



OSCE Yearbook 2015

by IFSH (ed.)

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In 2016, Germany is assuming the Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) – and it does so in turbulent times and “in full awareness of the crisis currently besetting Europe’s security architecture and of the OSCE’s central significance for our common security in Europe and of the role it could play.”¹ Against the backdrop of the crisis in and around Ukraine, the overarching priority of the German Chairmanship is to promote dialogue and rebuild confidence. To reach this goal, “Germany wants to use, maintain and consolidate the OSCE as a cornerstone of European security.”² The OSCE Yearbook 2015 not only undertakes to shed light on the events and developments in European security in the run-up to the German Chairmanship; it also portrays the OSCE, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2015, as an organization that, from its inception, epitomized multilateral dialogue and confidence-building in Europe.

The fact that the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is able to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, and thus its 40th birthday in 2015, is an indication that the concept of co-operative security by means of confidence-building and permanent multilateral dialogue on security in Europe has lost none of its relevance 25 years after the end of the Cold War. The OSCE’s strength continues to be its ability to sustain dialogue on security in Europe across political and ideological dividing lines as well as in crisis and conflict situations. The Organization has significant operational capacities in the fields of early warning, conflict prevention, conflict management, and conflict resolution and possesses several strong independent institutions. Its comprehensive concept of security encompassing the politico-military, economic and environmental, and human dimensions is still unique. Since the beginning of 2014, the security situation in Europe has been convulsed by the crisis in and around Ukraine. Against the background of tensions between Russia and the West, the OSCE has been accepted and made use of as the prime forum for security dialogue, giving the Organization an un hoped-for boost in prominence. It remains the only forum for multilateral security dialogue in Europe in which Russia is formally included as an equal member. By agreeing to the deployment of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and the stationing of OSCE observers at two Russian border posts, Moscow has indicated that it does not wish to burn all its bridges, that its interest in co-operation and maintaining security dialogue has not entirely evaporated. Following a phase of reorientation in terms of tasks, competencies, and priorities, a period of uncertainty over its future relevance, during which the OSCE has sought to find its place within the complex system of European organizations, it appears that the Organization’s engagement in Ukraine could be an opportunity to restore its significance.

Contents of the OSCE Yearbook 2015

Following the foreword by OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier, the first of the two special focus sections juxtaposes the 40th anniversary of the CSCE/OSCE with current developments in European security, and the Ukraine crisis in particular. Germany’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in 2016, opens this chapter by asking what we can learn from the experience of Helsinki for European security in the 21st century. Also taking a historical approach, Reinhard Mutz undertakes a critical analysis of the negotiations between East and West during the period of Europe’s division and asks what the CSCE had achieved and failed to achieve by

the end of the Cold War. Matt Rojansky, Mikhail Troitskiy, and David J. Galbreath then analyse the current state of relations between Russia and the West against the background of the Ukraine crisis, examine the effects of the crisis on security and co-operation in Europe, and focus on the role of the OSCE in this regard. Finally, Maxime Lefebvre offers a French view of the Ukraine crisis and the new role for the OSCE that has resulted from it.

The second special focus section contains contributions relating to the Ukraine crisis itself with an emphasis on conflict prevention and crisis management. Heidi Tagliavini, the OSCE's representative in the Trilateral Contact Group until June 2015, gives a first-hand report of the OSCE-led mediation efforts that seek to resolve the conflict; Claus Neukirch provides an insight into the activities of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. The lessons that the OSCE can already draw from the Ukraine crisis for future conflict management activities are the subject of Fred Tanner's contribution; Hans-Joachim Schmidt illustrates the close interconnections of crisis management and conventional arms control; at the heart of Jean P. Froehly's considerations is the contribution that the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has made to defusing the crisis. Finally, P. Terrence Hopmann undertakes a historical comparison of the reactions to the first Ukraine/Crimea crisis from 1992-1996 and crisis management efforts in 2014 and 2015.

Away from the special focus sections, David Aprasidze examines domestic developments in Georgia, with a focus on the consolidation of democracy. Three contributions focus on Central Asia: Thomas Kunze and Michail Logvinov describe potential Islamist threats to the region after the end of the combat mission by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan; Arne C. Seifert considers how the "Islamic State" can be stopped from spreading into Central Asia; and Ghaffor Mirzoev analyses the significance of religion and culture in the Tajik national consciousness. In a further contribution, Jenny Nordman examines the role of ethnic nationalism in the policies of states in the Western Balkans, before Daniela Pisoiu and Reem Ahmed explore the phenomenon of growing right-wing radical populist movements in Western Europe.

Three contributions concern themselves with questions of conflict prevention and resolution that are not directly connected to the Ukraine crisis: Jennifer Croft reports on the status of non-citizens in the Baltic states; György Szabo, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan, introduces his work; and Samuel Goda outlines the activities of the OSCE Mission to Moldova.

In the section on the three dimensions of the OSCE and cross-dimensional challenges, Reinhold Mokrosch considers the relationship between religious tolerance and satire against the background of the attacks in Paris and Copenhagen in January and February 2015 and asks how tolerant religions need to be to serve peace and whether there should be limits to satire, or if, as Kurt Tucholsky suggested, "anything goes". There follows a plea by Omar Grech and Monika Wohlfeld for a proper balance between state and human security in relation to the current Mediterranean refugee tragedy, after which Paul Holtom considers the OSCE's role in the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty and Rory McCorley assesses the lessons that can be learned for future activities from the OSCE's border monitoring operations in Georgia. Finally, Laurent Goetschel and Natascha Cerny describe the increasing significance of civil society for the OSCE in the fields of human rights and peacebuilding.

1 The Federal Government, OSCE – Deutschland 2016, Renewing dialogue, rebuilding trust, restoring security. The priorities of the German OSCE Chairmanship in 2016, p. 1, at: <http://www.osce.org/cio/215791>.

2 Ibid., p. 2.

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