



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2012 OSCE SECURITY DAYS

Vienna, 24-25 June 2012

INTRODUCTION

The OSCE Security Days, held in Vienna on 24-25 June 2012, brought together more than 250 participants with the aim of strengthening interaction between the OSCE and relevant Track II initiatives on Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security. During the four-panel debate, a prominent group of experts, think tanks and OSCE delegates discussed current security challenges and the role of civil society in shaping a security community. The debate highlighted the need to tackle security challenges through cooperative tools and to promote trust, dialogue and reconciliation. The OSCE Security Days – which was live streamed over the internet - was an open forum for debate and provided valuable intellectual input for the 2012 Annual Security Review Conference, which began the following day.

DISCUSSION

The welcome addresses were delivered by **Lamberto Zannier**, OSCE Secretary General, **Eoin O’Leary**, Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council, and **Wolfgang Schüssel**, President of the Austrian Association for Foreign Policy and the United Nations (ÖGAVN) and former Austrian Chancellor.

The first session was moderated by **István Gyarmati**, President of the Center for Democracy Public Foundation, with the participation of **Heather Conley**, Senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, **Igor Yurgens**, Director of the *Institut Sovremenogo Razvitiya* and **Alyson Bailes**, Professor at the Reykjavik University of Iceland. The discussion focussed on the topics to be included in a comprehensive and balanced security agenda, keeping in mind geopolitical landscape and new threats to security. Some of the points raised in the subsequent debate included:

- *Today, the OSCE region enjoys unprecedented peace, and yet it faces an increasing number of "old" and "new" security challenges.*
- *The OSCE should strive to prioritize its activities where it can make a difference, based on its comparative advantage.*
- *Talks on the possible streamlining - or rebalancing - of the OSCE's work would benefit from greater engagement of civil society, including think tanks and academia. In this regard, the OSCE could consider establishing an informal "network" to assist the Organization in discussing sensitive issues in a less official context.*
- *The importance of working with youth was repeatedly highlighted.*

- *Given the ongoing financial crisis, it was noted that extremism and radical movements may find more fertile ground to develop and the OSCE should closely monitor this phenomena.*
- *The Mediterranean region could benefit significantly from the OSCE experience.*

The second session looked at the emergence of the new global challenges and at the existing conventional arms control and confidence and security-building regimes within the OSCE area. **Adam Kobieracki**, Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, moderated the session, while speakers such as **Steven Pifer**, Director of the Brookings Arms Control Initiative, **Adam Rotfeld**, Co-Chairman of the Polish-Russian Working Group on Difficult Matters, **Vicenzo Camporini**, Vice-President of the Istituto Affari Internazionali and **Daniel Möckli**, Senior Researcher at the Center for Security Studies, argued that arms control and confidence and security-building regimes remain major instruments for military predictability and transparency. The following topics were raised in the subsequent debate:

- *The lack of trust – as opposed to lack of security - was identified as a key challenge in the OSCE area. In this regard, participants identified confidence building measures and military transparency/predictability as a core task of the OSCE.*
- *One of the OSCE's main functions is managing diverging perceptions of security through its cooperative approach.*
- *The unprecedented availability of weapons poses a new security threat which requires developing new approaches. Need for new tools to be developed for "open" intelligence and data sharing.*
- *While the concept of the indivisibility of security does not allow for a differentiation between "more" vs. "less" secure areas, different sub-regional security realities should be taken into due account.*
- *Participants highlighted the importance of conventional arms control and several proposals were made on how to move forward. Renewed political will and a rekindled debate focussing on respective strategic needs was identified as an important condition for making progress in this field. Negotiations on concrete issues would also play an important role in fostering trust, by restoring a culture of political-military dialogue. Subsequently, new conventional armaments limitations could be developed, focussing as a first step on sub-regional stability.*
- *The OSCE practice of including civil society in its security dialogue is a useful model for the OSCE, but also for partner countries undergoing transition in the Southern Mediterranean region.*
- *Links between arms controls and protracted conflicts have had a negative effect. These links should be relooked at, including in the discussion on the future of arms control.*

The third session, which focussed on addressing the protracted conflicts and revitalising dialogue, was moderated by **Janez Lenarčič**, Director of ODHIR. Speakers such as **Erwan Fouéré**, Special Representative of the OSCE CiO for the Transdniestrian settlement process, **Kai Eide**, former UN Special Representative for Afghanistan, **Aleksandr Nikitin**, Director of the Center for Euro-Atlantic Security at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations and **Jonathan Sisson** from Swisspeace, confirmed that dialogue remains the key vehicle for political processes within the OSCE. The following key points were underlined in the subsequent debate:

- *Reconciliation is key to maintain durable peace, including the establishment of transitional justice systems (dealing with the past: reconciliation/truth commissions). Many different examples were highlighted in this regard.*
- *Every conflict is different, thus a "one-size-fits-all" approach is not possible. Despite this, important lessons can still be drawn from each conflict.*

- *When dealing with conflict resolution and reconciliation, the key-words are: inclusiveness, ownership, truth, justice, forgiveness.*
- *Dialogue is an essential tool to achieve reconciliation, but alone is not sufficient.*
- *In addressing protracted conflicts, attempts to promote a political agreement among the ruling forces may not prove sufficient to secure peace. Many other key players (including woman, MPs and NGOs) need to be brought on board and wide local ownership is key to a successful peace process.*
- *OSCE has a long tradition of CBMs and CSBMs and should build on this experience to generate the conditions for addressing protracted conflicts in the OSCE area.*
- *While OSCE direct engagement in "solving" the protracted conflicts is appreciated, it should never become part of the problem. International community can assist in the process, but a deep understanding of the region and local dynamics is essential*
- *It would be useful to explore the possibility for joint crisis management missions with the UN, NATO, EU and CSTO.*

The last session explored potential ways forward when it comes to implementing the Astana vision. It was moderated by the OSCE Secretary General, **Lamberto Zannier**. **Wolfgang Zellner**, Head of Centre for OSCE Research in Hamburg, **Andrei Zagorski**, Professor at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, **François-Xavier de Donnea**, Head of the Belgian delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and **Daniel Serwer**, Professor at the School of Advanced International Studies, intervened as panelists and argued that a credible security community should be crafted around inclusive reconciliation processes, common values and converging strategic interests. The need for a new fundamental document - or security framework - for the OSCE, was also debated and The *Helsinki + 40 process* identified as an important step in the right direction. The following issues were highlighted in the final debate:

- *OSCE proved to be well capable to adapt to the different security scenarios throughout the last decades. Consequently, the OSCE agenda progressively expanded and now there is a need to prioritize.*
- *Helsinki + 40, as a follow up to the Corfu Process, Astana Commemorative Declaration and V to V process, sets a reasonable deadline to the OSCE reform efforts.*
- *It was noted that the security community is currently more of a political slogan than a genuine strategic goal of OSCE participating States.*
- *Despite the fact that many participating States face similar security challenges, they often lack converging threat assessments.*
- *It was argued that a security community should not be established "artificially", but rather grow progressively through a network of converging interstate, business, cultural, and civil society relations.*
- *The important role of the OSCE PA, as well as the need to include Members of National Parliaments into all the efforts to address the different phases of the conflict cycle.*
- *Reconciliation is not a spontaneous process. On the contrary, it is normally a very painful one, which begins by "acknowledging the wrong doings" - thus breaking the "circle of violence".*
- *No solid reconciliation may occur without the full engagement of civil society.*
- *OSCE is in the position to contribute to the global governance (Afghanistan, Med, Western Africa), but how much can it really achieve in times of shrinking resources?*
- *OSCE should build circles of track II initiatives to support/complement its intergovernmental efforts in all areas of OSCE engagement.*