

ANALYSIS:

Platforms for Intelligence Networks

In today's world there are very few covert informal networks as the Club de Bern (CdB), which is an intelligence sharing network between the intelligence services of the 27 states of the EU. It is a network based on voluntary exchange of relevant secrets, experience and views as well as discussing ongoing issues. However, the global intelligence community today also needs overt and formal platforms to meet with each other and discuss covert and important international security issues.

These formal and overt platforms are usually forums, summits and conferences that provide the platform for the officials and officers of secret service intelligence agencies of various countries to exchange ideas and build reciprocal relationships for joint efforts in interstate and regional security. These platforms are a convenient venue for holding bilateral and multilateral meetings between participating delegations. Such forums have its own convenience as they bring various sides together in one place as a kind of neutral hub and a diplomatic club gathering as opposed to the political invitation of one side to the other that sends a political signal. Countries with differing political positions can address ways of calculating and preventing security-related risks.

One of older examples of such platforms is, of course, the Munich Security Conference (MSC) that is organized by its non-profit foundation. It is the world's leading forum for debating international security policy. Since its inception in the fall of 1963, MSC was, is, and, it's likely, will continue to be an independent venue for policymakers and experts for open and constructive discussions about the most pressing international security issues of the day – and of the future.

Among the new and notable examples of such platforms is the Baku Security Forum that is an international platform dedicated to global and regional security issues. It annually brings together representatives of intelligence and security agencies from various countries. The forum is organized by the State Security Service of Azerbaijan and in just four years it has become a key event for master spies and spy masters across the globe. In 2026, the 4th edition of it brought together nearly 600 high-ranking representatives from over 100 countries to discuss the global security architecture.