



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

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**Partnership for Peace Consortium - 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference:**

**Transformation: Meeting the Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Bucharest 13 - 15 June 2004**

Mr Chairman,

I am honoured to be invited to this Conference to share the OSCE experience on meeting the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. May I remind you that next year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the OSCE as an organisation, which started off with the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975 establishing the CSCE. It's only three years since Romania successfully undertook the important and challenging task to hold the Chairmanship of the Organization, under which important documents such as The Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism was adopted. To meet new challenges to security is the very 'rationale' behind the establishment of the OSCE, and therefore our focus and philosophy is very accentuated towards the prevention of conflicts.

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. Our present 18 field presences are involved in a number of activities falling also into a broad category of peace operations, and these activities have contributed significantly to dealing with different levels of crisis/conflict situations in Eastern and Southern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. In fact, our Missions themselves have demonstrated to serve a much appreciated early warning/conflict prevention role.

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 Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, adopted in Maastricht 2003. 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.

In the OSCE Strategy, threats to security and stability are perceived more likely to arise as negative, destabilising consequences of developments that cut across the politico-military, economic and environmental and human dimensions, than from any major armed conflict.

Many of them are interconnected: a threat in one dimension of security usually affects the situation also in other domains. Naturally, not every threat to security is present in every region of the OSCE area to the same extent: different regions and sub-regions are faced with different, sometimes very specific problems. On the basis of the OSCE Strategy, together with **specific threats of a politico-military nature**, four key-clusters of threats have been identified:

- threats arising from **terrorism and other criminal activities**;
- **inter-state and intra-state conflicts**;
- threats related to **discrimination and intolerance**;
- threats related to the **economy and the environment**.

Threats emerging from **inter-State and intra-State conflicts** remain the broadest category of threat within the OSCE area. Such conflicts, wherever they take place, may also pose a risk to neighbouring areas and may give rise to instability and other types of threats, such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, excessive and destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons (SALW), human rights violations, mass expulsion, deterioration of the socio-economic situation, and illegal migration.

**Terrorism** is one of the most important causes of instability in the current security environment and will remain a key challenge to peace and stability and to State power, particularly through its ability to use asymmetric methods to bypass traditional security and defence systems. Very often terrorism runs in parallel with organised crime and other criminal activities, and illicit trafficking. Open borders and free movement of persons and goods are beneficial to international co-operation, but also present growing challenges, including illegal migration. I may mention that there is now a focused discussion within the OSCE on how to develop a concept on Border Management and Security, to be delivered to the upcoming Ministerial Meeting in Sofia later this year.

**Discrimination and intolerance** also threaten the security of individuals and may give rise to wider-scale conflict and violence. *(They can have their root in issues such as ethnic and religious tensions, aggressive nationalism, chauvinism and xenophobia, and may also stem from racism, anti-Semitism and violent extremism, as well as lack of respect for the rights of*

*persons belonging to national minorities. The mobility of migrant populations and the emergence of societies with many co-existing cultures in all parts of the OSCE region present growing opportunities as well as challenges.)*

Deepening economic and social disparities, lack of rule of law, weak governance in public and corporate spheres, corruption, widespread poverty and high unemployment are some key **economic factors**, which threaten stability and security. *(They provide a breeding ground for other major threats. **Environmental degradation**, unsustainable use of natural resources, mismanagement of wastes and pollution affect ecological systems and have a substantial negative impact on the health, welfare, stability and security of States.)*

Many of the **threats of a politico-military nature**, including those addressed by existing OSCE documents, such as destabilising accumulations of conventional weaponry, illicit transfers of arms, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, remain of great concern to the OSCE participating States. Among the threats that have either changed in nature or impact, or are new altogether, armed threats posed by terrorists and other criminal groups require particular attention. Equally, attention should be given to potential challenges stemming from the changing character of armed conflicts.

Now let me present the way OSCE is preparing to meet the challenges mentioned above. 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.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me turn now to 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 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 Central European 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.

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. The 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.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 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. As recent as three weeks ago the CPC together with the PA conducted a seminar in Vienna on the topic of parliamentary oversight of the armed forces. Finally, I may mention that a Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition was adopted last year, and it establishes practical procedures for stockpile destruction, while upgrading their security and management practices.

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 enlargement 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Including manufacture, marking, export controls, brokering, stockpile/surplus management and security destruction and Disarmament, demobilization and re-integration measures

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 democratisation 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. In this connection, let me point out that better use should be made of cross-conditionality: non-compliance with international obligations (ICTY or OSCE or Dayton) could be linked to progress in the relations with other organizations (e.g. SAP or PfP cooperation). We must see where and how we can complement each other, using experience gained, resources and mechanisms available. And we should respect the principle of inclusiveness and involve all relevant players.

The OSCE/NATO.UN/EU working level consultations between headquarters have become a good example of improved information sharing, and we are presently discussing ways to make it even more systematic and operational. For instance, we have invited both NATO and the EU to join us for a set of consultations in a “trilateral format” next July, to compare our respective programmes of activities in a number of areas where we are all engaged, albeit from different perspectives, through programmes whose complementarity could probably be further enhanced.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by pointing to the fact, that 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. Europe will continue to change also in the future. It remains to be seen what the impact of the inclusion of new members to NATO and EU will have. But I think that our common endeavours in addressing new threats and challenges remain fully complementary and that our original contributions can reinforce each other. We intend to continue operating in a flexible, pragmatic and transparent way towards advancing these common goals of ours, firmly committed as ever to the strengthening of stability and security in our region.

Thank you.