

The OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation

Reflections and Perspectives



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The OSCE Asian
Partnership for Co-operation

Afghanistan

Australia

Japan

Republic of Korea

Thailand

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Joint Foreword

The OSCE enjoys an excellent level of co-operation with the Asian Partners, who display a great interest in and commitment to the OSCE. Over the past decades the Asian Partners have contributed substantially to the OSCE's dialogue on many different aspects of comprehensive security. They have also backed OSCE activities financially as demonstrated by the generous contributions of several Asian Partners to the establishment of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. This booklet, which marks the twentieth anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partnership, is intended to pay tribute to the close and productive collaboration that the Organization has been enjoying with Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand while at the same time providing ideas for future and even closer co-operation.

The Partners for Co-operation started to foster a flexible dialogue with the CSCE/OSCE in the early 1990s, at the time when the Organization was taking on a more formal structure. From today's perspective that dialogue which has since developed so well was visionary at the time, not least because the geopolitical connectivity between

Asia and the OSCE area is not necessarily visible at first glance. It was at the 1992 Helsinki Summit that the then CSCE participating States explicitly acknowledged the link between European and global security by adopting two landmark provisions: the participating States declared their understanding that the CSCE was a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations; and Japan became the first Asian country to be invited to attend CSCE meetings. Shortly after that, in 1994, the participating States reaffirmed their intention to "develop a substantial relationship with non-participating States" by inviting the Republic of Korea to attend the Budapest Summit.

The year 1995 marked another important milestone in the history of the OSCE Asian Partnership as it was immediately before the Ministerial Council in Budapest on 5 December 1995 that the Permanent Council decided to apply the term "Partners for Co-operation" to Japan and the Republic of Korea. This allowed for the creation of a framework for more States to join the Partnership: in 2000, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member Thailand became an OSCE



Swiss President and Foreign Minister and OSCE Chairperson-in-Office 2014 Didier Burkhalter, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dačić and OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier at the Ministerial Council, Basel, 4-5 December 2014. (Jonathan Perfect)

2014 Basel Ministerial Council

Declaration on Co-operation with the Asian Partners

“The Helsinki+40 process provides an opportunity to strengthen the dialogue with the Asian Partners for Co-operation. We encourage the Asian Partners for Co-operation to contribute actively to the Helsinki+40 process on the issues which are relevant to the Partners, and especially to consider additional options for further enhancing the OSCE’s relations with the Asian Partners for Co-operation.”

partner, followed by Afghanistan in 2003, Mongolia in 2004 (Mongolia became a participating State in 2012), and Australia in 2009.

Furthermore, in 2003, following a decision by the Permanent Council, the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation was officially established. To date it remains the main forum for informal dialogue.

In 2007, the OSCE Partnership Fund was established as a means for supporting practical co-operation activities and promoting further engagement of the Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

At the Ministerial Council meetings in Madrid in 2007 and Vilnius in 2011, two Ministerial Decisions (MC.DEC 4/07 and MC.DEC 4/11) were passed to provide for direct support of Afghanistan through the development of extrabudgetary projects, paving the way for a set of projects covering all three dimensions of security.

Over the years, the OSCE Asian Partnership has become an integral part of the OSCE’s work and a complement to the long-standing OSCE Mediterranean relationship. Two principles underlie the participating States’ relationship with the five Asian Partners: the desire to share and to learn from each other’s experiences; and the mutual benefits to be gained from the Asian Partners’ contribution to the OSCE’s goals. Most importantly,

all five Asian Partners fully support OSCE values and commitments and have taken significant steps towards their voluntary implementation.

In accordance with established procedures, Switzerland, as the outgoing OSCE Chairmanship, is chairing the OSCE’s Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation in 2015. During the Swiss Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2014, the Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland and then OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Federal Councillor Didier Burkhalter, announced that his country intended to significantly increase co-operation between the OSCE and its Asian Partners and wished to promote greater dialogue and co-operation between the OSCE and multilateral forums in Asia.

The joint work plan of Switzerland and Serbia for 2014 and 2015 emphasizes that “interaction with the Partners should become more concrete and project-orientated”. In this context, the Ministerial Declaration on Co-operation with the Asian Partners adopted at the Ministerial Council in Basel in 2014, which is the first OSCE declaration exclusively devoted to strengthening co-operation with the Asian Partners, carries particular significance. It signals a joint willingness to elevate the OSCE Asian Partnership to the next level, creating the basis for a substantive strengthening of co-operation in the coming period.

In the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), Norway, which holds the third Chairmanship of the FSC in 2015, aims to continue the work of preceding Chairmanships Mongolia and Montenegro by raising awareness and promoting dialogue on OSCE politico-military principles and commitments with the Partners for Co-operation. Following the first ever outreach conference on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security for the Asian Partners held in Mongolia in March 2015, Norway supports the idea of further outreach to the Asian Partners for Co-operation on the Code of Conduct and other confidence- and security-building measures by enhancing the sharing of experiences and good practices, including through specific regional events.

In view of the 20th anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation, which we will celebrate on 5 December 2015, this booklet represents our acknowledgement and appreciation for a partnership that has come a long way and has a bright future. The value attached to the OSCE Asian Partnership also



H.E. Ambassador Robert Kvile, Permanent Representative of Norway to the OSCE.
(Micky Kröll)



H.E. Ambassador Vuk Žugić, Permanent Representative of Serbia to the OSCE. (Micky Kröll)



H.E. Ambassador Claude Wild, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE. (Micky Kröll)

clearly comes out of the introductory statements by the Ambassadors of the five Asian Partner countries included in this booklet.

This publication is also intended to be a reference document for policymakers, officials and practitioners dealing with security co-operation between the OSCE and its Asian Partners by providing a useful and comprehensive overview of the partnership including all the procedural texts and arrangements concerning the Partnership, as well as an overview of current projects and activities implemented with the active support of the Asian Partners.

Particular attention is also given to the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan by dedicating a separate chapter to relevant activities of the OSCE institutions and field operations. Another chapter focuses on the efforts of the OSCE and Asian Partners to work towards security for all from a gender mainstreaming perspective. The publication concludes with comments by the Ambassador of Mongolia, whose country has made the unique move from being an Asian Partner to becoming an OSCE participating State and whose commitment to the Asian Partnership remains strong, as well as with comments by the Irish Deputy Head of Delegation to the OSCE highlighting his country's particular engagement during its OSCE Chairmanship in 2012, the year Mongolia became an OSCE participating State.

Vuk Žugić
Chairperson of the Permanent Council

Claude Wild
Chairperson of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation

Robert Kvile
Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation

Lamberto Zannier
OSCE Secretary General

Afghanistan | Partnering with the OSCE during Afghanistan's Decade of Transformation (2015-2024)



Since becoming an OSCE Partner for Co-operation in 2003, Afghanistan has greatly benefited from this collaboration. At the same time and in light of the fact that security in the area of the OSCE participating States is inextricably linked with the stability of the Partners, our co-operation already has and will increasingly contribute to the security of the OSCE participating States. The OSCE has created a unique concept of comprehensive and co-operative security. We have subscribed to the view that comprehensive security must encompass all three complementary and equally relevant dimensions of security, namely the politico-military (first dimension), the economic and environmental (second dimension) and the human (third dimension). The co-operative nature of security is safeguarded by our shared understanding that security is indivisible and that all aspects of security are interconnected and interdependent.

For the past twelve years, Afghanistan has actively engaged in dialogue with the OSCE and has pledged to share and advance the organization's principles, values and objectives. Afghanistan participated in the 2010 OSCE Summit in Astana and in all annual Ministerial Council meetings held since 2003. We actively contribute to the weekly meetings of the two OSCE decision-making bodies, the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation. Afghanistan contributed to the Corfu Process, attended high-level meetings with the OSCE Troika on the margins of the Ministerial Council meetings, and participated in main meetings of the OSCE (Gender Equality Review Conference, Annual Security Review Conference, Security Days events, meetings of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, expert group meetings and Parliamentary Assembly meetings, to name but a few). Afghanistan has also attended the OSCE Asian Conferences and hosted the OSCE-Afghanistan Conference in Kabul in November 2008. Two packages of OSCE programmes and projects for Afghanistan have been adopted and Afghan stakeholders have been invited to attend seminars, trainings and workshops at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe, as well as in Moscow, Vienna and other places. Furthermore, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has sent Election Support Teams to all presidential, parliamentary and provincial council elections held in Afghanistan since 2004.

We appreciate the fact that our joint activities with the OSCE have been continuously enhanced over the years to the extent that today Afghanistan represents an important component of the work of the Organization. Major steps in this direction were taken at the OSCE Ministerial Council meetings in Madrid in 2007 and in Vilnius in 2011. At those meetings, the OSCE formally decided, in accordance with requests from the Government of Afghanistan, to enhance its co-operation with the country.

At the beginning of 2015, Afghanistan entered into its first and challenging year of the Decade of Transformation. While fully aware of other protracted and new conflicts and challenges in the OSCE area, the Government of Afghanistan calls upon the OSCE, and in particular future Chairmanships, to ensure that the Organization remains critically engaged with Afghanistan during the Decade of Transformation. We are ready to discuss the scope and range of our joint activities with the OSCE for the coming years. Our transformation process entails aspects of security, governance and development. At the same time, regional co-operation is a major pillar of Afghanistan's foreign policy. Given the above, the OSCE, as the world's largest regional organization and with its cross-dimensional approach, clearly is uniquely placed to complement existing efforts in Afghanistan – a perfect match. The people and Government of Afghanistan highly appreciate the continued generous support of the OSCE and its participating States and Partners for Co-operation. We look forward to further broadening and deepening our collaboration with a view to accomplishing a stable, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan.



**H.E. Ambassador Ayoob Erfani,
Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the OSCE**

Australia | Working with the OSCE to address emerging challenges to global security



The twentieth anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation comes at a testing time for global security. Events of the recent past have highlighted the value of our partnership in promoting the peace and well-being of the international community based on mutual respect, cooperation and dialogue.

Australia shares the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and endeavours to bring to the table the knowledge and experiences shaped through our active regional and international roles in addressing the issues of global security, including during our term on the United Nations Security Council. The OSCE has been a useful cooperative mechanism to discuss and exchange ideas on addressing global challenges such as anti-terrorism, human trafficking and improving the security of women and girls.

Australia has also strongly supported the OSCE's ongoing efforts to monitor the implementation of ceasefire in the Ukraine crisis. We may be geographically distant from this region, but events have shown that no country is immune from the effects of this conflict. We remain particularly grateful for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission's work in facilitating access to the MH17 crash site, and for its ongoing work in Ukraine.

We have made financial contributions since the beginning of our Partnership in 2009 to support the OSCE's work, notably to the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine and including Human Rights Training and Education Programme, Anti-Trafficking Programme and other conflict prevention capacity-building activities. Australia hosted the 2013 Asian Partners Conference in Adelaide, where discussions focused on improving the security of women and girls, including economic empowerment and the eradication of human trafficking.

Australia looks forward to continuing our cooperation on emerging challenges such as the threat of violent extremism, through both formal and informal mechanisms of the OSCE. Our Government is committed to playing its role in the global effort to combat violent extremism, address its causes and strengthen law enforcement.

Australia would welcome discussing new ideas for further invigorating the OSCE Partnership for Co-operation, including on how to effectively involve the Asian Partners in the process of drafting decisions and declarations pertaining to them. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the OSCE in the coming years, in our joint work toward the goal of comprehensive security.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Stuart', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**H.E. Ambassador David Stuart,
Permanent Representative of Australia to the OSCE**

Japan | Enhanced co-operation with the OSCE based on common values and principles

In 2015, the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation marks its twentieth anniversary. This year is also the fortieth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the 70th anniversary of the end of the World War II.

In Europe, the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and security in Europe itself have been shaken by the crisis in and around Ukraine. Similarly, in East Asia, on the other side, unilateral attempts to change the status quo in relation to territorial and maritime disputes have become more apparent.

The crisis in and around Ukraine is not a “fire on the other side of the river” for Asia, while the situation in Asia has become inextricably linked with security in Europe. The experiences and lessons of the OSCE are of great value in strengthening the security architecture in East Asia. Against these backdrops, it is more and more valuable and essential for both the OSCE participating States and the Asian Partners for Co-operation to deepen the co-operation, while confirming the basic principles, such as the inalienable right of sovereignty, territorial integrity, rule of law and respect for fundamental human rights.

Since I took office as a Japanese ambassador in Vienna in September 2013, I have been making the utmost efforts to strengthen the relationship with the OSCE as a partner which shares values and basic principles. Those particular efforts include a contribution of €2 million in total to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), and a contribution of US\$ 2 million in total to the OSCE Border Management Staff College. In June 2014, Japan co-hosted the OSCE-Japan Conference in Tokyo, whose main theme was: “Sharing experiences and lessons learned between the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation in order to create a safer, more interconnected and fairer world in the face of emerging challenges.” At the beginning of 2015, the Foreign Ministry of Japan and the OSCE reached an agreement on holding regular high-level meetings. Since August 2015, a Japanese diplomat has been working at the SMM headquarters in Kyiv.

Japan continues to contribute to the peace, stability and prosperity of the international community through close cooperation with the OSCE.



**H.E. Ambassador Makoto Taketoshi,
Permanent Representative of Japan to the OSCE**



Republic of Korea | Modelling the OSCE in Northeast Asia



In 2015, a year of significant milestones, we are celebrating many historic events such as the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the signing of the United Nations Charter as well as the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of the Helsinki Final Act. For Koreans, this year not only marks the seventieth anniversary of our liberation but also of the division of the Korean peninsula. I believe that the twentieth anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partnership adds another unique milestone to the series of events that have had a great impact on the international community in terms of peace and security, development and human rights.

Northeast Asia, where the Republic of Korea is located, is facing daunting challenges and threats and is often compared with nineteenth century Europe, where conflicts among nations led to two tragic events that nearly encompassed the globe during the first half of the twentieth century. Today in Northeast Asia, there are tensions due to the divergent dreams and visions of the region's countries. Of these, the pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is by far the most daunting and intractable challenge in the region.

The Northeast Asian region is also burdened with non-traditional and transnational security threats such as foreign terrorist fighters, violent extremism, cyber threats, epidemic outbreaks, maritime refugees and climate change.

These emerging challenges pose threats on many fronts but also provide a wide scope for co-operation. When the Republic of Korea hosted the 2015 OSCE Asian Conference in June, all participants stressed that the current security environment requires common efforts by Europe and Asia, and the OSCE was requested to create a strong bridge to link both continents so that they could tackle emerging challenges and threats jointly.

In order to facilitate multilateral security co-operation on such security issues in Northeast Asia, the Republic of Korea has proposed the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative. Inspired by the success of the CSCE/OSCE in promoting co-operation over conflict in Europe since 1975, the Republic of Korea intends to nurture trust-building dialogue through this initiative. Even though there are differences between Europe's and East Asia's security landscapes, the concept of comprehensive and co-operative security can be tailored to fit the realities of Northeast Asia.

In this context, the Republic of Korea has welcomed proposals from the OSCE participating States on participating in the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative as dialogue partners. The OSCE will share with Northeast Asia best practices and lessons learned from the process of trust building and preventive diplomacy over four decades.

For its part, the Republic of Korea has been contributing to the OSCE's multifaceted and critical work in many fields, including through a voluntary contribution of €100,000 to the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine in 2014, and it will continue to contribute to OSCE activities through the Partnership Fund.

As the crisis in Europe presents the OSCE not only with daunting challenges but also with great opportunities for envisaging the future of the Organization, a constructive approach to resolving tensions and conflicts in Northeast Asia through dialogue and cooperation could bring more security and stability to the region.

I trust that the OSCE will continue to model comprehensive security for Northeast Asia as countries in the region work towards a regional confidence and securitybuilding process. As a Partner for Co-operation since 1994 and member of the Asian Contact Group, the Republic of Korea stands ready to promote the principles and commitments of the OSCE in its noble endeavours in Europe and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of three characters: '송', '영', and '완' (Song, Young-wan).

H.E. Ambassador Young-wan Song,
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the OSCE

Thailand | Building bridges between Asia and Europe



The twentieth anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation is a testimony to the strong and long-standing co-operation between the Asian Partners and the OSCE, which has steadily evolved and matured in various fields.

This year also marks fifteen years since Thailand became an OSCE Asian Partner for Co-operation. For Thailand, the OSCE is an important forum for sharing our experiences of addressing security challenges, especially non-traditional threats, and also for learning from the OSCE and other Partners about how to develop confidence- and security-building measures and preventive diplomacy to promote regional peace and security.

As the only member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) which is an OSCE Partner for Co-operation, Thailand aims to serve as a bridge linking the OSCE with ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Like the OSCE, the ARF is a platform for dialogue among ASEAN and its dialogue partners on issues pertaining to regional peace and security matters. Thailand believes the roles and experiences of organizations from different parts of the world can be drawn on to enhance our regional and global security. Therefore, we wish to see stronger co-operation among different regional security organizations, which will help build confidence and improve understanding between different regions.

Today, the world is facing ever more complex security threats. The challenge for us is to collaborate and find ways to develop strategies to effectively address these threats, both traditional and non-traditional. Thailand is committed to contributing constructively to the collective efforts within the OSCE. We will continue to share our experiences and best practices in addressing these threats as we seek a positive agenda for co-operation.

For its part, Thailand has hosted four major conferences within the OSCE framework to share our experience in various fields: the Thailand Conference on Sharing of Experiences in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings: Opportunities for Co-operation, in 2005; the OSCE-Thailand Conference on Challenges to Global Security: From Poverty to Pandemic, in 2006; the workshop on “Combating illicit crop cultivation and enhancing border security and management: Thailand as a case study”, in January 2010; and the 2012 OSCE-Thailand Conference on Strengthening Security through Regional Co-operation, at which Thailand also hosted a workshop entitled “Promoting security through a comprehensive approach to development in border areas – a capacitybuilding programme according to Thai Experience”. Thailand is also preparing to host the OSCE Asian Conference in 2016.

We firmly believe that the co-operation between the OSCE and the Asian Partners will continue to expand through sharing of best practices and experiences. Thailand is looking forward to further building bridges between Asia and Europe by strengthening co-operation between ASEAN, ARF and the OSCE.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "A. Srisamoot". The signature is stylized, with a large "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

H.E. Mr. Arthayudh Srisamoot,
Permanent Representative of Thailand to the OSCE

I. The twentieth anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation

Vienna 1995

Permanent Council Decision No. 94

“The Permanent Council

Decides that the term ‘partners for co-operation’ will henceforth be used to refer to Japan and the Republic of Korea [...]”

Expansion of the OSCE Asian Partnership

The year 2015 marks an important milestone – the 20th anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation. However, even earlier the CSCE/OSCE was already attracting interest in several Asian countries.

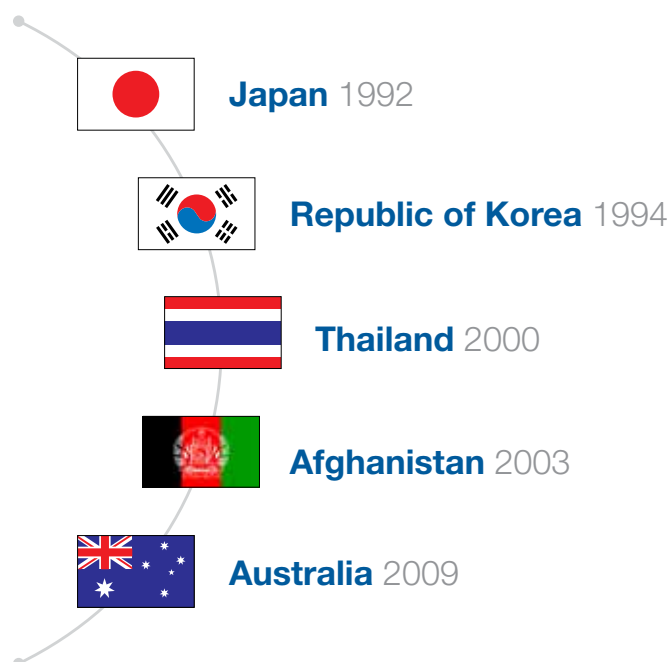
Japan was the first Asian country to be invited to attend a CSCE meeting, namely the CSCE Summit held in Helsinki on 9 and 10 July 1992 and the first to establish special relations with the CSCE/OSCE.

In June 1994, the CSCE Committee of Senior Officials decided to invite the **Republic of Korea** to the Budapest Review Conference and the subsequent Budapest Summit in December 1994. With regard to its own history, as highlighted also by the Korean Ambassador to the OSCE in this booklet, the Republic of Korea was particularly interested in the CSCE/OSCE experience of developing and implementing confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs). Consequently, the first OSCE-Korea Conference, held in 2001, was devoted to the “Applicability of OSCE CSBMs in Northeast Asia”, a topic that would be further discussed in different forums in subsequent years.

Thailand joined the group of Asian Partners on 9 November 2000. Earlier the same year, Thailand had hosted a workshop entitled “Thailand and the OSCE: the way towards a future co-operation” in Bangkok on 28 September 2000. Since then, Thailand has proved to be

an interested and engaged Partner which can also play a role in liaising between the OSCE and the South-East Asian region. A member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as well as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Thailand is acting as an important bridge between the OSCE, ASEAN and the ARF.

In 2002, OSCE participating State Tajikistan suggested that **Afghanistan** become a partner to the OSCE. Several other participating States subsequently supported that proposal, noting that three OSCE participating States



shared borders with Afghanistan. The decision on establishing formal links with Afghanistan as an Asian Partner for Co-operation was taken on 3 April 2003.

In 2004, **Mongolia** became the next Asian Partner, subsequently becoming the 57th OSCE participating State only eight years later, in November 2012.

Finally, in December 2009, **Australia** was welcomed as the most recent OSCE Asian Partner for Co-operation.

Creating a framework for co-operation: The Asian Contact Group

In December 1995, the Permanent Council decided to use the term **Partners for Co-operation** to refer to Japan and the Republic of Korea, thereby laying the groundwork for a more institutionalized relationship with what would later become the group of Asian Partners.

In 2003, following a recommendation in the so-called Ladsous report (named after the then Permanent Representative of France to the OSCE, Mr. Hervé Ladsous) and following a decision by the Permanent Council (PC.DEC/430), a Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation was launched. Its first meeting was held in March 2003.

It was established as an informal group, “which will enable the Asian partners to keep abreast of events and activities in the OSCE area and the participating States to find out about the main issues concerning their region”.

Today the Asian Contact Group serves as the main forum for an open and interactive dialogue with the Partners. It meets approximately every two months at the ambassador level and is chaired by the previous year’s Chairmanship of the OSCE (Switzerland in 2015 and Serbia in 2016). Besides regular briefings by the OSCE and the Asian Contact Group Chairmanships, meetings often include presentations by senior representatives from the capitals of the Asian Partner States, who provide information about security-related developments and activities in their countries and possible areas for

2003 Maastricht Ministerial Council

OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty- First Century

“We will encourage [the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation] to voluntarily implement the principles and commitments of the OSCE and will co-operate with them in this as appropriate. As a first step towards increased dialogue, we will invite all our Partners for Co-operation to participate on a more frequent basis as observers in Permanent Council and Forum for Security Co-operation meetings. The OSCE will also consider ways in which OSCE norms, principles, commitments and values could be shared with other regions, in particular neighbouring areas. Contacts with organizations in those areas will be further developed.”

co-operation. Representatives of OSCE executive structures brief on OSCE activities and representatives of partner organizations present relevant work with an Asian or South-East Asian dimension. Preparations for or follow-up on main events and activities are also on the agenda, while between Contact Group meetings, day-to-day dialogue is maintained through technical meetings at the level of contact points in Vienna, allowing for informal consultations on specific activities or on preparations for meetings.

The Asian Contact Group takes a demand-driven approach to selecting topics for discussion as agreed by the Asian Partners and the Chair of the Asian Contact Group. It also puts a strong focus on sharing experiences and lessons learned. Topics such as the



2008 OSCE-Afghanistan Conference. Kabul, Afghanistan, 9 November 2008. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan)

fight against corruption and the recovery of stolen assets, sustainable energy and water management feature alongside disaster risk reduction, small arms and light weapons and many others, demonstrating the range of issues of common interest. In recent years, several of the Asian Partners have shown a particular interest in the OSCE as a possible model for security co-operation in East and Northeast Asia and in the OSCE's experience in implementing CSBMs through multilateral co-operation.

The importance of the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation has been underscored in a number of OSCE documents, such as the Charter for European Security adopted at the 1999 Istanbul Summit and the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-first Century adopted at the Maastricht Ministerial Council meeting in 2003. This last document in particular reiterated the interconnectedness between the security of the OSCE area and that of adjacent regions and reaffirmed the participating States' commitment to intensifying co-operation with the Asian and Mediterranean Partners.

In implementation of the Maastricht Strategy, the OSCE Permanent Council commissioned a report on how to further enhance dialogue and co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation, which was submitted to the OSCE Ministerial Council in 2004 (PC.DEC/571/Corr. I, 2 December 2003). The "Report of the Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on the implementation of Permanent Council Decision No. 571" (Mr. Aleksi Härkönen, the then Permanent Representative of Finland to the OSCE) included, among other things, the following suggestion: "Partner States are encouraged ... to consider benefiting from the OSCE's experience, accumulated over three decades, of applying the concept of comprehensive security in practice, and using it as a source of inspiration." The report was annexed to the 2004 Sofia Ministerial Council Document (see MC.DEC/17/04, 7 December 2004).

When the OSCE participating States adopted Rules of Procedure for the Organization in 2006, the Partnership status was defined in its current form. Although the Rules largely codified practices that already existed, they formalized the status of the Contact Groups as informal subsidiary bodies of the Permanent Council, and confirmed the Partners' right to take an active part in meetings of the decision-making bodies and other OSCE events.

At the Astana Summit in 2010, the participating States recommitted to enhancing the level of their interaction with the Partners. In the 2014 Basel Ministerial Council Declaration on Co-operation with the Asian Partners, the first OSCE Declaration to focus exclusively on the OSCE Asian Partnership, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the OSCE participating States renewed their commitment "to deepen and expand the dialogue and co-operation with the Asian Partners." It is in this spirit that the OSCE Asian Partnership will continue to develop.

II. A Japanese perspective on the beginnings of the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation

The CSCE/OSCE is a unique and flexible organization, which has reached out to external actors since its initial establishment in 1975. This outreach is conducted for three main reasons. The first is to enhance the security of the CSCE/OSCE area. The second is to offer opportunities to observe the activities of the CSCE/OSCE, which could contribute to security co-operation in other regions of the world. And third, since the mid-2000s, the OSCE has increasingly offered to share its norms and principles with interested partner countries.

While the CSCE had been pursuing a dialogue with Mediterranean countries since its inception, the intention of extending relations to other non-participating countries was first explicitly expressed in 1990 in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, in which the participating States, in the section on the CSCE and the world, make the statement: “We stand ready to join with any and all States in common efforts to protect and advance the community of fundamental human values.”

It was around the time of the CSCE Bonn Conference on Economic Co-operation from 19 March to 11 April 1990 that the Japanese media discussed the possibility of observer status for Japan in the CSCE. On 7 May 1990, the then Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Yasuhiro Nakasone, contributed an article to the Los Angeles Times stating “insofar as the CSCE is of major significance to global security, it is inconceivable that Japan not engage itself, directly or indirectly, in that process.”

After the end of the East-West confrontation in Europe, Japan was searching for its role in the construction of a new world order. Its first response was to provide massive economic assistance to the Central and Eastern European countries and the former USSR, and then to provide substantial aid for the reconstruction of former Yugoslavia. Japan also started to develop political relations with European countries as well as with NATO and the European Community.

After the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the CSCE was expected to have a significant role in the new order. Japan reviewed its policy with regard to the CSCE and decided that institutionalized relations with the CSCE were required.

Japan needed to be familiar with the situation on the ground and to be involved in political consultation because Japan was asked to contribute as a member of the G7 to reform and reconstruction in Central and Eastern Europe, the former USSR and former Yugoslavia.

Opening of the CSCE
Follow-up Meeting in Helsinki,
24 March 1992

**1974-1992 Minister for Foreign
Affairs of the Federal Republic
of Germany, Hans-Dietrich
Genscher**

“The development of the CSCE as an institution is arousing increasing interest among the non-participating States. The CSCE principle of dialogue and co-operation must also be practised in relation to other countries. Japan has announced its interest in closer links with the CSCE. I am in favour of this and hope that Helsinki will send a signal of partnership both to this important country and to other States in the region.”

Brussels, Japan Trilateral Forum, 20 January 2015

**Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan,
Fumio Kishida**

“The basic principles under the Helsinki Final Act have not been observed in various parts of the world. These basic principles should be applied not only to Europe but also to international relations covering the entire globe. With this year marking the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Helsinki Final Act, I firmly believe that all countries should recognize anew the importance of observing these basic principles.”

Japan had legitimate security interests in the CSCE area since it is located in the region adjacent to that area. Any arms control framework, including confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) and any regional conflicts in the CSCE area neighbouring on Japan could have affected Japan's security interests. The zone of application of the CSBMs is one example. During the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty negotiations, the prospect of the deployment of intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Asia after their elimination from Europe caused concern. In the case of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the transfer by the Russian Federation of military equipment from Europe to the East of the Urals could affect the security of Japan.

From July 1990, I worked for the Embassy of Japan to the Kingdom of Belgium, which was responsible for bilateral relations with Belgium and NATO, and European security as a whole. The CSCE was not institutionalized and this Embassy covered the CSCE.

On the occasion of the Berlin CSCE Council Meeting in June 1991, the then Italian Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis was the first to prominently advocate Japan's involvement in the CSCE. In late October 1991, during

preparations for the CSCE Council of Ministers in Prague, which was to take place the following January, Italy circulated a formal proposal on establishing dialogue with Japan in the Committee of Senior Officials.

From February to April 1992, on the occasion of Japan's high-level consultations with several CSCE countries, Japan expressed an interest in establishing institutionalized relations with the CSCE, and received support from German Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, United States Secretary of State James Baker, Czech President Václav Havel, Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, and Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock. Japan launched a formal démarche to the CSCE participating States in late April 1992.

The 1992 Prague Document on Further Development of CSCE Institutions and Structures, includes the following paragraph on relations with non-participating States: “The Council requests the Helsinki Follow-up Meeting to recommend practical ways to establish a flexible dialogue between the CSCE and interested non-participating States or groups of States, for example through contacts between the said States and the Chairman-in-Office of the Council or of the Committee of Senior Officials.” It was against that background that Japan was the first Asian country to be invited to attend a CSCE meeting, namely the CSCE Summit held in Helsinki on 9 and 10 July 1992.

I personally was a member of the Japanese delegation and I remember the glory of this summit which celebrated the end of the Cold War, even though it was overshadowed by the crisis and war in the former Yugoslavia. It was on a sunny day during the period of the “white nights” when the memorable reception hosted by Finland took place at the Kalastajatorppa Hotel, located on the Gulf of Finland.

The Helsinki Summit Declaration defines relations with non-participating States as follows: “We have expanded dialogue with non-participating States, inviting them to take part in our activities on a selective basis when they can make a contribution.”

The relevant Helsinki Summit Decision on relations with external partners defined the relations between Japan and the CSCE in the following terms: “In accordance with paragraph 45 of the Prague Document, the participating States intend to deepen their co-operation and develop



Meeting of the Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Helsinki, March 1992. (OSCE)

a substantial relationship with non-participating States, such as Japan, which display an interest in the CSCE, share its principles and objectives, and are actively engaged in European co-operation through relevant organizations. To this end, Japan will be invited to attend CSCE meetings, including those of Heads of State and Government, the CSCE Council, the Committee of Senior Officials and other appropriate CSCE bodies which consider specific topics of expanded consultation and co-operation. Representatives of Japan may contribute to such meetings, without participating in the preparation and adoption of decisions, on subjects in which Japan has a direct interest and/or wishes to co-operate actively with the CSCE.” Japan attached importance to present its views, the so-called “right to speak” when necessary.

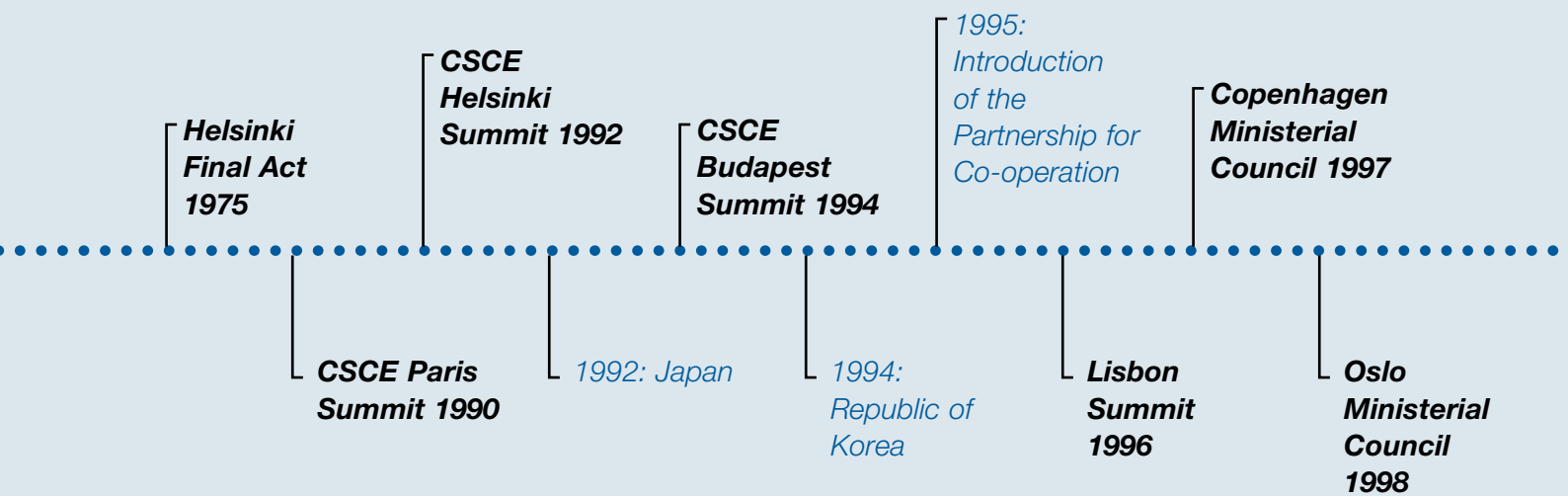
In the years following the Helsinki Summit, the CSCE/OSCE continued to attract the interest of other countries from Asia and the Pacific, and the OSCE

Asian Partnership continued to grow both in terms of the number of Partners and, as is well documented in this publication, the scope of joint activities. As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation, we can expect that relationship to develop further. Certain transnational threats, such as terrorism and cybercrime, know no geographical boundaries. Sharing common values and norms, as well as developing region-to-region co-operation has therefore become more important than ever.

**H.E. Ms. Takako Ueta, Ambassador,
Professor at the International Christian
University, Tokyo, Japan**

III. Founding Documents

Timeline of key events



Helsinki Final Act 1975

The participating States,

recognize the close link between peace and security in Europe and in the world as a whole and conscious of the need for each of them to make its contribution to the strengthening of world peace and security and to the promotion of fundamental rights, economic and social progress and well-being for all peoples.

Motivated by the political will, in the interest of peoples, to improve and intensify their relations and to contribute in Europe to peace, security, justice and cooperation as well as to rapprochement among themselves and with the other States of the world.

Charter of Paris for a New Europe 1990

The CSCE and the World

The destiny of our nations is linked to that of all other nations. We support fully the United Nations and the enhancement of its role in promoting international peace, security and justice. We reaffirm our commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations as enshrined in the Charter and condemn all violations of these principles. We recognize with satisfaction the growing role of the United Nations in world affairs and its increasing effectiveness, fostered by the improvement in relations among our States.



Aware of the dire needs of a great part of the world, we commit ourselves to solidarity with all other countries. Therefore, we issue a call from Paris today to all the nations of the 7 world. We stand ready to join with any and all States in common efforts to protect and advance the community of fundamental human values.

Supplementary document to give effect to certain provisions contained in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe

Procedures and organizational modalities relating to certain provisions contained in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, signed in Paris on 21 November 1990, are set out below.

- I.
- Institutional arrangements
- (...)
- E. The CSCE Secretariat
- 1. The Secretariat will
- (...)
- provide information in the public domain regarding the CSCE to individuals, NGOs, international organizations and non-participating States

Prague Document 1992

Second Meeting of the Council (Council of Ministers)

(...)

X: Relations with non-participating States

45. The Council requests the Helsinki Follow-up Meeting to recommend practical ways to establish a flexible dialogue between the CSCE and interested non-participating States or groups of States, for example through contacts between the said States and the Chairman-in-Office of the Council or of the Committee of Senior Officials.

(...)

CSCE Helsinki Document 1992: The Challenges of Change

IV: [...] Relations with non-participating States

(9) In accordance with paragraph 45 of the Prague Document, the participating States intend to deepen their co-operation and develop a substantial relationship with non-participating States, such as Japan, which display an interest in the CSCE, share its principles and objectives, and are actively engaged in European co-operation through relevant organizations.

(10) To this end, Japan will be invited to attend CSCE meetings, including those of Heads of State and Government, the CSCE Council, the Committee of Senior Officials and other appropriate CSCE bodies which consider specific topics of expanded consultation and co-operation.

(11) Representatives of Japan may contribute to such meetings, without participating in the preparation and adoption of decisions, on subjects in which Japan has a direct interest and/or wishes to co-operate actively with the CSCE.

CSCE Budapest Document 1994

Towards a Genuine Partnership in a New Era

(...)

18. We note with satisfaction the development of our relationship with Japan. We welcome the interest of the Republic of Korea which has attended the CSCE Summit Meeting for the first time and of other States in the CSCE's experience and activities, and express our readiness to co-operate with them in areas of mutual interest.

27th Committee of Senior Officials 1994

The Committee of Senior Officials,

Noting with appreciation the letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea to the Chairman-in-Office expressing the interest of the Republic of Korea in the work and experience of the CSCE and its desire to contribute to the cause of the CSCE,

Took the following decision:

1. The Republic of Korea will be invited to the Budapest Review Conference to observe proceedings in the Plenary, as well as in those working groups where it has a special interest;
2. The Republic of Korea will be invited to attend, and make contributions to, the forthcoming CSCE Summit;
3. The Republic of Korea may be invited on a case-by-case basis to CSCE seminars and other ad hoc meetings on subjects in which it has a special interest;
4. The Secretary General of the CSCE is requested to make arrangements for a more regular exchange of information (including access to official CSCE documents) between the CSCE and the Republic of Korea. (...)

49th Plenary Meeting of the Permanent Council 1995

PC.DEC/94, 5 December 1995

The Permanent Council,

Decides that the term “partners for co-operation” will henceforth be used to refer to Japan and the Republic of Korea, and the term “Mediterranean partners for co-operation” to Algeria, Egypt, Israel, [Jordan], Morocco and Tunisia. These changes in name do not alter the specific relationships between these States and the OSCE set out in previous OSCE decisions.

Lisbon Summit Declaration 1996

24. We are committed to further developing the dialogue with our Mediterranean partners for co-operation, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. In this context, strengthening security and co-operation in the Mediterranean is important for stability in the OSCE region. We welcome the continued interest displayed by the Mediterranean partners for co-operation, Japan, and the Republic of Korea in the OSCE, and the deepening of dialogue and cooperation with them. We invite them to participate in our activities, including meetings as appropriate.

Copenhagen Document 1997

I. Chairman's Summary

The Ministers noted with satisfaction efforts to further develop co-operation with the partners for co-operation, in particular the Mediterranean partners for co-operation.

MC.DEC/6/97

5. As a means of turning their vision into reality, Ministers agree that participating States, through a Document-Charter, will, inter alia, undertake the following:

(j) Recognizing the indivisibility of security, they affirm that strengthened security and co-operation in adjacent areas, in particular the Mediterranean, is an important factor for stability in the OSCE area. They will consider closer co-operation with all partners for co-operation in order to promote the norms and values shared by the OSCE participating States. They will also encourage partners to draw on OSCE Expertise.

MC.DEC/8/97

The Ministerial Council,

Having considered, following the address of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to the Permanent Council on 17 April 1997, measures to bring OSCE financing mechanisms in line with political decisions and with the increased volume and scope of the Organization's tasks, Reaffirming the commitment of all participating States to fulfil their financial obligations, including the settlement of arrears and prompt future payments (...)

3. Notes that a system of voluntary funding will also be maintained in order to accept financial contributions to such missions/projects from participating States, OSCE partners for co-operation as well as other sources.

176th Plenary Meeting of the Permanent Council 1998

PC.DEC/241, 9 July 1998

III. General issues

2. Partners for co-operation, Mediterranean partners for co-operation, international organizations and institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations are invited to ensure appropriate participation in OSCE meetings devoted to Human Dimension issues."

Oslo Ministerial Council 1998

I. Oslo Ministerial Declaration

V.

The OSCE welcomes support for its activities from its Partners for co-operation. We appreciate the contributions of Japan and the Republic of Korea to OSCE efforts. We thank Japan for its generous financial support for Bosnia and Herzegovina elections and in the context of Kosovo.

OSCE Charter for European Security 1999

IV. Co-operation with Partners for Co-operation

1. It has been suggested that strengthened co-operation with Japan and the Republic of Korea could, in particular, be related to the regional security dimension. Joint activities in connection with field missions in Central Asia are regarded as the most visible initial feature of the Euro-Asian co-operation.

2. Closer contacts, as called for by Japan, could be considered in connection with the Asia Regional Forum (ARF), which is regarded as the OSCE's closest counterpart in Asia. These ideas need further clarification and elaboration.

307th Plenary Meeting of the Permanent Council 2000

PC.DEC/378, 9 November 2000

Granting of the Status of Partners for Co-operation to Thailand

The Permanent Council,

Noting with appreciation the letter by the Foreign Minister for Thailand, dated 11 October 2000 (CIO.GAL/109/00), requesting that Thailand be granted the status of Partner for Co-operation,

Noting with satisfaction the reiteration of Thailand's intentions towards sharing the principles, values and goals of the OSCE, and wish to develop more structured contacts with the OSCE, as well as its intention to develop and actively promote the goals of the OSCE and to contribute as appropriate to OSCE activities,

Taking positive note of the workshop on "Thailand and OSCE: the way towards a future cooperation", held in Bangkok on 28 September 2000,

Decides:

- To welcome Thailand as a Partner for Co-operation;
- To invite Thailand to the meetings of Heads of State or Government, to Review Conferences, and to meetings of the Ministerial Council;
- To invite Thailand to Human Dimension Implementation Meetings and Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings in accordance with PC Decision No. 241;
- To invite Thailand to the meetings of the Economic Forum;
- To invite Thailand on a case-by-case basis to OSCE seminars and ad hoc meetings on subjects in which it has a special interest;
- To request the Secretary General to make arrangements for a more regular exchange of information between the OSCE and Thailand, including access to official OSCE documents.

The Permanent Council will review the above decision in the light of experience and any other procedures that may be developed concerning relations with Partners for Cooperation.

PC.DEC/379, 9 November 2000

Decision No. 379
Developing Recommendations regarding Applications for Future Partnership

The Permanent Council,

In view of the growing interest in partnership status with the OSCE, tasks an informal open ended working group with developing recommendations by June of next year on the basis for considering future applications for partnership.

445th Plenary Meeting of the Permanent Council 2003

PC.DEC/537, 3 April 2003

Decision No. 537
Granting of the Status of Partner for Co-operation to Afghanistan

The Permanent Council,

Noting with appreciation the letter by the Foreign Minister of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, dated 18 February 2003 (CIO.GAL/13/03) requesting that Afghanistan be granted the status of a Partner for Co-operation,

Noting with satisfaction Afghanistan's intentions towards sharing the principles, values and goals of the OSCE and the interest of Afghanistan in establishing close relations with the OSCE based on exchanges of views and information on various issues of mutual interest and participation in OSCE meetings and activities,

Noting also that Afghanistan shares common borders with three OSCE participating States and has mutual security interests with them as well as with other OSCE States,

Recalling PC Decision No. 430, dated 19 July 2001 on taking note and welcoming the report on recommendations concerning future applications for partnership (PC.DEL/344/01/Rev.3),

Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan to the OSCE Chairmanship at the Maastricht Ministerial Council 2003.

(CIO.GAL/13/03)

"The Government of Afghanistan highly values the experience of the OSCE in peace-building activities and maintaining stability. In this context, I would like to request your assistance in your capacity of Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE in granting Afghanistan the status of Partner for Co-operation of the OSCE. The Government of Afghanistan would highly appreciate if such a decision were taken by the OSCE in the nearest future."

Recalling the proposal of President Rakhmonov of Tajikistan on 19 February 2002 to invite Afghanistan to become a Partner for Co-operation,

Decides:

To welcome Afghanistan as a Partner for Co-operation;

To invite Afghanistan to the meetings of Heads of State or Government, to Review Conferences, and to meetings of the Ministerial Council;

To invite Afghanistan to Human Dimension Implementation Meetings and Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings in accordance with PC Decision No. 476 of 23 May 2002;

To invite Afghanistan to the meetings of the Economic Forum and the Annual Security Review Conference;

To invite Afghanistan on a case-by-case basis to OSCE seminars and ad hoc meetings on subjects which are of mutual interest;

To further invite Afghanistan to be involved in other OSCE events on the same terms as the existing partner States;

To request the Secretary General and the Chairmanship in Office to make arrangements for regular exchanges of views and information between the OSCE and Afghanistan, including access to official OSCE documents, on various matters of mutual interest and possibilities for cooperation.

The Permanent Council will review the above decision in light of experience and any other procedures that may be developed concerning relations with Partners for Co-operation.

484th Plenary Meeting of the Permanent Council 2003

Permanent Council Decision No. 571

Further Dialogue and Co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and exploring the scope for wider sharing of OSCE Norms, Principles and Commitments with Others

PC.DEC/571, 2 December 2003

Decides:

- To identify additional fields of cooperation and interaction with the OSCE Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Cooperation for the purpose of enhancing mutual security;
- To encourage Partners for Co-operation to voluntarily implement OSCE norms, principles and commitments, including as a means to further interaction with the OSCE;
- To explore the scope for wider sharing of OSCE norms, principles and commitments with adjacent areas;
- To pursue its work on procedures for future applications for partnership;
- To prepare a report on the outcome of this work to be submitted to the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in 2004.

The Permanent Council also requests the Forum for Security Cooperation to make its own contribution to this work, within its competencies and mandate.”

Maastricht Ministerial Council 2003

OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century 2003

The OSCE response

23. As threats originating or evolving in adjacent regions are of increasing importance, the OSCE will intensify its cooperation with its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation, by early identification of areas of common interest and concern and possibilities for further coordinated action. We will encourage them to voluntarily implement the principles and commitments of the OSCE and will cooperate with them in this as appropriate. As a first step towards increased dialogue, we will invite all our Partners for Co-operation to participate on a more frequent basis as observers in Permanent Council and Forum for Security Co-operation meetings. The OSCE will also consider ways in which OSCE norms, principles, commitments and values could be shared with other regions, in particular neighbouring areas. Contacts with organizations in those areas will be further developed.

Sofia Ministerial Council 2004

Decision No. 17/04 OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation

MC.DEC/17/04

The Ministerial Council,

Recognizing the increasing importance of the well-established co-operation between the OSCE and its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation,

Recalling Permanent Council Decision No. 571/Corr.1, by which the Permanent Council decided to submit a report to the Ministerial Council meeting in 2004 on further dialogue and co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and exploring the scope for wider sharing of OSCE norms, principles and commitments with others, and which requested the Forum for Security Co-operation to make its own contribution to this work,

Underlines the importance of the report PC.DEL/366/04/Rev. 4, which is based on an exchange of various views, including with the OSCE Partners for Co-operation;

Tasks the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation to remain seized of the matter.

Madrid Ministerial Council 2007

Ministerial Declaration on the OSCE Partners for Co-operation

MC.DOC/1/07

1. We, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the OSCE participating States, welcome the increased engagement by the Partners for Co-operation in the OSCE, noting that, over the years, a solid foundation has been laid for a strengthened partnership. We should build further on the Helsinki Final Act 1975, Helsinki Document 1992, the Budapest Document 1994, the Charter for European Security 1999, the 2003 OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century, Ministerial Council Decision No. 17/04 on the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation, and other relevant documents and decisions, which underlined the importance of dialogue and co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation, exploring the scope for wider sharing of OSCE norms, principles and commitments with them.

2. We remain concerned about threats to security and stability within and around the OSCE area. We reiterate the interdependence between the security of the OSCE area and that of the Partners for Co-operation, and we encourage further efforts to strengthen the relationship between the Partners for Co-operation and the participating States in order to increase our ability to respond to new and traditional threats to security.

3. We support the efforts of the Partners for Co-operation to promote the OSCE's norms, principles and commitments in their regions, and encourage them to take further steps towards their voluntary implementation. We call on the Partners for Co-operation to report on their implementation in appropriate OSCE meetings. We advocate the development of the annual Mediterranean Seminars and Conferences with the Asian Partners for Co-operation into effective channels of communication between countries in different regions. We encourage the Partners to continue engaging on issues of common relevance to the OSCE and their regions. We also advocate increased sharing of the OSCE's experience in preventive diplomacy and confidence-building measures as well as further interaction with relevant regional organizations.

4. We encourage the OSCE Chairmanship to make full use of the possibility to invite Partners for Co-operation to attend meetings of the decision-making bodies, as well as of relevant informal subsidiary bodies on a case-by-case basis, and to make oral and/or written contributions, in accordance with the OSCE Rules of Procedure. In this respect, we commend the efforts undertaken by the Chairmanships of the Permanent Council and of the Forum for Security Co-operation to facilitate regular attendance by the Partners for Co-operation in the meetings of the two bodies.

5. We will, through the respective Contact Groups, keep the Partners for Co-operation regularly informed on discussions on relevant Ministerial Council decisions. We invite the Chairpersons of the Contact Groups to inform the Permanent Council about topical matters and to submit yearly reports to the Ministerial Council. In the spirit of paragraph 49 of the Charter for European Security, we also encourage the Permanent Council to examine the recommendations emerging from the Contact Groups and the Mediterranean Seminars and the OSCE Conferences with the Asian Partners for Co-operation.

6. We proceed from the understanding that further OSCE engagement with the Partners for Co-operation will be carried out within available resources and avoid duplication of efforts by other international organizations.

7. We take note with appreciation of the outcome of the 2007 OSCE-Mongolia Conference on Strengthening the Co-operative Security between the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation. We call for examination of the wider applicability of the recommendations and suggestions stemming from this Conference. We look forward to the next OSCE conference with the Asian Partners for Co-operation.

8. We equally look forward to the 2007 Mediterranean Seminar on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination and Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding, to take place in Tel Aviv, Israel, on 18 and 19 December 2007.

9. We welcome the initiative taken by the Chairmanships of the Contact Groups in organizing the first Joint Meeting of the Contact Groups to assess the state of co-operation between the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation.

10. We encourage the Partners for Co-operation to increase their interaction with the participating States and the OSCE executive structures in all three dimensions. In this context, the exchange of information on best practices and lessons learned could be further enhanced, in particular, by creating opportunities to involve experts from the Partners for Co-operation in OSCE activities. We stand ready to examine requests from the Partners for Co-operation for assistance in areas where the OSCE has particular expertise.

11. We welcome the decision by the Permanent Council on the establishment of a Partnership Fund, which will facilitate further promotion of the engagement of the Partners for Co-operation. We encourage the participating States and the Partners for Co-operation to contribute to it.

12. Recalling Permanent Council Decision No. 233 of 11 June 1998, we invite the Partners for Co-operation to send observers to participate in election observation missions, and call on the ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to make arrangements to include them in election monitoring organized by the OSCE.

13. We welcome the initiative by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to hold an annual Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean, and encourage it to consider holding Asian Forums as well. We also encourage the Partners for Co-operation to participate in these events.

14. We encourage the OSCE Chairmanship and the chairpersons of the Contact Groups, together with the Secretary General, to continue supporting the dialogue with the Partners for Co-operation and to facilitate their contacts with OSCE executive structures in order to address common threats to security and stability and to promote the voluntary implementation of OSCE norms, principles and commitments.

15. Recalling Permanent Council Decision No. 430 of 19 July 2001, we remain open to considering future applications for partnership from interested countries.

Decision No. 4/07 on OSCE engagement with Afghanistan

MC.DEC/4/07

The Ministerial Council,

Taking note of the request by Afghanistan (PC.DEL/922/07 from 21 September 2007) that the OSCE provide assistance to the country in the fields of border security, police training and combating drug trafficking,

Seriously concerned that the situation in Afghanistan is having an impact on security in the OSCE area,

Recognizing the primary role of the United Nations Security Council in maintaining global security and stability, and with a view to supporting the goals set forth in the Afghanistan Compact, agreed to at the London Conference on Afghanistan in 2006,

Acknowledging the contribution of the United Nations as well as of regional arrangements under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter and of other international organizations, such as, inter alia, NATO, EU, CSTO and other relevant international actors as well as participating States actively engaged in Afghanistan and desirous of complementing their efforts also in order to avoid unnecessary duplication,

Recalling the 1975 Helsinki Final Act which states the close link between peace and security in Europe and in the world as a whole,

Also recalling the 1999 Charter for European Security, which states that “the OSCE is the inclusive and comprehensive organization for consultation, decision-making and co-operation in its region”,

Taking into consideration the status of Afghanistan as a Partner for Co-operation of the OSCE, and recalling the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the TwentyFirst Century, adopted in 2003 at the Eleventh Meeting of the Ministerial Council, in Maastricht, which states that “the OSCE will intensify its co-operation with its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Cooperation, by early identification of areas of common interest and concern and possibilities for further co-ordinated action”,

Recalling Permanent Council Decision No. 571 of 2 December 2003 on further dialogue and cooperation with the Partners for Co-operation and exploring the scope for wider sharing of OSCE norms, principles and commitments with others, and Ministerial Council Decision No. 17/04 of 7 December 2004,

Recalling Ministerial Council Decision No. 5/05, encouraging the Partners for Co-operation to implement voluntarily the OSCE commitments to combat the threat of illicit drugs,

Recalling the OSCE Border Security and Management Concept, adopted in 2005 at the Thirteenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council, in Ljubljana, which states that the provisions of the Concept will be shared by the Partners for Co-operation, on a voluntary basis,

Taking note of the OSCE project to train Afghanistan’s anti-drug police officers in Domodedovo, launched on 12 November 2007,

Convinced that long-term security and stability in Afghanistan is of the utmost importance for the OSCE region, in particular for Central Asia,

Stressing the particular responsibility of the Government of Afghanistan for security and stability in the country and the important role of the International Security Assistance Forces in assisting Afghan authorities on these matters,

Underscoring the importance of contributing to international efforts to combat terrorism and trafficking in small arms and light weapons, illegal drugs, and human beings,

1. Within available resources, tasks the Secretary General with examining the prospects for intensifying OSCE action to support measures for securing the borders between the Central Asian participating States and Afghanistan in line with the objectives and principles set forth in the OSCE Border Security and Management Concept;
2. Further tasks the Secretary General with exploring all possible cooperation options, in co-ordination with the United Nations and other relevant regional and international organizations and other actors, and making proposals, as appropriate, for further actions by the Permanent Council;
3. Encourages the OSCE field operations in Central Asia, in consultation with their host governments, to intensify the involvement of Afghan counterparts in their relevant activities;
4. Tasks the Secretary General with providing support for intensifying the involvement of Afghan counterparts in OSCE activities, such as those related to the fields of border security and management, policing and the fight against drug trafficking, and those at the educational and training facilities in Central Asia and in the rest of the OSCE area, and with developing specific

projects and programmes for Afghan counterparts in the OSCE area, as necessary and without unnecessary duplication of existing efforts, including those of international actors such as the UN Office on Drugs and Crime;

5. Encourages the Secretary General and OSCE field operations in Central Asia to coordinate with relevant regional organizations with a view to avoiding unnecessary duplication and reinforce mutual efforts;

6. Endorses the Permanent Council Decision on combating the threat of illicit drugs, inter alia tasking the Secretary General with conducting in 2008 a follow-up training project for Afghanistan's anti-drug police officers in Domodedovo;

7. Encourages the participating States and Partners for Co-operation to contribute to activities in the above-mentioned fields;

8. Tasks the Permanent Council with remaining seized of the matter and with researching and evaluating options for future engagement with Afghanistan upon its request.

690th Plenary Meeting of the Permanent Council 2007

Permanent Council Decision No. 812 Establishment of a Partnership Fund 2007

PC.DEC/812, 30 November 2007

The Permanent Council,

Recognizing the increasing importance of the well-established co-operation between the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation,

Recalling Permanent Council Decision No. 571/Corr.1, on further dialogue and co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and exploring the scope for wider sharing of OSCE norms, principles and commitments with others,

Recalling Ministerial Council Decision No. 17/04, of 7 December 2004, on the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation, underlining the importance of the report PC.DEL/366/04/Rev.4,

Wishing to promote the engagement of the Partners for Co-operation,

Decides to:

1. Establish a specific fund exclusively financed through extrabudgetary contributions, hereinafter referred to as the Partnership Fund, to foster deeper relations with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation and aimed at financing:

- After consultation with the Partners for Co-operation, participation by representatives from the Partners for Co-operation in such activities related to existing OSCE programmes as OSCE conferences, seminars, workshops and other meetings, or OSCE-related conferences, seminars, workshops and other meetings held by the Chairmanship, the FSC Chairmanship or an executive structure, as well as internships, visits, briefings and training courses, organized in accordance with the OSCE rules of procedure (MC.DOC/1/06);
- Such activities related to existing OSCE programmes as OSCE conferences, seminars, workshops and other meetings or OSCE-related conferences, seminars, workshops and other meetings held by the Chairmanship, the FSC

Chairmanship or an executive structure in the territory of a participating State that are designed to encourage the Partners for Co-operation to voluntarily implement OSCE norms, principles, commitments and best practices, as well as internships, visits, briefings and training courses, organized in accordance with the OSCE rules of procedure (MC.DOC/1/06);

- Contribution toward the costs of the OSCE Mediterranean seminar and the OSCE conference with the Asian Partners for Co-operation;

2. Further decides that this Fund shall be set up and managed in accordance with the OSCE's Financial Regulations and its Common Regulatory Management System (CRMS). In accordance with the principles of fund accounting applied by the OSCE, this Fund will be a multi-year fund, with balances carried forward from one year to the next, subject to agreement by the donor(s) and duration of the activity;

3. Requests the Secretary General:

- As Fund Manager, to administer the Fund in accordance with the Financial Regulations;
- To report to the Permanent Council on the operation of this Fund once a year or at the request of the Permanent Council;
- To establish the operational modalities of the Partnership Fund, and to inform the participating States and the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation of these modalities by means of a circular note;

4. The Partnership Fund will not be used to finance the organization of OSCE-related conferences, seminars, workshops, other meetings and activities outside of the OSCE region without an appropriate decision by an OSCE decision-making body;

1. Encourages the participating States and the Partners for Co-operation to contribute to the Partnership Fund.

Operational modalities of the Partnership Fund 2008

SEC.GAL/20/08, 31 January 2008

1. The Fund will be used exclusively for the purposes stipulated in PC.DEC/812 and be financed exclusively through extrabudgetary contributions. The Secretary General shall ensure that funds are utilized in strict compliance with the provisions of that decision.

2. A new Fund and a Master Project has been created and set-up in IRMA. All pledges should be made against the project number 1100689 "Master Project – Partnership Fund".

3. The Master Project Manager, designated by the Secretary General, is Mr. Fabrizio Scarpa, Senior External Co-operation Officer, who will be responsible for the Master Project and will communicate with the Donors in regard to fund raising and reporting. The Master Project Manager will be the main contact point for individual Project Managers who are responsible for specific projects under the Fund.

4. Specific projects will be proposed and submitted to the Master Project Manager by the Secretariat, Institutions and Field Operations. Upon approval of the specific project by the Master Project Manager, who will ensure compliance with PC.DEC/812, it will be uploaded in IRMA and will receive a unique project number. Information about such projects will also be made available to the Partners for Co-operation, once they are uploaded into the project database. The individual Project Managers will be fully responsible for the day-to-day management of their projects. The individual Project Managers will be responsible for preparing interim and final financial and narrative reports for distribution to the Donors by the Master Project Manager.

5. Donors

(a) can make contributions that are not restricted to any specific activities and are aimed at financing activities stipulated in PC.DEC/812; or

(b) can earmark contributions to a specific project(s) to be financed through the Fund.

6. As stipulated in PC.DEC/812, the Secretary General will report to the Permanent Council on the operation of this Fund once a year or at the request of the Permanent Council.

Athens Ministerial Council 2009

Decision on Granting of the Status of Partners for Co-operation to Australia

MC.DEC/13/09

The Ministerial Council,

Noting with appreciation the letter by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia (CIO.GAL/182/09), requesting that Australia be granted the status of Partner for Co-operation,

Noting with satisfaction that Australia has supported the OSCE principles and objectives since its beginning as a Helsinki process in 1973 and shares its comprehensive and co-operative approach to security and related issues of economic and human development,

Noting also that Australia is interested in establishing close relations with the OSCE through the exchange of views and information on various issues of mutual interest and participation in OSCE meetings and activities,

Recalling Permanent Council Decision No. 430, dated 19 July 2001,

Recalling the Madrid Ministerial Declaration on the OSCE Partners for Co-operation

(MC.DOC/1/07),

With reference to the OSCE Rules of Procedure (MC.DOC/1/06),

Decides:

- To welcome Australia as a Partner for Co-operation;
- To invite Australia to participate in the meetings of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation;
- All provisions of the OSCE Rules of Procedure and other OSCE documents related to States referred to in paragraph IV.1(D)4 shall be applicable for Australia.

Address of the Australian Delegation to the Athens Ministerial Council 2009

(MC.DEL/87/09)

“Australia is grateful to the OSCE Chairman, the Secretary-General, the participating states, and the Secretariat for their prompt consideration and approval of our formal application to become an Asian Partner for Cooperation. Australia will bring to its engagement with the OSCE considerable experience in the work of peace keeping, peace building and the strengthening of governance in our own neighbourhood. Closer engagement with the OSCE will complement our existing contribution in these fields and facilitate the sharing of expertise and experiences.”

Summit Meeting 2010

Astana Commemorative Declaration: Towards a Security Community

10. We recognize that the security of the OSCE area is inextricably linked to that of adjacent areas, notably in the Mediterranean and in Asia. We must therefore enhance the level of our interaction with our Partners for Co-operation.

Vilnius Ministerial Council 2011

Decision on strengthening OSCE engagement with Afghanistan

MC.DEC/4/11

The Ministerial Council,

Sharing the common objective of promoting longterm security and stability in Afghanistan, a Partner for Cooperation of the OSCE since 2003,

Convinced that longterm security and stability in Afghanistan has a direct impact on security in the OSCE region,

Acknowledging the primary role of the UN in international efforts in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan, as well as the valuable contribution of relevant regional and international organizations and institutions actively engaged in assisting Afghanistan, inter alia, NATO, EU, CSTO, CICA and SCO, and underscoring the importance of coordination of these efforts and avoiding duplication, including through making best use of existing mechanisms for co-ordination,

Welcoming the Istanbul Process on regional security and co-operation for a secure and stable Afghanistan that was launched at the Istanbul Conference for Afghanistan on 2 November 2011, as well as the results of the International Afghanistan Conference, held in Bonn on 5 December 2011,

Acknowledging the OSCE and its participating States' contributions as part of the UN-led efforts of the international community towards assisting Afghanistan in areas where the OSCE has its expertise and experience,

Stressing the particular responsibility of the Government of Afghanistan for long-term security and stability in the country, to be achieved through a process that is Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-driven,

Supporting the on-going process of transition of responsibility, including for providing comprehensive security, to the Afghan authorities in the framework of the Kabul Process, and remaining convinced that progress to be made between now and 2014, when transition will be completed, will make a decisive impact on the future course of efforts underway in Afghanistan, and being confident that the OSCE can make a tangible contribution to this end, drawing upon its expertise and experience,

Acknowledging the central role that has been played by Madrid Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/07 on OSCE engagement with Afghanistan in fostering cooperation between the OSCE and Afghanistan since 2007,

Referring to the Athens Ministerial Council Decision No. 2/09 on further OSCE efforts to address transnational threats and challenges to security and stability, which calls for intensified implementation of Madrid Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/07,

Recalling the Astana Commemorative Declaration, which acknowledges that security in the OSCE region is inextricably linked with the security of neighbouring regions, and underscores in particular the need to contribute effectively to collective international efforts to promote a stable, independent, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan,

Recognizing the threat posed by illicit production, trade, trafficking and consumption of drugs originating in Afghanistan to international peace and stability in the region and beyond, and emphasizing the importance of co-operation with Afghanistan to counter this threat and to enhance border management co-operation between Afghanistan and its neighbours in ensuring comprehensive measures for drug control,

Commending the efforts by OSCE participating States, Partners for Cooperation, the Secretariat and the field operations towards the implementation of Madrid Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/07 aimed at assisting Afghanistan in the fields of border security, police training, customs training, combating of drug trafficking, inter alia through the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe and other training facilities in the OSCE participating States,

Acknowledging with appreciation the election support that has been provided to Afghanistan by four OSCE/ODIHR election support teams, in accordance with the relevant Permanent Council decisions and upon the request of the Afghan Government, and stressing the importance that we attach to the transparent, inclusive, free and fair elections in Afghanistan, in line with its national legislation and international standards,

Noting the relevance of the participation of Afghan officials and civil society representatives in OSCE events, and reaffirming the OSCE's readiness, within its mandate and available resources, to assist Afghanistan in its voluntary implementation of OSCE norms, principles and commitments,

Welcoming the use of the Partnership Fund, in accordance with Permanent Council Decision No. 812, to foster closer relations with Afghanistan and to support increased participation by Afghan representatives in OSCE activities across the three dimensions of security,

Recognizing the important role of education for stability and development in Afghanistan, and in particular the contribution by the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, which serves as a promoter of OSCE values,

Convinced of the importance of regional cooperation between Afghanistan and the OSCE participating States in Central Asia, and of the essential role of these participating States in helping to promote long-term security and stability in Afghanistan,

Welcoming bilateral and multilateral initiatives between Afghanistan and the regional countries that could contribute to the improved regional cooperation and enhanced trust and confidence,

Wishing to enhance the co-operation between the OSCE and Afghanistan,

1. Decides to further strengthen the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan across the three dimensions and on the basis of the OSCE concept of comprehensive, cooperative and indivisible security, pursuant to the request of the Government of Afghanistan;
2. Invites OSCE participating States and Partners for Cooperation to contribute, on a voluntary basis, to the efforts of the OSCE and international community, to promote the longterm security and stability of Afghanistan;
3. Tasks the Secretary General and executive structures, in accordance with their mandates and established procedures, with continuing ongoing projects and programmes of co-operation between the OSCE and Afghanistan and with developing a new package of activities across all three dimensions of security, in consultation with participating States and in coordination with the UN and other relevant international and regional organizations;
4. Tasks the Secretary General to act as a focal point among all OSCE executive structures, aiming at co-ordination and coherence of implementation of Afghan related projects and programmes in the OSCE area;
5. Calls upon the OSCE executive structures, within their mandates, to facilitate a broader participation of Afghan officials and civil society representatives in relevant OSCE events, including through the use of the Partnership Fund, as appropriate;
6. Recommends to Afghanistan to establish a fixed national focal point mechanism to facilitate cooperation between the OSCE and Afghanistan aimed at enabling better implementation of, and follow-up on, OSCE projects and activities;
7. Expresses the readiness to provide election support, at the request of the Afghan Government, as appropriate, especially in the light of the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections in Afghanistan;
8. Tasks the Permanent Council with remaining seized of the matter and with researching and evaluating options for further engagement with Afghanistan, upon its request;
9. Invites participating States to continue consultations in the framework of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation with a view to develop ongoing and new OSCE activities, across the three dimensions;
10. Tasks the Secretary General to regularly report to the participating States on the implementation of this decision.

Decision No. 5/11 Partners for Co-operation

The Ministerial Council,

Recalling the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, which recognizes the close link between peace and security in Europe and in the world as a whole,

Recalling the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century, adopted in 2003 at the Eleventh Meeting of the Ministerial Council in Maastricht, which states that the OSCE will intensify its co-operation with its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation, by early identification of areas of common interest and concern and possibilities for further co-ordinated action,

Fully convinced that the security of the OSCE area is inextricably linked with security in the regions of the Partners for Co-operation, and reaffirming our commitment to intensifying our dialogue and co-operation with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation and to strengthening our capacity to respond to the needs and priorities identified by the Partners and on the basis of OSCE norms, principles and commitments,

Recognizing the democratic transition processes, political, economic and social changes that have taken place in some Mediterranean Partners in 2011,

Commending the voluntary reform processes undertaken by some Mediterranean Partner countries,

Recognizing that each country is different and has the right to develop its own political model, with respect for the universal values of human rights and dignity,

Agreeing that the OSCE's experience in different areas can be of interest and potential benefit to the Partners, while taking into full account their prime responsibility for making national political choices as well as their specific political, social, cultural and religious heritage and in accordance with their needs, goals and national priorities,

Reaffirming the readiness of the OSCE, through its executive structures, within their respective mandates in accordance with established procedures and when requested, to assist the Partners for Co-operation, as appropriate, in their voluntary implementation of OSCE norms, principles and commitments,

Recognizing the important role played by civil society in Partners for Co-operation, in promoting democracy, the rule of law, and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Welcoming the progress achieved in recent years through dialogue and co-operation with our Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation, including their enhanced participation in OSCE meetings and activities including the implementation of concrete mutual projects,

Recalling Permanent Council Decision No. 571 on further dialogue and co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and exploring the scope for wider sharing of OSCE norms, principles and commitments with others, and Ministerial Council Decision No. 17/04 on the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation, as well as the Madrid Ministerial Declaration on the OSCE Partners for Co-operation,

Recalling the Astana Commemorative Declaration of 2010, which underlined the importance of enhancing the level of interaction with the Partners for Co-operation,

Reiterating support for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's co-operation with the Partners including through the holding of its annual Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean, and taking note of the work done by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in this respect,

1. Decides to enhance further the Partnership for Co-operation by broadening dialogue, intensifying political consultations, strengthening practical co-operation and further sharing best practices and experience gained in the development of comprehensive, co-operative and indivisible security, in the three OSCE dimensions, according to the needs and priorities identified by the Partners;"

2. Encourages the OSCE executive structures, in accordance with their mandates and established procedures, to engage in action oriented co-operation with the Partner countries in all three dimensions, taking also into account the annual conferences of Partners, by providing expert advice and exchange of information on best practices and experiences upon request of the Partners based on relevant OSCE decisions when required and invites the Partners to increase the level of their participation in the OSCE activities;
3. Decides, in the context of the Partnership, to increase the efforts to promote OSCE norms, principles and commitments through the contacts in co-ordination with other relevant regional and international organizations, particularly the United Nations notably through the sharing of best practices and experiences and through joint projects and activities in all three dimensions, as appropriate;
4. Calls upon the OSCE Chairmanship and the Contact Groups, together with the Secretary General, to strengthen and further develop regular high-level dialogue with the Partners for Co-operation, in order to enhance mutual understanding and ensure high-level political support and assistance for the Partners for Co-operation, taking into account their needs and priorities;
5. Calls upon the OSCE executive structures, within their mandates, to facilitate a broader participation of officials and civil society representatives of Partners for Co-operation in relevant OSCE events, as well as through the use of the Partnership Fund as appropriate;
6. Tasks the Secretary General, in consultation with the OSCE Chairmanship, with exploring possible options for action oriented and results based co-operation with Partners, in co-ordination with the United Nations and other relevant regional and international organizations and institutions, and with making proposals, as appropriate, for further action by the Permanent Council;
7. Requests the Permanent Council to remain seized of the matter and to consider options for future engagement with the Partners for Co-operation at their request;
8. Encourages the participating States and the Partners for Co-operation to share their experiences and contribute to the OSCE activities in all three dimensions, including through contributions to the Partnership Fund, as appropriate, in order to promote further engagement with the Partners for Co-operation;
9. Reconfirms its openness to considering future potential applications for partnership from interested countries, in line with Permanent Council Decision No. 430 of 19 July 2001.

Dublin Ministerial Council 2012

Decision on the accession of Mongolia to the OSCE

MC.DEC/2/12

The Ministerial Council,

Following the receipt of the letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia (CIO.GAL/213/11 of 28 October 2011) in which Mongolia expressed its willingness to join the OSCE as a participating State and its acceptance of all commitments and responsibilities contained in OSCE documents, and of the addendum from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia (PC.DEL/780/12 of 7 August 2012) in which Mongolia articulates its responsibilities – specifically with regard to the Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures,

With reference to Ministerial Council Decision No. 12/11 of 7 December 2011 on the application of Mongolia to become a participating State and to the Chairmanship's report on this matter (CIO.GAL/82/12 of 4 July 2012),

Welcomes Mongolia as a participating State of the OSCE on the understanding that the zone of application for CSBMs as defined in Annex I to the Vienna Document will not extend to Mongolia's territory, unless the Ministerial Council determines otherwise, and in that regard, Vienna Document commitments that apply only to the zone of application will apply to any Mongolian forces in the zone but not to the territory of Mongolia.

Basel Ministerial Council 2014

Declaration on the Co-operation with the Asian Partners

MC.DOC/10/14

1. We, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the OSCE participating States, welcome the engaged participation of the Asian Partners for Co-operation in the OSCE, noting that, over the years, the partnership has been steadily strengthened and its importance and efficiency demonstrated. We renew our commitment to deepen and expand the dialogue and co-operation with the Asian Partners, on the basis of Ministerial Council Decision No. 5/11, and call on the Partners to continue voluntarily implementing OSCE commitments.
2. We note with appreciation the generous contribution of Asian Partners to OSCE extrabudgetary projects and relevant OSCE activities, inter alia the support from Japan, Australia, the Republic of Korea and the Kingdom of Thailand for the establishment of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. We encourage the Asian Partners to continue to make use of existing OSCE mechanisms, including the Partnership Fund.
3. We remain committed to an open and frank exchange of information within the Contact Group with the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation, which serves as the main forum for regular dialogue between the OSCE participating States and Asian Partners for Co-operation within the work of the organization. We take note with appreciation of the practice of holding regular OSCE conferences in the Partners for Co-operation and call for a more proactive use by participating States and Partners for Co-operation of those events to intensify the dialogue. In that context, we note a growing interest among the Asian Partners for Co-operation in deepening their understanding of the OSCE's expertise in such areas as combating transnational threats, confidence and security-building measures, empowerment and inclusion of women in the political

and economic spheres as well as providing equal opportunities for women and men to contribute to peace processes, and we reaffirm our readiness to continue to share OSCE's best practices through the various existing formats.

4. We reaffirm our long term commitment to further strengthen the OSCE's engagement across the three dimensions with Afghanistan pursuant to the request of the government of Afghanistan, as expressed in Ministerial Council Decisions Nos. 4/07 and 4/11. We commend the progress achieved so far and call for continued implementation of those decisions beyond 2014, inter alia on border cooperation between the OSCE participating States and Afghanistan on bilateral and multilateral levels. We welcome the holding of elections in Afghanistan in 2014 and the formation of the Government of National Unity. We note with satisfaction the deployment of ODIHR election support teams to the Afghan elections in recent years and encourage the Afghan Government to make good use of the recommendations made.

5. We reaffirm our condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and our firm rejection of the identification of terrorism with any race, ethnicity, nationality or religion. We reiterate our resolve to combat it, as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and is incompatible with the fundamental values and principles shared by the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation alike. We welcome dialogue on the efforts to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism, to suppress the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and develop and implement prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies, in full implementation of UNSCR 2170 and 2178, and in particular foreign terrorist fighters identified therein, to ensure that any person who participates in the financing, planning, preparation or perpetration of terrorist acts or in supporting terrorist acts is brought to justice, as well as to ensure that no funds, financial assets or economic resources are made directly or indirectly available to fund terrorist activities. We reiterate our commitment to prevent the movement of terrorist individuals or groups through effective border controls and controls of issuance identity papers and travel documents. We welcome the opportunity to address the topic of the fight against terrorism during the Twenty-First Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council.

6. The Helsinki+40 process provides an opportunity to strengthen the dialogue with the Asian Partners for Cooperation. We encourage the Asian Partners for Cooperation to contribute actively to the Helsinki+40 process on the issues which are relevant to the Partners, and especially to consider additional options for further enhancing the OSCE's relations with the Asian Partners for Co-operation.

7. We take note that initiatives by academia, non-governmental organizations and other representatives of civil society may provide additional channels to support and expand the existing dialogue and co-operation between the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation.

IV. A selection of projects implemented under the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation

Over the years, co-operation at the operational level has been strengthened significantly. The Asian Partners for Co-operation have contributed actively to the work of the OSCE, through the deployment of observers to electoral missions of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the secondment of their nationals to OSCE field operations, financial contributions to the activities of various OSCE units, institutions and field operations, often those with a particular focus on Central Asia, as well as through financial support for the National Dialogue Project in Ukraine and for the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

Much of this was implemented through the Partnership Fund, which was established in 2007 to support practical co-operation activities and promote further engagement on the part of the Partners for Co-operation. Through the Partnership Fund, OSCE participating States and Partners deepen relations by co-financing seminars, workshops, internships, visits, briefings and training courses, as well as through the dissemination of OSCE guidelines and handbooks designed to encourage the implementation of OSCE norms, principles and commitments in the Partner States. The participation of Partners' representatives in OSCE activities, including training courses, is also financed through the Partnership Fund.

Both the OSCE participating States and the Partners for Co-operation contribute to the Partnership Fund and over the years, the OSCE has been able to share its experience with the Partners for Co-operation on a number of topics, including evolving transnational threats and their implications for security in Europe and Asia, conflict prevention in the new security circumstances and the applicability of OSCE confidence- and security-building measures in Northeast Asia, best practices in developing confidence-building measures on cybersecurity, the human dimension of security, anti-trafficking and global efforts to enhance disaster risk reduction.

Below, the OSCE's engagement with the Asian Partners for Co-operation is highlighted through a selection of representative projects implemented with the support of and for the benefit of the Asian Partners, which in turn strongly promotes the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation overall.

Afghanistan: Facilitating broad participation in OSCE events and programmes

The Partnership Fund is one of the main tools facilitating the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan. It serves as an administrative tool for receiving extrabudgetary contributions from interested donors with the objective of furthering the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan through greater Afghan participation in OSCE activities, also in collaboration with the OSCE institutions. It provides support for targeted projects and helps facilitate a broad participation of Afghan officials and civil society representatives in OSCE events. It also allows the OSCE Secretariat to sponsor the participation of young Afghans in internship and junior professional programmes in OSCE units and institutions. The Secretariat further facilitates the participation of representatives of Afghan government structures and non-governmental organizations at OSCE conferences and workshops, including high-level events such as annual Ministerial Council meetings. Hence, through the Partnership Fund framework, the OSCE uses every opportunity to create a platform for exchange and co-operation between Afghan representatives and its executive structures. For a comprehensive overview of the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan, see chapter V of this booklet.



Regional round table for Central Asian State officials, Istanbul, Turkey, November 2014. (OSCE)

Australia: Taking action against trafficking

Australia fully supports the work of the OSCE and its comprehensive and co-operative approach to security and makes a constructive and practical contribution to the work of the organization. As the most recent OSCE Asian Partner for Co-operation, Australia has been contributing to a variety of OSCE activities in all three dimensions. Between 2012 and 2015, the ODIHR implemented a project supported by the Australian Agency for International Development aimed at enhancing local, national and regional capacities to ensure human rights protection of trafficked persons and vulnerable groups in Central Asia. It was implemented in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in co-operation with the OSCE field operations and the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

The project beneficiaries were policymakers and professionals involved in developing and implementing responses to trafficking in Central Asia, such as members of national anti-trafficking co-ordination mechanisms, law enforcement officials, prosecutors, judges, lawyers and civil society organizations working to assist and protect the rights of trafficked persons and vulnerable groups.

The project strengthened consultation and co-operation among key State and civil society stakeholders in Central Asia, as well as relevant countries of origin and destination, leading to enhanced knowledge and skills to adequately identify and assist trafficked persons and members of vulnerable groups. It led to more comprehensive and effective national referral mechanisms (NRMs) in Central Asia as it strengthened national and regional capacities and structures for providing trafficked persons and vulnerable groups with better access to justice.

The NRM assessments conducted in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, which included assessments of existing gaps and challenges in trafficked persons' access to justice and effective remedies in these countries, fed into regional round tables and capacity-building events that the ODIHR organized in all five Central Asian countries. These events contributed to strengthening the capacity of 84 lawyers and legal practitioners, State officials and civil society representatives to provide legal aid to trafficked persons. The project helped to initiate a practical discussion on the needs, challenges and possibilities in providing assistance with access to justice, including claiming compensation for trafficked persons and developing specific recommendations for States, non-governmental organizations and the private sector on how to improve the provision of legal

assistance to trafficked persons. It also improved cross-border links among anti-trafficking lawyers and legal practitioners in the region and with the countries of destination and transit.

Through the project, the ODIHR assisted State and civil society stakeholders in Central Asia in developing and implementing national capacitybuilding initiatives, adequate policies, procedures and practices. Here, nine small projects implemented in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan played a particularly important role in amplifying the effects of the project. These small projects enabled a range of initiatives benefiting hundreds of individuals, for example the development of awareness-raising tools and activities for youth, journalists and migrant communities, and the creation of concrete guidance materials for various professionals (such as law enforcement and specialists working with minors), enabling better access to services for those in need of assistance.

ODIHR is now finalizing a Resource Pack for civil society organizations and national authorities in Central Asia. The pack will be published in English and Russian on the OSCE website and will contain information about good practices and the results of the nine small projects and other project activities.

Japan: Active participation in OSCE projects and missions

Since 1992, Japan has consistently been a very committed Partner for Co-operation and has contributed to various OSCE projects and activities. Japan's contribution to the OSCE is based on two main pillars, active participation in OSCE meetings and financial support for projects, initially in particular for post-war reconstruction in former Yugoslavia, later increasingly related to Central Asia and Afghanistan, and recently also to Ukraine. In that context, Japan has made significant contributions to both the Partnership Fund and to extrabudgetary projects.

In addition to making financial contributions, Japan has also participated in a wide range of OSCE activities by providing its experts and officials to field operations and election monitoring missions. Since 1999, Japan has regularly seconded experts to OSCE field operations; one is currently serving in the OSCE Mission to Kosovo



Street action for youth volunteerism, Mr. Yusuke Hara with officials from the Malishevë/Mališevo Municipal Department of Culture, Youth and Sports, and members of local youth groups, August 2015. (OSCE)

and one has also been serving in the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine since August 2015.

[Interview with Mr. Yusuke Hara, Human Dimension Officer since August 2014, about his experience as a Japanese national seconded to the OSCE Regional Office in Prizren, Kosovo.](#)

What is your professional background?

My academic and professional background is in international law with a Masters specialization in international criminal law, international human rights law and international humanitarian law. I am particularly interested in the issue of transitional justice as a bridge between peacebuilding, human rights and the rule of law. Prior to joining the OSCE, I had acquired work experience in human rights non-governmental organizations and international criminal tribunals.

What do you do at the field mission?

I began my assignment as Human Dimension Officer at the OSCE Mission in Kosovo in August 2014. My main responsibilities are working on the development of democratic, transparent and accountable local institutions in line with international human rights standards and the principles of good governance, dealing with various issues ranging from oversight of the executive branch to the participation of women

and youth in decision-making processes. Despite the involvement of international community for more than 15 years, it is still challenging to implement a number of legislative and related strategies at the local level due to a combination of poor drafting, the insufficient human and financial resources of the local administration and weak political will.

Why did you want to work with the OSCE and in particular for an OSCE field operation?

What I find most attractive about the OSCE is that the organization values field operations as a driving force in engaging in the different dimensions of security – politico-military, economic and environmental and human. In the context of Kosovo, the mission, as the third pillar of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), has the strongest field presence among other international organizations and works closely with central and local authorities and institutions and civil society. Such a field operation allows me to directly respond to people and their needs through co-ordination and facilitation.

You are not the first Japanese national to have been seconded to the OSCE. Why do you think such co-operation is important for you and your country?

Japan has been developing a long-standing relationship with the OSCE as a Partner for Co-operation since 1992. Given the changing and challenging security environment surrounding Japan and the growing need to tackle globalized security threats such as terrorism and human trafficking, I believe it is ever more important to strengthen dialogue and co-operation between Asia and Europe to exchange wisdom and lessons learned. At the same time, as Japan is committed to peacebuilding in the region and beyond, such co-operation certainly provides an opportunity to develop a career as a “peacebuilder”.

What has your experience in the field been like?

During a year of field experience, unlike during previous work at the headquarters of international organizations, I have become aware of the importance of developing good relationships with local colleagues. As I cannot speak any of the local languages, I have committed to consulting and co-ordinating fully with my colleagues in order to speak and act with a single and coherent

voice on behalf of the Mission. I have also learned to be patient and persistent since the results of many of our interventions are not apparent until some time has passed. Overall, I believe that working in field operations provides an opportunity to see something that I previously took for granted in different ways.

Republic of Korea: Promoting peace and security in Northeast Asia with reference to aspects of the OSCE toolbox

The Republic of Korea has made substantial contributions to the Partnership Fund as well as to OSCE extrabudgetary projects. The country's contributions focus mainly on Afghanistan and Central Asia. Key projects that benefited from the country's support were those on mine action and border patrolling in Tajikistan, and ODIHR's electoral support to Afghanistan.

Over the last years, the Republic of Korea has seconded experts to the OSCE and also provided seconded experts for several ODIHR election observation missions, notably in the Western Balkans and in Central Asia.

Inaugural Address 25 February 2013

President of the Republic of Korea, Park Geun-hye

“The ‘era of happiness for the people’ that I dream of is one that ushers in an era of happiness on the Korean Peninsula and indeed throughout the global village. We will build even more solid ties of trust with the United States, China, Japan, Russia and other countries of Asia and Oceania by reducing tension and conflict to build peace and co-operation in Asia.”



OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier addresses the participants in the 2015 OSCE Asian Conference in Seoul, Republic of Korea. (OSCE)



Republic of Korea Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon (2004-2006) chairing a meeting of the Asian Partners to enhance mutual understanding of security challenges affecting Europe and Asia. Ljubljana Ministerial Council meeting 2005. (OSCE)

Security Community 1/2015¹

Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, Shin Dong-ik

“The security situation, at first sight, may not look promising. However, much can be achieved in the Asian region if we succeed in establishing a multilateral security mechanism. A stable Northeast Asia would greatly enhance global security and prosperity. The OSCE has given us some insight as to how we could establish such a security mechanism, using the three C’s concept of security: common, comprehensive and co-operative.”

Moreover, the Republic of Korea is actively promoting opportunities to share experience and lessons learned between the OSCE and the Asian Partners. At the

Ljubljana Ministerial Council meeting in 2005, the then Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon chaired a meeting of the Asian Partners to enhance mutual understanding of security challenges affecting both Europe and Asia. On behalf of the Asian Partners, the Republic of Korea recommended specific ways and means of strengthening consultation and co-operation between the OSCE and the Asian Partners.

As a nation still divided, the Republic of Korea has sought to learn from the rich experiences gained by the CSCE/OSCE through the Helsinki Process over the past decades. The Republic of Korea has consistently promoted the usefulness of the OSCE experience as a potential inspiration for building multilateral and comprehensive security co-operation in Northeast Asia, particularly with regard to the OSCE’s expertise in confidence- and security-building measures. Several workshops and conferences co-hosted by the OSCE and the Republic of Korea have been dedicated to this topic. In 2013, President Park Geun-hye proposed the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) as a framework for promoting discussion on multilateral security co-operation. On the margins of the 2015 OSCE Asian Conference in Seoul, the Republic of Korea hosted a side event specifically dedicated to NAPCI, at which the OSCE and Asian Partners shared relevant experience and expressed interest in a continued dialogue on the issue.

¹ <http://www.osce.org/magazine/171281>.



Foreign Minister of Thailand Kasit Piromya (2008-2011) speaks at the OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna, 24 June 2010. (OSCE)



Visit to the Royal Project in Chiang Mai province within the workshop on “Combating Illicit Crop Cultivation and Enhancing Border Security and Management: Thailand as a Case Study”, January 2010. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand)

Thailand: Sharing border security experiences

Thailand continuously makes valuable contributions to the dialogue and co-operation in the framework of the OSCE Asian Partnership, making active use of all available means including the Partnership Fund in particular. In doing so, it has repeatedly contributed to current debates within the OSCE as demonstrated in 2010 and 2012, when Thailand organized two workshops on combating drug cultivation and trafficking.

At the 2010 workshop entitled “Combating illicit crop cultivation and enhancing border security and management” hosted by Thailand, the Partnership Fund was used for the first time to sponsor an event outside the OSCE area. For Thailand as a new Partner to the OSCE, the workshop provided an effective opportunity to share best practices from its own experience in addressing these challenges. Experts from the Partner countries and the participating States exchanged lessons learned and established valuable contacts. This testified to the validity of the cross-dimensional and co-operative approach promoted by the OSCE in tackling the increasing transnational threats affecting both the OSCE and its Partners. The participation of Afghan experts, alongside officials from Central Asia and other participating States, also provided a tangible follow-up to the 2007 Ministerial Council decision on OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan.

Similarly, a workshop on “Promoting security through a comprehensive approach to development in border areas”, held back-to-back with the 2012 OSCE-Thailand Conference in Chiang Mai, allowed for a continuation of the debate from 2010 by providing an opportunity to share Thai experiences of border control and the eradication of poppy production with Afghan experts.

**OSCE Permanent Council,
Vienna, 24 June 2010**

**2008-2011 Foreign Minister of
Thailand, Kasit Piromya**

“A touch of creativity can go a long way, as can be seen with Thailand’s co-operation with Afghanistan and the OSCE on the issue of drug trafficking. In Afghanistan and Aceh, Thailand is known for successfully bringing sustainable alternative livelihood development by eliminating narcotics crop cultivation and poverty alleviation through sustainable means and livelihood.”

V. Afghanistan: engagement and strategic co-operation

The OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan began with an acknowledgement that security in the OSCE region is inseparable from developments in its neighbouring countries. In 2003, Afghanistan became an OSCE Partner for Co-operation and in December 2007, at the Ministerial Council meeting in Madrid, the OSCE participating States adopted the Decision on OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan. With this landmark document, the Organization highlighted its strong commitment to intensifying its support to Afghanistan.

This chapter describes the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan, providing an overview of the most important projects and giving details about the Organization's strengths and constraints in relation to its assistance to Afghanistan. It also highlights the need for continued close co-operation.

The OSCE began by focusing its activities on strengthening the security and management of borders between the Central Asian States and Afghanistan,

subsequently expanding into projects related to combating terrorism and trafficking in small arms, light weapons, illicit drugs and human beings. In 2011, the OSCE participating States adopted Ministerial Council Decision 04/11 in Vilnius reinforcing their commitment to Afghanistan. In addition to the politico-military dimension, projects have since taken into account the economic and environmental as well as human dimension aspects of security, including education, empowerment of women and continued assistance to election processes. Since Afghanistan is not a participating State of the OSCE, the projects are implemented almost exclusively outside Afghanistan. The majority of the projects are funded through extrabudgetary contributions. The OSCE's activities related to Afghanistan are mainly implemented by the OSCE's field operations in Central Asia in close co-ordination and co-operation with units in the OSCE Secretariat, notably the Transnational Threats Department.

Securing borders: OSCE border management activities

Border Management Staff College

Established in 2009, the Border Management Staff College (BMSC) in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, offers trainings and seminars for border and customs officers. A total of 650 officials from Afghanistan have been trained at the College to date. One of the greatest areas of added value of the college is its efforts to promote closer co-operation and exchange of experience from across the OSCE region. The college uses the OSCE network to collect and disseminate best practices and lessons learned.

BMSC core courses follow a comprehensive approach allowing BMSC students to gain a thorough understanding of various border-related issues such as border security models, national strategies, modern technologies, crossborder conflicts, anti-corruption measures and protection of human rights



Participant from Armenia Arshak Davtyan presents the results of a group exercise held in the framework of the Staff Course leadership and management session in Dushanbe, 12 October 2012. (OSCE BMSC/Illona Kazaryan)

in preventing and combating transnational threats and crime. The BMSC also hosts conferences and round table discussions where high-level decision makers, practitioners and representatives of academic institutions exchange views on current security issues.

Patrol Programming and Leadership Project

The OSCE Office in Tajikistan carries out the Patrol Programming and Leadership Project to help strengthen border security primarily along the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Central to this project are five-week courses on patrol leadership and specialized training in winter patrolling, medical skills, technical management and practical analysis. To date, around 250 border guards from Afghanistan have received specialized training in map reading, navigation, surveillance techniques, tactical patrolling, reporting, human rights and gender awareness.

To complement the patrolling project, the Office carries out workshops in Dari on forged document identification, international best practices in cross-border co-operation, leadership management and counter-narcotics for Afghan officers in co-operation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan. The Office also hosts two liaison officers from the Afghan Border Police to support coordination of these activities.

Training of trainers for Afghan law enforcement officers on combating illicit drugs, held in Domodedovo, Russian Federation

When addressing border security and management, activities related to combating illicit drugs play an important role. The OSCE Secretariat's Transnational Threats Department provides advanced "training of trainers" to a select group of Afghan law enforcement officers from operational departments of the Counter-Narcotics Police and Border Police. The main purpose is to enhance participants' practical competencies and training skills in combating the production and trafficking of illicit drugs. The course schedule includes methods and tools for strengthening the participants' capacity to deliver trainings in Afghanistan on search operations in residential buildings, airports and vehicles. Trainings also focus on tactical search techniques, the effective use of sniffer dogs and special equipment, as well as on the documentation of search results and their processing

during further stages of the investigations. The OSCE offers these courses at the All-Russian Advanced Training Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation in Domodedovo, Moscow region.

Addressing economic and environmental challenges

Customs project in Kyrgyzstan

Corruption in customs services and low levels of revenue collection remain a serious concern for Afghanistan. The OSCE Centre in Bishkek has therefore developed specialized trainings on advanced topics for customs officers from Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan. The trainings address the shortage of qualified personnel at the management and operational levels and include courses on a variety of specialized topics identified as priorities by Afghanistan's Customs Department for up to 150 customs officers and 10 instructors from the Afghan National Customs Academy. One of the major achievements of the courses has been the participation of seven female Afghan officers. The Centre is determined to encourage more female officers to take advantage of its tailor-made courses. Of equal importance is also the "training of trainers" component of the courses, which enhances the capacity of the participants to conduct courses in Afghanistan.

Human dimension and democratization efforts

Assistance with election processes

As mentioned above, the OSCE does not usually operate inside Afghanistan. However, based on requests from the national electoral commission and as agreed by consensus through relevant OSCE Permanent Council decisions, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has been involved in election support in Afghanistan since 2004. The most recent deployment was in 2014. On 5 April and 14 June 2014, Afghanistan held presidential and provincial council elections. Following an invitation by the Independent Election Commission (IEC) of Afghanistan to support the 2014 election process, the Permanent Council tasked the ODIHR with deploying

List of OSCE Academy Policy Briefs that focused on Afghanistan or were relevant to Afghanistan-Central Asia relations:

Policy Brief No. 25

TAPI AND CASA-1000: WIN-WIN TRADE BETWEEN CENTRAL ASIA AND SOUTH ASIA

By Sayed Masood Sadat

Policy Brief No. 22

AFGHANISTAN'S GROWING ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC DIVIDES: TIME TO ADDRESS THEM

By Arwin Rahi

Policy Brief No. 12

AFGHANISTAN'S TRANSITION TOWARDS 2014: IMPLICATIONS FOR CENTRAL ASIA

By Said Reza Kazemi

Policy Brief No. 11

IS THERE A VIABLE FUTURE FOR US POLICY IN CENTRAL ASIA?

By Dr. Roger Kangas

Policy Brief No. 9

AFGHANISTAN: STATE, BOUNDARIES, AND THE THREATS OF PERPETUAL CONFLICT

By Elham Gharji

Policy Brief No. 7

INSTABILITY IN TAJIKISTAN? THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF UZBEKISTAN AND THE AFGHANISTAN FACTOR

By Christian Bleuer

Policy Brief No. 5

TRANSIT AGREEMENTS, SECURITY COOPERATION AND AFGHANISTAN STABILIZATION

By Gregory Gleason



ODIHR election observation in Kabul. Unloading of ballots, International Security Assistance Force, Spring 2015.

(ODIHR/Alexander Shlyk)

an Election Support Team to Afghanistan. This was the fifth such team to be deployed to Afghanistan since 2004, demonstrating the ongoing interest of the Afghan authorities in ODIHR assistance. ODIHR released the final Election Support Team report in December 2014.² The report provides a number of recommendations for the Afghan and international electoral stakeholders and highlights key areas for the electoral reform, based on international standards and other obligations on the part of Afghanistan.

Education, research and capacity development

OSCE Academy in Bishkek

Founded in 2002, the OSCE Academy in Bishkek is a renowned educational and research institution in Central Asia which runs two MA programmes, in politics and security and in economic governance and development. Students come from across Central Asia but also from other countries, including Afghanistan since 2006. As of June 2015, a total of 26 students from Afghanistan graduated from the academy's MA programmes, 17 men and 9 women. Currently, three students from Afghanistan are enrolled on the politics and security course.

² <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/afghanistan/129761>.

In addition to running MA programmes, the OSCE Academy also invites young professionals from Afghanistan to its professional training courses, in particular the Certificate Programme on Conflict Resolution and Conflict-Sensitive Development. Between 2012 and 2015, 44 participants from Afghanistan have participated in this training. An interesting statistic is that while in 2012 there were 36 applications for 13 places, in 2015, 176 applications were received for 11 places, indicating a dramatic increase in the demand for this training.

Last but not least, the academy has devoted considerable attention to issues related to Afghanistan in its series of policy briefs, at its annual regional conference and at public events.

Looking ahead: what role for the OSCE?

Since Afghanistan's partnership began in 2003, the country has undergone important transitions. The year 2014 was a year of significant milestones for Afghanistan ending with the election of a new president, the establishment of a unity government and the formal end of mission for the International Security Assistance Force. Afghanistan is currently at the start of its "Transformation Decade" spanning the period from 2015 to 2024. It is widely acknowledged that uncertainty about the future of the country will continue to present particular challenges for international donor support, the co-operation of international and regional organizations with Afghanistan, and the capability of the country to withstand current security threats. What is crucial, however, is that the new Afghan leadership has been demonstrating willingness and commitment to continue the co-operation with regional and international organizations.

As the security situation in Afghanistan will continue to affect the stability of Central Asia and the OSCE area at large, the Organization will continue to rely on its field presences in the five Central Asian participating States to provide targeted assistance in key areas and to promote regional security, stability and economic development. In so doing, the Organization will work with other international actors such the European Union and the United Nations, as well as with the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation



A MA programme class at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, April 2012. (OSCE)

(SCO). The OSCE will further contribute to the implementation of the Heart of Asia Istanbul process, notably with regard to confidence-building measures in the areas of counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics and education. Networking and co-operation efforts between these organizations are important to further consolidate the joint commitment and support of the international community to Afghanistan.

VI. The OSCE and the Asian Partners - working towards integrating a gender perspective into comprehensive security

The OSCE recognizes gender equality as essential to fostering peace, sustaining democracy and driving economic development. The OSCE's added value in promoting gender equality, as outlined in the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, stems from its potential to integrate a gender perspective into all three OSCE security dimensions. Achieving optimal outcomes requires co-operative action with special attention to how comprehensive security issues affect women and men differently.

Many OSCE participating States and Asian Partner countries have made progress towards integrating a gender perspective into their economic, social and security-related policies in recent years, but there are still persistent gaps. The following sections highlight some efforts that the OSCE and the Asian Partners have made to date aimed at bringing a gender perspective into security issues and include some suggestions for possible areas for future co-operation.

Encouraging women's participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction

A gendered approach to peace and security is essential, as ensuring women's participation in peacebuilding is not only a matter of women's and girls' rights, but also a matter of operational effectiveness. In order to satisfy the security needs of both men and women, a gender analysis must be applied throughout the institutions that provide security. Thus, gender mainstreaming in the politico-military dimension means taking into account how women and men can contribute to and are affected by areas such as policing, arms control, conflict prevention and dialogue and mediation facilitation. This encompasses all stages of conflict from prevention to reconstruction.

Involving women in peacebuilding

The participation of women is critical to the success of any peacebuilding process as lasting peace can never be achieved if half of the population is excluded or faces discrimination. Women peacebuilders have different perspectives and priorities from men and their role in re-establishing the social fabric in the aftermath of conflict is vital.

Research shows that involving women in peacebuilding increases the probability that violence will end by 24%. Institutionalizing gender equality by ensuring female participation in the implementation of a peace plan and establishing gender electoral quotas can significantly increase the likelihood of durable peace.³

Women's engagement as civil leaders and public officials both signals and heralds more inclusive forms of politics and governance. Institutions and families with more gender equality can shift the composition of



Minister of Women's Affairs of Afghanistan Dilbar Nazari updates the OSCE Permanent Council on progress in the area of women's empowerment in Afghanistan. Vienna, May 2015. (OSCE)

³ Stone, Laurel. 2014. "Can women make the world more peaceful?", article in The Guardian.

public and private spending related to health, education and children, enhancing societal conditions for lasting peace.⁴ And while sexual violence and the physical security of women are significant problems during peacetime, the issues are compounded in conflict and post-conflict scenarios and require particular attention in the context of reconstruction efforts.

Even so, women are conspicuously underrepresented at the peacetable, where crucial decisions about post-conflict recovery and governance are made. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women reports that fewer than 10% of negotiators, signatories and chief mediators in peace processes are women.⁵ Barriers to fully integrating women into post-conflict reconciliation and reintegration include a lack of political will, deeply entrenched attitudes opposing the inclusion of women, including cultural and existing power balances and interests, and a lack of attention to gender inequalities in the judicial and economic recovery pillar of peacebuilding.

The OSCE Secretariat's Gender Section addresses this issue by promoting women's leadership in peacebuilding and has organized a number of conferences in co-operation with the Asian Partners, especially Afghanistan, on the topic of women, peace and security. In May 2015, the Gender Section and the Embassy of Afghanistan in Vienna organized a visit to the OSCE by the new Afghan Minister for Women's Affairs, H.E. Ms. Dilbar Nazari. She was accompanied by a delegation of representatives from other government and civil society institutions. The goal of the visit was to raise awareness of the critical contribution that women's empowerment makes towards long-term stability, security and reconciliation in Afghanistan. Additionally, it sought to build consensus among Afghan, OSCE and other international stakeholders that women's empowerment is mutually reinforcing and inseparable from the post-conflict rehabilitation and national reconciliation processes.

Other OSCE Asian Partners have also made efforts to advance dialogue on achieving gender equality in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict scenarios. The 2013 OSCE - Australia Conference was dedicated to the issue of improving the security of women and girls.

Participants in three round tables discussed combating violence against women and human trafficking, as well as increasing women's economic participation. At the 2014 OSCE - Japan Conference, a session was held on efforts to encourage women to play a driving role in creating a fairer world. Participants shared the view that empowering women can be a catalyst for positive change and overall efforts aimed at building a humane and inclusive society.

These high-level conferences have allowed participating States, the Asian Partners, national experts, and civil society representatives to engage in discussions on a gendered approach to peace and security concerns. In the future, more women, especially local representatives, should be included in discussions about peace and reconciliation processes, as well as form a higher proportion of peacekeepers on the ground. In order to achieve this, the OSCE and its Asian Partners should continue to strengthen their co-operation on a gender-conscious approach to peacebuilding.

Applying a gender perspective to border management

Given the transnational nature of border management, an important area for co-operation between the OSCE and its Asian Partners is the integration of a gender perspective into that area. Gender-specific vulnerabilities and attributes come into play for women and men crossing borders, but achieving a gender balance in border security management positions to address these issues is a significant challenge for many OSCE participating States and Asian Partner countries. While statistics are difficult to come by, according to one recent count, only 45 women serve in leadership positions in customs administration worldwide.⁶

Including women in law enforcement agencies, such as border institutions, is a human rights requirement and helps border institutions become more legitimate and representative of the population they serve. It can also improve operational efficiency by increasing community outreach, detection rates, and the protection of vulnerable men and women crossing borders. The inclusion of more women in border management can help reduce tension and resolve conflict in border areas. Studies show that in many cases, women are more effective at dealing with disorder, including violent disorder, than

⁴ Gonzales, M. C. et al. 2015. "Fair Play: More Equal Laws Boost Female Labour Force Participation". International Monetary Fund.

⁵ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. 2012. Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence.

⁶ Hall, Allan, and Oliver, Julia. 2013. "Helping women cross borders and break barriers in customs administration: A WCO Conference", article on World Bank Group blog "The trade post"

men. The detection and prevention of human trafficking also improves when female border guards are employed as they can be better at identifying both male and female victims and can reach out to victims, especially females, in a different way from their male counterparts. Women have also been identified as drug traffickers or terrorists, and the presence of female border personnel ensures a higher degree of security, particularly in regions where women are veiled and there would be restrictions for men in carrying out physical searches.⁷

In spite of this, border police services remain reluctant to include women in their ranks, and not enough women apply for employment in the field. Once hired, women still face many obstacles, and they often lack the necessary role models or mentors to help them move up the ranks. This situation hinders efforts to recruit and retain more women, and is, in part, why numbers remain stagnant or decline.

The OSCE Border Management Staff College (BMSC) in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, addresses these problems by promoting the participation of women in its border security training and by including gender mainstreaming as part of its core curriculum (see also chapter V of this booklet). The first Afghan women joined the BMSC in 2013 and their participation has increased continuously over the past three years, with 11 Afghan women having attended so far.

In 2013, the BMSC developed a short course for female leaders of border security and management agencies to get together to learn from each other and exchange gender-specific experiences. Lecturers came from a range of OSCE participating States and Asian partner countries, including Japan.

In further recognition of the need to have women-only training courses, the BMSC in May 2014 introduced an all-women staff course, covering topics ranging from management models to information-sharing, migration, human trafficking and smuggling, counter-terrorism, anti-corruption measures, conflict management, and leadership. This course was regarded as so successful that the BMSC was able to offer two further staff courses exclusively for women. The OSCE Transnational Threats Department/Border Security and Management Unit additionally ran five day courses in Romania and Mongolia on request.

⁷ Mackay, Angela. 2008 "Border Management and Gender". DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, UN-INSTRAW.

Border management is a transnational issue where there is an urgent need for greater women's involvement and better integration of both women's and men's perspectives. Combining the efforts of OSCE institutions with the diverse experiences of Asian Partner countries would provide numerous opportunities to promote equal access for women and men to relevant capacitybuilding and to increase overall knowledge of how to apply a gender perspective in border management practices.

Violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism

Violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT) is a global problem calling for collaborative and gender-responsive solutions on the part of the OSCE in co-operation with its Asian Partners. Women and men play different roles in preventing and combating terrorism and the equal involvement of both women and men as policy shapers, educators, community members, and activists is essential to addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism. However, the gender-specific contributions women can offer to combat VERLT are often overlooked. Women can provide crucial feedback on the current counter-terrorism efforts of the international community and can point out when preventive policies and practices are having counter-productive impacts on their communities. Women are effective in implementing initiatives and shaping narratives to counter extremist propaganda, and they may carry special weight with female audiences. Moreover, because of their role in the family, women can be in a unique position to transmit ideologies of tolerance to the next generation.

While women can play a key role in counter-terrorism efforts, terrorist organizations are increasingly manipulating gender dynamics by using sexual violence and mass rape against women as a tactic. At the same time such organizations are developing multi-layered and highly effective strategies to recruit female followers and sympathisers, whose numbers, whilst still limited, are on the increase.⁸ Thus more attention must be paid to the specific factors that attract women to support terrorist groups. In order to gain a better understanding of these factors, it is necessary to facilitate the involvement of women's organizations in identifying

⁸ Strasser, Fred. 2015. "Women and violent extremism: a growing threat demands concerted action", article on United States Institute of Peace website.



Participants gather outside the GCTE-OSCE International Workshop on women's empowerment and countering VERLT. Istanbul, Turkey, May 2014. (OSCE)

and addressing specific political, social, economic, cultural, or educational concerns that may lead to violent extremism and terrorist radicalization. The lack of such involvement constitutes a practical obstacle to women's engagement against VERLT and undermines women's contributions to the prevention of terrorism.⁹

With respect to these efforts, Australia co-funded an OSCE guidebook on community policing and countering VERLT. The guidebook addresses the need for women in law enforcement, and also for police to engage effectively with women in their communities. Together with the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), the OSCE organized two international workshops on women and countering VERLT in Istanbul in May 2014 and in Vienna in October 2014. Their aim was to identify good policy practices for gender-sensitive efforts aimed at countering violent extremism. The workshops resulted in a draft good practice document on women and countering violent extremism, which is expected to be adopted by the GCTF in September 2015.

VERLT is a serious challenge for OSCE participating States and their Asian Partners that demands concerted action. Increased co-operation to understand and take action on the gendered ramifications of current extremist and terrorist activities has an important role to play in tackling the long-term challenge of preventing the radicalization of young women and men.

9 OSCE Secretariat. 2013. "Final report on women and terrorist radicalization", available at: <http://www.osce.org/secretariat/99919?download=true>.

Promoting equal opportunities for women in the economic sphere

In the OSCE policy framework, participating States have emphasized the importance of equal access for women and men to economic opportunities as a critical factor in promoting economic recovery, sustainable growth, and societal welfare, which in turn contributes to stability and comprehensive security. Providing equality of opportunity and outcome requires eliminating discrimination against women in employment and identifying and addressing the potential barriers that women face to achieving their economic goals and social protection.

Economic empowerment of women is one of the most important contributing factors to achieving gender equality, increased economic security, and prosperity for all. The lack of opportunity for women to participate fully in the economic sphere carries a high cost – according to research findings, restricted job opportunities for women cost Asia and the Pacific region between \$42 and \$46 billion per year in GDP growth.¹⁰ Moreover, increased entrepreneurship by women offers tangible benefits for communities as businesswomen reinvest profits in social goods. Women's economic

10 United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. 2007. Economic and Social Survey of East Asia and the Pacific. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok.

empowerment is strongly associated with reduced poverty levels and more inclusive, democratic societies. Investing in women thus has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency, and sustained economic growth.

In spite of these advantages, a number of barriers remain to women's full participation in the economic sphere. Social norms and traditional values continue to hold women back. In many countries, a sizable proportion of the population still believes that women are less suited for business roles than men. Additionally, structural barriers such as unequal access to credit, technology, and education, as well as a lack of networking opportunities and relevant social policies for women in economic life, pose significant problems.

The OSCE has co-operated with Asian Partners to address these issues. In 2012, for example, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities co-operated with the United Nations Development Programme in Afghanistan, the Turkish Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization, and the World Fair Trade Organization to organize a one week capacity-building programme to empower women entrepreneurs and business managers in Istanbul. The programme, which received financial support from Japan among other countries, included three days of training and two days of enterprise and factory visits, training 24 women from Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan in strengthening their business management skills, improving their professional networks, and broadening their market opportunities.

Building on this experience, further opportunities exist for the OSCE and the Asian Partners to join hands in supporting resource centres offering vocational training for entrepreneurial women and skill-building courses in business development for vulnerable women. Women's business associations can also be further strengthened by providing better interregional networking and more opportunities for women entrepreneurs to meet and learn from others in their field of business.

Gender and environmental security

The importance of the linkages between environmental security and gender roles has been supported by a wide range of research and impact assessments. Women play decisive roles in managing and preserving biodiversity, water, land, and other natural resources, especially



Swiss Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter stresses the importance of disaster risk reduction for safeguarding sustainable development at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR), Sendai, Japan, 14-18 March 2015. (UNWCDRR)

at the local level. While environmental degradation has severe consequences for all human beings, it particularly affects the most vulnerable, mainly women and children who constitute the majority of the world's poor. This is especially dramatic in conflict and post-conflict contexts where women usually face the burden of securing themselves and their families. Both floods and droughts threaten vulnerable populations and sustainable development, underscoring the need for water management and disaster relief efforts that take into account the needs, contributions, and knowledge of both women and men. In the coming years, climate change is likely to exacerbate the situation, making closer co-operation between the OSCE and the Asian Partners on environmental security more important than ever.

The implications of climate change and environmental security represent different challenges for men and women. As a threat multiplier, climate change contributes to natural disasters such as floods and droughts, creates resource scarcity, and in turn water and food insecurity and forced displacement. In addition to challenges that all victims of disasters face, women and girls are disproportionately affected by increased risks connected with natural disasters. Gender-based violence, sexual assaults, forced prostitution, and unwanted pregnancies become much more widespread during and in the aftermath of climate changerelated disasters. For fear of sexual violence, women often avoid using shelters and become less mobile, further undermining their safety. Moreover, emergency situations often prompt human traffickers and smugglers to target vulnerable women.

While women face particular vulnerabilities pertaining to environmental security, they also offer unique skillsets and perspectives that are invaluable in disaster relief efforts. As the primary providers of food, water and energy for their households, women often have particular knowledge of community practices and social norms that can be instrumental in designing strategies and programmes to help communities facing disasters.

To better handle crises, countries throughout Asia are embracing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 to eliminate or mitigate the impact of natural disasters. The Framework contains a strong gender-conscious component. The OSCE Secretariat's Gender Section is also committed to strengthening capacities for disaster risk reduction. Following the Basel Ministerial Council Decision No. 6/14 on enhancing disaster risk reduction, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and the OSCE field operations were tasked to support participating States in increasing gender/age/disability-sensitive disaster risk reduction. Following the May 2014 floods in Serbia, the OSCE Mission to Serbia supported the development of a research publication on the impact of the flooding. The aim was to identify and document gender-specific differences regarding flood risk, inform the public, and formulate a set of recommendations to responsible authorities to improve gender-sensitive planning in emergency management. In May 2015, these findings were discussed during a round table in Belgrade on mainstreaming gender considerations in disaster risk reduction planning.

Such experiences lend themselves to further co-operative efforts between the OSCE and the Asian Partners. As extreme weather events increase in severity and frequency, gender-sensitive engagement in the area of environmental security is a necessity. Therefore, particular attention should be paid to possible co-operation with the Asian partners on strengthening an inclusive response to natural disaster using existing platforms where OSCE participating States and the Asian Partners for Co-operation are already working together.

Conclusion and future outlook

The nature of today's security issues calls for a more co-operative approach than ever. As illustrated above, the OSCE Secretariat's Gender Section has been involved with Asian Partners, particularly Afghanistan, with

respect to issues critical to gender mainstreaming such as peacebuilding and reconstruction, border security, women's entrepreneurship and disaster risk reduction. Furthermore, high-level conferences have created a space for informed discussion between the Organization and the Asian Partners on the role of gender equality in achieving comprehensive security. These efforts have proven productive and provide positive examples for future engagement.

However, more collaborative efforts could be instigated across all three dimensions, particularly in the fields of VERLT, disaster risk reduction, water management and migration. Here, two potential areas for future co-operation could be mentioned, given, for example, that women represent an essential part of water governance solutions, which has a strong impact on environmental security. As there is still a lack of transboundary agreements and climate change amplifies environmental tensions, it is necessary to take into consideration the added value of a gender perspective to solve the unequal distribution of water. Building on ongoing OSCE activities related to gender mainstreaming and conflict resolution in the water governance sector in Central Asia and Afghanistan, the Organization would welcome the contribution and participation of more Asian Partners in future gender-related environmental projects.

In addition, labour migration represents both an opportunity and a challenge for the Asian Partners. Like other pressing global issues, migration calls for collaborative solutions. Taking guidance from the existing co-operation between the OSCE and its Mediterranean Partners, co-operation combining the expertise of the OSCE and the Asian Partners could be envisaged for the process of gender mainstreaming labour migration policy and offering much-needed practical gender-responsive solutions in the areas of migrant security and economic inclusion.

To conclude, extremism, environmental disasters, and mass human migration will remain global challenges for the foreseeable future. To confront these challenges effectively for the benefit of all citizens, the OSCE and the Asian Partners must work on incorporating both male and female perspectives and needs into all policies, programmes, and activities. Doing so is the best means of accomplishing humane, inclusive, and secure societies for all.

VII. Prospects for increased co-operation with regional organizations in Asia

Successfully addressing today's increasingly complex security challenges will depend to a large extent on the international community's ability to develop coordinated responses. In line with their mandates and comparative advantages, international and regional organizations will need to find ways to share the burden of their efforts by pooling resources and creating new synergies.

The OSCE has established relations with a number of regional security frameworks in Asia, among them the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), more specifically with the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and more recently with the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS). Furthermore, the OSCE is looking into the prospects of establishing closer relations with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA). The OSCE has also been in contact with the Republic of Korea with regard to its Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI, see also chapter IV of this booklet) and may develop contacts with the East Asia Summit (EAS).

The above list of organizations is not exhaustive. Rather, it comprises organizations and mechanisms which are thematically centred on security issues and with which there is, at least to some extent, an overlapping membership, whether as OSCE participating States or as Asian Partners for Co-operation.

With a number of these, close links have been established.

Several Asian Partners have on various occasions called for closer co-operation between the OSCE, **ASEAN** and the **ARF**. Since its ASEAN Chairmanship (2008-2012), Thailand in particular has strongly advocated for deepening relations, including on issues such as confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), counter-terrorism, maritime security, non-proliferation and disarmament. In December 2009, the OSCE and ASEAN Secretaries General met in Vienna and discussed opportunities and possible areas for future co-operation. In February 2010, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand provided an

extensive briefing to the OSCE Asian Contact Group on ARF objectives and activities and pointed to possible areas of co-operation with the OSCE.

While ASEAN is a political and economic organization of ten South-East Asian countries, the ARF is a far broader security framework with membership extending beyond the Asia-Pacific region. The objectives of the ARF are to foster constructive dialogue on political and security issues and to make significant contributions towards confidence-building and preventive diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region. The similarities between the OSCE and ARF are evident. Both are regional security organizations and inclusive forums for dialogue. Both have consensus-based decision-making processes, promote confidence-building and deal with many similar threats and challenges.



ARF

4 OSCE Partners are members:

Australia, Japan, Thailand and Republic of Korea

4 OSCE participating States are members:

Canada, Mongolia, Russian Federation and United States of America

ARF is the only Asian security framework of which the European Union is a member

The OSCE and the ARF have already co-operated loosely on CSBMs, as was highlighted by an ARF High-Level Workshop on CSBMs and Preventive Diplomacy held in Berlin, Germany, in November 2011. Based on the joint work plan of Switzerland and Serbia for 2014 and 2015, which emphasizes that "interaction with the Partners should become more concrete and project-orientated", the OSCE has been actively looking into the possibilities for continuing this exchange. Thailand's lasting efforts to actively facilitate further co-operation are important in this regard.

Both ARF and OSCE documents have consistently highlighted transnational threats as major challenges over the past decade. They include counter-terrorism, transnational crime, trafficking in drugs and human beings, as well as cyber security, among others. On almost all of these topics, the OSCE has formulated policy approaches and established operational capacities, thereby accumulating substantial practical experience that could be shared with the ARF and its member States.

There would also appear to be a sufficiently strong basis for initiating co-operation between the OSCE and the East Asian Summit. Its membership includes four OSCE Asian Partners (Australia, Japan, Thailand and the Republic of Korea) but also two OSCE participating States (Russian Federation and United States of America). Several issues discussed at EAS meetings have also been prioritized on the OSCE agenda, among them energy security, climate change, tackling transnational threats, and conflict management.



TCS

**Members, among them
two OSCE Partners:**

*People's Republic of China, Japan
and the Republic of Korea*

The **TCS** was established in 2011 as an “international organization with a vision of promoting peace and common prosperity”. In 2014 and 2015, the TCS held track II workshops on CSBMs in Tokyo and Seoul which in both cases were organised back to back with the OSCE Asian Conferences. The workshops focused mainly on an inter-institutional exchange of experiences between the TCS, OSCE, ARF and the SCO in the area of confidence-building measures. There was also a thematic focus on transnational threats and on maritime and airspace disputes in the region. The TCS has since expressed an interest in further co-operation with the OSCE.

Over the past few years, contacts between the OSCE and **CICA**, a forum for security and co-operation in Asia, have been developed and expanded. CICA has been invited to participate in OSCE Ministerial Council meetings and the annual conferences with the Asian Partners for Co-operation, in addition to a number of

specialized OSCE workshops and conferences. The CICA catalogue from 2004 lists activities in five broad categories, all of which relate to topics on the OSCE agenda: economic, environmental, military and political.



CICA

6 OSCE Partners are members:

*Afghanistan, Egypt, Israel, Jordan,
Republic of Korea and Thailand*

8 OSCE participating

States are members:

*Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan,
Mongolia, Russian Federation,
Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan*

CICA representatives have stated their interest in developing co-operation with the OSCE in the following specific areas: military and political aspects of security; the fight against terrorism; conflict prevention; activities in the areas of the economy and the environment, and in the human dimension. The OSCE's rich experience in implementing confidence-building measures is also of interest to CICA. The two organizations could enhance practical co-operation on regional security issues in Central Asia and confidence-building measures designed to promote peace, security and stability in the region. The OSCE also stands ready to further co-operate with CICA on preventing and countering terrorism. This could take the form of joint OSCE-CICA workshops or joint training projects and in areas of a more technical nature such as travel document security.

The OSCE has consistently stressed its readiness to deepen contacts and exchange information on issues of mutual interest and concern with the **SCO**. The SCO was established in 2001 and replaced the “Shanghai Group” or “Shanghai Five,” founded in 1996 related to the Sino-Soviet border. The priorities of the SCO include co-operation to tackle terrorism, separatism and extremism.

In July 2013, SCO Secretary General Dmitry Mezentsev addressed the OSCE Permanent Council and outlined a number of opportunities for developing closer cooperation between the two organizations. Over the past years, SCO representatives have regularly



OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier with SCO Secretary General Dmitry Mezentsev after having addressed the OSCE Permanent Council, July 2013.
(Micky Kröll)



OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier with the Director of the Executive Committee of the SCO RATS, Zhang Xingfang, in Vienna, June 2015. (OSCE)

participated in and contributed to OSCE regional workshops for police interagency co-operation and law enforcement capacity-building. SCO representatives have also made valuable contributions to meetings organised by the OSCE and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on combating organized crime and terrorism and on criminal justice issues in Central Asia.

Given that the SCO serves as a platform for co-operation with Afghanistan and as a focal point for coordinating regional contributions to international efforts in support of Afghanistan, the SCO could become a key partner for the OSCE in its efforts to address the challenges stemming from transition in Afghanistan. On 10 November 2014, the Director of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) addressed the OSCE Security Committee. This was a welcome opportunity to explore ways to boost inter-institutional co-operation in general and on antiterrorism issues in particular.



SCO

1 OSCE Partner is a member:
Afghanistan

6 OSCE participating States are members:

*Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan,
Russian Federation, Tajikistan,
Uzbekistan and Mongolia*

*Belarus and Turkey are
dialogue partners*

From the OSCE's point of view, co-operation with the SCO could benefit from joint efforts aimed at co-organizing regional and national conferences, seminars or workshops in countries that are both SCO members and OSCE participating States. Major topics of common interest are countering terrorism and violent extremism, border security and management, as well as different forms of transnational organized crime.

VIII. Mongolia: From a Partner for Co-operation to a participating State

In 2015, the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation marks its 20th anniversary, which coincides with the fortieth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. This provides us with yet another opportunity for reflection on the values of our co-operation to promote further peace and security within the OSCE area, as well as in regions adjacent to it.

As a country with a small population and a vast territory, Mongolia attaches great importance to its co-operation with international and regional organizations. The Foreign Policy Concept of Mongolia states that Mongolia's priority in foreign policy is to ensure its security and vital national interests by political and diplomatic means. The OSCE is the largest regional organization dealing with security issues. It is well known that the OSCE's unique approach to a comprehensive security policy across its three dimensions (politico-military, economic and environmental and human) enables its participating States to consider security issues in a much broader sense. It should be highlighted in this regard that Mongolia's National Security Concept addresses security issues through the following six interrelated pillars: security of existence, economic security, internal security, human security, environmental security and information security. That is another reason why Mongolia attaches so much importance to its membership of the OSCE.



In 2004, Mongolia became an OSCE Partner for Co-operation. Since then it has actively participated in OSCE programme activities and worked with other partners. Thus, in May 2011, the OSCE-Mongolia Conference was held in Ulaanbaatar. A series of seminars and training courses has been successfully organized in Mongolia in co-operation with the OSCE. We have been strongly engaged within the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation and actively participated in Asian Contact Group meetings and OSCE Asian conferences.

In 2012, Mongolia became the 57th participating State of the OSCE. This was an important milestone in expanding our relations with the OSCE and in implementing our foreign policy objectives. Becoming a fully-fledged member of the Organization opened to us broader avenues for more active engagement and co-operation. Thus, we gained more knowledge and experience in addressing co-operative security issues while chairing the Forum for Security Co-operation in the first trimester of 2015, serving as Co-ordinator of Cluster VII of the Helsinki+40 process and hosting the Conference on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security for participating States and the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation in March 2015. A Mongolian monitor has started to serve in the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. In September 2015, Mongolia will be hosting the autumn session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Today, the OSCE region is facing new challenges to its security which cannot be overcome without co-operation. In this regard, I fully share the view expressed by our incoming Chairperson, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier on 2 July 2015, that "We must not allow all that we have

built up in the OSCE over the years to be torn down now - that is, the vision of a peaceful order in Europe that rests on dialogue, trust and security”.

As an OSCE participating State from Asia, Mongolia would also welcome and support initiatives aimed at contributing to peace and security and at promoting dialogue and co-operation in our region. For its part, Mongolia has been pursuing an active policy aimed at setting up dialogue mechanisms in Northeast Asia since the 1980s. Thus, on 29 April 2013, at the 7th Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies chaired by Mongolia, President Ts. Elbegdorj formally launched the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security. The third “Ulaanbaatar Dialogue” conference was successfully held in Ulaanbaatar on 25 and 26 June 2015.

In conclusion, I wish to highlight once again the importance of strengthening further the bridges between the OSCE participating States and the Asian Partners in line with the Ministerial Council declaration adopted in Basel.



H.E. Ambassador Gunaajav Batjargal,
Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the OSCE



Participants of a three-days conference on the OSCE Code of Conduct for Central Asia and Asian Partners for Co-operation, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 10 March 2015. (OSCE)

The Accession of Mongolia – a Chairmanship's Perspective

On 21 November 2012, Mongolia became the 57th participating State of the OSCE. That Mongolia so actively sought membership of the Organisation demonstrates the continuing relevance of the OSCE comprehensive approach to security and the viability of the Organisation as a forum for regional security dialogue.

The journey from application to membership was not always a straight-forward one. The application was formally lodged in October 2011. At the Vilnius Ministerial Council, participating States tasked the incoming Chairmanship to take forward Mongolia's request to become a participating State "at the earliest opportunity".

It fell, then, to **the Irish Chairmanship in 2012** to take the dossier forward. As part of this effort, the then Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Ambassador Eoin O'Leary, and Secretary General Lamberto Zannier led a visit to Ulan Bator in June, joined by a team of experts from OSCE Institutions and the Secretariat. The purpose of the visit was to consult with key government interlocutors and representatives of civil society on Mongolia's understanding of and commitment to meet the requirements of OSCE membership; and to draft a report which would inform discussions in Vienna and in the capitals of other participating States. Needless to say, the report concluded that Mongolia fully understood the requirements of an OSCE participating State and was well suited to become one.

Following publication of the report, the Irish Chairmanship continued the consensus-building process on the accession of Mongolia. In August, the Foreign Minister of Mongolia clarified that the Zone of Application for CSBMs as set out in the Vienna Document does not relate to the territory of Mongolia. This clarification helped to pave the way for the launching of a silence procedure on a Ministerial Council decision which approved Mongolia's application as a full-fledged participating State. On 21 November, the then Chairperson in Office, Mr. Eamon



Chairperson of the OSCE's Permanent Council, H.E. Ambassador Eoin O'Leary of Ireland embraces the Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the OSCE, H.E. Ambassador Enkhsaikhan Jargalsaikhan, Vienna 22 November 2012. (Curtis Budden)

Gilmore T.D. announced that the silence procedure on the decision on the accession of Mongolia to the OSCE was not broken. The following day, on 22 November 2012, Mongolia was formally welcomed to the Permanent Council with the unravelling of the Mongolian flag outside the Hofburg Conference Centre and with a ceremony in the Neuer Saal.

Since its accession, Mongolia has made a valuable contribution as a participating State to the work of the OSCE, such as their highly-successful Chairmanship of the FSC in the first trimester of 2015, support for the Helsinki +40 process, and the provision of secondees to the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. Ireland is proud that it was able, as the then Chairmanship in Office, to play its part in completing Mongolia's accession process.

**Mr. Patrick O'Reilly,
Deputy Head of Mission,
Permanent Mission of Ireland to the OSCE**

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