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Never-Ending Stories? - An Interim Balance of Long-Term Missions

An Example: The Ukraine

On 1 June 1999, a long dispute between the OSCE and the Ukraine came to a formal conclusion. After protracted negotiations the Permanent Council, in a special meeting lasting only five minutes, adopted a new form of co-operation with the Ukraine.¹ On 25 April 1996, the Ukrainian government had already expressed that it no longer wanted to host a Mission whose unforeseeable length placed them in an unfavourable light internationally.² However the other participating States at that point felt that the Mission, which had been launched on 25 August 1994, initially for half a year and then extended every six months, was still necessary. Its original task had been to act as an observer of the situation and in an advisory capacity on the writing of a Ukrainian constitution, particularly in developing an autonomy statute for the Crimea, as well as encouraging the dialogue between different ethnic minorities. This had for the most part been completed. However some participating States had appealed to extend the mandate so that it could continue to deal with the status of the Tatars and accelerate the development of a programme for their integration into society.³

At that time the Ukrainian government agreed to the next extension of the mandate, but made it understood that it was to be the last. However, later they did consent to further extensions. To counteract the concern in Kyiv that the OSCE was discriminating against them by maintaining its long-term presence there, it officially decided on 11 December 1997 to reduce the number of mission members, a measure that had been put into effect informally some time ago.⁴ A year later the mandate was in fact extended for the very last time until 30 April 1999. Nevertheless, this was done with the perspective of creating new forms of co-operation.⁵ This decision to end the Mis-

1 Cf. OSCE, Permanent Council, PC Journal No. 231, Decision No. 295, PC.DEC/295, 1 June 1999.

2 Cf. Klemens Büscher, *The Missions to the Republic of Moldova and the Ukraine: A Double-Entry Balance Sheet*, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (Ed.), OSCE Yearbook 1999, Baden-Baden 2000, pp. 195-210, here: p. 207.

3 Cf. OSZE-Tätigkeitsbericht [OSCE Progress Report], in: ÖMZ 4/1996, p. 456, as well as Rolf Welberts, *The OSCE Missions to the Successor States of the Former Soviet Union*, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (Ed.), OSCE-Yearbook 1997, Baden-Baden 1998, pp. 123-134, here: p. 132.

4 Cf. Büscher, cited above (Note. 2), p. 207.

5 Cf. OSCE, Permanent Council, PC Journal No. 202, Decision No. 278, PC.DEC/278, 17 December 1998.

sion's mandate was the first and has up to now been the only⁶ one of its nature. With the exception of the first two missions to Kosovo, which were brought to an end prematurely, all other OSCE long-term missions and other field activities⁷ have always been extended.

In December 1998 a conversion of the Mission into an expert group was scheduled to take place. Instead however, the Permanent Council decision of 1 June 1999 established the office of an OSCE Project Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator was assigned two international assistants and a local staff. This office was created to plan, implement and monitor projects between important Ukrainian governmental and non-governmental institutions and the OSCE. The Co-ordinator's office is located in the rooms of the former OSCE Mission in Kyiv. While the Ukrainian government placed value on having a clear say in making decisions on concrete projects, the Permanent Council was primarily looking for a new name for the work it wished to be continued on a series of problem areas and which had definitely been successful in the past. Within this compromise a similarity with the original Mission predominates. This is reflected by the fact that the initial duration of this new office was fixed at six months ending on 31 December 1999 with the possibility for prolongation in six-month periods thereafter.⁸

Consequently it would seem that OSCE long-term missions have turned into never-ending stories. In the following, reflections will be made on why this is true against the horizon of the 1999 Istanbul Summit where the OSCE drew various conclusions based on its experiences in long-term missions and similar field activities. These deductions have raised hopes that improvements may occur, but are not enough to solve the issues.

6 The decision (PC.DEC/337) to officially conclude the mandate of the OSCE Representative to the Joint Committee on the Skrunda Radar Station (Latvia) on 27 January 2000 cannot be counted here because that mandate was completed when the deadline for the Russian-Latvian Agreement was met through the dismantling of the Skrunda Radar Station. Nor can we count the situation where Sanctions Assistance Missions (SAMs) became ineffective because sanctions against the former Yugoslavia were lifted through the Dayton Agreement; cf. Berthold Meyer, *In der Endlosschleife? Die OSZE-Langzeitmissionen auf dem Prüfstand [Stuck in the Infinite Loop? OSCE Long-Term Missions on the Test Stand]*, HSFK-Report 3/1998, Frankfurt/M. 1998, pp. 11-12.

7 There is a list of all long-term missions on the OSCE web site: the Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina Missions (which were ended prematurely in 1993) as well as those to Skopje (Macedonia), Georgia, Estonia, Moldova, Latvia, Tajikistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and in Kosovo. "Other field activities" are: the Central Asian Liaison Office, the Assistance Group to Chechnya, the Presence in Albania, the Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus, the Centres in Almaty, Ashgabad and Bishkek, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, the Offices in Yerevan and Baku. In addition there are also activities listed separately, i.e. activities concerning the conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference as well as assistance in implementation of bilateral agreements between Latvia and/or Estonia and Russia.

8 The first decision to extend the mandate was adopted at the 261st Plenary Meeting of the Permanent Council on 9 December 1999, cf. PC Journal No. 261, Decision No. 330, PC.DEC/330, 9 December 1999.

The Basic Problem for All Mandates

The success of an international mission in a crisis area - whether it acts based on an OSCE mandate or that of another international organization - is dependent on four variables:

- the complexity and intensity of the conflict with which it is confronted,
- the extent of the contents of the mandate when it is launched,
- the number and capabilities of its mission members, as well as
- the time frame available to fulfil its tasks.

It is clear from a perusal of OSCE mandates⁹ that the three variables, which the OSCE Permanent Council is able to influence, are also interdependent thus creating a dilemma. Everything speaks for the fact that in the preparatory discussions prior to drawing up a mandate its content enjoys highest priority: With the best intentions of dealing with the existing problems that may not have been grasped in all their complexity by short-term fact-finding missions sent to the crisis area before, deployment mandates include everything that encourages beneficial co-operation between the conflict parties or that would give the growing democracies the rating of "fully mature". But then the Conflict Prevention Centre responsible for fitting out the missions has to solve the problem of finding the appropriate personnel with only very limited funds. Accordingly almost all the missions deployed up until 1995 (namely those to Skopje, Georgia, Estonia, Moldova, Latvia, Tajikistan, Sarajevo¹⁰ and the Ukraine) were staffed with less than ten international members and initially limited in duration to six months.¹¹ This meant that from the outset there was a discrepancy between fulfilling their comprehensive task list and the realities they were facing. Thus the missions, because of limited opportunities to achieve their work, could either only allow a very short "maturation period" to their "host countries" and then be forced to leave or extend their mandate. Because the first alternative would have been an admission of failure, which was neither in the interest of the host country nor in the interest of the other participating States, decisions to extend mandates were made at regular intervals. Unfortunately, there were seldom decisions made on the fine-tuning of a mandate or an increase in personnel.¹²

Admittedly this practice differs from the mandates of the large missions deployed starting at the end of 1995. In the cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Croatia, Albania and Kosovo, greater dimensions were taken into

9 For more detail see Meyer, cited above (Note 6).

10 Absorbed by the Mission to Bosnia und Herzegovina at the end of 1995.

11 The Assistance Group to Chechnya deployed in April 1995 was also initially comprised of only six diplomats but their tasks were not limited in duration.

12 Such decisions were made for the Mission to Tajikistan in 1996, to Skopje only in connection with the escalation of the Kosovo conflict in March 1998 and for the Mission to Georgia in connection with the second war in Chechnya once in December 1999 and again in April 2000.

consideration with a view to providing personnel as well as to the duration of the missions. This however brought no change in the older missions, which continued to be extended after every six months.

Personnel Problems

Mission staff, at least during the initial years, often suffered from the fact that many of their members were not adequately informed about the political situation of the host country and its historical background. Moreover only a few members were fluent enough in the languages of the conflict parties. Occasionally diplomats or officers were appointed as Head of Mission, their last foreign posting before going into retirement. Maybe this is why they have not always shown the commitment required to solve problems or reach the necessary goals.

Because of the six-month extension rhythm, personnel changes occurred too quickly during the set-up and training phases - which had not been planned as such but turned out to be necessary - of small missions. This led to an efficiency deficit because of time lost training new personnel, even though individual members were highly motivated and had the adequate language skills. Furthermore individual members do not (or cannot) identify with their work to the best advantage if they know that it will be limited to just a few months. On the general mission level, the rapid change in personnel hindered the development of the indispensable institutional memory so necessary for effective completion of tasks. Moreover, contacts with important administrative departments and representatives of the conflict parties had to be re-initiated time and again. This had several negative effects: 1. Confidence and trust, which are important for mission work, had to be continually renewed with people in key positions. 2. Due to their much more profound knowledge of the internal relationships of the country, those people whose interests did not coincide with OSCE goals were able to implement their policies against OSCE peace strategies.

In spite of the criticism that missions have inadequate provisions for personnel and that extension intervals are too short one should not lose sight of one factor: The only recourse that the Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General have to deploy a mission, is to try to convince the participating States to provide a sufficient number of the appropriate personnel for each mission. However there has been little progress in this area, especially for the large missions, which had particularly serious effects in the launching of the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM).

Success with All Its Ups and Downs

If you wanted to measure mission success by the number of conflicts that have been completely resolved, you would have modest results. But this is not the point. Even after the most ceremonially sealed peace settlements, the differences which caused a conflict and for which it was fought have not necessarily been eliminated. A *modus vivendi* must be brought about which enables the parties to resolve future conflicts in a regulated manner. The international OSCE community has very few resources at its disposal to urge individual participating States to conform to OSCE regulations in implementing their domestic and foreign policies and resolving their conflicts through peaceful means.

This basic idea is in accordance with the missions' task to "maintain a high profile in the country", which was first included in the mandate for the Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje. Although only isolated and sporadic because of inadequate mission staffing, international representatives made appearances accordingly throughout the whole country and were able to have a pacifying effect in most combat areas. At least the situation in these areas did not escalate into armed conflict. Thus the framework for a peaceful resolution and settlement of the conflict was improved. At the same time this was a chance to bring the conflict parties closer to the most effective way to proceed.

These experiences led to the deployment in October 1998 of a very large Verification Mission to Kosovo, at the time, in a state of war. In principle it would have been possible for the 2,000 international members planned for the Mission to use OSCE vehicles to be present at any given time anywhere in the country to be able to contribute to the pacification process. However the Mission was not launched as quickly as it should have been.¹³ Furthermore, there is some doubt as to whether the desired effect would have been achieved even with the deployment of several hundreds of members in November and if the full contingent had been present at the latest by the end of the year. The main problem was that mission members had to operate fully unarmed among warring parties who were extremely unyielding.

All in all those missions, which were established between 1992 and 1998, whose presence at a conflict was long enough and whose size was large enough, were able to mediate between the parties and especially at the local level defuse conflicts in a vast number of situations. They could work towards getting laws passed that were designed for the protection of minorities,

13 Although a KVM presence would have already been necessary during the 15 days allowed for the withdrawal of Serb troops and police forces, there were only a few vehicles with an OSCE emblem patrolling the country. The first large contingents were deployed starting in December. By the end of January 1999 there were around 1,000 mission members and even upon their departure on the eve of the NATO bombings the number of personnel had only increased to 1,380 international members and 1,000 local staff members. Over 300 of the original applicants had by then withdrawn their applications (probably because of the high combat risk).

who were entitled to it under the Copenhagen Document of 1990. And subsequently mission members were able, in their role as ombudspersons, to facilitate that these laws were upheld. In this respect they have with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) been able to assist in the development of a civil society in certain countries. Their chances of success are higher when missions are established at an early stage. When this is the case, prevention of violence and negotiations have a better chance of taking hold before bloody clashes in vast dimensions lead to serious individual and collective traumas. In this sense, particularly the Missions to Estonia and Latvia have served well. Admittedly this could be due to the fact that in the Baltic states these missions were able to cultivate older traditions of civil society, which were not totally lost during the Soviet period. Moreover the hopes that these two host countries have of becoming members of NATO and the European Union made their governments more prepared than most to engage in constructive conflict management.

It is much harder but not impossible for the OSCE to bring an armed conflict to a standstill or to organize post-conflict rehabilitation. The difficulties of the Missions to Bosnia and Herzegovina, to Croatia and in Kosovo have shown that proximity to Western Europe is no bonus. However in these cases it was not just the major traumas of the individual conflict parties that got in the way and did not allow them to approach one another. Much more important is that these missions were confronted with a conflict party, namely the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, whose OSCE membership had been suspended but did not feel that this sanction was causing them enough grief to return to conforming to OSCE standards.

In principle it is naïve to assume that a country in which social tensions reign or where there is a civil war being fought, or has on paper just been ended, that all people are alike in their yearning for peace and the guiding hand of an OSCE mission. The opposite is probably closer to the truth. The international community must therefore be alert to the interests of those who have gained advantages from the tensions and wars up to that point. These actors have violent means at their disposal and in certain cases will use them again. Because the OSCE - especially in cases where their missions must operate without military assistance - cannot just knock these weapons out of their hands, the Chairman-in-Office, his Personal Representatives or the missions must convince the actors that they are at more of an advantage with their combat uniforms off than on. This is a difficult balancing act for OSCE. To reach its goal of building a civil society, basically it would have to ensure that the influence of the authoritarian *ancien régime* or the *warlords* is diminished.

On occasion Heads of Mission have been too benevolent in these situations (e.g. in the first year of the Dayton Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina). They only made hesitant comments in their reports on such issues as election restrictions to the detriment of the opposition or the rigging of election re-

sults.¹⁴ It is possible they considered positive assessments a better way to help a country on its way to democracy than the use of strong criticism. Another reason the OSCE presumably holds back on its demand for reruns to the ballot-boxes is that election observation is enormously expensive. Moreover the OSCE has recently favoured not sending observers to elections where there was rather little chance that they would be held in accordance with regulations and with accurate results.¹⁵ For a short period this alternative exonerates the OSCE twice over. Neither does it cost anything nor does it lead to the approval of election forgeries when one should have known better. However this kind of abstinence does not help the long-term development of democracies. In fact, if these examples set a precedent, they will damage the reputation of the OSCE in the same way that whitewashing the issues does. In addition, election rigging can lead to domestic unrest which depending on the degree of its escalation could become much more expensive to the international community than organizing new elections through the OSCE.

The Difficulty in Fulfilling the Mandate and Concluding the Mission

Only the Mission to Estonia had the following mandate from the start: "keeping in mind the temporary nature of the Mission, consider ways and means of transferring its responsibilities to institutions or organizations representing the local population".¹⁶ However, this step was not taken although developments in this particular situation were favourable and mandates for later missions did not contain any objectives for the "period after the mission". Talks with diplomats working in and around the OSCE show that on the whole it is unclear which requirements must be fulfilled so the Permanent Council can determine whether a mandate has been concluded or not. Is it enough for the government of the host country to declare that they have the situation under control or is a joint communiqué from the various representatives of the conflict parties necessary? Or should the Permanent Council, if neither of the latter eventualities have occurred, with an eye on the budget situation in Vienna and in the capitals of those countries seconding the mission, first thin out the mission and then discreetly withdraw it?

14 Cf. the very descriptive diary by Ed van Thijn, *The Moods of Sarajevo*. Excerpts from the *Diary of an Observer*, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (Ed.), *OSCE Yearbook 1997, Baden-Baden 1998*, pp. 159-189.

15 This was the case for the elections in Uzbekistan (cf. OSCE/ODIHR Press Release of 22 November 1999) and in Turkmenistan, where the prevailing conditions did not meet OSCE requirements (cf. OSCE/ODIHR Press Release of 9 December 1999).

16 Committee of Senior Officials, Nineteenth CSO Meeting, Prague, 2-4 February 1993, in: Arie Bloed (Ed.), *The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Analysis and Basic Documents, 1972-1993*, Dordrecht/Boston/London 1993, pp. 988-998, p. 988. See also Falk Lange, *The OSCE Missions to the Baltic States*, in: *OSCE Yearbook 1997*, cited above (Note 14), pp. 115-121, here: p. 121.

Economic factors do play a certain role in the establishment of a mission. This is made clear through the limitations on the size of a mission and the duration of its first period. Later however, these factors obviously become secondary. During the year the Swiss held the OSCE Chair, there were "emphatic efforts to dissolve one Mission on the theory that work has to be carried out rationally and operationally and that even the chairman of an international organization, like the board of private firms, should produce concrete successes. One aspect of success, however, is that organizational elements created for a specific purpose should, in the interest of the firm's productivity, be disbanded once their envisioned goal has been achieved."¹⁷

Compared with these business management considerations however other issues came to the fore in the decisions on missions generally made every six months: the interests of individual countries as well as fears in view of the risk, difficult to estimate, of what would happen if a mission were withdrawn. For example from Moscow's viewpoint some missions were established solely to protect the Russian minorities in the former Soviet republics. For this reason Moscow fears that the withdrawal of these missions could in the view of their host countries "imply that the problems had finally been solved - which does not correspond to the Russian ideas and view of the situation".¹⁸ Larger participating States view the maintenance of missions as an instrument enabling them to extend their sphere of influence in certain regions of Europe and Central Asia. They want to be able to keep a "permanent collective 'eye' on restless neighbouring countries". Finally some view "a fairly large number of operational missions as an outstanding indicator of prestige for the Organization and its members, calculated to elevate the OSCE to the same level as other international and regional organizations with a large regional or global presence (...)".¹⁹

This view of countries seconding missions is in contrast to the problems that some of the host countries - not just the previously mentioned Ukraine - have with a permanent presence of the missions. The longer the international representatives are active at the scene and are able to make a political contribution, the more effect they have on the sovereignty of the states involved. These in turn consider this as intervention in their internal affairs. Aside from the fact that none of the states appreciate this and to a certain extent it impairs the reputation of governments in the eyes of their voters, the political elites in these countries fear that the continuation of an international presence could be seen as an indicator that the situation was continuously instable and detract from foreign investment. Moreover some of the host countries see an element of discrimination or even imposition of will in the exclusive concentration of benevolent interventions up to now in countries that were originally

17 Herbert Grubmayr, Problems and Difficulties of the OSCE's Long-Term Missions, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (Ed.), OSCE Yearbook 1998, Baden-Baden 1999, pp. 217-232, here: p. 220.

18 Ibid., p. 221.

19 Ibid.

part of the communist bloc. The "old West" could combat the lack of acceptance arising from this view by showing less resistance to the discussion of minority problems in the West and subsequently agreeing to the deployment of a mission in a Western country.

A Gleam of Hope over the Bosphorus

As the participants in the Istanbul Summit in November 1999 gathered together, one of the most difficult years in OSCE history, if not the most difficult since the CSCE process began in 1975, was coming to an end. There were examples at hand of the helplessness of an organization whose only means to create and secure peace were of a civilian nature: One example was the failure of the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission which led to its withdrawal from the deployment area just before NATO troops flew into Yugoslavia and started dropping the first bombs; another was the futile attempt of the Chairman-in-Office, Knut Vollebæk, to convince the Russians to end their war against renegade Chechnya or at least to fulfil the prerequisites for humanitarian aid. However, there were also signs of hope: the re-entry of an OSCE mission into Kosovo now controlled by an international peacekeeping force, the Kosovo Force (KFOR), as well as - at the Summit itself - Russian readiness to agree to the following passage on the second Chechen war: "We underscore the need to respect OSCE norms. We agree that in light of the humanitarian situation in the region it is important to alleviate the hardships of the civilian population, including by creating appropriate conditions for international organizations to provide humanitarian aid. We agree that a political solution is essential, and that the assistance of the OSCE would contribute to achieving that goal. We welcome the willingness of the OSCE to assist in the renewal of a political dialogue. We welcome the agreement of the Russian Federation to a visit by the Chairman-in-Office to the region. We reaffirm the existing mandate of the OSCE Assistance Group in Chechnya. In this regard, we also welcome the willingness of the Russian Federation to facilitate these steps, which will contribute to creating conditions for stability, security, and economic prosperity in the region."²⁰

Although the text is phrased in very diplomatic language, it took long discussions with the Russians to convince them to agree to this point and it had very little effect thereafter. This was true even though the Charter for European Security, which was also adopted with the Russian vote in Istanbul, states that documents like the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris as well as all other OSCE declarations "established clear standards for participating States' treatment of each other and of all individuals within their territories. All OSCE commitments, without ex-

20 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Istanbul Summit Declaration, Istanbul, November 1999, reprinted in the present volume, pp. 413-424, here: p. 419.

ception, apply equally to each participating State. Their implementation in good faith is essential for relations between States, between governments and their peoples, as well as between the organizations of which they are members. Participating States are accountable to their citizens and responsible to each other for their implementation of their OSCE commitments. We regard these commitments as our common achievement and therefore consider them to be matters of immediate and legitimate concern to all participating States."²¹

The indication of mutual responsibility of the participating States is important because this was an effort by participants of the Istanbul Summit to overcome the reservations of individual states, which have inner-societal conflicts, about intervention in their internal affairs. It is designed to make it easier for the OSCE to deploy missions to the country affected and to avert the escalation of violence or to introduce steps towards a de-escalation. However, the missions must still be given an invitation by the country where they would like to take action. In this manner state sovereignty continues to be taken into account.

If one considers the chapter of the Charter on the strengthening of common instruments it seems that the OSCE has learned something from its approximately seven-year experience with long-term missions and other field activities. There are several fundamental changes to the Organization planned. The Charter specifically states what is intended: Training programmes in the areas of human rights, democratization and the rule of law were announced. It was also pointed out that participating States should guarantee that qualified personnel should be made available for field operations and that personnel training be improved. Co-operation with other international organizations, especially the Council of Europe, was to be enhanced. Finally each host country was to be assisted in building its own capacity and expertise within its area of responsibility, to "facilitate an efficient transfer of the tasks of the operation to the host country, and consequently the closure of the field operation".²²

An improvement in the ability to deploy civilian and police expertise rapidly will most likely become very important. For this purpose the "Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams" (REACT) are to be established so that the OSCE may make use of this instrument. "This will enable OSCE bodies and institutions, acting in accordance with their respective procedures, to offer experts quickly to OSCE participating States to provide assistance, in compliance with OSCE norms, in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. This rapidly deployable capability will cover a wide range of civilian expertise. It will give us the ability to address problems before they become crises and to deploy quickly the civilian component of a

21 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Charter for European Security, Istanbul, November 1999, reprinted in the present volume, pp. 425-443, here: p. 428.

22 Ibid., p. 437.

peacekeeping operation when needed. These Teams could also be used as surge capacity to assist the OSCE with the rapid deployment of large-scale or specialized operations."²³

To ensure that rapid deployment is based on thorough preparation and planning, an Operation Centre within the Conflict Prevention Centre with a small core staff will be established. The staff will have expertise relevant for all kinds of OSCE operations and be able to be expanded rapidly if necessary. This Centre is to plan and deploy field operations, including those involving REACT resources.²⁴

Constructing this Operation Centre may still come under the authority of the Chairman-in-Office and/or the Secretary General. However, even setting up REACT resources is dependent on how serious participating States were when they signed the document in Istanbul. Whether the gleam over the Bosphorus proves more than a distant ray of hope on the horizon will become clear in the near future.

Additional Measures to Make Field Operations More Effective

Up to now not enough trained personnel have been made available for the larger missions. Whether this defect will be eliminated through core training measures instituted by the new Operation Centre cannot be deduced from the Charter for European Security. In any case in training future mission members one could make use of the rich experiences of previous members. Therefore in connection with the training strategy undertaken in 1998 for field activities, the following should be put into effect: Present and former members of OSCE long-term missions and ODIHR election monitoring missions should have intensive meetings to exchange information embracing both host countries and seconding countries. This would be beneficial to those members returning home from foreign cultures or war operations and the post-war period. It would make it easier for them to deal psychologically with culture shock or the experience of death and destruction. They would then be better prepared to face the challenges of a new mission. Personal reports on the experiences of former members as well as a systematic evaluation of the results of mission activities should be imparted to new members in a thorough training programme.

A comparison of the new large missions with the older small ones shows the OSCE has become more flexible in establishing limits on mission duration. Nevertheless, it still maintains a limit of six months for smaller field operations. Within the framework of an evaluation of all missions, those missions where it is clear that their presence will have to be maintained for a long time should be changed into permanent OSCE offices. If evaluation results en-

23 Ibid.

24 Cf. *ibid.* p. 438.

couraged the transformation of several offices simultaneously so that no one single country would feel discriminated against, this would have several advantages. A director of this kind of an office, who would be appointed for example for three years, could develop and maintain the necessary contacts to important people, departments and organizations in the country in a much better fashion. It would also make it easier to enhance the "institutional memory" that has been developed to varying degrees in the missions. However, mission work should not be allowed to become too bureaucratic. This is why offices, which have been established with long time frames, should also be examined periodically as to their necessity and closed as soon as local offices are able to fulfil their tasks. This is also important to be able to maintain pressure on the members of field operations and the conflict parties so that they succeed in reaching constructive forms of conflict management that can then be put into practice independently by conflict parties. Because not all missions are in a position to be transformed, the Permanent Council should, for all those missions that must maintain their current status, follow the example of the first mandate for Estonia: Considerations should be made as to how the institutions and organizations of the host country could be primed for taking over the mission's tasks and responsibilities when the operation has come to an end. This should also be true when new mandates are issued for new missions as far as one can assume they will not be in operation for longer than two years.

OSCE missions have operated and will continue to operate in warlike and precarious ceasefire situations. It has become a matter of course during the past eight years that OSCE missions have been allowed to include military personnel, but that mission members were not allowed to carry weapons.²⁵ This is most probably a tremendous advantage in their mediation and arbitration efforts as well as for their activities in the humanitarian dimension. If however mission members are subject to the hostility of the conflict parties and unprotected, this could have a negative influence on their motivation and hinder the recruitment of new members. In this respect, it would be a great advantage in difficult operations to adopt a policy of division of labour by the participating States and the host countries, like that involving the SFOR troops in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the end of 1995 and in the Kosovo Mission since the summer of 1999. This would also lower the risk that the operation be brought to an end prematurely.

The mandate for the Presence in Albania, which includes co-ordinating the activities of the various international organizations active there, was the result of the obvious conclusions the OSCE drew from wasteful duplication of work and the frictions arising there from. The Istanbul Summit took a further step and adopted the following: "In accordance with the Platform for Co-op-

25 This is also true of the border patrol units monitoring the Georgian-Chechen border, which is an expansion of the mandate of the Mission to Georgia. Cf. OSCE Permanent Council, Journal No. 262, Decision No. 334, PC.DEC/334, 15 December 1999.

erative Security, co-operation between OSCE and other international organizations in performing field operations will be enhanced. This will be done, *inter alia*, by carrying out common projects with other partners, in particular the Council of Europe, allowing the OSCE to benefit from their expertise while respecting the identity and decision-making procedures of each organization involved." ²⁶ If this is achieved the chances would be higher that the goals of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, which is under the auspices of the OSCE, will be reached.

26 Charter for European Security, cited above (Note 21), p. 437.