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CORE - The Centre for OSCE Research at the IFSH

The OSCE as a regional security organization comprising 55 participating States extends across almost the entire northern hemisphere from "Vancouver to Vladivostok". It is the only international organization with an explicit pan-European mandate and radius. Furthermore it has a Transatlantic dimension. In particular, it includes those crisis regions where there are states that will not become members of other European organizations in the near future, but will nevertheless have a fundamental influence on pan-European security.

The OSCE has reacted to crises and conflicts faster and more successfully than other organizations and has developed innovative, non-military instruments for the prevention and management of ethno-political conflicts. Today, the OSCE plays a decisive role in the European security architecture through preventive diplomacy, early warning, election monitoring, confidence- and security-building measures, arms control and in particular through its field missions.

Scientific Focus and Involvement

The increasing number of intra-state, most often ethno-political conflicts in a series of OSCE participating States after the end of the East-West conflict moved the prevention concept - which had gained the centre of attention on the political level in 1994 through the Agenda for Peace put forward by Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations - to the centre of discussion in the field of political science. However the lively scientific debate on the prevention of ethno-political conflicts often takes place on a theoretical level highly abstracted from the praxis of international organizations. There has been (almost) no research on prevention, in particular on the work of the OSCE. Serious deficiencies in the research in this area as well as an opportunity to make constructive contributions to the further development of the OSCE discussion led the Director of the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH), Dieter S. Lutz, initially, to found the OSCE Yearbook in 1995. After the creation of the Yearbook, the Institute established a focus on OSCE research. The almost explosive development of OSCE activities in the past few years and the many new issues arising therefrom ultimately led to the establishment of the Centre for OSCE Research (CORE) at the IFSH. CORE is the only research centre worldwide specialized in OSCE research.

The Founding of the Centre for OSCE Research

The Centre was founded on 6 January 2000 as a department of the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH). Federal President Johannes Rau, the First Mayor of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Ortwin Runde, and the Director of IFSH and Head of CORE spoke at the founding ceremony. The Federal President opened the ceremonies at the City Hall of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg with a speech under the motto of his predecessor, Gustav Heinemann: "Peace as a Predicament". In addition, the speeches by First Mayor Runde and Professor Lutz, which dealt with one and the same topic although from differing angles, were unusually consistent. This topic can be said to be the CORE guiding principle: "War is not normal!"

Some of the guests, totalling over 400 persons coming from political, economic and public life, used the opportunity to make significant contributions laying the financial foundations for an IFSH building extension urgently required to accommodate CORE.

Within the framework of a symposium entitled "OSCE 2000 - A Civilian Peace Policy for Europe", the OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Ján Kubiš, the Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office, Ambassador Dr. Margit Wästfelt, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve as well as the then German and Russian Ambassadors to the OSCE, Dr. Rudolf Schmidt und Oleg Belous discussed OSCE perspectives. Krista Sager, the Deputy Mayor and Senator for Science of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg gave a short welcoming speech and the discussion was moderated by the Deputy Head of CORE, Dr. Wolfgang Zellner.

After the founding ceremony, the Centre offered an international workshop on current OSCE developments and the CORE working programme for the year 2000. The participants were OSCE academic experts and representatives from OSCE institutions, including *inter alia* former OSCE Secretary General Ambassador ret. Dr. Wilhelm Höynck, Falk Lange, Advisor to the High Commissioner on National Minorities, as well as Dr. Monika Wohlfeld from the OSCE Secretariat. Members of the academic community included: Professor Dr. Adam Daniel Rotfeld, Stockholm International Institute for Peace Research (SIPRI), Professor Victor-Yves Ghebali of the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, and Dr. Pál Dunay of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy.

The workshop participants discussed current and prospective research projects as well as the CORE publications and services planned. As a result of the workshop it was realized that CORE would be able to rely on secure backing and assistance from science and politics.

CORE Goals and Principles

The Centre for OSCE Research has been set up to function as a politically independent think-tank and combines basic research on central aspects of OSCE development with demand-oriented analyses. CORE's goal is to follow OSCE development by performing critical analyses thus contributing to a deeper understanding of OSCE problems and perspectives. Furthermore, CORE research is to make a contribution to a realistic assessment of OSCE capabilities and limits. In addition, it will give support to OSCE endeavours to institute effective conflict settlement and the construction of a European security order.

The fact that CORE research is derived from current OSCE activities is a strong indication that the Centre is praxis-oriented. This is emphasized through its international orientation and the high percentage of staff members, who in addition to their academic qualifications have also had practical experience in OSCE missions and institutions as well as having been involved in research projects in the Central and Eastern European states. In research projects like "On the Effectiveness of the OSCE Minority Regime", academic researchers in the countries being examined are conducting detailed field studies.

Regular contacts with OSCE missions and institutions also reinforce the CORE research focus on politically relevant issues. This is designed to allow it to utilize the experiences of former mission members and thus structure its advisory capacities on policy in a realistic manner and not simply offer theoretical hypotheses.

Working Areas

The essential focus of the Centre, reflected in all of its individual activities, is on conflict prevention, crisis management and the process of post-conflict peace-building. In addition to conducting research, CORE issues publications and provides services. The research focus, in particular, is to be on innovative OSCE instruments directed towards conflict management during the differing phases in which conflicts escalate. These include the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Representative on Freedom of the Media and naturally the long-term missions. The regional focus is on the three central crisis regions in the OSCE area, the Balkans, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Research Projects

The Project "On the Effectiveness of the OSCE Minority Regime"

Ethno-political conflicts are currently the main cause of violent confrontations in Europe. As a rule, they occur within states, but often have the potential to escalate into inter-state conflict. Thus, ethno-political violence is always a danger to security and stability, as well as peace and is therefore a risk to the inter-state relations between OSCE participating States. This was the reason the then CSCE created the institution of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) in 1992.

The main task of the HCNM is the early identification of minority conflicts and if applicable their peaceful solution. Despite the fact that the work of the HCNM, the former Dutch Foreign Minister Max van der Stoep, who has been in office since 1993, has unanimously been recognized by politicians as well as academicians as highly productive, the effectiveness of this instrument has yet to be examined empirically. This led to the above-mentioned research project, which since 1999 has been funded by the *Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft* (DFG, German Research Association) and is being implemented by CORE.

In this project, research is being conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the OSCE minority regime according to the degree to which the HCNM recommendations on legislation and praxis during the period from 1993 to 2000 have been implemented. The groups dealt with are the Russian minorities in Estonia, Latvia and the Ukraine, the Hungarian minorities in Romania and Slovakia as well as the Albanian minority in Macedonia. Furthermore an attempt will be made to explain the reasons for the differing degrees to which of the High Commissioner's recommendations have been implemented in each country. On this basis, political recommendations will be made to optimize the effectivity of the HCNM as an OSCE institution.

The Project "Performance Requirements and Performance Profiles of OSCE and UN Missions"

The topic of this project was not created in an ivory tower at the Institute in Hamburg, but was the result of discussions with members of the German Parliament, members of the OSCE Secretariat and around 25 Heads of Permanent Representations to the OSCE in Vienna, who were all concurrently of the opinion that a mission study should be given priority. Within a period of only a few years, more than 20 multi-functional UN peacekeeping operations and OSCE missions have been deployed in the OSCE area. They are currently one of the most important instruments used by international actors to prevent violence and manage conflicts with civilian means in OSCE space. In the Charter for European Security adopted at the Istanbul Summit in Novem-

ber 1999, the OSCE participating States again emphasized the importance of OSCE missions. However, there is a huge disparity between the political significance of this innovative instrument and its scientific treatment.

The scientific literature on UN and OSCE civilian missions is characterized by being primarily descriptive blended with some prescriptive elements. There are very few studies based on theory or on explicit systematic research on the performance requirements and performance profiles of OSCE and UN missions. Thus especially those questions that are decisive for mission deployment have remained unanswered, that is, what are the comparative advantages and disadvantages the world organization has with respect to the regional organization and vice-versa, as well as how synergy effects can be achieved through division of labour and co-operation. This research project is aimed at filling the gap in this area.

The empirical goal of this study is to compare the performance profiles of UN and OSCE missions and explain the differences between the two through variables related to conflict and/or organization. The OSCE and UN Missions in Kosovo, Macedonia, Georgia and Tajikistan are to be the focus of this research.

With respect to policy advice, the goal of the study is developing recommendations for optimizing UN and OSCE civilian missions. These will be drawn from empirical results and an interpretation of these. The recommendations are to have an effect on the organization of missions, their working methods, their fields of activity and forms of co-operation as well as lead to possible adaptations in the structure of the parent organizations.

The Research Project "Security through Democratization"

The OSCE is characterized by its unique linking of the human dimension with the security dimension. The democratic quality of intra-state relationships thus becomes the legitimate object of international security concerns and co-operative regulatory measures. Thus, the OSCE promotion of democracy is not primarily legitimized through the goal of perfecting democracy, but indirectly, through efforts to create stability and security. In view of the widespread weaknesses in democratic institutions in the countries in transition, the building of democracy is decidedly an essential instrument in conflict prevention. OSCE efforts in the area of the human dimension are consequently not to be measured by an abstract democracy model or ideal.

For the first time, this research project is to implement a theoretical analysis of OSCE democratization measures directed towards creating security based on comparative case studies in Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. The central focus of the project is on the capabilities and limits of the OSCE to make a contribution to the maintenance and strengthening of stability and security through its democratization work. This project is an initial venture into creating security through democratization

measures by external actors, an area where extensive research is still required.

Likewise, the results of this research project are to be used to make concrete policy recommendations to optimize activity fields, instruments and co-operation processes in the area of the OSCE human dimension.

Publications and Services

At this point it is no longer necessary to make special mention of the OSCE Yearbook, which readers have recognized for years now as an indispensable source of basic information on OSCE activities. The authors of this book include OSCE practitioners, diplomats, soldiers and scientists. We are particularly proud that the book appears in three languages (German, English and Russian) and the Russian edition is used as standard material in numerous universities in the Russian Federation and in other CIS countries.

The results of current research projects are being published in the *Working Papers* series, by and large in English. Our newsletter, *CORE News*, provides information on the events and developments at CORE. Core News and the Working Papers can be accessed at the Centre's web site.

CORE provides an extensive collection of OSCE-related documents and secondary literature for external researchers and the general public in its "OSCE Depository Library". This library was begun during mid-1999 and is being continually enlarged.

Since the middle of the year 2000, the IFSH and CORE and thus the "OSCE Depository Library" have been members of the German Information Network on International Relations and Area Studies, whose scientific data base World Affairs Online (WAO) includes almost a half a million entries. CORE has agreed to give special attention to the task of making OSCE documents as well as OSCE-related literature available on this information network.

Since mid-1999, the German Foreign Office has offered a training programme for personnel to be deployed in civilian peace missions. The goal of the programme is to better prepare future OSCE and UN mission members before they are deployed, so that they will be able to operate more effectively and thus guarantee better mission working methods. CORE members have offered courses on the institutional development of the OSCE and on mission activities as well as developed materials related to countries and conflicts for mission members.

Co-operation with Academia, Politics and Society

Many of the above-mentioned activities would not have been possible without the project funding of the German Foreign Office. This funding is by no

means a one-way street. CORE is also in the process of developing professional reports which could be of value to future German OSCE policy. The development of such studies, compilations, policy papers is, in addition to the long-term research, naturally one of the basic tasks of a centre, which has praxis-oriented and policy-relevant aims. CORE continues to maintain working contacts with the OSCE Secretariat, the numerous OSCE delegations as well as other organizations, like the Council of Europe.

On a scientific level, CORE has the opportunity to build on the broad basis for co-operation that the IFSH has developed during the last decades, and in addition, it will bring in new elements. One of our guiding principles is an orientation towards making the Centre highly international, i.e. by maintaining contacts with international institutes as well as increasingly inviting international fellows to join us. Although we do not yet have an adequate formally financed fellowship programme, our first international guest researcher, Professor Noboru Miyawaki from Japan, joined us at CORE in September 2000. These are small steps but they are headed in the right direction.

And last, but not least, it must be mentioned that requests from the general public or the media on OSCE topics for information for seminars, lectures etc. - have increased considerably since CORE was founded.

Just a year after the creation of CORE, it is still too early to offer an interim evaluation of the situation. Many areas have been tackled, but many areas lie fallow because of the lack of personnel or funding. CORE is far from "completed" and in fact, this state will never come into effect. A centre dedicated to the realities of policy and policy-making will have to evolve continually to be able to fulfil its self-elected goal: to put the politically desired priority for civilian conflict prevention on a scientific basis.