

1.5. “The OSCE’s Contribution to new Stability”

Speech at the Seminar on
“Post-Cold-War Europe-Organizations in Search of new Roles”

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I.

Introduction

It is a special pleasure for me to return to Helsinki as Secretary General of the OSCE. Helsinki is the birthplace of the process that has led us from the “Conference **on**” to the “Organization **for**” Security and Co-operation in Europe. We mark the 20th Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act this year, and this is also the first year of Finland’s membership in the European Union. Could there be a better place than Helsinki to discuss the OSCE’s role, placing special emphasis on the possibilities for developing it further within a solid network of other global and regional structures and organizations. And could there be a better time than 50 years after the liberation from the Nazi ordeal? So I want to congratulate the Finnish Committee for European Security and having organized this meeting. It is only one of the many useful activities of STETE and of its Secretary General, Mrs. Grönick.

II.

New Tasks and New Structures Summits in Paris, Helsinki, Budapest

The 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe marked the end of the era of confrontation. It opened a new chapter of comprehensive co-operation between all CSCE participating States. But the Charter also contained a note of prudent caution: it stated that although the threat of conflict in Europe has diminished, other changes threaten the stability of our societies. However, we were not prepared for the suddenness and intensity of these new challenges. Bloody wars in the former Yugoslavia and concerning Nagorno-Karabakh; elsewhere ethnic conflicts, gross violations of human rights, serious internal tensions and social and economic setbacks – all these darkened the vision of a safe, free and prosperous OSCE Community.

The 1992 Helsinki Summit had to define these new challenges and formulate a strategy to face them. The Summit emphasized the central role of the CSCE in fostering and managing the historic change. At a time of promise but also of instability and insecurity, the Summit insisted in particular on efforts to forestall aggression by addressing the root causes of problems and to prevent, manage and settle conflicts

peacefully by appropriate means. To fulfil these new tasks, new operational arrangements and instruments were put in place.

The Helsinki Summit established the office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities to provide on the critical minorities issue enhanced possibilities for early warning and early action. The function has grown into one of the OSCE's real success stories.

To improve the CSCE's contributions to the development of the Human Dimension, the role of the ODIHR was enhanced. It was also tasked with contributing to early warning.

To complement the CSCE's operational possibilities in crisis management, the CSCE received a general mandate for peacekeeping operations.

The 1992 Summit also strengthened the CSCE structures. The mandate of the Chairman-in-Office was expanded and his support through the Troika and Personal Representatives was formalized.

In the military security field, a new body for dialogue and negotiation was established – the Forum for Security Co-operation. It started work on an ambitious agenda for immediate action, which soon resulted in important new agreements that further developed elements of co-operative security.

The new tasks before the CSCE required clearer relations and closer contacts with international organizations, in particular with the United Nations. In a bold step forward, the CSCE participating States declared their understanding of the CSCE as a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. It was, however, stated that the CSCE would not undertake enforcement action. With a view to European and transatlantic organizations, the Helsinki Summit Declaration asked for increased co-operation to provide a solid foundation for peace and prosperity.

After the Helsinki Summit, the effectiveness of its decisions was immediately put to the test. The growing tensions in Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the danger of a spillover of the Yugoslav conflict to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the deep crisis over Transnistria in Moldova after the bloody clashes in June 1992, the South Ossetian conflict in Georgia, the continuing conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and the urgent but very differing needs for preventive efforts in the Baltics – all these were pressing tasks calling for action by the CSCE. In a sense, they imposed themselves as the CSCE's new agenda.

Some of the instruments developed at Helsinki proved useful in the face of these demanding tasks. But contrary to what some had expected at Helsinki, it was not "classical" peacekeeping that turned out to be a typical form of OSCE conflict management. Smaller resident missions – predominantly politico-diplomatic, but often with a military component – became a typical CSCE tool. Although not provided for in the Helsinki Decisions, they were pragmatically put into operation and today constitute one of the main OSCE conflict-resolution instruments.

Another lesson was drawn after Helsinki from the confrontation with real challenges. The increased operational activities of the CSCE needed more institutionalized support, in terms of both political and administrative structures. Therefore, a permanent political body with representatives of all CSCE participating States was established in Vienna. It allowed for continuing consultation and decision-making among all the CSCE States. Also, the post of Secretary General, first proposed at the Helsinki Summit, was created. With the establishment of a Secretariat in Vienna, it was also possible to create a more solid and transparent financial basis through a unified budget for all OSCE activities.

In December '94, the Budapest Summit took place in a different environment. President Yeltsin spoke of the danger of a "cold peace", and views on the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina had become so controversial that no decision on this key issue could find consensus.

But there was a general feeling that in this increasingly critical situation the capabilities of the CSCE in conflict prevention and crisis management should be further developed.

The CSCE was renamed the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The change of name reflected the deep transformation of the CSCE. It was also an expression of the determination to give a new political impetus to the CSCE, thus enabling it to play a central role in the promotion of a common security space. The Budapest Summit confirmed the role of the OSCE as a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management in the region.

The first task of the OSCE in an increasingly extended and difficult transition period is to play its role in building a secure and stable OSCE community. This new stability will be the result of a dynamic process of change and development based on shared values and a comprehensive concept of security.

It is essential to recognize that no one organization, global or regional, can provide all the answers to the broad spectrum of challenges facing us. The question is perhaps not so much what roles we find for existing organizations; what bothers me more is what structures we can develop to solve the burning problems.

There are today three main areas where the OSCE can and must provide a contribution to the building of new stability within a community of nations with no divisions:

- the consolidation of common values and the building of civil societies;
- the prevention of local conflicts, restoring stability and bringing peace to war-torn areas;
- the promotion of a co-operative system of security to overcome real and perceived security deficits, avoiding the creation of new divisions.

III.

Human Dimension

The Human Dimension, comprising human rights, democracy and the rule of law, is at the heart of the OSCE.

The OSCE possesses a number of comparative advantages in this field. First of all, the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security links the Human Dimension tightly with all the other aspects of security – political, economic, military, etc. This underlines the importance of the Human Dimension as a vital element of conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation. Human Dimension deficiencies are early warning indicators, and the Human Dimension provides a solid basis for advice and support for rehabilitation efforts.

Another comparative advantage is the OSCE's high level of standards and norms elaborated in the Human Dimension. The OSCE has developed in some areas detailed provisions where existing international conventions express only general principles. Examples are the OSCE provisions on free and fair elections, obligations of participating States concerning travel and human contacts and, in particular, the far-reaching OSCE rules concerning national minority issues.

Another OSCE asset of paramount importance is its recognized rule that "commitments undertaken in the field of the Human Dimension of the CSCE are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the States concerned." This statement has quite recently been the basis allowing for an active involvement of the OSCE in the Chechnyan conflict.

Having established the norms, the OSCE is now active by endeavouring to improve implementation. While the OSCE effort is co-operative, the high degree of interdependence of OSCE States creates a strong incentive to co-operate. On this basis the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights conducts an impressive range of activities aimed at assisting in election processes aimed at consolidating civil societies by developing and supporting NGOs and fostering free media and at integrating the newly admitted participating States, helping them to develop their laws and create the necessary legal structures.

IV.

Conflict Prevention

Only a couple of weeks after the end of the Helsinki '92 Summit, the CSCE for the first time undertook operative action to prevent conflict. A resident Mission was dispatched to Kosovo, Vojvodina and Sandjak to establish an international presence in these regions of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The task of this Mission was to avoid spillover from the wars escalating in other areas of the former Yugoslavia. By now, the OSCE has some more experience in the field of conflict prevention and crisis management. This makes it possible to establish more clearly the OSCE's comparative advantages in this area.

Instrumental in ensuring the efficacy of OSCE conflict prevention are ongoing political consultations in which all OSCE participating States are involved. These consultations

are conducted on a weekly basis in the Permanent Council. These meetings provide an opportunity to address and discuss at an early stage all situations which have the potential to degenerate into crisis or even violence.

Of course, also within the OSCE the critical phase is the step from early warning to early action. There, during the last years and based on experience, the executive initiative of the Chairman-in-Office has been considerably strengthened.

The latest example of the utility and efficiency of this means was the OSCE action in Chechnya. The Hungarian Chairmanship, in a number of steps, denounced the violation of OSCE commitments and secured the readiness of the leadership of the Russian Federation to co-operate with the OSCE in efforts to redress the situation. The CIO's activities were supported by the very intensive dialogue in the Permanent Council. Finally consensus was reached to establish a continuous OSCE presence in this conflict zone. The OSCE Assistance Group is now in Grozny; it will allow the OSCE to co-operate in promoting a peaceful settlement and in monitoring and improving the human rights situation. – But let me add – in Chechnya the coordinates are similar to the ones in other places: The OSCE can help, can inspire, can push but actual settlement is for the parties concerned.

The conflict prevention potential of resident OSCE missions was further developed after the first mission was sent to Kosovo. At present, the total number of active OSCE resident missions is eight. Deployed in: Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Moldova, Estonia, Latvia, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Sarajevo. The mandates, composition and operations of the Missions are increasingly divergent, underlining the great flexibility of this instrument. But they are all small in size, the biggest Mission still having fewer than 20 members. Although many missions have a military component, for all missions, Human Dimension issues, democracy and rule-of-law building are an essential and indispensable element of their tasks. All missions are co-operating with international organizations active in their respective areas, in particular with the UN, the Council of Europe, UNHCR, as well as with a number of NGOs. An important feature of all resident Missions is regular reporting. This keeps all participating States involved and is a good means to generate their political and financial support, as well as their readiness to provide the necessary personnel.

Each mission has its own specific problems, but the overall picture is that all of them have contributed tangibly to stability building through support and advice or, in some cases, by their very presence.

An OSCE institution particularly important in the field of conflict prevention is the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. He has become the prime tool for signalling potential crisis related to national minority issues even at their embryonic stage. Being neither a national minorities ombudsman nor an investigator of individual human rights violations, the High Commissioner, currently Mr. Max van der Stoep, acts as an instrument to identify and promote the early resolution of ethnic tensions that might endanger peace, stability or relations between OSCE participating States. Operating independently of all parties involved in tensions, the High Commissioner conducts on-site missions and engages in preventive diplomacy at the earliest stages of tensions. In addition to obtaining first-hand information from the parties concerned, the High Commissioner promotes dialogue, confidence and co-operation between

them. The steadily increasing involvement of the HCNM throughout almost the entire OSCE area proves that this is a necessary and useful OSCE institution.

Since Helsinki '92 the OSCE has a general mandate for full-fledged peacekeeping operations. It is still, however, unexplored OSCE territory. The test for the OSCE will be the projected OSCE peacekeeping operation in Nagorno-Karabakh. A decision has been taken at Budapest. As the OSCE continues its preparations for this mission, particular care is taken to ensure political transparency, to link the operation to the political process and to ensure cost-effectiveness.

Finland has taken over from Sweden a special role, and as co-chairman of the so called Minsk Group, which has to create the political basis for a PNO.

V.

Co-operative Security

Since the end of East-West confrontation, military aspects of security have lost their key role for the maintenance of a fragile stability. But huge military forces and potentials present in the OSCE area continue to be highly relevant factors for the objective assessment and subjective perception of stability and security. The best means for reducing the inherent danger of the abuse of such forces, externally or internally, is the development of credible structures of co-operative security. Such structures must be based on the will of all participating States to build a genuine security partnership this would make security within OSCE-area truly indivisible. This implies in particular the commitment by all participating States, individually as well as collectively, not to enhance their own security at the expense of that of others.

The OSCE contribution to co-operative security has three main elements:

- acting as a guardian of existing arms control agreements;
- providing a platform for ongoing consultation on all aspects of military security;
- negotiating further norms and standards of behaviour in the security field, as well as arms control and confidence-building measures.

The OSCE, indirectly or directly, remains the political guardian of far-reaching arms control agreements which are the basis of a co-operative structure for military security in Europe: in particular the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). These have introduced strict limits on key military equipment and personnel held by the States of NATO and the former states of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Europe, which has for many years been the area of the most tense confrontations and highest concentration of weapons, has embarked on an unprecedented demilitarization process resulting in the destruction of tens of thousands of pieces of equipment. The Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures has put in place a very intensive system of information exchange and intrusive verification. This elaborate system allows to monitor military activities and provides at the same time for a number of early-warning indicators.

A milestone on the road leading to co-operative security was the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, a norm-setting document adopted at Budapest in December 1994. This document, reaffirming the validity of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security, sets norms and principles guiding the role of armed forces in democratic societies, and relations among States and relations of States vis-à-vis their nations in the military field. The Code, *inter alia*, underscores the determination of participating States to act in solidarity if OSCE norms and commitments are violated and to facilitate responses to any security challenges they may face as a result. The Code has also established norms for the internal use of armed forces. They were clearly violated in Chechnya, triggering in this way OSCE involvement. That may be required in defence of their common values.

The OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation, identical in composition with the OSCE Permanent Council, meets in Vienna every week. It provides all OSCE participating States with a unique forum where their concerns are discussed and their security interests heard and acted upon.

The FSC is also the OSCE's negotiating body on arms control, disarmament and confidence-building.

VI.

Co-operation and Division of Labour with Other Organizations

As the discussion on the development of a new architecture and new structures within the OSCE area proceeds, one aspect is already clear and uncontested: no one organization, global or regional, can go it alone. For reasons of substantive and formal competence, for reasons of historically based differences in membership and – in the final analysis – for reasons of power-sharing, only a pluralistic structure can lead to long-term stability in the OSCE area. Therefore, the ongoing complaints about the large number of institutions and organizations, particularly within geographical Europe, should finally be halted. This phenomenon is a strength, not a weakness of our post-confrontation situation. However, a central question of the new security order in Europe is the relationship between this multitude of international organizations. Some basic elements of this co-operation are already in place.

Of particular importance for the OSCE is its relationship with the **United Nations**, bearing in mind the OSCE status as a regional arrangement under Art. 52 of the UN Charter. This Article contains some indications concerning the division of labour among the UN and regional arrangements. In particular, the UN Charter encourages members of regional arrangements to make use of such arrangements to settle disputes **before** they are referred to the United Nations Security Council. The essence of this rule is a kind of subsidiarity principle in favour of the OSCE – hence the “OSCE-first” rule. Its purpose is to activate the existing regional potential within the OSCE area in the solving of regional problems; but the OSCE also wants to lighten the UN's burden. This is not relevant, however, for enforcement action. In the view of the OSCE, enforcement remains the prerogative of the Security Council. To maintain a continuum of action in cases necessitating enforcement, the Budapest decisions have created the possibility, in exceptional cases, of OSCE States jointly referring a dispute

to the Security Council. Some rules for practical co-operation between the OSCE and the United Nations have been laid down in a framework UN-OSCE agreement concluded in 1993. They are the basis for close co-operation, especially in preventing and settling conflicts.

Co-operation between the OSCE and other regional organizations is more complex politically and also in practice. The Helsinki Summit expressed the OSCE philosophy on this issue, other regional organizations are regarded as complementary and not in terms of a hierarchy. Furthermore, the OSCE approach vis-à-vis other regional organizations is co-operative and by no means competitive. The 1992 Helsinki Document formulated an explicit OSCE interest in seeking co-operative support from NATO and other organizations in OSCE-led peacekeeping. This means that the OSCE could go as far as giving a “mandate” to another regional organization for a peacekeeping operation within the OSCE area. On the other hand, the role of the OSCE in the European security architecture has been recognized in political statements by NATO and other regional organizations. The Budapest Summit directed the OSCE to pursue more systematic and practical co-operation between itself and other regional and transatlantic organizations and institutions that share its values and objectives.

What does all this mean in practice? Representatives of the United Nations and other international organizations attend major OSCE meetings. They contribute to seminars held within the OSCE framework. The OSCE is also invited to attend meetings of other organizations. It enjoys observer status at the UN General Assembly. Officials of the organizations at all levels have direct and, if necessary, daily contacts on a broad range of issues. In the field of the Human Dimension, multilateral meetings involving the United Nations, UNHCR, the ICRC and the Council of Europe are a regular practice.

But in spite of these many contacts and ties, the present situation falls a long way short of using fully the potential of mutually reinforcing co-operation.

What are the problems affecting this co-operation? Some of them can be easily qualified as bureaucratic. International organizations, like all bureaucracies, are tempted with “empire building”. They may look for new tasks to become more relevant or more powerful. For the same reasons they may be concerned with “empire-maintaining” and therefore reluctant to share responsibilities with other organizations. Furthermore, new tasks mean more and perhaps better jobs, greater budgetary leeway and greater political support from the member States for the organization’s operations. These are some reasons why it is sometimes difficult to agree on a distribution of tasks and a division of labour based on comparative advantages.

More serious are obstacles of a political nature. Some aspects of the European architecture are not only open but also very controversial. There are clearly differing views on the role of NATO and the scale and pace of its eventual extension. The perception of the nature and the political perspectives of the CIS is another controversial issue. Like the future role of NATO, it is directly related to the position of the Russian Federation within the European and transatlantic security structures. We must hope that the continuing dialogue, including the OSCE discussion on the

security model for the 21st century, will help to close this political gap. If not it might create new divisions.

There are, however, no simple or ready-made solutions. It is important to recognize and accept that these are not technical questions but highly sensitive political issues. Therefore, there are limits to what is achievable in elaborating some general rules or guidelines for mutual reinforcing co-operation. But respect for organizations' identity and autonomy, comparative advantages as the basis for the allocation of tasks, joint use of available resources where possible and the mutual transparency of work and work plans can help to create a basis for progress.

The organizations should feel encouraged to extend practical co-operation in a transparent and pragmatic way. Formal agreements that fail to address the underlying political issues will not solve the problem. On the other hand, developing a process aimed at creating awareness of the problem and fostering a culture of co-operation can be a major contribution towards defusing underlying political tensions. The awareness of common and shared responsibilities should be developed. This process should be sustained from within each organization. But the crucial role is for the **member States**. They have to look at minimizing the "imperial" mentality of organizations, preventing duplication of effort and fostering a culture of co-operation and co-ordination.

VII.

Some Conclusions

The OSCE has come a long way since its establishment, further than just moving from Helsinki, its birthplace 20 years ago, to Vienna, its present-day seat. Faced with new challenges, it has established a new identity in developing its contributions to a new stability.

As long as there is the will to promote a common secure space stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok and based on the OSCE's common values, there will also be a need for an OSCE with a credible potential for consultation, action and negotiation. The OSCE is called upon to promote and consolidate the concept of indivisible security in this space. In particular, preventing new divisions is a new and important task of the OSCE. It does so by developing common rules and standards, by defending and restoring common values and by developing, through consultation and joint action, a sense of belonging together.

The OSCE will always be selective in its priorities but comprehensive in its open-ended agenda and approach. There is no danger that it will one day start to become a small UN-type body for Europe. The OSCE can provide co-operative and collective security but different from NATO not collective defense. Its relationship with NATO and other western security structures should therefore be perceived as **complementary and not as presenting an alternative**. As long as there is a limit on EU and NATO expansion there will be a need for an all-inclusive, co-operative security structure where all States of the OSCE area find their place. Such a structure must allow all

participating States to work for their legitimate interests and, at the same time, to make their contribution to stability. We will not be able to manage today's extremely complex situation successfully if we continue to deal with important aspects of comprehensive security in an isolated, one-track-minded way.

The OSCE will work closely with, but will not duplicate, the Council of Europe. It will operate using different but complementary methods, giving priority to using political instruments in dealing with problems of the Human Dimension that have clear security implications. The OSCE will bring into this Dimension a wide geographical scope and **will also remain in the East well beyond the geographical borders of Europe.**

One part of the burden that the OSCE inherited from the CSCE is the often polarized understanding of its role. The CSCE has suffered from its very beginning from being perceived by some as good for nothing and by others as good for all. We need a realistic assessment of the OSCE's strengths and weaknesses. OSCE should continue to concentrate on things it has proved it can do well: conflict prevention, political consultation, norm-setting, the integration of new States, the promotion of civil societies, and military security co-operation.

There is no room for complacency and there is still much to be done to improve its effectiveness. But I think the OSCE is now on the right track. It has a role to play in building new stability for which there is no other actor in sight. But the play is not a one-man-show. A successful performance can be achieved only by a set of actors willing and capable to be guided by the script: a lasting, peaceful, democratic order within the OSCE area.