

DRAFT

Check against delivery

***The way forward or is
the OSCE fit for the 21st century ?***

Presentation by
Ambassador Gérard Stoudmann
Director of the
Geneva Centre for Security Policy

The OSCE Annual Security Review Conference

Vienna, 23-24 June 2004

1. The OSCE at a crossroad

- Obviously the OSCE is at a crossroad. Like other international organizations, it is challenged by a rapidly changing security environment and has to readjust to the new realities, in particular the globalization of challenges, where a purely regional concept of security policy – such as “European Security” – has become largely obsolete when not considered in its global context.
- Today, the OSCE has become without any doubts less important on both sides of the Atlantic. In this, it is not alone as other European and Transatlantic Institutions face similar questions. Unlike these institutions however, the problem is more acute for the OSCE as it is not a “hard security” organisation such as NATO, lacks the economic and structural incentives of the EU or the global character of the UN both in geographic and substantive meaning of the word and, most importantly, has seen some important elements of its activities, such as conflict management taken over gradually by more powerful actors.
- Therefore the urgent question is whether the Organisation can shape itself to be fit and credible for the 21st century or, more bluntly, for what would its members want to use it today and in the future ? Just an ad hoc “service providing” institution or one of the pillars of Europe’s security architecture, unique because of its inclusiveness and legitimized through its comprehensive agenda and membership.
- It is not the first time that the relevance of the organisation is questioned. After the collapse of the iron curtain, the future of the predecessor organisation, the CSCE was

bleak, but instead of the announced death, the OSCE was re-invented to fit new realities. The same can happen today.

2. The OSCE and the new security environment

- During the cold war, the OSCE proved its relevance by addressing the participating states' security concerns and by initiating innovative and ground breaking mechanisms from the CBM's agreed upon, for example during the 1984 Stockholm CDE Conference, to the Open Skies treaty or the CFE process, thus earning its reputation as one of the key security organisations in Europe.
- In the 90's, the OSCE has developed a considerable network of field presences and played a not negligible role in conflict prevention and rehabilitation. In the meantime, this role has been taken over more and more by EU / NATO.
- Today the OSCE has to adapt to a new security environment where non state actors and asymmetrical threats are challenging the traditional approaches to security in the multilateral context. The OSCE can either respond bureaucratically or be creative and think "out of the box". This however can be achieved by building on its strengths from the past, that is through - not only in words - a comprehensive and cooperative approach to security as well as by finding the right balance between the different dimensions, most particularly the human and the security dimensions. The OSCE principles remain today as relevant as in the past, if not more, when dealing with present challenges, even though their practical translation should be adapted to the new environment. These principles are what make this organisation so special and have to remain the foundation of its future action.
- OSCE must adapt to the new threats and challenges originating on the one hand from post 9/11 World, but also from the deep, fundamental and overriding transformation process of international structures; while, on the other hand, continue to address the old challenges that remain, emerging from inter-state and in particular intra-state conflicts, such as frozen conflicts or originating in the geo-political concerns of its members.
- Terrorism, WMD, failed or weak states, organized crime and its "offspring", trafficking in Human beings, are the issues regularly mentioned nowadays. They are direct threats that the OSCE has already started to address, in particular by finding "niches" where its comparative advantages make its intervention relevant.

- But the OSCE must go beyond these immediate threats and address more consistently other challenges which, though less visible, are nonetheless very important and relevant for the stability and predictability of the international environment.

To this category belongs all forms of radicalism, such as aggressive nationalism, xenophobia, racism, including anti-Semitism, but also anti-Arabism and anti-Islamism. If intolerance does not threaten yet our democracies, it has nevertheless reached alarming levels too often.

Fighting terrorism efficiently can not be limited to fighting its effects through the use of force, but there is a need to understand and address its root causes. This is the second aspect where the OSCE can prove useful. Let me outline why:

- In many places within the OSCE area growing poverty is of concern. In an interdependent and transparent environment, the awareness and perception of different state of development of civil societies, the huge differences in living standards, are perceived by those who feel to be on the losing end more acutely than ever. This leads to growing frustration and disenchantment towards democracy and market economy as universal values. Nostalgia for a more predictable and secure environment prevails often over so called “Western” values which have brought little good, except for a tiny minority.

In addition, societies with different levels of development are all faced with the dark side of globalisation: a profound structural transformation, which complexity is such that more questions are raised than can be answered. Globalisation is with no doubts contributing to a sense of insecurity and unpredictability within civil societies, rich or poor. This provides for a fertile ground on which terrorism, extremism, intolerance and all forms of radicalism mentioned earlier are growing fast.

- A “soft” security institution such as the OSCE, with its founding principles, in particular Human Rights and fundamental freedoms, its inclusive membership and its tools like institutions and field presences, will not solve all problems. But the OSCE is particularly well suited to play a meaningful role and should be better used by the participating states as an instrument addressing these issues and therefore helping to create a more stable and predictable environment. This is a domaine for unspectacular, modest and step by step approaches, a methodology familiar to the OSCE, which are good value for money and can lead nevertheless to substantial

results. This, however, will only be successful if the approach is based on trust and cooperation and is perceived as universally applicable throughout the OSCE. The perception that OSCE standards are not necessarily applicable equally to all its members is the quickest way to jeopardize the Organisation's credibility and capacity for action. The very nature of the Organisation, its principles, in particular comprehensive security, demand an inclusive **agenda**, not double standards and "finger-pointing".

3. The "way forward"

There are many possible ways forward. I will start with what it should not be.

- What OSCE should not do in dealing with those new challenges, is to continue to produce documents and declarations of intent. These are not the "deliverables" that will maintain its relevance and credibility in the future. The OSCE has, with the Maastricht document on a new strategy, a very solid and comprehensive "road map" that should now be fully and creatively implemented. Maybe an action plan and an implementation calendar for the new strategy adopted in Maastricht should be considered.
- What the OSCE should not do either, particularly when dealing with terrorism, is to trade Human Rights and fundamental freedoms for security. Its monitoring role of the compatibility of measures against terrorism with Human Rights and fundamental freedoms commitments remains essential and, as we have seen recently, not at all addressing theoretical concerns.

So, what should the OSCE do concretely ?

- First, it can and should, as in the past, continue to play a role in crisis management, in particular before – through conflict prevention and especially early warning - and after in the post-conflict rehabilitation phase. Its main tool, but not exclusive, for preventive diplomacy has been the HCNM. Field presence and other Institutions have a potential as well which should be mobilised to full capacity. In particular, the feasibility of new imaginative initiatives in the field of conflict mitigation should be considered. In particular we should ask the question whether large OSCE field mission are still good value for money or whether a smaller, but highly competent field presence does not fit better today's need.

Such actions can only be successful if first, there is enough political will to initiate them and long term political commitment as well as serious funding. Peace building is a very long term endeavour that too often is jeopardized by the international community's weak commitment. Second, such action must rest on highly professional staff. Therefore, the OSCE should not only pay utmost attention to the political aspects of its operation, but also to the quality of its product. Leadership and professional competences are essential for the political success of any operation. Therefore the OSCE should in particular, find non bureaucratic ways for keeping its qualified and experienced personnel while further increasing the recruitment of specialists, both in the field and at headquarters. The Organisation should invest more in its Human Resources, with a long term perspective. This is common sense in the private sector and should be common sense here too. It can be done without turning the OSCE into a career organisation. What is required is creativity and flexibility. That would certainly contribute to improving the effectiveness and functioning of the OSCE field operations, the essential tool for a credible involvement of the Organisation in crisis management.

New tools should also be developed – as already stated in the Maastricht document – in my view, they should certainly not be new Institutions or bodies, but new form of operations, particularly but not exclusively in the field. In this context, cooperation should not only be developed with other inter-governmental organisations, but also with specialised NGOs and “think-tanks”. The possibility of bringing together the internationally available knowledge on a specific issue where the OSCE is contemplating action should be considered, for example in the form of “task forces”. In particular, the idea of a civilian rapid deployment unit, with civil administration capabilities should be implemented.

- Secondly, the new threats, mostly from non-state actors, such as terrorism, WMD and related technologies, organized crime and related issues should definitely be addressed through concrete, pragmatic and readily implementable measures, within a policy of “niches”. Many have already been identified, from Border Security and Management to monitoring and ensuring security of stockpiles of weapons, be it small arms such as MANPADS or WMD, through policing activities. The OSCE initiative in the context of MANPADS is the best example one can think of a swift and pragmatic approach that should be prioritized in view of preventing terrorists to increase their capabilities. It is the implementation of such initiatives that will ensure

that the OSCE remains an operational and relevant actor in addressing present threats. Developing further the FSC into an instrument that produces deliverables in response to present threat is essential.

Among other initiatives of the kind that should receive high priority, one should consider:

- Measures to prevent access and acquisition of WMD materials (N.B.C). Here, the rationale is to limit the risks of another catastrophic terrorist action in the OSCE area.
- Measures to exchange information on risks and coordinate response in the field of critical infrastructure protection. In societies highly dependent on technology, critical infrastructures cover a very wide range of fields, from maritime, air and ground transportation to information technology, communications, water supplies and distribution. Because they often are transnational by nature, critical infrastructure cannot be efficiently protected through national means only. Meetings of experts with a view to make OSCE wide recommendations could be initiated.
- Measures to harmonize and coordinate action in the field of transborder crossing, that is all matters relating to border security, travel documents, people smuggling and other forms of illegal border crossing and migration (such as trafficking).
- Thirdly, the OSCE should not forget about its politico-military instruments just because we have to deal with non state actors. Even though some of them may appear dusty and less relevant in today's security environment, the OSCE does not exist in a strategic vacuum. The very principles at the origin of its arms control and other similar agreements were to build confidence and thus prevent conflict. These principles remain as valid today as yesterday. Disregarding them would be precisely the opposite than a confidence building measure. On the contrary, the commitment to the acquis should be reaffirmed, if only for its confidence building effect.
- In comparison to terrorist networks and organized crime, the International Community lags far behind in terms of transborder cooperation !
The OSCE, here again through the scope of its membership is well placed to initiate steps improving the efficiency of international response to transnational threats. Regular meeting of experts, be it police experts or experts in different field of critical infrastructures would be the embryo of a sort of OSCE homeland security for the

future.

We all know that it is easier said than done, as it involves slaughtering some “sacred cows” both at the national and intra institutional level, but international cooperation is also a “must” in present times.

Capacity building should remain a priority as well. A lot remains to be done, but the example of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, bringing together young professionals and students from Central Asian republics provides added value not only through its regional educational and training objectives, but by building regional networks of people who are possibly the leaders and the elite of tomorrow in the region.

- To better address realities on the ground, the OSCE enhance its lessons learned capacities by having as a rule a report on lessons learned after each rotation of heads of mission, recommendation should be presented regularly with a view of implementing in practice. A “lessons learned unit” should coordinate this effort in a non bureaucratic way.
- Last, but not least the early warning function of the OSCE. Its importance should not be repeated like a mantra, but the creation of a credible follow-up mechanism is in my view necessary.

4. Conclusion

Let me conclude. With initiatives such as MANPADS export control the OSCE has certainly chosen the right way to address new threats. It has to follow up on this path and initiate more of this kind of pragmatic and focused actions.

In parallel it must continue its important task of providing assistance to members which expect it, to manage their transformation and modernisation process through institution building, capacity building and support for their democratisation process. But with less finger-pointing and with no double standard.

The participating states should also encourage a more political role for the OSCE to perform more conflict mitigation and less service providing, in particular in those regions where it is not competing with other structures such as NATO or EU.

Ultimately however the way forward is not the issue, the issue is the political commitment of participating states. Therefore, the success of the Organisation will be based on the answer given to the two following questions:

- The first one is conceptual – not in the sense of designing the way forward and of developing a strategic concept such as in Maastricht – but with respect to the place and role that its participating states wants it to have in the European Security Architecture. Without more political will and determination, the OSCE will have a hard time getting the necessary resources, particularly financial, to implement credibly the strategy set forth at Maastricht. In this respect the way forward lies in the hands of its members. As other inter-governmental organisations, its capacity for action is the sum of the political determination of its members.

- The second question is institutional: will the reform process in which it has engaged lead to more efficient and professional structures or to a heavier, less flexible bureaucracy ?

It is my hope that the answer to both questions will be positive because the parameters on which it has been build are unique, its legitimacy is one of its main assets. Renouncing the benefit of its principles and instruments would impoverish Europe's security landscape. On the contrary I believe that it should remain a model not only for Europe, but beyond as well, such as for the greater Middle-East, a region in dire needs.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.