

Ján Kubiš

Preface

In the year 2000, the OSCE has a reason to celebrate. This year is marked by the 25th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act - the document which became the foundation for the CSCE and later the OSCE. Under the auspices of the CSCE, the "Helsinki process" was used by participating States to promote compliance with their CSCE commitments including the field of human rights, thus contributing to the end of the totalitarian regimes in the East and the end of division of Europe.

Today, the OSCE operates in a different environment, and deals with a complex variety of challenges as well as old and new threats to European security. The Organization has also undergone rapid transition in the realm of field operations. Within just a few years, the OSCE has developed into an active field organization, with currently over 20 field activities, and several thousand national and international staff members in a number of countries and regions in Europe and Central Asia.

Yet also in this new environment, the philosophy of the OSCE has remained the same - compliance with and implementation in good faith of all OSCE principles, norms and commitments and by all OSCE participating States, accountability for these to their citizens, and responsibility to each other. Its strength continues to be its broad membership,¹ its early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation instruments, as well as its negotiations and consultations based on building a consensus.

These unique characteristics of the Organization were further emphasized and strengthened by the decisions taken at the OSCE Summit held in Istanbul in November 1999. The concept of common and comprehensive security, and of equal partnership, solidarity and transparency remain the guiding principle of the Organization. In Istanbul, participating States emphasized that the security of each participating State is inseparably linked to that of all others, and that the Organization will address the human, economic, political and military dimensions of security as an integral whole.

Recognizing that the post-Cold War era security challenges require close co-operation among the various international players, the OSCE participating States, in Istanbul, agreed to adopt the Platform for Co-operative Security, which addresses the need to strengthen co-operation between the OSCE and other international organizations and institutions, thereby making better use of the resources of the international community. To those organizations and institutions whose members adhere to OSCE principles and commitments and whose membership is based on openness and free will, the Platform pro-

¹ After being suspended in 1992, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia became the 55th OSCE participating State on 10 November 2000.

poses regular contacts, the identification of liaison officers or points of contact, cross-representation at appropriate meetings and other arrangements intended to increase understanding of their respective conflict prevention tools. In dealing with co-operation in response to specific crises, the Platform suggests a pragmatic ongoing exchange of information and the fostering of coordinated approaches to avoid duplication and to ensure efficient use of available resources. The OSCE offers to serve as a flexible framework for co-operation of the various mutually reinforcing efforts.

In fact, many steps have been taken in the last few years to improve co-operation among international organizations, and the Platform further emphasizes this priority of the Organization. A framework of regular consultation with partner organizations has been established, goal-oriented field co-operation has been developing steadily, and ensuring that international organizations are already involved at the planning stages of field activities has brought good results. For example, this year, the OSCE and Council of Europe signed a Common Catalogue of Co-operation Modalities - a depiction of the scope and modalities of co-operation aimed at preserving the institutional memory of co-operation efforts.

An innovative form of co-operation among international organizations is currently underway in Kosovo. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OSCE MIK) is a distinct component within the overall framework of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). It has taken the leading role in matters relating to institution- and democracy-building, human rights and elections, the latter in co-operation with the UN. It has a number of responsibilities that are unprecedented in the context of the OSCE, such as training a new police service and judicial and administrative personnel, as well as providing a framework for media regulation and monitoring.

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo has also been tasked with the organization and supervision of the municipal elections in Kosovo. Together with the UN, the OSCE developed a citizens register, which is the basis for a credible voters list drawn up by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. A joint "Registration Task Force" has been set up consisting of the "institution building pillar" (OSCE) and the "civil administration pillar" (UN), within the framework of UNMIK, with the joint task of planning and executing voter registration of the citizens of Kosovo.

A Human Rights Training Needs Assessment Mission visited Kosovo as part of an ongoing project between the OSCE, UN OHCHR, the European Commission and the Council of Europe, whose aim is to develop a common set of human rights training materials and programmes for all OSCE and UN field missions.

The OSCE Mission maintains close links with the Kosovo Force (KFOR), which provides a secure environment for OSCE activities in Kosovo. The Council of Europe has contributed seconded experts to the OSCE Mission in

Kosovo, on both short-term and long-term bases, in the fields of media affairs, police training, democratization, human rights and the rule of law.

OSCE MIK is itself important, but Kosovo cannot be isolated from the entire region. The OSCE has a vital role across all borders in South Eastern Europe through the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, placed under the auspices of the OSCE by the Cologne Ministerial Conference, convened by the European Union on 10 June 1999. The Stability Pact has proved to be another vital framework encouraging co-operation between the OSCE and other international organizations.

Another area where close co-ordination of efforts will be vital is Chechnya. As the OSCE is preparing for re-deployment of its Assistance Group in Chechnya, it follows the principle that it will need to co-operate closely on the ground with the Council of Europe, especially as the Council of Europe seconded personnel to the office of Mr. Kalamanov, Personal Representative of the President of the Russian Federation on Human Rights. In addition, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) gives backing to the Personal Representative's office. The OSCE and the Council of Europe are consulting on this issue by utilizing the channels open for frequent contacts and exchange of information.

The growing responsibilities of the Organization in the realms of early warning, conflict prevention, conflict management, and post-conflict rehabilitation led to the decision of the participating States at the Istanbul Summit to give the Organization more operational capabilities. The decision was taken to create Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams (REACT), thereby enabling the OSCE to respond quickly to demands for civilian expert assistance and for large civilian field operations and to shorten deployment time. The idea is to enable the OSCE to deploy civilian and police experts quickly to OSCE participating States to provide assistance, in compliance with OSCE norms, in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. The participating States have also agreed on studying ways on how to expand the ability of the OSCE to carry out police-related activities. In order to better prepare and manage OSCE field operations, an Operation Centre was established. Its role is to plan and deploy field operations, including those involving REACT resources. It liaises with other international organizations and institutions as appropriate in accordance with the Platform for Co-operative Security. The participating States also reconfirmed their determination to develop the OSCE's role in peacekeeping, an activity that has up to now not been undertaken by the Organization. Finally, the participating States decided to strengthen the consultation process within the OSCE by establishing the Preparatory Committee under the OSCE Permanent Council.

The OSCE has expanded the scale and substance of its efforts. This has greatly strengthened the OSCE's contribution to security and co-operation throughout the entire OSCE area. In Central Asia, the consolidation of the

presence of the OSCE in the region, and the work of Ambassador Höynck, and until the end of 2000 myself, as Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia,² are aimed at a better common OSCE response to the multitude of challenges facing the countries of Central Asia, at their further integration and the enhancement of the OSCE's co-operative activities in that region.

In Armenia, an OSCE Office in Yerevan has been opened. This Office promotes the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments as well as co-operation with the Republic of Armenia within the OSCE framework. It facilitates contacts with the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and other OSCE institutions. It also establishes and maintains contacts with local authorities, universities, research institutions and NGOs. In July 2000, an OSCE Office with a similar mandate opened in Baku, Azerbaijan.

In Georgia, on top of its regular mandate, the OSCE Mission has also been tasked with border observation. By deploying permanent observers, it was possible *inter alia* to lower tension between Georgia and the Russian Federation over allegations related to developments in and around Chechnya.

The activities level of OSCE institutions has also grown considerably. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Representative on Freedom of the Media, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, but also the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, active in the human dimension, have an increasingly important role and impact in the Organization's early warning, conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation efforts. Similar activation is visible in the work of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities. The OSCE Secretariat has undergone restructuring intended to strengthen the operational capacity of the OSCE, notably with regard to the planning, deployment and management of field missions.

To conclude, let me say that Europe, from Vancouver to Vladivostok, requires the contribution of a strengthened OSCE to meet the risks and challenges facing the OSCE area, to improve human security and thereby to make a difference in the life of the individual.

2 In 2001, Ambassador Höynck was re-appointed under the new title as Personal Representative for tasks in support of the participating States in Central Asia.