



# 30 Years, 30 Opinions





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Individual perspectives on the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and its successor, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

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Photo: Lubomir Kotek

The opinions expressed in this publication are the authors' own.

# Foreword



Since 1975, the OSCE and its predecessor, the CSCE, have quietly gone about the business of building security through co-operation in Europe. This year, to mark the 30th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, we have asked people to reflect on what the Organization means to them, how it has touched their lives, and what role they see it playing in the future.

In this collection of *30 Years, 30 Opinions* we have brought together the views of a number of men and women from around the OSCE area including former presidents, senior officials of international organizations, former OSCE officials, diplomats, members of non-governmental organizations, academics and journalists, as well as those who have had first-hand contacts with the OSCE in the field.

Some faces you may recognize, others will be less well-known but all are equally passionate in their feelings about the OSCE.

This compilation, originally published on the OSCE public website

([www.osce.org](http://www.osce.org)) to coincide with the anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act signing, is a testament to both the historic significance of the CSCE and the contemporary relevance of the OSCE.

It gives a voice to people who appreciate the work of the OSCE at a diplomatic and operational level, building peace in the field and around the negotiating table.

Our world is changing. The Cold War now seems like ancient history. The OSCE – a child of its times – is changing too. Its innovativeness and ability to adapt to the challenges of the day remain key strengths.

Reflecting on the past should inspire us in our current work, and give us renewed enthusiasm for the future. It is clear from these 30 opinions that the CSCE/OSCE has played a major role in improving European security. But it is equally apparent that the work goes on.

As we take steps to strengthen the effectiveness of the OSCE, we should never lose sight of what the Organization

is designed to achieve – a free, democratic and integrated OSCE area where participating States are at peace with each other and individuals and communities live in freedom, prosperity and security.

That may seem like a tall order, but so too was the task faced by the CSCE's "founding fathers" at Helsinki in 1975, under a set of different circumstances.

I am confident that 30 years from now, people will look back and say that at the beginning of the 21st century the OSCE was instrumental in combating common threats to security, strengthening the foundations of democratic societies, preventing and resolving conflicts, and facilitating peaceful relations between and within states.

If we can continue with these aims, we will be the rightful heirs of the "Spirit of Helsinki".

*Marc Perrin de Brichambaut*  
*OSCE Secretary General*

Speech by the former President of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act.



## ‘The Helsinki Final Act enshrined the principles for interaction between states and for respect of human rights’

Martti Ahtisaari, Finland

Twenty years ago, the leaders of the states responsible for European security signed the historic CSCE Final Act in Helsinki. At that time, Europe’s horizons were clouded by the prospect of a major war, and the continent was politically and ideologically divided. Hoping to avert an outbreak of war, the CSCE signatory states nevertheless declared their readiness to settle their differences by peaceful means. The goal was to establish principles for a new collective security order and to end the era of wars in the continent’s history.

The CSCE process was widely regarded as a substitute peace treaty and a pillar of stability. Furthermore, the Helsinki Final Act enshrined the principles for interaction between states and for respect of human rights. In the longer

term, the CSCE process paved the way for profound change in Europe.

Today, Europe is in the midst of a historic transformation process. The CSCE process has a key role to play in guiding this transformation. And, by grasping this opportunity, we can prevent the re-emergence of political and military dividing lines.

We have a shared vision of the kind of Europe that we want to work towards. The goals were set down in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe adopted at the CSCE’s summit in 1990. This involves a commitment to jointly agreed principles on democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

European security is now under the shadow of increasing instability. Above all it is plagued by the senseless use of

force in the Balkans and in the Caucasus region. But we now have a historic opportunity to free the continent of Europe from the yoke of a violent past. We must rise to this challenge.

Our potential for managing change peacefully is still hampered by old modes of thinking that date from the Cold War era: security is excessively equated with military power rather than with social, cultural and economic factors. With its renowned three baskets of concerns, the Helsinki Final Act wisely emphasized the broad and ever-widening aspects of security. President Urho Kekkonen, who signed the CSCE Final Act on Finland’s behalf, took the broad view of security. He said: “Security is not gained by erecting fences; security is gained by opening gates.”

## ‘Without the help of the OSCE, my case would have lasted forever’

Arifa, Kosovo



Arifa is a 60-year-old Bosnian woman from Sarajevo. She moved to Kosovo in the 1970s to live with her husband, a Kosovo Albanian, and worked in a textile factory.

After years of beating and abuse by my husband, I divorced in 1987 and moved to the upper floor of our house. When he brought in a new wife, he forced me to leave the house and to rent a flat. After I left, he started maltreating the children, especially my daughter, Aferdita. One day, when my son Mirsad returned home from work, he found his sister badly beaten up lying on the floor. He called me and said: “Mama, I have to bring Aferdita over, she is feeling really bad.”

I filed a complaint at the municipal court in Prizren to get my share of the house and to be able to live there safely with my children. After several court sessions, the issue was put on hold because of the conflicts in 1998. After that, I raised the issue again. Although the judge told me that half of the house

belonged to me, my husband would never let me have it. I couldn’t afford a lawyer.

One day, I was passing by the OSCE Office in Prizren and I thought to myself, let me try here and see if they can help. After explaining my situation, the Officer told me that they would look into my case and they did indeed. They helped me identify a lawyer through the Legal Aid Centre, who has done a wonderful job. He advised me how to proceed with the case, such as reporting my husband to the police, which I never did before, so that police would have a file.

I also learned what my rights were; such as the right to receive the court document in my mother language. OSCE people also monitored very closely the court sessions of my case and they made

sure that the judge was handling my case properly.

The OSCE helped me to join the Centre for Women and Children in Prizren, where I go every day. I feel safer there and more comfortable as I have friends that morally support me.

In June 2005 I legally received half of the property and now I live again on the upper floor of the house. This means a lot to me as I do not have to pay a monthly rent of 130 euros. I still have some fear of my ex-husband, but at least I found a system that can support me.

Without the help of the OSCE, my case would have lasted forever. Now I am back home and I am very thankful to the OSCE and the people who supported me during these three years.

# 'The OSCE is an indispensable partner in ensuring full implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement'

Paddy Ashdown, United Kingdom

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has always been, and remains, an indispensable partner in ensuring full implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. It has brought a broad range of logistical resources, professional expertise and political input to the project of building a stable democracy in BiH, which is the surest bulwark against a return to the violence and trauma of the early 1990s.

After the war, the OSCE Mission successfully supervised a series of elections, starting in 1996. These marked the country's slow but steady progress away from endemic crises and widespread, deeply rooted suspicion and towards modern norms of democratic dialogue. The success of the OSCE's endeavours was made clear when it was able to

transfer the remaining responsibilities for elections to the BiH Election Commission in 2002.

The OSCE has been instrumental in promoting security co-operation, and has been active in fostering and strengthening the development of civil society in BiH, on the premise that a country recovering from the disastrous effects of war will, in the final analysis, not be healed by outsiders, but by the enlightened and determined efforts of its own citizens.



Lord Ashdown is the High Representative and the European Union's Special Representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Robert L. Barry was Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina and led several OSCE/ODIHR election observation missions.

# 'The continued vitality of the Organization is the best guarantee of the growth of democracy and human rights'

Robert L. Barry, United States of America

My own involvement with the OSCE dates back to the very beginning. As a notetaker, I was present at a meeting between Henry Kissinger and Andrei Gromyko as they considered how to deal with Maltese Prime Minister Dom Mintoff's blockage of consensus on the Helsinki Final Act.

Later, as Ambassador to Bulgaria, I frequently reminded Todor Zhivkov of the obligations he undertook by joining the consensus in Helsinki. Then, in 1985-86, I headed the US Delegation to the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in Europe, organized under CSCE auspices and built on "Basket 1" of the Final Act.

In still another incarnation, I headed the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina 1998-2001, then the largest

OSCE field mission, responsible for many elements of civilian implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Subsequently I have headed or participated in OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) election observation missions to Serbia, Armenia, Albania, Russia, Kazakhstan and Afghanistan.

There is considerable debate at present as to the future of the OSCE. A central point of controversy has to do with the OSCE's election observation and election support activities, which some participating States have objected to. In fact, the methodology developed by ODIHR is now the gold standard for international and domestic election observations, and established democracies such as the US and the UK have taken

OSCE criticisms seriously. These election missions are a stabilizing factor, as was demonstrated in the presidential election in Afghanistan, where the OSCE successfully convinced opposition candidates to refer their complaints to an impartial commission rather than declaring the elections void and taking to the streets.

The spread of democratic rule is the declared goal of all OSCE participating States, as well as OSCE partners for co-operation. The continued vitality of the Organization and its institutions is the best guarantee of the growth of democracy and human rights.



In January 2000, the OSCE Mission to Georgia was mandated to “observe and report on movement across the border”, first between Georgia and the Russian Federation Republic of Chechnya, then later to include the border with the neighbouring Russian Federation Republics of Ingushetia and Dagestan. At midnight on 31 December 2004, the Border Monitoring Operation was officially closed after over five years of operations.

From my perspective, as a conflict prevention programme, I think the Operation was very successful. Having experienced many different international missions, I have rarely seen an operation end on such a successful note. By establishing itself on the border, the Operation bought time for the Georgian Border Guard to get established, and this activ-

ity, I believe, helped prevent additional conflict. Today, because of our mission, I think the Georgian Border Guard and the Russian Border Service have greater confidence in each other.

To utilize expertise gained from the Border Monitoring Operation, and at the request of the Georgian Government, the OSCE agreed to begin the Training Assistance Programme for the Georgian Border Guard service. With this project, OSCE skills are being transferred to the border guards.



Jack Bell was a border monitor, a team leader and Operations Officer with the Border Monitoring Operation of the OSCE Mission to Georgia from February 2003 to December 2004.

**‘As a conflict prevention programme, I think the Border Monitoring Operation was very successful’** Jack Bell, United States of America

**‘I will never forget the passion with which the discussions within the OSCE are led’** Dieter Boden, Germany

Germany was one of the main initiators of the CSCE and the Helsinki Final Act. Today, the political context has changed fundamentally, but we have not reduced our engagement. The daily work of the OSCE is basically the creation of consensus between the participating States. In this, the German Delegation and I have seen our most important task. In this endeavour we will not let ourselves be surpassed by any other state.

The OSCE should always follow its vision: to implement in this community of States, that spans from Vancouver to Vladivostok, the basic rules for politics and humane cohabitation. Over the last 30 years of combined efforts, we have created a network of norms and principles. The implementation of these norms and principles has to be done every day

and has to be achieved together. There is practically no bigger endeavour one can think of.

I will never forget the passion with which the discussions within the OSCE are led in order to make it more relevant and to improve it. In this, I see a sign of its continuing vitality.

Ambassador Boden was Head of the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the OSCE from 2002 to 2005. He gave this statement at his last Permanent Council meeting.





Remarks by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Chizhov, at the International Roundtable Meeting on *The 30th Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the Problems of the OSCE*, Moscow, June 2005.

## 'Some experts are bluntly saying that the OSCE has exhausted its historic mission'

Vladimir Chizhov, Russian Federation

Nearly 30 years now separate us from the moment when 35 Heads of State or Government signed in Helsinki the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) – the crown of years of difficult negotiations.

I would have liked to speak about the OSCE in the year of its jubilee solely in cheerful tones of course, but it is not possible, because unfortunately not only positive things can be observed in the activities of this Organization.

Doubts are increasingly being expressed as to whether there is a need at all for the Organization in the new circumstances, and about its prospects. Evidence of an impending systemic crisis in the OSCE have been its inability to suggest a convincing agenda for

consideration at the highest political level (there have been no summits since 1999) and the impossibility for the last two years in a row of agreeing on the general political declarations of the Council of Foreign Ministers' meetings. All this, of course, isn't fortuitous, for it reflects the lack of a common vision by the participating States of the tasks facing the Organization. Some experts are bluntly saying that the OSCE has exhausted its historic mission. There were also, as you know, proposals to merge it with other multilateral forums.

What are the reasons for such a sad evolution? They are several. One of them is the departure from the letter and spirit of the Helsinki Final Act, the appearance in OSCE activities of evermore glaring geographic and functional

imbalances, which deprives the Organization of its identity.

The answer to the sacred question of "what needs to be done" could, in our opinion, lie in solving a two-fold task: on the one hand, as they say, go back to sources, and on the other – finish building the OSCE edifice as it was originally conceived. This presupposes, among other things, freeing the OSCE "construction" of an accretion of alien elements in recent years, just like sea-going ships are cleaned from time to time of the shells clinging to their bottoms that hinder using the full engine power. Russia wants the OSCE to become a fully modern liner, operated according to advanced standards of multilateral diplomacy.

## 'The Council of Europe closely followed and encouraged the Helsinki Process'

Terry Davis, United Kingdom



Photo: Council of Europe

Although the agreement in Helsinki in 1975 was called the Final Act, it was really the beginning of a new era. It was a chink in the Iron Curtain. For the first time, a decade before 'perestroika', the Iron Curtain had let 'glasnost' through this chink.

The Council of Europe closely followed and encouraged the Helsinki Process and the birth of the OSCE as it is now known, but the Council of Europe has not only been an observer. We have been glad to be a partner of the OSCE. We have worked together to promote our shared values continent-wide, and we will continue to work in partnership.

Terry Davis is Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

# 'Free media means security and stability'

Freimut Duve, Germany

Freimut Duve was the first OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. He was appointed in 1998 and led the Office for the next six years.



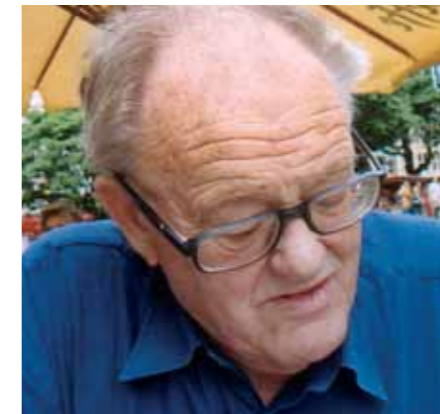
From the first conference in Helsinki, the CSCE and nowadays the OSCE has been based on the principle of security through co-operation. However, it is often forgotten that security does not necessarily mean military security. The Helsinki Final Act respects the fundamental human rights, including freedom of thought, and the so-called third basket, the human dimension, pervades all follow-up meetings and declarations. Improvements in working conditions for journalists and freedom of expression have always been one of the main aims of the CSCE/OSCE process.

This is not only because freedom of expression is one of the fundamental human rights, but also because free media as the fourth branch of power in effect means security and stability. A free press

safeguards the rule of law and the rightful use of power by both governments and corporations. Corruption and the arbitrary use of power are constricted by independent media. Censorship, however, curtails the exchange of ideas, innovation and social and economic development. Freedom of the media is mandatory for modern democratic societies and thus for affiliation to Europe.

On 5 November 1997, the Permanent Council, with Decision No. 193, adopted the mandate of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. The creation of this unique office once again acknowledges the importance of the human dimension for security in Europe and the significance of the right of freedom of expression. The mandate enables the Representative to use the instruments

of early warning and interventions but also calls on his Office to assist the participating States in the furthering of free, independent and pluralistic media.



Roland Eggleston is a correspondent for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

# 'The CSCE came alive at the meeting in Madrid from November 1980 to September 1983'

Roland Eggleston, Australia

I am one of the few journalists to have covered the Helsinki Process on a daily basis from its origins through to the Vienna meeting which ended in 1989. I did so for the American broadcasters Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty.

For me, the CSCE came alive at the meeting in Madrid from November 1980 to September 1983. I believe the Madrid document set an agenda which remains at the heart of what is now today the OSCE. It emphasized human rights on the one hand and the need for a European security arrangement on the other.

The atmosphere in Madrid reflected the state of East-West relations at the time. Virtually every meeting was marked by clashes between the U.S. delegation, led by the Washington lawyer Max Kampelman, and the USSR, led by

a very experienced diplomat, Leonid Ilichev. I particularly recall one winter afternoon when Ilichev called for the windows to be opened "to let out this poisonous air".

Naturally the meetings were closed to journalists. But there was never a problem in finding someone to tell us what had happened.

Inevitably better relations developed between individuals as the months passed. But only outside the conference. Inside events such as the imposition of martial law in Poland made it difficult to negotiate a final document.

The Stockholm security conference, which followed Madrid, played an important role in reducing fears of military aggression. The agreements binding both NATO and the Warsaw Pact

to cut the number of troops and military equipment forces in Europe and the confidence-building measures which accompanied them helped end confrontation. Eventually they helped create the peaceful Europe we have today.





*Although the OSCE was created as a security organization, it does not deal exclusively with military issues. Its broad mandate also encompasses human rights, as well as economic and environmental affairs.*



# 'I am confident that 2005 will see a "renaissance" of the OSCE'

**Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Austria**

The OSCE is a cornerstone of our Euro-Atlantic security architecture. Uniting 55 countries from Vancouver to Vladivostok, it is a crucial platform for comprehensive and co-operative security.

The three decades since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act have brought historic achievements. From confidence-building measures and arms reduction to early warning and post-conflict institution-building by highly effective field missions, the CSCE/OSCE has matured to the clear benefit of its participating States and their citizens. The European Union, itself a strong and multifaceted provider of security, has been co-operating particularly closely with the OSCE, including in the field.

I salute all those who have built this successful framework over the years

with their political insight and personal commitment. As Chairperson-in-Office in 2000, I personally experienced the potential of the Organization and greatly appreciate its added value.

I am confident that 2005 will see a "renaissance" of the OSCE after a difficult phase, so that we can continue tackling our common challenges in the 21st century. We must further increase our efforts to protect human security and find strong responses to new threats such as terrorism, trafficking and organized crime. This will enable us to build on the legacy of Helsinki: respect for the liberty and the integrity of the individual.



Photo: European Commission

**Benita Ferrero-Waldner is European Union Commissioner for External Relations. As the former Foreign Minister of Austria, she was OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in 2000.**

Gerald R. Ford was President of the United States from 1974 to 1976, during the CSCE's formative years.



Photo: Gerald R. Ford Library

# 'We must never cease to maintain our vigilance in the support of freedom'

**Gerald R. Ford, United States of America**

On 1 August 1975, thirty-five nations gathered in Finland to confront a vital challenge. It was a time of great divide throughout Europe and the world. The Cold War had entered its third decade and the threat of nuclear annihilation hung over every conversation between East and West. The Helsinki Conference and subsequent agreement would prove to be a landmark in international relations; a first of its kind to link peace and security while upholding the fundamental principles of universal human rights.

In fact, the three pillars of the agreement – co-operation on humanitarian issues, on commercial and environmental issues, and on security issues – would establish ongoing dialogues for transforming the relationships among people

stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Underpinning this transformation, we were guided by the most basic of principles: working together toward the peaceful settlement of conflicts; respecting freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief; and supporting the self-determination of all to promote a true and lasting peace.

At the signing of the Helsinki Final Act thirty years ago, I said that history would judge this conference not by the promises we made that day, but by the promises we kept. Europe and the world have witnessed tremendous changes in the last thirty years. Those original thirty-five signatories now number fifty-five. And we have seen an expansion of liberty throughout the region and the globe

that was unimaginable when we signed this Final Act. As we move toward a new generation, we can look back and say that, despite the difficulties and tensions, we have kept our word. But we must never cease to maintain our vigilance in the support of freedom, democracy and the inalienable rights that we have for so long struggled to protect. The OSCE has a proud legacy thirty years later, and it is one that we hope endures for another thirty and beyond.

For nearly two decades, the CSCE filled a vacuum in East-West relations ongoing since the emergence of the Cold War and even, perhaps, the 1917 October Revolution. It constituted a global channel of communication of unprecedented flexibility in multilateral diplomacy. Through the Helsinki Final Act, it provided a normative compass and, thus, a yardstick to assess the behaviour of governments at both inter-State and intra-State level. It offered a long-term programme of comprehensive security.

Performing as such, the CSCE brought qualitative change. First, it "Europeanized" East-West relations previously just managed by the USA and the USSR. Second, it democratized East-West relations by integrating the neutral and non-aligned States on an equal footing with NATO and Warsaw Pact members. Third, it introduced human rights and military confidence-building (as well as environmental matters) onto the East-West agenda.

The CSCE process demonstrated that "the spectre haunting Europe" was not

communism (as argued in Karl Marx's Manifesto), but human rights: hence, a long-standing taboo became a legitimate subject of dialogue and, gradually, of co-operation. In parallel, the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures aimed at "reducing the dangers of armed conflict and of misunderstanding or miscalculation of military activities which could give rise to apprehension" (Helsinki Final Act) de-dramatized routine military activities in Europe. The CSCE has to be credited for its pioneering on-site inspection regime which prefigured those subsequently established under the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces and Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaties.

The CSCE gave a most sophisticated solution to the problem of how two clusters of States, whose relations were a constant alternation between phases of extreme tension and ambiguous relaxation, could be brought into an enduring framework of peaceful co-operation. Against all odds, it resisted several adverse political cross-currents such as

the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and NATO's dual-track decision on euromissiles. The collapse of communism vindicated the CSCE, which had actually been operating against the background of a widespread scepticism in the Western world. In many respects, post-communist Europe was the spiritual offspring of the Helsinki Process.



Victor-Yves Ghebali is Professor of Political Science at the Graduate Institute of International Studies of Geneva. He also teaches at the University of Strasbourg, and at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy.

**'In many respects, post-communist Europe was the spiritual offspring of the Helsinki Process'**

Victor-Yves Ghebali, Switzerland



Lev Harutyunyan is Co-ordinator of the Public Environmental Information Centre (Aarhus Centre) in Yerevan.

**'We have shown that professional environmental journalism is important for the country'**

Lev Harutyunyan, Armenia

With the help of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, the Aarhus Centre was opened in 2002. The OSCE provided technical assistance, renovated the space, created the environmental library and provided computers as well as Internet access. Although the OSCE is not part of the Board of Experts, it participates in all meetings and supports many projects.

Thanks to the help of the OSCE, the Aarhus Centre now plays a significant role in Armenian society. It raises awareness of environmental problems and shows ways through which the human right to a healthy environment can be protected. We do this by providing free access to an environmental library and the Internet, hosting seminars and public hearings on environmental legislation, and by paying

particular attention to environmental education.

The Environmental NGO Coalition that nowadays is an important player in environmental life was also created thanks to the joint efforts of the Centre and the OSCE.

Another concrete example of our co-operation is a competition for the best environmental media coverage, now in its third year throughout Armenia. With this initiative, we have shown that professional environmental journalism is important for the country – and as a result of our work, the Yerevan State University recently introduced a course on environmental journalism.



Photo: UNMIK

Søren Jessen-Petersen is Special Representative of the UN Secretary General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

## ‘We could now make a good claim to be living in the Europe of Helsinki’

Søren Jessen-Petersen, Denmark

I remember in the mid-1980s coming across a book by an academic husband and wife team, Denis and Cynthia Roberts. The book was entitled *How to Secure Peace in Europe*. Its prescription was that all states should act in accordance with their obligations under the Helsinki Final Act, which was then ten years old. At the time their idealism seemed naïve. We still lived in the Europe of Yalta – divided, mutually suspicious and, in many places, repressive.

How times change. The Europe of Yalta has gone, and we could now make a good claim to be living in the Europe of Helsinki. The Final Act’s central insight – that the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is inherently stabilizing – has become received wisdom. Since the end of the Cold War, OSCE

missions in trouble spots from the Balkans to Central Asia have been helping the countries within the OSCE to create the institutions and mentalities needed to achieve these ideals.

In Kosovo the OSCE has been a key player since the days of the Kosovo Verification Mission in 1998. It remains a key player today in the form of Pillar III (Democratization and Institution Building) of the United Nations Mission. That Kosovo has come as far as it has in the fields of democratic institutions, human rights and policing is thanks in large part to the dedication and hard work of the OSCE and its staff; and to the inspiration that we all draw from the fundamental values enunciated in the Helsinki Final Act.

## ‘Now it is much easier for me to work with information and correspondence in English’

Irina Kamenyuk, Turkmenistan

Irina Kamenyuk is Chief Inspector at the Department of Customs Statistics and Analysis, State Customs Service of Turkmenistan. Last year, she joined an OSCE training course for State Customs Officials.



In 2004, I heard about the combined English language and computer training course for State Customs Officials in Turkmenistan, organized by the OSCE Centre in Ashgabad in collaboration with the EU TACIS programme. I decided to apply for the language training, realizing that knowledge of the English language would be an asset in my job.

In June 2004, our English classes began. Our training centre was equipped with modern audio and video facilities, and all students were provided with the necessary training materials. The organizers of the training selected very good teachers whose methods of teaching proved to be very successful, as most of our students made great progress by the end of the first six months of our studies.

Upon completion of these six months, I decided to continue learning the language at a higher level. I think my English has improved considerably since I began learning it last year. Now it is much easier for me to work with information and correspondence in English, and it really helps to be able to communicate in English with my foreign counterparts. I recommend that all my colleagues attend the training and improve their language skills.

Today, as international co-operation in Turkmenistan’s Customs Service is strengthening, knowledge of English is increasingly important. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the OSCE Centre in Ashgabad for its support in the capacity-building of Turkmenistan’s customs officials.



Jurica Malčić, a former Constitutional Court judge in Croatia, is Human Rights Ombudsman.



**‘With the help of the OSCE,  
I can reach the most disadvantaged  
citizens’**

**Jurica Malčić, Croatia**

The Office of the Ombudsman in Croatia very much conforms to the European ombudsman model in its independence, structure and authority. Many of the complaints we are dealing with reflect the realities of Croatia, most of them associated with the work of state bodies, including chronic delays and non-enforcement of decisions.

Despite a desire to do more, we were often hamstrung due to a lack of resources – from personnel to budget. This made our work very frustrating at times. Operating out of premises in Zagreb, the capital city, there was no way to reach out to those in outlying areas and to have direct contact with the least privileged individuals, especially displaced persons and refugees.

With the help of the OSCE Mission to

Croatia and the financial support of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a project was created to support the Office. It enables me and my deputies to systematically visit regional centres. Apart from making it much easier for individuals to reach the Office, we gain a direct insight into problems that citizens of particular towns and counties encounter as well as into regional government bodies. Apart from devising the project and securing the funds, the Mission also provided logistical support – we worked out of OSCE field offices and the staff there also provided us with invaluable information on human rights abuses that occur in their areas.

The Mission also assisted us in preparing various public information tools: leaflets to familiarize the public with our

work, the creation and maintenance of a website, a specialized database to manage our individual case studies as well as computer equipment.

By supporting our work, the OSCE helps to safeguard Croatian citizens against human rights violations and to restore faith in government institutions and the rule of law in this country.

**‘The OSCE is a framework in which  
fundamental ideas and values need  
to be cultivated and renewed’**

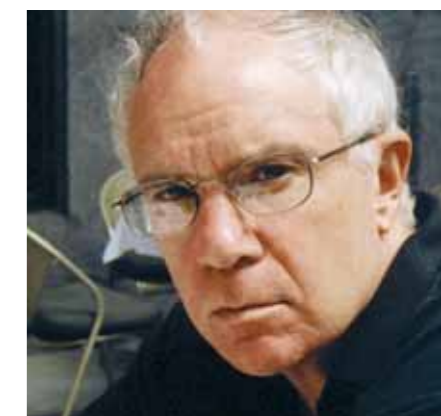
**Aaron Rhodes, USA**

When I think about the OSCE, its history, and its future, what comes to mind are the ideals, the moral standards, the political values, and the dreams – the commitment to human freedom and dignity, international co-operation, dialogue, equality and peace – that is, the things that make up the vision of the Helsinki Process.

I think about qualities that honourable and effective people – people from official delegations, from the staff, and from civil society – have brought to their efforts: qualities like civil courage, civility, selflessness, generosity of spirit, humility before facts, integrity and sacrifice.

The OSCE is a means to an end. The OSCE is a framework and a process in which fundamental ideas and values

need to be cultivated and renewed. The point of reflecting about the OSCE is to keep alive those vivid ideas and values. The anniversary is a time to remember that what has made the OSCE work – when it has worked – is devotion to those ideas and human qualities that can allow international institutions to function for the good of all people.



Aaron Rhodes is the Executive Director of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF) in Vienna. The IHF monitors compliance with the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and its follow-up documents.

# 'An exchange of goods and technology cannot take place without people'

Michel Rocard, France

What is this about Helsinki hypocrisy? I am not insisting that the "third Basket" of the Helsinki Final Act contains "Western" principles. But we have conceded that the Eastern representatives can pretend to believe in these principles and we will act as if we believe that they believe in them! We all know that, due to the differing structures of our societies, this is simply not possible. Since we recognize that our social systems are different, and we rule out the possibility of resolving these differences by military means, then I ask myself why don't we clarify these acknowledged misunderstandings? That is what I call the recognized hypocrisy of Helsinki.

We are now in the process of binding ourselves closer together. Some of

the results of this process, for example, issues affecting the work of reporters, the reunification of families or the cultural conference in Budapest now taking place, are already a kind of controlled management of the development of these differences...

No-one with a clear head and of a peaceful disposition would come up with the idea of demanding the East European countries must change their system. This is out of the question. But there is a vital interest in the East in goods and technology, and such an exchange cannot take place without people. With people come culture and ideas. This is what we have to decide upon – reducing the degree of hypocrisy and developing, step by step, a more humane atmosphere,

Contribution by Michel Rocard, former French Prime Minister and Member of the European Parliament, at the Bergedorf Round Table on *Ten years of Helsinki* in 1985.



Photo: European Parliament

which will itself have a positive feedback on the political and military confidence-building process.

Source: *Bergedorf Round Table, Koerber Foundation* (translated by OSCE/PPIS)

The fight against human trafficking is the prime goal of the Centre of Women's Social Advancement. We are a non-governmental organization, and the work the OSCE does for our Centre is immeasurable. It was the OSCE Centre in Tashkent that organized the first training for the fight against trafficking in Uzbekistan. During the training, leaders of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) learned about the problem of trafficking in human beings and how to prevent it for the first time. Seminars and workshops that helped us to do our work more professionally were organized by the OSCE. The OSCE also supports the change of attitude of government officials towards NGOs and their role in combating trafficking in human beings.

A convincing example of this change is a working group that brings together representatives of the Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Labour and Social Protection of Population Department, the Ministry of Education, representatives of the media and two other non-govern-

mental organizations. Now, government bodies and NGOs work together in preventing trafficking, helping the victims and conducting joint media campaigns.

A study tour for the members of government and non-government working groups was organized by the OSCE last year. It took us to Macedonia and Italy where we experienced anti-trafficking work in these countries. The results of this tour were joint actions of government bodies and NGOs, and the acknowledgement of the role of NGOs by officials in the fight against human trafficking.

In August 2004, together with the OSCE Centre in Tashkent, we set up a youth summer camp. The 80 participants were trained to carry out the information campaign "We are against modern day slavery!" Since this summer camp, these volunteers have been doing useful work among young people. They have organized over 100 meetings in which about 5,000 students took part – and the number of volunteers is still growing.

Olga Sashina is the Director of the Centre of Women's Social Advancement in Navoi Oblast, Uzbekistan.



# 'The work the OSCE does for our Centre is immeasurable'

Olga Sashina, Uzbekistan



*The OSCE monitors media developments in its participating States and provides early warning on violations of freedom of expression. A free media is one of the cornerstones of democratic society.*



I have known the OSCE for a long time, but only from its work in the other parts of the Balkans. The first time I worked with them directly was just over two years ago, when I was selected for a police course for community relations co-ordinators. There were over 30 police selected from across the country.

We had two intensive workshops led by international police from the OSCE. These workshops dealt with policing in a democracy, problem solving, conflict resolution, communication skills as well as inter-organizational co-operation. We also had training in media skills for the first time. At the end of the workshops, we made a field visit to the Netherlands to see how community policing works in practice.

There was a police officer from England who led the problem-solving session, and contributed to all the training too. I think he is a great man and I still learn a lot from him. You can see that he has many years of experience and he brought them here; it is clear from the way he answers questions and responds

to people. He was extremely calm and patient and this attitude was powerful, even in very heated moments, his presence brought people to a consensus. I try to remember this approach in my job now.

These past weeks we have been dealing with a problem in a village at the edge of the lake, a mixed village with a very old tradition of fishing. There is a property dispute that could turn into an issue for peace and public order: one ethnic group is constructing a beach and upsetting the other ethnic group because of its nearness to religious grounds, which is in turn upsetting some building planners, as well as some ecological institutions. There is a lot of confusion regarding property rights and construction permission. At its heart, the problem is not a policing matter, but the fact is, it could become one. So our approach now is not to wait for it to become a serious incident, but to try to resolve the situation before it comes back at us like a boomerang.

I appreciate the OSCE's assistance.

We live in a beautiful country that is rich in many ways, its clean air, its mountains, its forests. I want to do everything I can to turn our country away from crime, corruption and conflict-related problems. To make a better country, a European country, a better place for our children.



Živorat Savić is the Chief Sector Leader of the Uniformed Police in Struga.

**'I want to do everything I can to turn our country away from crime, corruption and conflict-related problems'**

Živorat Savić, Skopje

**'A truly effective partnership between NATO and the OSCE will bring greater security for us all'**

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, The Netherlands

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer is NATO Secretary General. As Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, he was OSCE Chairman-in-Office in 2003.



When the so-called "Helsinki Process" started in 1975, expectations were modest. Alleviating the hardships caused by Europe's Cold War division was its primary aim. Over time, the OSCE has evolved from a fragile process into a true institution, a permanent fixture of Euro-Atlantic security co-operation. From Vancouver to Vladivostok, the OSCE has been the standard-bearer of democracy and the rule of law. Its agenda has consistently broadened, but it has remained faithful to its principles, and these have been a true engine for the change that Europe has seen in the last 15 years.

Today, many of the issues that used to concern the CSCE 30 years ago are thankfully no longer on our agenda, but the international security environment has become no less demanding. We are

confronted with new and complex challenges to our security – regional conflicts, a lethal breed of terrorism, and "failed states" causing instability in their own region and beyond. To meet those challenges, we must apply political, economic and also military instruments in a well-coordinated way. That is why I strongly promoted OSCE-NATO co-operation when I was OSCE Chairman-in-Office back in 2003, and why I continue to do so in my current capacity as NATO Secretary General.

The Balkans have shown the strength of our co-operation – for example when we prevented civil strife in Southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at the beginning of this century, or brought together all interested parties in Ohrid in 2003 to work towards

greater border security in South-East Europe. I am determined to build on that positive experience, and to seek closer co-operation in other areas where each of our organizations has a contribution to make, because I firmly believe that a truly effective partnership between NATO and the OSCE will bring greater security for us all.



Being at the core of European human rights values and having given birth to one of the most powerful grass-roots human rights movements on the continent, it has been no wonder that the OSCE turned its attention to environmental protection and co-operation.

A clean and healthy environment is a fundamental human right, and so is well-being. When both need to be respected, contradictions may appear and lead to tensions, or even conflicts within and among states. Paying attention to the environmental dimension of efforts to ensure politically responsible development and governance is thus paramount for a steady advancement of democracy and peace in Europe. What is more, where the latter are still lacking, it is often environmental co-operation that half-opens a gate to a broader dialogue.

UNEP, as the global community's "green conscience", needs all the support it can get to keep environmental perspectives on the political agenda; even

more so when their disregard leads to instability and insecurity. I highly value the enormous progress in mutual understanding between our two organizations, and the common achievements of tangible results just within two years of the existence of the OSCE-UNDP-UNEP-NATO 'Environment and Security' initiative.

In today's complicated world, oversaturated with competing agendas and interests, I believe that it is this type of approach that can make a lasting positive impact, of which I hope to see more in the near future – within countries, in Europe, worldwide, and not least, within our own organizations.

Frits Schlingemann is Director and Regional Representative for Europe of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

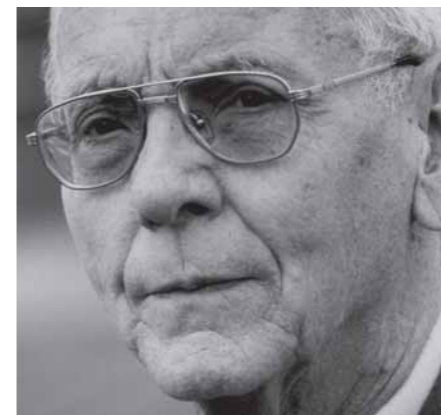


**'A clean and healthy environment is a fundamental human right'**

**Frits Schlingemann, The Netherlands**

## 'Human rights became everybody's business'

**Max van der Stoel, The Netherlands**



Max van der Stoel was the OSCE's first High Commissioner on National Minorities and held the post from 1993 to 2001.

For me, the greatest contribution of the Helsinki Process and the OSCE has been to internationalize human rights. Principle Seven of the Helsinki Final Act and the Moscow Document of 1991 opened up the so-called internal affairs of States to international scrutiny. Human rights became everybody's business.

When I visited Czechoslovakia in 1977, I could see the importance that dissidents like Vaclav Havel and Jan Patočka attached to CSCE commitments. Showing solidarity with them was the least that we could do to make the Helsinki commitments come to life.

As High Commissioner on National Minorities, my mandate was based on the idea of legitimate intrusiveness. I could decide where to go and I could hold governments to account for the

way they treated persons belonging to national minorities. I believe this played a key role in preventing conflict and improving inter-ethnic relations.

As the OSCE enters a new decade and goes through a process of reform, it should not compromise its well-established record of holding States accountable for the protection of human rights.



## 'We need this Organization in other parts of the world too'

Rita Süßmuth, Germany

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe plays a central role in conflict prevention and conflict mitigation. Its predecessor, the CSCE, was pivotal in the implementation of human rights and democracy, the peaceful settlement of conflicts and the strengthening of security, as well as economic development through co-operation.

The decisive basis is confidence-building. We need this Organization in other parts of the world, too. It is therefore absolutely necessary to secure the future of the OSCE and to improve its effectiveness.

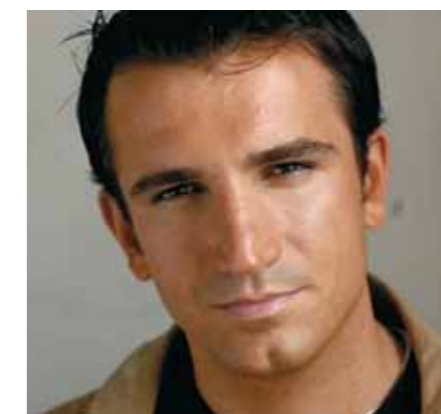


Rita Süßmuth, Member of the Global Commission on International Migration, was Vice President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Head of the OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights long-term Election Observation Missions to the Russian Federation and the USA.

## 'The OSCE has become our coach and supports all of us who plan to remain in Albania for the long run'

Erion Veliaj, Albania

Erion Veliaj is the Executive Director and one of the founders of Albania's groundbreaking civic movement MJAFT, the goal of which has been to tackle civic apathy.



Back in 2003, many believed that the MJAFT ("Enough" in Albanian) campaign was merely a utopian dream of a handful of young people who naïvely believed that tackling civic apathy could be the answer to the irresponsible politics that seemed to be the norm in Albania. Among the few that allowed themselves to be inspired and touched by this dream were some of the country's leading public figures, as well as the OSCE Presence in Albania, which over the past two years has continued to advise and be a partner of MJAFT.

Today, the MJAFT movement has become one of the leading advocates for change in Albania and was awarded the UN Civil Society Award in 2004, thanks largely to the generous support of the OSCE. Achievements such as a substan-

tial increase in the education budget, improving environmental legislation, access to parliament, testimonies held in US Congress and freedom of information are all successes that have continually been facilitated via the expertise and network of OSCE officers.

In 2003 and 2005, MJAFT worked with the OSCE Presence to launch two of the largest and most successful "Get out the Vote" campaigns ever to be held in Albania. These campaigns contributed significantly to an increase in voter turnout, as well as helping to break the persistent myth among young people that politics is only about the "old boys" in power. OSCE field offices have coached MJAFT Civic Clubs and supported them in co-ordinating city hall hearings as well as organizing

debates with local candidates, thus helping to ensure that each citizen is empowered with the sense of being a unique shareholder in local community affairs.

Rather than controlling and patronizing local groups with overwhelming "international knowledge", the OSCE Presence in Albania found value in reversing that trend in development work, and chose instead to become our coach and to support all of us who plan to remain in Albania for the long run. For that, all of us at MJAFT will remain very grateful.

# 'More attention should be paid to the social adaptation of discharged military officers'

**Volodymyr Vlasov, Ukraine**



Volodymyr Vlasov, retired Lieutenant Colonel from the Armed Forces of Ukraine, graduated in 2004 from an Advanced Management Course for Senior Officers supported by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine.

After serving my country for decades, it was difficult to be discharged and make the transition to civilian life. I was not sure what to do with myself. At that point in my life, I needed a guide to support me and show me what I needed to do to be successful in the civilian world. The Advanced Management Course for Senior Officers, taught by the trainers of Business Link and supported by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, not only became such a guide, but also provided me with the means to succeed.

During a short period of time, the course taught me the most important aspects of business and human resource management, career planning, finance and marketing strategies, and exposed me to new approaches in business. Everything taught at the training course

was both interesting and useful, but I personally enjoyed human resources as it was one of my main responsibilities while serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The knowledge and skills I gained were sufficient to help me adjust to civilian life and start off at the same level as managers working in the business sector for quite some time. As a result, and thanks to the employment assistance provided during the course, I got a position with a growing and dynamic Ukrainian company. This position provided me with an opportunity to use my knowledge and skills and further my professional development.

My future plans include competing for other positions with greater responsibilities in both domestic and possibly foreign companies.

I am strongly convinced that more attention should be paid to the social adaptation of discharged military officers. More emphasis should be placed on providing assistance to officers during that first period of transition – just after retirement.

# 'My experiences at the OSCE Academy have had a significant impact on my life'

**Violetta Yan, Kyrgyzstan**



Photo: Eric Gourlan

Violetta Yan is among the first candidates for the master's programme in political science at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek.

By bringing together people from various backgrounds, the OSCE Academy in Bishkek provides a very productive social and academic environment which encourages creativity and critical thinking. The strength of the Academy lies in its location in Central Asia. It is not education "from above" but something "from within": there is good collaboration between international and national (Central Asian) professors, lecturers and experts.

My experiences at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek have had a significant impact on my life. The Academy has equipped me with necessary knowledge, extended my experience and improved my skills to become a policy-maker. Even if the word "policy-maker" sounds quite self-confident, I can assure you that I do

feel confident, capable and committed to becoming useful in this capacity. The Academy has fostered in me the ability to work for national, regional and international institutions.

In Central Asia, the role of the OSCE varies from country to country. Regardless of the scale of involvement in each country, it is an authority. Nowadays, when the region is experiencing events that threaten stability and peace, the OSCE is the primary actor in early warning and preventing of violent conflicts. It is a political platform that offers the best chances for dialogue at international and national levels.

I have learned about unity, diversity and shared values as key components for integration, co-operation and, as a result, security in its comprehen-

sive meaning. What is instrumental in achieving them? I believe it is the OSCE's support of educational initiatives. It is helping forge open-minded, reflective and self-sustaining democratic societies in Central Asia.

# 'The agenda of change within the OSCE region is not yet exhausted'

Andrei Zagorski, Russian Federation

Andrei V. Zagorski is Associate Professor at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations. He has published extensively on Russian foreign policy, European security, post-Soviet developments and arms control.



The political leaders who signed the Helsinki Final Act did not know how much the European landscape would change in the next 30 years. Some of them would have hardly endorsed those changes. They had wanted the CSCE to consolidate the *status quo* rather than to promote openness by introducing the concepts of human rights, freedom of movement of people and information, and transparency in military affairs.

Throughout the last 30 years, the CSCE/OSCE both benefited and suffered from the change of atmosphere in Europe. It did not miss the chance, however, to work towards the vision of "a Europe whole and free". It has established challenging standards for the accountability of states to their citizens, and to each other. At the end of the

Cold War, the CSCE played a pivotal role in setting the agenda for democratic change in the former communist countries.

The agenda of change within the OSCE region is not yet exhausted. The Organization still has a crucial role to play in managing the forthcoming change by providing a regulatory framework for it. Despite the new challenges, the most important mission of the OSCE is still to ensure compliance with and implementation in good faith of all OSCE principles, norms and commitments by all participating States, as well as to provide for accountability of the participating States to their citizens, and responsibility to each other.

# 'The OSCE's contribution to peace and stability in Europe is far greater than generally perceived'

Wolfgang Zellner, Germany

The OSCE is one of the most flexible and underestimated organizations Europe has produced within the last 30 years. Its contribution to peace and stability, as well as to progress and change in Europe, is far greater than generally perceived. During the Cold War, the CSCE created a common basis for dialogue and co-operation between two hostile alliances, and, at the same time, legitimized the peaceful changes in the eastern half of the continent.

In the early 1990s, the CSCE/OSCE reinvented itself for the first time and created a whole toolbox of instruments for crisis prevention, conflict management and post-conflict rehabilitation, thereby developing from a conference into an organization.

Today, three factors – the new European security environment, a number of unresolved disputes among participating States, and the need to address new transnational threats – have led to a serious adaptation crisis that the Organization must face. However, thanks to the OSCE's proven flexibility, one can be confident that it will be able to adapt again to changing needs.



Wolfgang Zellner is the Acting Head of the Centre for OSCE Research (CORE) in Hamburg and an expert in conventional arms control in Europe and minority issues.

