

**THE OSCE; QUO VADIS ?**

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Between 6-7 December 2002, the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) held its 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Council meeting in Porto. From EU member states that are also participants in the OSCE, only three Foreign Ministers attended: one was the outgoing Portuguese Chairman in Office, Minister Martins da Cruz, and the other the incoming Dutch Chairman in Office, Minister De Hoop Scheffer. Likewise, from across the Atlantic, neither the US, nor Canada were represented at Foreign Ministers' level. This was also the case with the countries from Central Asia, save Tadjikistan.

Sandwiched between NATO's summit meeting in Prague one week before and the EU Copenhagen summit one week after, during which both organisations took important decisions on enlargement, it might be said that the timing of the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting was somewhat inopportune. However, this belies some of the larger questions. What importance do participating States attach to the OSCE in the present European<sup>1</sup> security architecture? How will an enlarged EU and NATO reflect on the OSCE? Is the OSCE becoming a very expensive talk shop? In brief, where is the OSCE going and what future role can the organization play in order to provide added value to the new European security architecture?

Listening to the statements made at the Porto Ministerial Council meeting, particularly by representatives of west European countries, these referred almost without exception to the OSCE as constituting one of the linchpins of the new European security

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<sup>1</sup> The term European is used generically and is meant to denote the geographical space covered by the OSCE

architecture. Reference was frequently made to the “unique niche” occupied by the OSCE in the European security architecture – albeit without much substance as to what exactly that particular “niche” might be. One representative, mentioning the expected European Union enlargement at the then forthcoming EU Summit meeting commented : “more EU does not mean less OSCE”. In view of the interest – or rather lack thereof - demonstrated by these countries towards the OSCE as manifest in their level of participation at the Porto Ministerial, one may indeed ask whether such lofty words reflect wishful thinking at best or self serving hypocrisy at worst. Then, of course, there is growing disinterest by the member Central Asian states towards the OSCE. This comes, surprisingly, at a time when the international community in general and the OSCE in particular have been paying increasingly more attention to Central Asia in the wake of September 11 and ensuing developments in neighboring Afghanistan.

This general lassitude on the part of a considerable number of participating states – albeit perhaps for different reasons – as well as recent pangs of soul-searching within the organization would seem to indicate that the OSCE is at a crossroads. It would equally seem that the organization has at present no clear road map to help take it forward. And certainly the Porto Ministerial declaration with its somewhat catchy title “Responding to Change” is far from offering a panacea in this regard.

## EVOLUTION OF THE OSCE

In order to understand where the OSCE needs to go and what resources it has to get there, one needs to make an appraisal of the past, if only briefly.

The OSCE, established in Helsinki in 1975 as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe – CSCE - was designed to cater to the need for enhanced dialogue in a bi-polar world order. With the adoption of the Helsinki Final Act, in which the basic principles governing relations between participating States were laid down, the organization played its part in reducing East-West tensions leading up to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Helsinki process not only opened up a permanent channel of communication between participating states, but also laid down the guidelines of a normative code of conduct for inter-state and intra-state relations among them, as well as establishing a sustainable programme of co-operation.

Perhaps the two most important benchmarks in the evolution of the Organization were the summit meeting in Paris in 1990 and the summit meeting in Budapest in 1994. In Paris “The Charter of Paris For a New Europe” was adopted. The charter addressed the end of the “era of confrontation”, thus defining the new role of the CSCE in post Cold War Europe. The necessity for the institutionalization of the CSCE process in order to respond better to the new security environment was also emphasized at the Paris summit. At the Budapest summit in 1994 the CSCE ceased to be a process and became an Organization. Between the summit in Paris in 1990 and the Budapest summit in 1994, through a number of meetings, including a summit meeting in Helsinki in 1992, the ground was laid for the institutionalization of the Organization. It was during these formative years that OSCE

“Institutions” such as the Secretariat, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Economic Forum, the Forum for Security Co-operation, the Warsaw Office for Free Elections (which was later to become the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights-ODIHR) were established. It was also during these years that the human dimension of the OSCE gained prominence. At meetings held in Vienna, Paris, Copenhagen and Moscow over a three-year period between 1989 and 1991, a wide range of commitments, as well as concrete follow-up mechanisms in the human dimension were established. Field presences set up in a number of participating states undergoing transition, further increased the organization’s effectiveness and contribution to security and stability. The CFE Treaty, negotiations for which were carried out under the aegis of the OSCE and the Vienna Document of the negotiations on confidence and security building measures, established the Organization as one of the cornerstones of European security, both in terms of policy as well as arms control and confidence and security-building measures.

The summit in Budapest consolidated these institutional developments. The CSCE was re-named the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe - OSCE -, and in the “Budapest Summit Declaration” the new role of the Organization was defined as being “a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management”, in a geography stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

The last Summit of the OSCE was held in 1999 in İstanbul, where a “Charter for European Security” was adopted with a view to strengthening the operational capabilities of the Organization in order to meet the risks and challenges facing the OSCE area and to improve human security. The “Document on a Platform for Cooperative Security”, also adopted at the İstanbul summit and acknowledging the changed political climate in Europe as

well as the new needs emerging thereof, recognized the mutually re-inforcing nature of the relationship between those organizations concerned with the promotion of comprehensive security and defined the modalities of co-operation between them.

With the break-up of Yugoslavia and the ensuing instability and conflict in south-east Europe, the OSCE over a period of 10 years has contributed substantially to its professed aims of crisis management and post conflict resolution if not to early warning *per se*. Indeed, one cannot overlook the OSCE's contribution in the Balkans in the field of promoting the rule of law, including election monitoring, institution building and police training and monitoring. Developments in the realm of confidence and security-building measures, which included regular exchange of information on a wide range of military topics, from planned military exercises to holdings in weaponry and acquisition of new weapons systems, as well as observation and verification visits among participating states on a reciprocal basis, also reached their peak during this time. Key security concepts such as the "comprehensive concept of security", which entails a multi-dimensional (politico-military, human and economic dimensions) approach to security, as well as the concept of the "indivisibility of security", which establishes the precepts of a holistic approach to security, are the products of this era. In retrospect, this period may well be seen as the "golden decade of the OSCE".

However, the same measure of success has not been forthcoming in other areas of the OSCE, as demonstrated by the lack of progress in the protracted conflicts in Moldova, Georgia and the Nagorno Karabagh region of Azerbaidjan. Nor has the OSCE been regarded as particularly succesful in addressing the concerns and needs of Central Asian participating states, notably in the economic and security dimensions.

## THE DUTCH CHAIRMANSHIP

At the beginning of 2003 the Netherlands took over the chairmanship of the OSCE. The Netherlands Minister of Foreign Affairs, in a recent letter sent to the Dutch Parliament, outlined the intentions of the Dutch Chairmanship throughout 2003. It is difficult not to acknowledge three basic premises in that letter.

1. First, as a result of the enlargement of the EU and NATO, the OSCE is no longer the unique forum where East and West meet.
2. Second, countries which have not yet joined EU and/or NATO may prefer to talk first with these organizations rather than the OSCE.
3. Third, frequent contacts and dialogue between major players in Europe are reducing the importance of the OSCE as a European platform for security dialogue.

However, one of the conclusions drawn in that letter, portraying the OSCE as a victim of its own success, might require some re-thinking. If we are to talk of victimization, perhaps it might be more insightful to venture that the OSCE is rather a victim of its own short-sighted policies and the way it has utilized the tools available to it in order to attain success. Placing the human dimension on the agenda as a priority, in an organization which otherwise professes a comprehensive approach to security, as well as equanimity between its three dimensions, is self contradictory if not self-defeating. This disproportionate approach to security and the development of various implementation mechanism in the human dimension (such as the Vienna and Moscow Mechanism), without developing effective mechanisms designed to address the concerns of participating states undergoing transition,

particularly in the economic and environmental dimension has led to an erosion of faith by some in the organization.

Thus it is ironic that the human dimension which boasts some of the organization's most notable achievements in the past may have become its Achilles heel today. This is not because the human dimension commitments of the OSCE are flawed in any way, or that they are no longer relevant, but rather because, of the preponderance placed upon them and the short-sighted and at times heavy-handed manner in which the human dimension mechanisms were put to use. The precedences thus set not only restrict the future use of OSCE human dimension mechanisms, but will also have a debilitating effect on the future of OSCE missions whose mandates mostly include assisting host states in the implementation of human dimension commitments.

Following up on some of the very broad statements and generalizations that have been made above, it might be useful now to focus some more on these in further detail, particularly in light of the comparative advantages of the organization, and how these advantages interplay within the context of the three dimensions of the OSCE, i.e. the human dimension, the economic and environmental dimension and the politico-military dimension.

## **COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGES OF THE OSCE**

First, let us take a look at the OSCE's strengths and comparative advantages as have been hitherto defined by the organization:

1. The OSCE comprises 55 participating States and stretches across a vast geography from Vancouver to Vladivostok. No other regional organization has the same broad membership and outreach.
2. There is no other regional organization which addresses on an equal footing matters covering all three dimensions of security – politico-military, human and economic. Thus the approach of the organization to security is a comprehensive one.
3. The Organization benefits from an array of conflict prevention instruments. These range from the organization's "institutions", such as the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the Office for Democratization and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Representative on the Freedom of the Media (RFM), to its 19 field missions covering a large geography from the Balkans to the Caucasus, from Eastern Europe to Central Asia.
4. With its decision-making procedure, based on the rule of consensus and the politically binding nature of its decisions, taken at the highest political level, the organization commands moral authority.

5. The nature of its organizational structure and rules of procedure allow the organization to respond flexibly and thus effectively to a variety of evolving challenges, risks and threats to security and stability.
6. Its broad “acquis”, also drawing heavily from other international instruments as well as complementing them, promotes efforts for close co-operation and mutually supportive interaction between a web of interlocking institutions active in the European space. Furthermore, this shared set of norms and values among participating states constitutes the basic fabric and binding force of the organization.
7. Through the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) – an independent body established for pursuing dialogue and negotiations on arms control, disarmament and confidence and security building matters, as well as serving as a follow up mechanism for agreed measures in these areas – security dialogue is linked to mainstream political dialogue carried out at the Permanent Council, thus achieving increased coherence and coordination in formulating security policies at the regional level, together with and in close consultation with other organizations dealing with security issues.

### **PHANTASMAGORIA OR REALITY?**

In the changed European security environment, are such self proclaimed comparative advantages phantasmagoria or reality ? The answer will probably be some time in coming, and will largely depend upon how well similar capabilities to the OSCE, as well as more advanced ones perhaps are developed in other regional *fora* involved in European security. It

will also depend partially on the OSCE's ability to adapt itself to the changes in the security environment. The former is outside the control of the OSCE, the latter within. The danger comes from without.

Let us now examine some of the inherent weaknesses in those advantages, particularly in light of recent developments in other *fora*.

At first glance, enlargement of NATO and the EU, together with the development of early warning and conflict prevention capacities in the latter as manifest in ESDP, does not seem to augur well for the future relevance of the OSCE in the new European security architecture. Presently, perhaps none of the aforementioned Organizations embraces the concept of security multi-dimensionally and as comprehensively as does the OSCE. However, the increasing trend, which was ironically spearheaded by the OSCE in 1999 through the document adopted at the Istanbul summit meeting on a "Platform for Co-operative Security", aimed at strengthening co-operation between various security structures in Europe, thus avoiding duplication and creating a web of mutually supportive interlocking institutions, may have helped further diminish the OSCE's relevance.

As indicated above, this danger is most prevalent where other organizations such as the EU and NATO encroach upon areas of conflict prevention, crisis management and post conflict rehabilitation that have hitherto been defined as the OSCE's "unique niche". The further this "niche" loses its uniqueness, the more the OSCE is weakened. A case in point is the co-operation between the EU and the Russian Federation on crisis management within the framework of ESDP. At NATO it is the NATO-Russia Council. The EU's "Partnership and Co-operation Agreements" signed with third countries to encourage these

countries, especially those which are also OSCE participating states, to seek enhanced dialogue within the framework of the EU, naturally works to the detriment of the OSCE. The same can be said of the PfP and EAPC programmes within NATO. Another recent example is the EU's desire to develop civilian police capacity. The EU has taken over civilian policing in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the UN, whereas a few years back, in Croatia, it was the OSCE that had this responsibility. The Stability Pact can be cited as yet another weakening factor.

The OSCE would seem to be disadvantaged here on two accounts, first as the result of its own policy of avoiding duplication, since other organizations don't seem to be bound by these ethics, and second by the fact that the OSCE's capacities can be duplicated elsewhere in a cost effective way.

The OSCE's institutions are no doubt a great asset for the activities of the organization and its ability to assist participating states in complying with OSCE norms and commitments. However, putting aside the secretariat, which is mainly an institution governing the day-to-day management of the organization, the other institutions, i.e. the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) and the Representative on the Freedom of the Media (RFM), are human dimension institutions. Efforts to establish an OSCE institution in the economic dimension have been repeatedly rejected, and no steps have been taken so far to establish any kind of institution in the politico-military dimension. This is yet another anomaly for an organization upholding equality among its three dimensions. Furthermore, there is confusion, bordering on suspicion, regarding from where or from whom OSCE institutions receive their instructions. The rules of procedure stipulating that the Chairman in Office is

vested with overall responsibility for executive action, including co-ordination of the work of OSCE institutions, are not enough to dispel such suspicions.

With regard to the OSCE's field missions, which currently absorb 85 per cent of the organization's budget, these are facing difficulties, as exemplified by the closure of the mission in Chechnya, the restructuring of the mission in Belarus, as well as a general discontent in the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus regarding mission activities there. This particular issue, which lies at the core of any discussion concerning the future of the OSCE, deserves a more in depth analysis. Indeed, as the importance of security dialogue *per se*, carried out in Vienna, has relatively diminished over the years, the relevance of the work carried out by missions on the ground has increased. Therefore, I will be revisiting this important issue further on.

The decision making process based on consensus can be considered both an asset as well as a liability. While consensual decision making imparts moral authority and credibility, on the other hand a premium on consensus also denotes agreement centered around the lowest common denominator. This can, in turn, erode credibility and the capacity to act decisively and in a timely manner when the need arises. The dismal record of consensus manifests itself as a particularly worrying case of sterility in the organization, as it struggles to address regional conflicts in Moldova and Georgia. These are clear cases where the inability to act, especially over a period of time, has become a default position.

Moreover, attempts by the organization's Chairman in Office to use personal initiative in order to promote certain issues more vigorously and vociferously are also challenged within the organization, further curtailing action. Consensus must be recognized

for what it is, i.e. the minimum which all member states support. However, it should not act as a constraint on the Chairman in Office's ability to use more personal initiative to speak out assertively and forcefully on issues which do not meet consensus, thus increasing the visibility of the organization in the public domain.

Whereas the structure of the OSCE and its rules of procedure are flexible, allowing for a certain degree of latitude in the organization's ability to respond effectively to unexpected crisis situations, this flexibility is often hampered by a cumbersome-decision making process. As a result, early warning seldom leads to effective conflict preventive action in the organization. It is mostly after conflicts break out that the cogs and wheels of the slow and grinding decision making machinery begin to turn. Terrorism is a good example, and a case where Turkey has had first-hand experience of the laborious consultation/decision making process in the OSCE. Beginning with the early 1990s, Turkey, over almost a decade, tried to persuade the organization – alas to no avail at that time - that terrorism constitutes a grave threat to the security and stability of the OSCE area. It is indeed ironic that the tragic events of September 11 were required before the organization was spurred into action to address terrorism. Not only does this example showcase the ineptitude of the organization's decision-making process before being confronted by a crisis, but it also erodes the belief of certain participating states in the organization's ability to address their security concerns on an equal footing with the security concerns of more influential member states.

The broad OSCE acquis of shared commitments no doubt constitutes one of the strongest arguments in favor of the OSCE. It is both the binding as well as the driving force behind the organization. If the OSCE acquis did not exist, participating states would have to

create it. Nevertheless, there are serious weaknesses and drawbacks here as well. First of all, the OSCE acquis also reflects the imbalanced nature of the three dimensions of the OSCE. Content-wise, it is somewhat lopsided in favor of the human dimension, yet even within the human dimension there exist inconsistencies. All human dimension acquis is equal (or should be), but some are more equal than others. Thus human dimension commitments such as national minorities, torture, freedom of speech and media, among others, may easily attain a predominant place on the agenda, while commitments regarding migrant workers, aggressive nationalism and xenophobia, are relegated to the backburner. This whole issue of agenda setting within the organization, naturally behoves one to ask whether the OSCE is truly composed of participating states on an equal footing, or whether the organization is just another tool in the hands of influential participating states, further complementing their foreign policy options.

Last but not least, what of the independent body dealing with politico-military issues – the FSC ? Together with the OSCE, the FSC is likewise going through a process of soul-searching. Is there truly any longer the need for independent yet parallel *fora* within the OSCE for pursuing security dialogue ? The unequivocal answer would seem to be “no”. The security and confidence-building measures negotiated under the aegis of the FSC, such as regular information exchanges and observation and verification visits are well established now, and would seem to have taken on a life of their own, hence requiring little hands-on management by the FSC. There is no reason to presuppose that current work undertaken at the FSC such as Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), terrorism, peace-keeping, ammunition stockpiles, to name a few, cannot be pursued under the aegis of the Permanent Council, since such issues cut across all three dimensions of the OSCE and are treated at the

Permanent Council parallel to the FSC. Subsuming the FSC under the Permanent Council would neither change the substance of the work presently done at the FSC, nor would it have an adverse effect on its value added. On the contrary, further coherence and cohesion would be achieved through a more centralized security dialogue. Moreover, unnecessary tension regarding the competencies of the FSC and the Permanent Council and their relationship to one another would thus be avoided.

### **OSCE FIELD MISSIONS: ENGINES OF CHANGE**

Much has been said about OSCE field missions. If there is one common element in all that has been said so far, it is that field missions are central to the “raison d’etre”, as well as future orientation, goals and achievements of the organization. Throughout the years field missions have maintained their significance by striving to assist participating States in living up to their OSCE commitments and in transforming respect for those commitments into concrete action. Referring to the role of OSCE field missions as “engines of change”, and as catalysts for stability through a multi-dimensional approach to security, Chairman in Office Minister De Hoop Scheffer, in his first presentation to the Permanent Council on 13 January this year, forcefully exclaimed that “without due regard for human rights and economic and ecological development, no sustainable security, no lasting peace can ever be achieved. Its practical experience of making such linkages at the field level has placed the OSCE at the cutting edge of conflict management. This is clearly the added value the OSCE has over other international organizations active in the field of security.”<sup>2</sup>

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2. Hoop Scheffer, Jaap. Address to the OSCE Permanent Council, 13 January 2003, Vienna. Translated in its entirety at <http://www.osce.org/news>

Why then are a growing number of host governments disenchanted with OSCE field missions, to the extent that the Netherlands Chairmanship has deemed it necessary to include the issue of improving the functioning and effectiveness of OSCE field missions on the agenda of the organization ? Indeed, do OSCE field missions have a future ? In order to answer these and other related questions pertaining to OSCE field missions, it might be helpful first of all to differentiate between missions that were established in OSCE participating states not undergoing political or social crisis at the time mission work was started, and those where mission work was commenced following political crisis, confrontation and conflict.

The missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Albania, Macedonia, and Kosovo may be considered in the latter category. These are “sui generis” in character. They were established either in order to avert further turmoil and conflict, or to assist in rehabilitation following armed conflict. There may, indeed, be similar roles for OSCE field missions in the future. However, such missions defy the original logic and genuine “raison d’etre” behind OSCE field missions and should be considered the exception rather than the rule.

Missions established in OSCE participating states, based on a co-operative relationship between the organization and host governments with a view to assisting host governments in the implementation of OSCE norms and commitments and helping them overcome the difficulties of transition, should constitute the models for the future. Yet it is exactly regarding such missions that most friction between host governments and the organization occurs. The main reason for this seems to be the difficulty in reconciling the expectations of host governments from OSCE field missions and the realm in which field missions see the focus of their work. There can be little doubt that host governments in the

countries of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Eastern Europe had hoped for more concrete assistance from OSCE field missions when these missions were established in the mid 90s. Expectations were high that field missions would raise awareness in the international community regarding the security concerns and needs of host governments, acting as a catalyst not only for reform and capacity building through transfer of expertise but also transfer of resources.

Notwithstanding the undeniable fact that democratization, good governance and the rule of law are prerequisites for social and economic reform and for creating the necessary conditions conducive for foreign investment and economic growth, the disproportionate and imbalanced approach of missions to their mandates in favour of the human dimension, while neglecting the economic/environmental dimension and the security concerns of host governments, have disillusioned not only the participating states concerned as to any concrete benefit to be had from OSCE field missions, but perhaps also most other participating states, who might otherwise favorably consider the establishment of an OSCE mission. Add to this fact the stigmatization that has accompanied the hosting of a mission, and it is very doubtful whether any OSCE participating state will look favorably upon the establishment of a mission on its territory in the future.

Some suggestions have been made of late, regarding a new concept for OSCE missions. These have been termed rather ambiguously as “roving missions”. At the core of the concept lies the idea of missions based in Vienna and tasked with pursuing very specific problems encountered in the OSCE area such as “human trafficking”, etc. While such thematic missions might help overcome the “stigmatization syndrome” on the part of participating states hosting missions, on the other hand the process of deciding the themes

around which such missions will be created, the elaboration of their mandates, and their impartial functioning, among other issues, may well prove to be difficult obstacles to overcome. Such “roving missions” would have to be established in a balanced manner, addressing the different concerns of participating states on a number of varying themes and not just focused on human dimension themes. In brief, great care should be taken in elaborating this concept, lest it turn out to be one more burden in a sphere of OSCE activity that is already overburdened by past mistakes.

If present field mission activities are not subjected to serious scrutiny and if the linkages referred to by the Chairman in Office in his presentation to the Permanent Council, between human rights, economic and ecological development, are not implemented on the ground by OSCE Field Offices - in other words, if a substantial reform process is not carried out under the Netherlands Chairmanship, not only will there be continued friction between host governments and the OSCE, resulting in the further forced closure of missions or a gradual loss of interest in the work of the OSCE on the part of Caucasian and Central Asian countries, but the OSCE will lose its reputable place at the “cutting edge of conflict management”, together with its added value.

### **WHAT CAN BE DONE?**

The dynamic and evolving nature of the European security environment requires the OSCE to review its role on a regular basis, re-evaluate its potential and as necessary, adapt itself to changes. The OSCE may have become an organization, but nevertheless it remains a process in evolution. As such, there are no “one size fits all” formulas and no “quick fixes” for the woes of the organization. What is relevant and acceptable today, may already be

irrelevant tomorrow. And in an organization espousing consensus, there are as many participating states begging to differ as there are ready to sign on at any given time.

The following are a few suggestions, seen from today's perspective, as to how the organization might overcome some of the dead ends with which it would seem to be confronted at present.

A more balanced and proportionate approach to the three dimensions of security is necessary. This oft-repeated statement at the conceptual level should also transcend to the everyday working level of the organization. The overexploited mantra, "the human dimension lies at the core of all OSCE activity", should be relegated to the past. After all, no participating state denies the importance of the human dimension and frequent repetition behoves one to ask whether it is he who obsessively promotes this idea that needs to be convinced most of its relevance. Thus the Office of the Economic Co-ordinator should be upgraded to an institution of the organization. Furthermore an "Office of the Politico-Military Co-ordinator" should be established.

In line with the above-mentioned balanced approach to the three dimensions, effective mechanisms in the economic/environmental dimension leading to concrete action should be considered. These mechanisms need not necessarily be conceptualized in terms of "commitments". Commitments may be an apt terminology for the human dimension. However, it may be time to think in novel terms regarding the economic dimension. The idea floated last year, of drawing up a code of conduct on the environment, according to which an observation and verification mechanism would be set up to follow developments having an adverse effect on the environment in participating states, reflects an outmoded way of

thinking. A more co-operative approach which would in the first place encourage participating states experiencing such problems to bring these to the attention of other participating states, and a mechanism that would ensure not only transfer of expertise but also transfer of resources and funds for addressing such difficulties in a concrete manner might be more beneficial and would certainly increase confidence in the OSCE.

Another factor that would boost confidence in the OSCE would be a rethinking of the method by which resources are allocated and used. The resources of the OSCE, especially within the fold of missions, are targeted too much towards seminars, workshops, and conferences. While not underestimating the importance of such activities, these must be balanced with projects which have a direct and tangible impact in host states. Hence, participating states with greater resources which support projects in other participating states on a bilateral basis or through other organizations to which they are members should channel some of these resources through the OSCE. In line with the above, the present system of “voluntary contributions” should be re-assessed. Too often this system results in the adage “he who pays the piper, plays the tune.”

An overly zealous approach by some participating states to steer the OSCE away from duplicating work undertaken in other similar *fora* can lead to apathy in the organization. Participating states of the OSCE who are also members of other regional organizations currently developing capacities duplicating those of the OSCE should likewise raise awareness in these organizations and assist in channeling ongoing work there in a way that avoids overlapping with work at the OSCE. In case this is not desirable, then perhaps they should refrain from repressing efforts at the OSCE to develop capacities, particularly in the economic dimension, which may partially duplicate ongoing work in other *fora*.

This may require closer interaction between the decision makers of organizations dealing with security issues. Therefore, the three organizations currently at the vanguard of European security, i.e. the OSCE, NATO and the EU, should establish a regular tripartite consultation mechanism (similar to the tripartite consultation mechanism between the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the UN) at both the technical and decision-making level in order to formulate and coordinate security policies.

Since relative security and stability has been attained in south-eastern Europe, a targeted field mission strategy for the Caucasus and Central Asia should be developed which specifically addresses the needs of these countries. The future relevance of the OSCE will be measured by its success in the Caucasus and Central Asia, as countries in this region are neither EU, nor NATO members and they will be looking increasingly to the OSCE to address their security concerns. Moreover, in order to maintain its credibility as a tool of conflict resolution, as well as a contributor to regional peace, security and stability, the OSCE should take a more pro-active approach with regard to the frozen conflicts in the Caucasus and Moldova. Diluted and sterile statements emerging from high level OSCE meetings regarding these protracted conflicts only serve to undermine the faith of the involved states in the organization's relevance. Instead of such statements reflecting the lowest common denominator, the Chairman in Office should come out with strong statements, despite the fact that such statements may not reflect a consensus position.

In this vein, particularly in consensus minus one situations, the Chairman in Office should use more personal initiative (even though this may cause displeasure among one or the other OSCE participating state) and speak out forcefully in his personal capacity on

issues which reflect the collective conscience of the OSCE participating states. However, this should be done in a very balanced manner, both thematically and geographically. Discussion on a strengthened Secretariat is already underway. Creating the post of a Deputy Secretary General would be desirable, if only for a more effective day to day running of Secretariat affairs.

A serious and substantial debate on the concept of Missions in general, including “Roving Missions” should be started as soon as possible. This should be carried out under the aegis of the Permanent Council and not within the fold of the human dimension. And lastly, the OSCE should continue to be a forum for security dialogue and to encourage such dialogue on a wide range of topics in a free flowing, unrestricted and flexible manner. Participating states should not lose sight of the OSCE’s value added as a regional security policy “think tank”. The mandate given to the organization at the Porto Ministerial by the ministers of foreign affairs of participating states to develop, during 2003, a strategy to address threats to security and stability in the 21st century, constitutes an important exercise for the future role and relevance of the OSCE. Therefore, it is imperative that the negotiations do not produce a still-born child.