



Kazan summit: security precautions in geopolitically dangerous times

The security precautions at the summit in Kazan are a sign that you have to expect anything in these times. It is impossible to imagine what damage an attack would cause. The Russians know this and are acting accordingly.

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The environment of the BRICS summit

We live in a world where major political events are defined primarily in terms of the safety of their participants: What is the global political environment in which the event is taking place? What messages does the organizer want to convey with the event beyond its actual purpose? Who is coming? Who might be disrupted by the event? Consequently: Who is at risk, and to what extent?

Only after these and many other questions have been answered is a decision made about the venue, along with other issues such as how guests will travel to the event, where they will be accommodated, what they will eat, and many other questions.

Once decisions are made, they are continually reviewed, evaluated, and discarded based on new information and insights.

The struggle to make the right decision involves both political and security bodies and, to a considerable extent, the security agencies as a whole. By the latter we mean the police, customs, secret services and the army - no one is exempt. They are the ones who have to take measures to ensure the maximum safety of state guests, their physical security.

At the same time, the necessary restrictions for all other participants and guests - technical staff, journalists, local residents, etc. - must be kept within tolerable limits. - must be kept within reasonable limits. Even if the interests of the latter must be subordinated in any case, the possible reactions of this group of people must be taken into account, since they have a direct and indirect effect on the organizer through the various media and thus on the public. With sometimes unforeseeable consequences.

A reminder of the G8 summit in Heiligendamm

There are media in the West that make fun of the security measures in Kazan. There is a double standard here. On the one hand, there is no reporting on what makes this extreme level of security necessary in the first place, and what role Western policy plays in it.

On the other hand, despite all these measures, there are no welded manhole covers in Kazan, which are now standard when the American president visits Germany, which is actually a friend of his. Nor are there any visible measures to dominate the escalation, such as barbed wire fences or security forces armed to the teeth, as was the case, for example, at the G8 summit in Heiligendamm. There, the already remote conference site was surrounded by a 13-kilometer-long, 2.5-meter-high security fence.



Barrier fence in Heiligendamm 2007

Security in Kazan

All the above-mentioned considerations in the run-up to a major political event were, of course, also played out and decisions were ultimately made with regard to the BRICS Summit in Kazan. As a result, all participants and guests have to deal with the realities of the security complex.

This is reflected in the fact that practically every intersection in Kazan is manned by police. The police also secure the 25-kilometer road from the city center to the airport in the same way. Their attitude is firm, but not aggressive. They try to minimize restrictions as much as possible, so getting in and out of a taxi at the hotel is tolerated despite the fact that there is a ban on stopping.

The BRICS Media Center is located in the Congress Center right next to the airport where the journalists traveling to the event work. Like the hotels, the convention center is equipped with security technology similar to that of an international airport and can only be entered with an official BRICS badge. The checks themselves are in some cases much more thorough.

Kazan is miles away from the realities of Heiligendamm, without offering a lower level of security for lack of it.

Conclusion

In our last articles, we referred to the importance of the BRICS countries. They are now the most important group of states in the world, both economically and, in key respects, politically. It goes without saying that all necessary measures must be taken to secure their meetings and that the venue must live with restrictions. Kazan can certainly serve as an example of how this can be achieved without extremes, despite all the necessities.

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