



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Conflict Prevention Centre**

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OSCE-Japan Conference 15-16 March 2004

Search for Effective Conflict Prevention in the New Security Circumstance

- Session 1. Current Practices of OSCE and Security in Asia –

Mr. Chairman

It is a privilege for me to open this important discussion on effective conflict prevention in the new prevailing security environment.

Conflict prevention is, after all, one of the core tasks for the OSCE and one, I would add, for which our organization is particularly well suited. By its very nature, it requires the use of a large set of tools which may change and evolve over time according to the challenges we face. Some basic requirements for effective conflict prevention include, in my view, a thorough and possibly permanent dialogue, a strong early warning capacity and the existence of permanent structures which are able to initiate and support the use of relevant tools and policies.

All of these elements are well developed within the OSCE. The permanent dialogue in Vienna, with the continuous exchange of views on all issues of concern for participating States, complemented by high-level consultations by the Chairman-in-Office and other high officials and by discussions at the Ministerial Council, are key to a good understanding of the issues and enable us to identify possible ways to defuse problems at a very early stage. Such

permanent dialogue, combined with the principle of consensus governing our decision making process, has the benefit of encouraging full participation and a strong sense of ownership of the organization for all – and especially for the smaller countries. Such thorough involvement of all countries in the decision making process facilitates efforts to better take into account and factor into our activities the aspirations of the countries themselves and improves the knowledge of the local situation. A key role in this sense is obviously played by our missions, through which we conduct a dialogue at the local level, not only with representatives of the governments and local administration, but also with the civil society. This is a key factor in promoting a better understanding and an acceptance of our activities at all levels.

Preventing crises or conflicts requires a good understanding of the specific situation where one operates but also of the evolving nature of the challenges we face. In this respect, a key function is the periodic re-definition of our own strategies, as embodied in a number of key CSCE/OSCE documents, to begin with the Helsinki Final Act and continuing with the Paris Charter of 1990, the 1999 Istanbul Charter for European Security and the 2002 Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century. These documents provide an updated framework against which we can fine-tune the work of our own institutions and provide useful terms of reference for us to develop new tools and initiatives.

Looking at the institutional set-up, the OSCE in fact is disposing of a large set of institutions, including the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Representative on Freedom of the Media (FOM), the Secretary General and the Secretariat, which includes the CPC; moreover our Parliamentary Assembly (PA) allows us to have a direct interface with parliamentarians of our participating States. The sum of the activities of these institutions within their respective areas of expertise and of those carried out by our field missions within their mandates shows how we translate the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security based on three dimensions, the politico-military, economic and environmental and the promotion of human rights and democratic institutions into practical initiatives. Because of this broad institutional setting, the OSCE has demonstrated a strong capacity to adapt flexibly to meeting new threats and challenges as they arise and as they are recognized as such by our participating States. Activities such as policing, fight against trafficking and against terrorism, attention to border management issues, mine action or even education have all

recently become concrete examples of how the OSCE's comprehensive approach can be updated and translated into new initiatives that engage different institutions at the same time, each of them from their own respective angles and with their own contribution of expertise. If this effort entails the development of new tools and of relevant expertise, it also requires a strong co-ordination effort - which involves the Chairmanship, the Secretary General and also the CPC - to ensure continuing coherence and an effective use and, as necessary, redeployment of resources. For instance, looking at trends within the OSCE's field missions, we see that there is a shift of focus from South Eastern Europe towards the east, and in particular Caucasus and Central Asia, and our effort to increase our activities in the pol-mil and the economic dimensions. In Central Asia, we are involved in many areas where our Asian partners are also engaged, and in this regard our respective agendas have many points in common.

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE's original co-operative and comprehensive approach to security strongly characterises the role of our organization in our region and beyond. However, the process of expansion of two large European and Euro-Atlantic institutions, such as the European Union and NATO, has resulted in opening a debate as to the future role of our own organization, which points essentially in two directions. The first is to continue to provide an important forum for dialogue and co-operation for those countries – and they are still the majority of our participating States – that either are not yet part of these processes or have little perspective of becoming part in the near future. The OSCE should increasingly strive to enhance its role as a primary platform for these countries to express their views and concerns. This would strengthen the role of the organization through an increased sense of ownership and confirming full inclusion in the decision-making process (hence the importance of the principle of consensus which I referred to earlier). The second area is an increasing focus on horizontal challenges, where co-operation between participating States, regardless of their membership in other organizations, can be fostered on the basis of our broad comprehensive approach to security with a view to promoting better security conditions for all, improved perspectives of economic co-operation and growth, a joint focus on the increasing environmental challenges that face us all, as well as higher democratization and human rights standards.

These new efforts require a new quality in our relationship with other institutions, which has become better structured and focussed in the last few years. Our increasingly efficient co-operation in the field, where we have learned quite a few lessons from past failures, is progressively supplemented by a developing dialogue at the headquarter level among international organizations, allowing us discussions and comparisons of strategic objectives and priorities. Our effort to focus on the new challenges, many of which are of a global nature, has also had an impact on the quality of our relationship with our co-operation partners, injecting much more substance into it and adding practical value to our exchanges.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to conclude with a few words on the specific OSCE expertise in the field of politico-military security, where we have developed a very advanced range of tools to promote security and stability in our region.

The OSCE experience with CSBMs is rightly regarded as a success story. The politico-military dimension has been an integral part of the OSCE security architecture for almost three decades. The first CSBMs have had a profound impact on European security. The emphasis was on predictability through increased openness and transparency. These measures have also been updated over time, to remain militarily significant and verifiable and to better reflect the new challenges.

Looking at the Asian regional context, I could especially draw your attention to our experience in regional CSBMs. These measures underline the indivisibility of security - the principle that comprehensive, mutually beneficial relations between countries in any region are possible only under conditions of stability and security, which is guaranteed by mutual confidence, openness and predictability. The OSCE experience demonstrates the effectiveness of such measures, applied to both bilateral and sub-regional levels, encompassing more traditional military CSBMs, selected arms control elements, an other, broader CBMs involving the institutions and the civil society.

As recently as last week, our participating States confirmed at our Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting the usefulness of CSBMs to significantly reduce tensions by increasing transparency and improving predictability between states. Moreover, the considerable improvement of the military security situation in the OSCE area including, as a result of the

progress achieved in CSBM and arms control implementation, has allowed the Organization to broaden the scope of its politico-military agenda, as discussed in the context of an Annual Security Review Conference.

While addressing the politico-military aspects of security, participating States have not limited themselves to modernisation of the CSBM regime. They have also paid serious attention to new security challenges in the military field, resulting in adoption of a number of documents, inter alia: Defence Planning, Stabilising Measures for Localised Crisis Situations, Global Exchange of Military Information, Questionnaire on Ottawa Convention on Prohibiting Anti-Personnel Landmines and the Questionnaire on the Status of Ratification of the Chemical Weapon Convention. Moreover, the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation has encouraged a responsible approach to international armaments transfers, in particular regarding those states accumulating conventional weapons beyond legitimate defence needs, and in regions of tension.

The effort to prevent and combat the illicit trafficking in SALW has become a major part of the OSCE's work, in relation to which a very advanced document encompassing commitments relating to the entire spectrum of SALW control, including manufacture, marking, export controls, brokering, stockpile/surplus management and security destruction and Disarmament, demobilization and re-integration measures was adopted in 2001. We have recently published a Best Practice Guide, which will serve as a useful and practical tool to guide and support individual States in improving their standards in this respect.

Finally, the Code of Conduct on politico-military relations is another important tool, ensuring transparency regarding democratic control of armed police and security forces. Its political significance lies in the fact that OSCE states have undertaken to base the internal control of their armed forces on agreed international guidelines. Its provisions should be considered an important support to the development of relevant legislation, in which both governments and parliaments play equally important roles. Our PA has provided strong support to our initiatives to promote implementation of the code.

In addition, a Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition adopted a few months ago establishes practical procedures for stockpile destruction, while upgrading their security and management practices.

Mr. Chairman,

The “OSCE model” is a result of a process which covered the last quarter of the last century, a time of profound change for Europe and beyond Europe. This model is very much reflecting our own experience, but it certainly contains elements of intent for other regions. For this reason, we are open to sharing it with our partners, if this is perceived a useful contribution to promoting peace and security also beyond the confines of our region.