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FROM CONFRONTATION TO CO-OPERATION: RESTORING CO-OPERATIVE SECURITY IN EUROPE

Berlin, 23-24 June 2016

Conference Report

Overview

Divergent security perceptions and decreasing trust have been hindering co-operation in the OSCE area for some time. The crisis in and around Ukraine has exacerbated existing divisions and marked a clear retreat from aspirations towards a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community to a confrontational posture and return to Cold War rhetoric. This OSCE Security Days conference aimed at contributing to a strategic dialogue on how to overcome the current stalemate and diverging threat perceptions and return to co-operative security in Europe.

More than 200 participants representing governments of OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, international and regional organizations, academia, civil society and the media engaged in a wide-ranging and dynamic debate. The full-day programme on 24 June was preceded by a night-owl session on protecting fundamental freedoms in times of crisis hosted by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in the Allianz-Forum on 23 June. The main conference held in the premises of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung was structured into four sessions that focused on restoring stability and predictability in the politico-military sphere, ways to bridge economic integration processes, joint responses to global and transnational threats, and perspectives for returning to co-operative security in the OSCE area.

The event generated a number of ideas and recommendations for rebuilding trust and confidence among the OSCE participating States and improving the prospects for joint action in the face of growing common security threats and challenges. The lively and interactive discussion underlined that European security faces a number of challenges that are too great for any one country or organization to tackle alone. It also showed that while

there were different perceptions and divergent interpretations of the origins of the current impasse, there was also a growing realization that the current challenges to European security required all participating States to seek a convergence of interests wherever possible. Follow-up activities to this OSCE Security Days conference in autumn 2016 and spring 2017 are currently under consideration.

*An annotated agenda with guiding questions is in the annex to this report. A full video-recording of the proceedings is available on the OSCE website. The event was made possible thanks to the generous support of the **Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung**, the **Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung**, and the **German OSCE Chairmanship**.*

Night Owl: Protecting Fundamental Freedoms in Times of Crisis

In his opening remarks, Parliamentary State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry of Defence Ralf Brauksiepe outlined on behalf of Federal Minister of Defence Ursula von der Leyen the many challenges and threats confronting security in Europe, evoking recent terrorist attacks in Paris, Istanbul and Brussels, as well as the use of hybrid warfare for power politics. He pointed to the risks of further fragmentation and division in the face of challenges such as the large refugee movements from the Middle East. In this tense situation, the State Secretary stressed the relevance of the OSCE for promoting fundamental freedoms on the basis of shared principles and for renewing dialogue, rebuilding trust and restoring security, in keeping with the motto of the 2016 German OSCE Chairmanship.

The panel discussion and Q&A with the audience highlighted the need for close engagement with civil society when discussing new approaches to security. In times when governments are under pressure to tighten security, the role of specialised bodies such as the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights was considered important in making sure that any additional security measures include sufficient safeguards, are limited in time, and designed in a way that is compatible with civil rights and fundamental freedoms. Preferably, authorities wishing to introduce new security laws should take a human rights-centred approach from the very start. Their action should also be commensurate to the actual threats and not be driven by a fear of the unknown. In relation to the migration challenge and associated fears among the local population of receiving countries, more emphasis on tolerance, integration and positive messages stressing the opportunities offered by migration rather than a one-sided narrative could help reassure the public and counter populist rhetoric. Looking at the need to address the root causes of threats to security emanating from areas adjacent to Europe, the link between sustainable development and the rule of law was seen as particularly pertinent.

Keynote Speech: Setting the Scene

On 24 June, Special Representative for the German OSCE Chairmanship Gernot Erler in his keynote address recalled the long negotiations that preceded the conclusion of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975. He characterized the CSCE and later OSCE method as one of patient dialogue making different interests transparent, reconciling them and in this way building confidence and preventing or peacefully resolving conflicts. Special Representative Erler deplored the violation of fundamental principles and the loss of trust and confidence, which

are undermining the ability of OSCE participating States to co-operate in addressing the many pressing security challenges of our times. He also pointed to an erosion of the basic consensus that sustainable security must be built on respect for human rights and democratic processes based on the rule of law. Detecting a sort of “verbose speechlessness”, he called on participating States to return to the observance of agreed rules and to work towards concrete results by focusing on areas of common ground.

Session I: Restoring Stability and Predictability in the Politico-Military Sphere

The first session focused on restoring military confidence in times of crisis. The debate stressed the risks associated with the increasing frequency of military exercises, including so-called “snap exercises” (i.e., without prior notification), and a lack of mechanisms to avoid military incidents and accidents and prevent any escalation of such occurrences. It was recognized that while trust was a key element in any co-operation, especially in such a sensitive area as the politico-military field, rebuilding trust and confidence after the violation of the Helsinki principles in and around Ukraine would take a lot of time and effort, as well as goodwill and patience of all involved.

Participants expressed different views on both the origins of the current crisis and the developments that have since ensued. It was argued that NATO’s responses to Russia’s actions in Ukraine were proportionate, defensive and in line with the Alliance’s international obligations. From Russia’s perspective, however, the increased number of NATO exercises, enhanced presence of its military infrastructure in Eastern Europe, and its further eastward enlargement represent a threat to Russia’s national security. In these circumstances, many participants argued that returning to a discussion on politico-military confidence-building measures and arms control was critical, but also very challenging. In this context, it was also noted that with the end of the Cold War, most Western countries had lost much of their analytical capacity to understand Russia, its perspectives and actions.

Despite divergent views on the current crisis, it was broadly recognized that the situation required renewed efforts to re-launch politico-military dialogue. Suspension of military-to-military contacts was considered a main obstacle to progress. Given the dangers of the current situation, military transparency and risk reduction measures were identified as priority areas for discussion. Many participants stressed the need to modernize the Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and called on the Russian Federation to consider the numerous proposals put forward in the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation. Governments should also consider updating other relevant documents in this area such as the Open Skies Treaty. At the same time, some participants noted that without a return to full respect for existing norms and principles, any debate on new confidence- and security-building measures would be futile.

The discussion underlined that a step-by-step approach starting at the expert level and including also track 1.5 and track 2 initiatives might be more likely to succeed than a larger, more comprehensive initiative. Some participants suggested that the involvement of civil society could help to inject fresh ideas and proposals into this traditionally inter-governmental process.

Recommendations

- Dialogue in the politico-military dimension should focus on increasing **military transparency**, in particular with regard to “snap” exercises, and improving **risk reduction measures** to avoid military incidents and accidents and prevent potential escalation and counter-escalation.
- The OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation should **update and modernize the Vienna Document**. All proposals put forward by a number of delegations should be seriously considered. Updating other relevant documents such as the Open Skies Treaty should be also considered.
- **Involving civil society in politico-military dialogue** could inject fresh ideas and proposals into the process. Establishing a NATO-Russia Council Civic Forum or Vienna Document Civic Forum could be considered.
- **Military-to-military contacts** between NATO member states and the Russian Federation should be re-established.
- There should be **more expert-level contacts and discussions**, including **track 1.5 and 2 initiatives**, on revitalizing arms control and transparency measures.
- A strong case was made for investing in greater **analytical capacities** to better understand divergent threat perceptions, perspectives, motives and actions.

Session II: Competition vs. Co-operation: Prospects for Harmonising Integration Processes

The second session explored ways to bridge various integration processes in the OSCE area. The discussion highlighted the positive effects of trade and investment for stability and security in the OSCE area. Integration processes such as the European Union (EU) and, more recently, the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) were seen as positive drivers of economic growth. There was broad recognition that connecting these processes and ensuring their compatibility warranted further efforts, not least in the view of countries currently outside of these regional processes but nevertheless affected by decisions taken by them.

Different views were put forward on whether the EU and EEU had sufficiently engaged with each other on respective integration processes, notably in the case of the EU's Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with Ukraine. Against the current backdrop of growing East-West tensions, as well as economic sanctions and counter-sanctions, participants recognized the need for dialogue to avoid increased compartmentalization of the OSCE's economic space. Moving beyond mere technical or informal talks to something more official was seen as a challenge, in particular in the current polarized political situation. Reference was made to earlier ideas of a common economic area from the Atlantic to the Pacific which some considered worthwhile keeping in mind as a long-term perspective in spite of the many political and structural obstacles that would need to be overcome.

Participants recognized the growing importance of connecting China with Europe as a transformative force in the Eurasian region. The China-driven “One Belt, One Road” initiative was seen as an opportunity for greater connectivity, a theme highlighted at a recent OSCE Chairmanship business conference in Berlin. Some participants considered that the OSCE might serve as a suitable platform for exploring economic confidence-building measures and

as a framework for dialogue among various sub-regional organizations in the economic sphere.

Recommendations

- A **conference to discuss practical areas of interaction** between integration initiatives within the OSCE space involving the business community with a stake in Eurasian trade could be organized. The vision of a common economic area from the Atlantic to the Pacific could be an important leitmotiv.
- Starting an **official dialogue** involving the EU, the EEU, and potentially others, would be an important symbolic step. It could help create a more constructive atmosphere but also serve to tackle real issues and remove some of the irritants that continue to affect relations.
- A trilateral format involving the OSCE, EEU and EU for discussions on **economic confidence-building measures** was proposed.
- Countries maintaining privileged relations with both the EU and the EEU could serve as **models for compatibility** and might offer lessons for regulating ties with other third countries.
- The **OSCE could play a more prominent role in facilitating economic connectivity across areas divided by conflict lines**. By way of example, reference was made to the OSCE's experience in the Trilateral Contact Group's working group on the economy within the framework of the Minsk negotiations on the crisis in and around Ukraine. Any such activity could also benefit from more research on economic connectivity in conflicts and the specific expertise of a technical advisory group.

Session III: Building Coalitions to Respond to Global and Transnational Challenges

This session looked at approaches and strategies to build effective coalitions to jointly address a range of increasingly intertwined, complex, multidimensional, transnational and global challenges like terrorism and violent extremism, organized crime, trafficking in human beings, climate change and large movements of refugees and migrants. It was noted that these challenges are becoming at the same time both domestic and international issues. Solving them requires innovative and flexible coalitions involving governments and international organizations like the OSCE, but also civil society and the private sector, underpinned by a common vision and strong political will.

Some participants pointed out that coalition-building to address global challenges appears particularly difficult against the current backdrop of deep mistrust and divergent views among states and within societies. There was agreement, however, that the solution lies in identifying commonalities rather than differences when addressing global challenges. For instance, while the economic and financial crisis remains a highly divisive issue, countering international terrorism and the fight against climate change have received increasing support for a common approach at the international level.

Some advocated having one country or a small group of like-minded states take the lead in creating strategic partnerships to tackle specific issues, similar to the role played by Belarus in mobilizing actors and resources in countering trafficking in human beings. It was also widely recognized that global civil society movements and international and regional

organizations play a key complementary role to national governments. Civil society, in particular, can raise awareness among the wider public about urgent issues of common concern and often gives voice to innovative solutions, while international organizations like the OSCE help create the structure and the rules for all coalition members to work together effectively. All agreed that flexible and innovative multilateralism supported by strong political leadership provides the best approach to the many complex and global challenges facing our societies.

In the digital and social media era, information management was singled out as a fundamental issue: evidence-based, objective and factual information helps raise awareness, mobilize resources and change negative and irrational narratives and should always support multilateral coalition-building.

Recommendations

- **Single countries or small groups of like-minded states** should **launch initiatives at the international level** to raise awareness of urgent global challenges and seek common solutions.
- **Coalition-building initiatives** should focus first on **areas of common concern** that are able to unify and create global consensus on solutions (e.g., terrorism, human trafficking, and sustainable development).
- International and regional organizations need to increasingly **join forces with civil society** to raise awareness, stimulate interest and mobilize political will and resources to tackle common challenges.
- Participating States should **encourage and empower relevant OSCE executive structures and initiatives** to foster innovative multilateral coalitions that bridge civil societies and national governments.
- Increasing **evidence-based information management** can facilitate multilateral coalition-building around global challenges through factual and objective data able to support long-term rational policies free of influence by ideology and populism.

Concluding Session: From Confrontation to Co-operation: Reviving Co-operative Security in the OSCE Area

The concluding session explored perspectives for a return to co-operative security in the OSCE area. It was noted that there was a serious security vacuum between Russia, the EU and NATO countries that was causing instability and had to be addressed from a long-term perspective. While resuming full co-operation on European security seems out of reach in the current political situation, moving into a de-escalation phase through renewed dialogue was seen as a precondition to rebuilding confidence and trust and eventually restoring co-operative security. Many participants also argued that without resolving the conflict in and around Ukraine first, there could be no return to full co-operation between Russia and the West. The implementation of the Minsk Agreements was recognized as a first important step in this regard.

Under these circumstances, it was argued that there was a need for strategic patience and any efforts in this area should now focus especially on managing the current situation and containing any further deterioration. At the same time, some participants suggested that

offering a mid- to long-term strategic vision was necessary in order to re-engage Russia and the West in constructive discussions on the future of European security. Reference was made to the recommendations of the Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security as a potential source of inspiration. A better understanding of each other's perceptions was identified as key for reconciling strongly divergent positions and turning the current confrontation over the status of "states in-between" the NATO Alliance and Russia into a win-win situation. In particular, the notion that deepening partnerships with one economic bloc was possible only at the expense of relations with another economic bloc was seen as a dangerous misunderstanding that had to be addressed.

The debate highlighted the central role of the OSCE as the only inclusive Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security organization. Many participants stressed the need for a two-track approach combining an intensive security dialogue on divisive issues with strengthened engagement in areas of common interest where concrete tangible results could be achieved. Some considered that the OSCE had been marginalized for too long before the crisis in and around Ukraine. While the OSCE's pre-eminent role was now more widely recognized, some participants called for increased political and financial support for its work. In this regard, it was also suggested that enhancing the OSCE's capacities and autonomy to act, as recommended by the Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security in its interim report, was essential for the future of co-operative security.

The discussion also underlined the relevance of civil society in this process, particularly at a time when inter-state relations are gridlocked. It was noted that many good proposals do not find their way into formal deliberations of the OSCE for lack of an appropriate platform. Concrete examples include suggestions to increase economic and business co-operation and to enhance engagement with women and youth. In addition to injecting fresh and innovative ideas, civil society was also seen as instrumental in facilitating people-to-people contacts that can help to reconcile opposing positions.

Recommendations

- All parties should support the full and unconditional **implementation of the Minsk Agreements**.
- A discussion should start on **a strategic vision for the future of European security**, in particular with regard to states in-between. Recommendations of the Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security could serve as a source of inspiration.
- The **OSCE should be used more intensively** as a platform for both security dialogue on divisive issues and engagement in areas of common interest where concrete tangible results can be achieved.
- The **OSCE's capacities and autonomy to act should be enhanced** as recommended by the Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security in its interim report.
- The **OSCE should provide civil society with an appropriate platform** to present its proposals for restoring co-operative security in Europe. Ideas such as an annual civil society summit for the OSCE area, or establishing a civic forum for Ukraine in parallel to the Minsk discussions, could be considered.

Annex



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FROM CONFRONTATION TO CO-OPERATION
RESTORING CO-OPERATIVE SECURITY
IN EUROPE

Berlin, 23-24 June 2016

ANNOTATED AGENDA

THURSDAY, 23 JUNE 2016

Venue: Allianz Forum, Pariser Platz 6, 10117 Berlin

18:00 - 19:45 **Night-owl Session: Security First? Protecting Fundamental Freedoms in Times of Crisis**

Multiple security threats in Europe and beyond are increasing a sense of uncertainty and insecurity among the European public. Governments, state institutions and regional organizations are under pressure to take additional measures to ensure public safety. Support for radical political parties and movements is growing in many European states. How can states, international institutions and civil society effectively tackle global and transnational threats and challenges without undermining fundamental freedoms and while respecting human rights and democratic values? Are we willing to give up some of our freedoms in exchange for greater security?

Welcome

- **Lamberto Zannier**, OSCE Secretary General
- **Hans-Gert Pöttering**, Chairman of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

Opening Remarks

- **Ralf Brauksiepe**, Parliamentary State Secretary, German Federal Ministry of Defence

Followed by a conversation with

- **Johannes Hahn**, EU Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy & Enlargement Negotiations
- **Sonja Licht**, President, Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence
- **Michael Georg Link**, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

Moderator

- **Andrej Grabowski**, Media Advisor and Coach, former Deputy Executive Editor at N24 news channel and TV-radio moderator

19:45 - 21:30 **Reception**

FRIDAY, 24 JUNE 2016

Venue: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Hiroshimastrasse 17, 10785 Berlin

8:30 - 9:00 **Registration**

9:00 - 9:30 **Welcoming remarks**

- **Lamberto Zannier**, OSCE Secretary General
- **Rolf Mützenich**, Member of the German Parliament and Member of the Board of the

9:30 - 10:00 Keynote Speech

- **Gernot Erler**, Special Representative of the Federal Government of Germany for the OSCE Chairmanship

10:00 - 11:30 Session I: Restoring Stability and Predictability in the Politico-Military Sphere

The current crisis in and around Ukraine has exacerbated divisions and mistrust among the OSCE participating States, including in the politico-military sphere. Military exercises are conducted with increasing frequency and often without prior notification. There has been a growing number of incidents of close military encounters. Meanwhile military-to-military dialogue is stagnating or has been suspended. In this situation there is a real potential for dangerous miscalculation and unforeseen incidents that could trigger direct military confrontation.

- *How can military confidence be restored in times of crisis?*
- *What new confidence- and security-building measures could be devised, in particular with regard to snap military exercises and close military encounters?*
- *Can the tension between the right of sovereign states to choose their own alliances and the concept of indivisible security be reconciled?*
- *What steps and measures should be taken to dispel concerns and ensure that the legitimate security interests of all states are respected?*

Moderator: **Fred Tanner**, Senior Adviser to the OSCE Secretary General

Panellists:

- **Anna Dolidze**, Deputy Minister of Defence of Georgia
- **Andrey Kelin**, Director of Department for European Co-operation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation
- **Stefanie Babst**, Head, NATO Strategic Analysis Capability
- **Robert Cooper**, Member of the European Council on Foreign Affairs

11:30 - 11:45 Coffee Break

11:45 - 13:15 Session II: Competition vs. Co-operation: Prospects for Harmonizing Integration Processes

Since the end of the Cold War, trade and investment have expanded dramatically, contributing to stability and security in the OSCE area. Many post-communist countries have joined the European Union, while others aspire to do so in the future. At the same time, some regions in the OSCE area have launched their own integration processes, such as the Eurasian Economic Union. Against the backdrop of growing East-West tensions, economic relations have become more politicized and questions of compatibility have arisen, in particular for countries that are not included in one or another integration process. Meanwhile, economic sanctions and counter-sanctions have become a visible expression of

the fundamental political divisions in Europe.

- *What can be done to prevent the (re-)emergence of camps with exclusive economic arrangements within the OSCE area?*
- *How can connectivity and dialogue between different organizations be improved?*
- *How can regional organizations help move beyond the compartmentalization of the OSCE space and remedy effects of the current crisis?*
- *What kinds of confidence-building measures could be applied in the economic sphere?*

Moderator: **Christian F. Ostermann**, Director of the History and Public Policy Program and the Global Europe Program, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Panellists:

- **Tatyana Valovaya**, Minister of Integration and Macroeconomics, Eurasian Economic Commission
- **Luc Devigne**, Director and Deputy Managing Director for Russia, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia and the OSCE, European External Action Service
- **Heidi Grau**, Head of the Human Security Division, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland
- **Timur Shaimergenov**, Deputy Director, The Library of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Honorary Fellow, Kazakhstan Institute of Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan

13:15 - 14:30 **Buffet Lunch**

14:30 - 16:00 **Session III: Building Coalitions to Respond to Global and Transnational Challenges**

The OSCE area is facing a range of complex security challenges that are multidimensional, transnational or even global, and increasingly intertwined. These challenges, which include terrorism and violent extremism, organized crime, trafficking in human beings, climate change and the recent unprecedented influx of refugees and migrants into Europe, among others, are too big for any single state to tackle on its own.

- *How can the OSCE participating States jointly address these challenges in an effective and co-operative manner?*
- *What innovative approaches and strategies can be applied?*
- *How can governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector work together to help address these challenges?*

Moderator: **Ian Lesser**, Executive Director, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Brussels

Panellists:

- **Alena Kupchyna**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus
- **Fabrizio Hochschild**, Deputy to the UN Secretary General's Special Adviser for the Summit on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants
- **François Heisbourg**, Chairman of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy and the

International Institute for Strategic Studies, Special Adviser for Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique

16:00 - 16:15 **Coffee Break**

16:15 - 17:45 **Concluding Session: From Confrontation to Co-operation:
Reviving Co-operative Security in the OSCE Area**

The OSCE plays a central role in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security architecture as a platform for inclusive dialogue and joint action. Despite its operational achievements on the ground, the OSCE has been struggling with political paralysis. A deteriorating security situation and risks of new dividing lines emerging in the OSCE area jeopardize constructive co-operation among the OSCE participating States. Rapidly growing global instability is exacerbating these developments.

- *What steps should be taken to avoid further worsening of East-West relations and what strategies could help shift the focus away from confrontation and back to co-operation?*
- *How can trust and confidence among the OSCE participating States be restored and what role can confidence-building measures play in that respect?*
- *What measures could be used to return to constructive dialogue?*
- *How can the European security architecture be strengthened?*

Moderator: **Judy Dempsey**, Non-resident Senior Associate, Carnegie Europe

Panellists:

- **Antje Leendertse**, Head of OSCE Task Force, Federal Foreign Office of Germany
- **Andrij Melnyk**, Ambassador of Ukraine to the Federal Republic of Germany
- **Štefan Füle**, Special Envoy for the OSCE and the Western Balkans of the Czech Republic
- **Igor Yurgens**, Chairman of the Management Board of the Institute of Contemporary Development and Professor of the Higher School of Economics in Moscow

17:45 - 18:00 **Closing Remarks**

- **Lamberto Zannier**, OSCE Secretary General
- **Antje Leendertse**, Head of OSCE Task Force, Federal Foreign Office of Germany

18:00 - 18:45 **Reception**

Master of Ceremony on 24 June:

Paul Bekkers, Director of the Office of the Secretary General, OSCE Secretariat