

Report by the Chairperson of the Security Committee (SC) of the Permanent Council to the 2010 Review Conference

Vienna, 18 October 2010

(Check Against Delivery)

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to join the ranks of my distinguished colleagues here today, and to take the floor as the Chairperson of the Security Committee at the opening of the 2010 OSCE Review Conference on the Politico-Military Dimension. The Review Conference and the Summit that will follow in early December are indeed events of great importance to the OSCE – both from a political and historical perspective.

As Chairperson of the Security Committee, I can unfortunately not look back so far into history as most of my other colleagues who are speaking at this session. At the time of the last Review Conference, eleven years ago, the Security Committee was not yet in existence. Nevertheless, it is a great pleasure for me to review the work of the Security Committee since its first meeting on 6 February 2007, under the then Security Committee Chair, Ambassador Peter Lizák, the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the OSCE.

The creation of a standing committee structure, as a successor to an informal working group system within the OSCE, was the work of many minds. In the case of the Security Committee, several considerations and objectives also came into play.

For one, participating States sought a more permanent platform to discuss new threats to security, to promote the exchange of information with other international organizations and partners, and to have a forum for a comprehensive political dialogue on non-military and political aspects of security, including the implementation of commitments. Also, a standing committee structure was to make possible enhanced interaction between the Organization's participating States and its executive structures, including those that were created by the participating States to address some of the newly emerging threats and security challenges,

such as the Action Against Terrorism Unit (ATU), the Borders Team, and the Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU).

In 2005, the Report by the Panel of Eminent Persons recommended a committee structure ‘to make the consultative and decision-making process more participatory, interactive and transparent, involving all participating States more actively and effectively.’ At the 2005 OSCE Ministerial Council in Ljubljana, MC Decision No. 17/05 on Strengthening the Effectiveness of the OSCE called upon participating States to consider improving the consultative process, including the establishment of a committee structure. On 5 December 2006, MC Decision No.17/06 on the Improvement of the Consultative Process, ushered in the committee structure as informal subsidiary bodies of the Permanent Council, comprising the three standing Committees as we know them today.

A ‘Snapshot’ of Achievements

The Security Committee has been an important venue for reviewing and discussing the activities of participating States and the executive structures in several areas, including addressing cross-dimensional issues affecting politico-military security.

I can give here only a ‘*snapshot*’ of the many activities that have been reviewed and discussed in the Security Committee since 2007. The range of activities in the Security Committee is indeed impressive and gives evidence of the co-operative efforts of many – the participating States, the OSCE Chairmanship, the OSCE Secretariat and, of course, our partners in other international organizations and national institutions.

The following list demonstrates the wide-range of the Security Committee’s activities since 2007:

- Regular reports of the executive structures have kept delegations well-informed about conducted and planned activities. Feedback provided by delegations has been important in guiding future activities of the executive structures.
- Executive structures have used the Security Committee to keep delegations informed about the activities of field operations in their sphere of responsibility and to provide information about specific projects. For example, during 2010, the

Borders Team distributed a matrix of border-related activities of all OSCE field operations to give delegations the full picture of the OSCE's current border security and management activities and invited the Principal of the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe to brief delegations on progress made. Thus, the Security Committee has been particularly crucial for increasing the visibility of the work of the thematic units.

- The Security Committee has also played a major role in assisting with the co-ordination of OSCE executive structures that are working on non-military aspects of security.
- Moreover, the Security Committee is also an important venue to draw attention to funding needs for various activities by the thematic units. Discussions and interactions between the representatives of the 56 participating States and the representatives of the thematic units have thus also contributed to various fund-raising activities. Moreover, the Security Committee has also been a forum for the delegations to provide direction to the thematic units.
- The Security Committee has been a venue for each OSCE Chairmanship to report on those activities it has actively supported, such as conferences and workshops, or as more recently, on issues related to the Corfu Process.
- The Security Committee has been an equally important forum for the Secretary General to speak on important topics such as, in 2008, on the implementation of MC Decision No. 4/07 on OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan, or in 2010 on his Report on 'Further OSCE Efforts to Address Transnational Threats and Challenges to Security and Stability.'
- Moreover, the Security Committee has been a main venue for launching new, forward-looking ideas and initiatives, and for negotiating political documents stemming from these initiatives. Since 2007, for example, six such documents have been negotiated by the SC and subsequently adopted at the MC level, significantly strengthening and expanding the OSCE's role in tackling transnational threats. The PC Decision 914/09 on Police-related activities was also discussed at length during

2009; as was a Draft Ministerial Council Decision on Further OSCE Action in Border Security and Management in 2008 (although no MC Decision was adopted).

- An important element of the work of the Security Committee has been the discussion of the main findings of conducted workshops and conferences related to the three thematic units. For example, on anti-terrorism issues, three interesting discussions took place in 2010 – on non-nuclear critical energy infrastructure protection, on the international legal framework and on the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Public Key Directory (PKD). These discussions helped identify the main policy options for participating States, as well as possibilities for OSCE awareness-raising and capacity-building activities in these areas. The Recommendations of the Annual Police Experts Meeting 2010 and the Drug Trafficking conclusions also were discussed at the Security Committee.

- The Security Committee has also been quick to pick up on debates related to new security challenges. In the context of MC Decision 4/07 on OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan, the Security Committee played a vital role in shaping the discussion and in providing a platform to discuss and review progress on various Secretariat-initiated activities. Most important, the Security Committee in 2010 has been able to assist and structure strategic discussions and stock-taking on OSCE activities on transnational threats (TNT), thus supporting in practical ways the initiatives that have come out of the Corfu Process.

- It should also be mentioned that the Security Committee has, on occasion, addressed cross-dimensional issues, and in this effort has hosted speakers from other parts of the Secretariat and the institutions, such as the Office of the OSCE Co-ordinator for Economic and Environmental Affairs (OCEEA), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and the Office of the Representative of Freedom of the Media (RFoM). In June 2010, a special Security Committee meeting was held to extend a hand to the Secretariat's Gender Issues unit, and to explore the benefits of women's involvement in security.

- Important is also the role of the Security Committee in discussing the date, modalities and agenda of the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) as it allows for yet another forum where differing perspectives can be brought forward.

- Last, but not least, the Security Committee has also become an effective forum to interact with the UN and other international organizations, as well as national authorities of participating States, to learn about their needs and priorities and to discuss their co-operation with the OSCE. Indeed, one can say that we have established a tradition of inviting guest speakers from other international or regional organizations as well as national authorities to exchange information and share ‘good practices’. For example, the Security Committee has fielded speakers representing the United Nations Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the UN Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (UN CTED), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and Interpol. Also, during 2010, the First Deputy Chairman of the National Security Committee of Tajikistan briefed delegations about his country’s new national border management strategy, an initiative supported by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan and the CPC’s OS/Border Team.

Challenges and the Way Forward

The many benefits of the Security Committee structure are clear. However, in concluding, allow me to make a few additional comments on what I see from the SC Chair’s perspective as some of the challenges which require our attention.

For one, I believe that we should consider a stronger and regular link between the thematic work of the Security Committee and the process of adopting the OSCE’s Unified Budget as, increasingly, there are budgetary implications as to what the Secretariat’s thematic units can accomplish, or in some cases, not accomplish due to financial and human resource limitations.

Moreover, in my opinion, the Security Committee could be used even more effectively to translate thematic-related discussions into decisions on the level of the Permanent Council. In this context, we could explore better means and mechanisms for intensifying the

interaction between the Heads of Delegations at the Permanent Council and the Security Committee.

I also see an increasing need to implement a cross- or multi-dimensional approach to TNT activities, and thus favor more frequent joint meetings of the three Committees or organizing ‘special thematic sessions’. Cross-linkages among various TNT issues, such as a holistic approach to reform criminal justice systems, democratic policing, trafficking in human beings, or human rights and rule of law issues connected with combating terrorism require complimentary responses.

Furthermore, the challenge will remain not only to keep TNT issues as a ‘standing item’ on the Security Committee’s agenda beyond the Corfu and Summit process, but also to have a point-of-contact among the OSCE executive structures that allows for a well co-ordinated approach to these issues.

Keeping the Security Committee more updated on field activities related to non-military aspects of security would add more regularly informative elements for the participating States when discussing, for example, mandates. Pertinent TNT programmes at the level of OSCE field operations should also become part of the reporting so as to get the ‘full picture’ of OSCE activities on TNT at the Security Committee.

Lastly, let me propose that the Security Committee makes also a linkage to the discussions regarding conflict prevention and confidence-building measures, by exploring what potentials some of the activities of the thematic units have to assist in that direction. For example, the preventive and confidence-building potential of border-related activities could be taken up as an additional subject. Moreover, I suggest there may be merit in discussing further some of the non-military related ideas raised in the Corfu Process under the tick on the Role of the OSCE in Early Warning, Conflict Prevention and Resolution, Crisis Management and Post-conflict Rehabilitation.

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you for your kind attention, and I look forward to our discussions in the various panels.