



## Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

### The Secretariat

**Conflict Prevention Centre**  
Director

**Vienna, 14 March 2011**

#### **Speaking Points for Ambassador Herbert Salber, Director, Conflict Prevention Centre**

*Informal Ambassadorial Meeting on 15 March 2011  
“Advancing the ‘V to V’ Dialogue on the Conflict Cycle”*

#### ***Introduction***

- We continue this dialogue on a solid foundation: agreed norms and principles; a unique concept of comprehensive and co-operative security – one that we have upheld for nearly 40 years, and which bears witness to our tradition of innovative and advanced thinking; and, of course, an impressive selection of proposals and initiatives put forward within the Corfu Process.
- Two years have passed since all of us first sat together to brainstorm collectively what we have at our disposal for conflict prevention and resolution; what our achievements have been; where problems still exist; and how we can move forward in addressing the conflict challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Over the last two years, much has happened – but also not happened. We have seen plenty of thoughtful proposals by delegations; we have tried, to the best of our abilities, to respond to emerging crisis situations; we have spent time and efforts to think about the future, and how to strengthen the role of existing OSCE tools and instruments in conflict prevention and conflict resolution.
- Without doubt, this dialogue must continue. However, the time has also come to take concrete action. To make what has not happened – happen. Allow me to voice a few thoughts on three questions that I consider important for our discussion today.

\*) Correction due to change of distribution status

- The first question is: How far have we come already over the last two years? The second one is: On what issues do we remain stuck? And thirdly: What can we do concretely to turn ideas into actual practice?

### *1. How far have we come?*

- Responding to this question requires that we look from two levels: from the conceptual level, and from the level of practical experience.
- Conceptually – we have travelled already across a remarkable landscape. Over the last two years, participating States have accumulated a good set of raw material. Apart from the 16 concrete proposals from the Corfu Process on various aspects of the conflict cycle, other ‘guiding’ documents have been produced in the collective spirit that has characterized this Process. This raw material should, I suggest, provide the foundation for our dialogue this year.
- Turning to the ‘guiding’ documents, I consider these to be:
  - The Kazakh Chairmanship’s Interim Report of July 2010, summarizing the proposals put forward within the Corfu Process;
  - The 2010 Astana Commemorative Declaration – Towards a Security Community, reiterating the OSCE’s commitment to agreed norms and principles. It could make the OSCE a security community in the truest sense of the word;
  - The 2011 Lithuanian Work Programme which reiterates the various views summarized in earlier documents.
- Let me also mention the ‘Draft Astana Framework for Action.’ Although not a consensus document, it can also provide us with further orientation. It is already a first milestone as it concretely outlines what needs to be done in the following areas of the conflict cycle:
  - “Improve and strengthen the OSCE’s early warning and crisis management capacity, including its ability to respond rapidly and effectively to requests for assistance from participating States;”

- “Review and reinforce OSCE mechanisms and procedures as regards their relevance and practical applicability, and ways to make them more operational, as appropriate;” and,
  - “Strengthen the political process and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the OSCE decision-making bodies in preventing and dealing with emerging and existing conflicts.”
- As to our practical experiences – in 2010, we had to respond to unrest in southern Kyrgyzstan by, *inter alia*, deploying police advisors; in early 2011, we also addressed the escalating political crisis in Albania by making use of a Special Envoy of the Chairperson-in-Office.
  - And of course, we continue to witness violence-related incidents on the Line of Contact in Nagorno-Karabakh; and still have to remain engaged in other protracted conflicts that require our constant attention.

## 2. *Where do we remain stuck?*

- Here, I wish to address what I think has ‘not happened’ .... yet.
- We still experience difficulty to act preventively enough; that is in the forefront of emerging crisis and conflict situations.
- We also do not respond timely enough to crisis situations that have already surfaced, and that require immediate action.
- Therefore, our conflict prevention efforts, particularly in the very early stages of an impending crisis, need more attention, resources and mobilization of political will to act rapidly.
- We invest lots of energy and time on informal and formal diplomacy rather than activating the preventive instruments we have, such as fact-finding and observer missions, preventive diplomacy, perhaps by means of a small mediation team, or

appropriate confidence-building measures. Thus, while we have the tools, we are reticent in using them to their fullest potential.

- As the situation in Kyrgyzstan has shown, preventive diplomacy (i.e., CiO Special Representative; HCNM) can be swift, but it often takes too much time to get ‘the first feet on the ground,’ and here I mean a more robust response (i.e., police advisors). We need to ask ourselves why this is so.
- In the case of Kyrgyzstan, and some of the past cases that I have looked at, I could not help but notice that it often took at least a month or longer before OSCE personnel were deployed in a crisis situation.
- Only in the case of the deployment of Military Monitoring Officers (or MMOs) to Georgia did we manage to have the first additional MMOs on the ground within three days following the adoption of PC Decision No. 861 on 19 August 2008.
- Acting preventively and responding timely requires not only political will (and willingness) and less ‘bureaucratic’ approaches, but also money, staff, and operational support in the field.

### **3. *What can be concretely done on the operational level?***

- This question brings me to the issue of turning ideas into practice. The ‘V to V Dialogue’ should ideally focus on moving toward a common understanding of concrete deliverables, the implementation of which could be extended into the next Chairmanship, if so deemed necessary.
- The many proposals submitted during the Corfu Process have demonstrated the strong commitment of participating States for advancing our thinking and our practice, particularly in the area of conflict prevention.
- Re-reading these documents once more before this meeting, I remain impressed by the efforts, the creativity, and thoughtfulness reflected in those proposals. It is therefore crucial that concrete deliverables contain the essence of the many

constructive ideas and initiatives that were put forward by the participating States over the last two years.

- While I do not want to ‘pre-empt’ the discussions here today and in the months to follow, let me nevertheless offer a few of my thoughts on areas in which I see prospects for the future:

- A dialogue on possible deliverables should take into account that, since the later part of the 1990s, the most comprehensive document on preventive action remains the 1992 Helsinki Summit Document. I would contend that no other document since then has really matched the wide-ranging provisions on early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management. The Corfu Process and the ‘V to V Dialogue’ hold the promise of a follow-on document that matches in importance the 1992 Helsinki Document.
- Thus, a first deliverable could be a possible follow-on document, perhaps in the form of what the Chairmanship has referred to as a ‘political framework for comprehensive action in conflict prevention and conflict resolution,’ that outlines explicitly those concrete efforts and activities that will be carried forward over the next years.
- There seems to be far-reaching preliminary agreement on concrete initiatives that could be carried forward, as reflected in the raw material I mentioned previously. Additional deliverables could therefore also be considered. A few examples:
  - Developing (and adopting) a concept on ‘Strengthening the analytical capacities of the OSCE executive structures, including their early warning capability;’

Here, a number of participating States have already provided concrete suggestions on how such a capacity could look, and how monitoring and reporting could proceed. These specific details could be reflected in such a concept.

- Developing a concept on enhancing support for OSCE mediation efforts.

This could also entail looking for example at the prospects of conciliation efforts, as has been proposed by a few participating States.

- Creating a working group/expert group to review OSCE mechanisms and procedures, with possible adjustments to be considered.

A number of participating States have already proposed such a specialized group, and in at least one case, a participating State has already provided a draft text for an updated Berlin Mechanism.