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Does the OSCE Have a Future?

Introduction

The question raised in the title is not an original one.[2] Surprisingly enough, however, these days it is generally not posed by those politicians, diplomats and researchers who have always either ignored or underestimated the role of the OSCE and its predecessor, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). For them, the CSCE has never been an important instrument for shaping security – neither in Europe nor in the transatlantic area as a whole. They have always been convinced that the process initiated 30 years ago in Helsinki was just an element of the "public diplomacy" necessary during the Cold War to undermine the legitimacy of totalitarian regimes in Central and South-eastern Europe and especially in the Soviet Union.[3] If the CSCE's goals, so defined, had been accomplished, a new political environment would render any further OSCE activities meaningless. As far as those critics are concerned, the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the bipolar system have deprived the CSCE of legitimacy. Events, however, have not confirmed this logic. The 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe and the subsequent decisions taken at the Summits in Helsinki (1992) and Budapest (1994) transformed the process started by the adoption of the Helsinki Final

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2 This was also the title of an event held by the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars. Participants included three American diplomats and researchers: William Hill, former Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Robert Barry, former Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and P. Terrence Hopman, Director of Global Security Program, Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University. See Sabina Crisen/Martin Sletzinger (of the East European Studies Program), Conflict Prevention in Europe: Does the OSCE Have a Future?, at: http://wwics.si.edu/index.cfm?topic_id=1422&fuseaction=topics.publications&doc_id=7441&group_id=7427. Eduard Brunner, one of the "founding fathers" of the Helsinki process, raised similar questions in June 2002. More on the same lines is given in: Eduard Brunner, Lambris dorés et coulisses: souvenir d'un diplomate, Geneva 2001, pp. 34-60.

3 In this respect, the views of two main architects of US security policy in the 1970s and 1980s are particularly instructive. In his memoirs, Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote that he advised the State Department to adopt a policy of confrontation at the CSCE forum; cf. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser 1977-1981, New York 1983, p. 297. At the end of 1988, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger suggested that the new US administration reach a "gentlemen's agreement" with the Soviet Union not on how the Soviet Union could safely remain in Europe (which was a Soviet goal in the 1970s), but on how it could safely leave Europe; see William Pfaff's editorial in the International Herald Tribune, 5 April 1989.

Act into a formal structure. On 1 January 1995, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) was established.

Following the second round of NATO enlargement, which saw seven new countries receiving an invitation to join the Alliance at the November 2002 summit in Prague, and the completion, at the end of 2002, of negotiations for the accession of ten additional countries to the European Union (EU), the question of the future of the OSCE is at the top of the agenda. But now this issue is being addressed – as already mentioned – not by the opponents and traditional critics of the OSCE, but rather by the supporters of and participants in the Helsinki process, who are looking for ways and means of revitalizing the Organization.[4] The enlargement of the EU and NATO (and, under the auspices of NATO, the Partnership for Peace and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council with their broader circles of participants), the fact that most OSCE States are members of the Council of Europe and, last but not least, the democratic transformation (with the introduction of political pluralism, the rule of law and market economies) of the states of Central and South-eastern Europe challenge us to rethink the OSCE mandate in general. Having said this, it must be acknowledged that some countries or areas will still need an OSCE umbrella of the old type for many years to come. I am thinking in particular of Belarus, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Unlike the Balkan states, which will one day be integrated within the existing security structures of NATO and the EU, the countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia (and Belarus) will remain outside those structures. It is therefore necessary to redefine the OSCE's specific mandate to increase its efficiency in these regions.

For a while, the fundamental goal of the OSCE was to provide a framework to help more than 20 European states make a peaceful transition from a totalitarian to a democratic system. Principles, rules and mechanisms laid down at Helsinki played an essential role in that process. Generally speaking, one can conclude that in most of the OSCE countries in transition, the mandate agreed upon almost 30 years ago has been fulfilled. Under these circumstances, it is natural to pose the question: "What next?"

Two Basic Questions: "Who?" and "What?"

Two basic questions need to be answered regarding the future of the OSCE. The first one, "who?", is made up of a series of interrelated sub-questions: Who are the addressees of new OSCE decisions? Whom do the OSCE's recommendations mainly target? Are all 55 participating States equally affected, or do the decisions concern just a few countries? And, if the latter is true, which countries in particular and why?

4 Cf., for example, Robert Barry, The OSCE: A Forgotten Transatlantic Security Organization?, BASIC Research Report 3/2002, London 2002.

At first glance, this seems to be a pointless question, since, according to the first principle of the Final Act of Helsinki, relations between states are based on sovereign equality and respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty. However, the key fact to remember is that most decisions adopted by the OSCE address the domestic situations of participating States. This constitutes a specific and in fact unique value of the OSCE. It also explains the OSCE's efficiency in conflict prevention and crisis management. One notes that since the end of the Cold War, all conflicts in the OSCE area have been intra-state and not inter-state matters.[5] This is true for the whole European, North American and Central Asian areas.

Against this background, a reasonable question is often raised: Why are there OSCE missions in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia, but not in the Basque country in Spain, Northern Ireland in the UK or Corsica in France, where separatism is in each case strong and a cause of crises and sometimes violent conflicts? The answer is quite simple: OSCE missions are needed in countries where the effective conflict prevention mechanisms available to a democratic state and an open society either do not exist or are very weak. The OSCE is a kind of external support structure. It operates where democratic standards and procedures do not work in practice, regardless of what is claimed. In most cases, it is newly established and immature institutions of democracy and the open society that need external support. It is not surprising that this type of activity is necessary in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Belarus, Macedonia, Moldova, the Caucasian states and Central Asia.

There is no need, however, for OSCE field missions in those states where democratic mechanisms are functional (even if not always very effective). Moreover, as a rule, democratic states have at their disposal other international structures, institutions and organizations to help them, such as NATO, the EU and the Council of Europe and are obliged to respect established rules for conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes as provided within these security institutions and structures. Very few OSCE States do not belong to those structures, and after the latest rounds of NATO and EU enlargement, this group will be even smaller.[6] For obvious reasons, therefore, OSCE activities will be focused on the situation in those remaining countries.

OSCE mechanisms, procedures and missions are also needed in weak states. These states look for external support, particularly when engaged in disputes with a stronger neighbour (Moldova and Georgia provide good ex-

5 According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), in the last twelve years there have been approximately 60 major armed conflicts in the world. Only four of them (Iraq vs. Iran, Iraq vs. Kuwait, India vs. Pakistan and Ethiopia vs. Eritrea) were between states; the others were intra-state conflicts; see SIPRI Yearbook 2001, Oxford 2001, p. 7, and SIPRI Yearbook 2002, Oxford 2002, p. 11.

6 This group consists in practice of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Serbia and Montenegro (formerly Yugoslavia).

amples of attempts to involve third parties in the search to resolve a conflict situation).

As far as large states – especially global powers – are concerned, multilateral security institutions are meaningful only if they can be used as instruments for pursuing their national interests. Otherwise, as Russian policy towards the OSCE proves, great powers are likely to be of little use to the work of multilateral organizations.

From the beginning of the Helsinki process, the Soviet Union – and later Russia – attached great importance, first to CSCE and then to the OSCE. Even before the Budapest Summit (5-6 December 1994) and especially during the debate on the new European Security Model, Russia was promoting its ambitious project for the continent's security architecture. Within this framework, the OSCE was to play a central role, co-ordinating other regional security institutions.[7] In the second half of the 1990s, the main goal of Russian diplomacy was to prevent, counteract or at least delay NATO extension to the East. This is the main reason why the OSCE played such an important role in Russian politics in those years: The goal was to question NATO's future *raison d'être*. Russia argued that the North Atlantic Alliance should preferably be dissolved as happened with the Warsaw Pact. As we now know, this approach failed, and Russian engagement in the OSCE radically decreased. Disengagement reached its lowest point at the end of the Ministerial Council of the OSCE in Vienna in November 2000, when, as a result of Russian opposition, no final document was adopted.

The turnaround in Russia's approach to the OSCE was merely a signal of deeper shifts in the country's security policy. The change was a result of Boris Yeltsin's withdrawal from power and Vladimir Putin's appointment as President. New priorities for Russian security policy were established and new instruments were created for achieving them. At this point, it is worth recalling an incident, almost forgotten today, which took place ten years ago in Stockholm.

On 14 December 1992, during the CSCE Ministerial Meeting, Andrei Kozyrev, the then Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, surprised all participants by declaring:

> I am obliged to introduce corrections in the general direction of Russian foreign policy. I wish to inform you briefly about these to the extent that they concern CSCE problems.
>
> First: While fully maintaining the policy of entry into Europe, we clearly recognize that our traditions in many respects, if not fundamentally, lie in Asia, and this sets limits to our rapprochement with Western Europe.

7 For more details, see SIPRI Yearbook 1995, Oxford 1995, pp. 286-301, and SIPRI Yearbook 1996, Oxford 1996, pp. 296-308.

> We see that, despite a certain degree of evolution, the strategies of NATO and the WEU, which are drawing up plans to strengthen their military presence in the Baltic and other regions of the territory of the former Soviet Union and to interfere in Bosnia and the internal affairs of Yugoslavia, remain essentially unchanged.
>
> Clearly, sanctions against the FRY were dictated by this policy. We demand that they be lifted, and if this does not happen, we reserve our right to take the necessary unilateral measures to defend our interests, especially since the sanctions cause us economic harm. In its struggle, the present Government of Serbia can count on the support of the great Russia.
>
> Second: The space of the former Soviet Union cannot be regarded as a zone of full application of CSCE norms. In essence, this is a post-imperial space, in which Russia has to defend its interests using all available means, including military and economic ones. We shall strongly insist that the former USSR Republics join without delay the new Federation or Confederation, and there will be tough talks on this matter.
>
> Third: All those who think that they can disregard these particularities and interests – that Russia will suffer the fate of the Soviet Union – should not forget that we are talking of a state that is capable of standing up for itself and its friends. We are, of course, ready to play a constructive part in the work of the CSCE Council, although we shall be very cautious in our approach to ideas leading to interference in internal affairs.[8]

This declaration caused uproar and great concern, but after a break Kozyrev explained that his statement should be treated as a "rhetorical device": "I would like to assure you and all others present that neither President Yeltsin, who remains the leader and guarantor of Russian domestic and foreign policy, nor I myself, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, would ever agree with what I read out in my previous statement [...] It was inspired by the most serious concern that you should all be aware of the genuine threats which face us on our course towards a post-Communist Europe. The text which I read out previously is a fairly accurate compilation of the demands of the opposition and not just the most radical opposition in Russia."[9]

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8 (First) Statement by the Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev at the Stockholm Ministerial Council Meeting on 14 December 1992; source: CSCE Secretariat, Prague (author's translation from the Russian).

9 (Second) Statement by the Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev at the Stockholm Ministerial Council Meeting on 14 December 1992; source: CSCE Secretariat, Prague (unofficial translation from the Russian). These two statements were later published. As the result of later developments, the Russian position at many later meetings (e.g. Istanbul 1999, Vienna 2000) was frequently close – in terms of both of the arguments used and the manner in which they were expressed – to that of Kozyrev's initial statement in Stockholm.

Since that statement was made ten years ago, sweeping changes have taken place in Russia. In particular, Russia has moved from refusing Central and Eastern European countries the right to freely choose their own security arrangements (including the right to join or not to join NATO), to adopting a joint NATO-Russia declaration on qualitatively new relations between the two sides at the NATO summit in Rome in May 2002. Russia also reconciled itself to NATO's invitation, extended at the Prague summit in November 2002, for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to join the Alliance. With Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia and the three Baltic states in NATO, the Alliance has enlarged the area of political and military stability in Europe. Against this background, one may feel quite justified in asking whether it would not be reasonable for the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), under the auspices of NATO, to take over the tasks currently performed by the OSCE in the same way that the Common European Security and Defence Policy within the framework of the EU took over the functions of the Western European Union. Given that the current round of NATO enlargement is not likely to be the last, this question is even more justified.[10]

At this point, it is time to consider the second question: "What?"

More precisely: What are the reasons for keeping alive an organization such as the OSCE? What goals does it serve, given that so many of its functions and tasks are also carried out by other European security institutions, particularly by NATO, the EU and the Council of Europe? In the past, the role and position of the OSCE within the European security architecture was determined by three factors.

Firstly, the OSCE has taken a comprehensive approach to the different dimensions of international relations: political and military rules and principles (which I shall call basket one), economy, tourism and environment (basket two) and human contacts, information, culture and education (basket three).

Secondly, the OSCE's approach has been characterized by flexibility, understood as an ability to adapt to a changing international environment and to undertake new challenges. In the first decade after it was founded in Helsinki (1975 to 85), the CSCE focused on respect for and implementation of human rights and on the free flow of people, information and ideas (basket three). At the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s (1986 to 92), attention shifted to the military aspects of security, especially to the reduction of conventional arms and forces in Europe (CFE) and to the establishment of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs). After the second Helsinki Summit (1992), high priority was given to conflict prevention and crisis management. For the last ten years, the objectives of the OSCE have been declared as follows:

10 Countries that have expressed an official interest in joining NATO include Albania, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Ukraine and Georgia.

- To consolidate the participating States' common values and help in building fully democratic civil societies based on the rule of law
- To prevent local conflicts, restore stability and bring peace to war-torn areas
- To overcome real and perceived security deficits and avoid the creation of new political, economic or social divisions by promoting a co-operative system of security.[11]

The bulk of these activities consists in looking at the domestic situation in states within the OSCE area and, to a lesser extent, relations between participating States. In other words, states have expressed their willingness to accept OSCE activities defined in the past by the Soviet Union and its satellites as illegal "interference in domestic affairs". By making a commitment to respect decisions taken within the OSCE framework, each state, implicitly, removes limits imposed by Principle VI of the Helsinki Final Act ("non-intervention in internal affairs").[12]

Finally, the OSCE provides a framework for partnership between 55 states in Europe, Central Asia and North America. In other words – and in contrast to the EU or the Council of Europe – the OSCE legitimizes the political presence of the United States in this area. Thus, the OSCE is a transatlantic organization that stabilizes the whole region – from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

From Inter-State to Intra-State Relations

Today, there are 17 missions actively operating in the OSCE area. Their main focus is on internal democratization, the rule of law, the development of free media and respect for human rights – with an emphasis on minority rights – economic and environment consulting and assistance in organizing free and fair elections. Those and similar issues were previously matters for the exclusive discretion of each state; and any attempt to address them through regulations, supervision, control or verification was treated as an intervention (or interference) in a state's internal affairs. Currently, these issues are addressed on a daily basis by approximately 4,000 people working in field missions in 17 countries all over the OSCE area. Field activities have played an important role in ending civil wars (Tajikistan), in preventing or limiting conflicts concerning national minorities (Ukraine, Croatia, Macedonia, Georgia) and in searching for lasting peaceful solutions to internal disputes (e.g. in Moldova

11 Cf. OSCE, OSCE Handbook, Vienna 2001, pp. 17-18.

12 The Lukashenko regime in Belarus still appeals to this rule. In fact, President Lukashenko of Belarus suspended the activities of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group, whose main goal was to assist that country's authorities in promoting democratic institutions and complying with other OSCE commitments. The OSCE Office reopened in February 2003 headed by Ambassador Eberhard Heyken.

between the central government in Chişinău and the self-proclaimed Republic of Transdniestria). It is impossible to exaggerate the role played by OSCE missions in laying the foundations of civil society after the end of the recent Balkan wars (in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and, more recently, Kosovo). The network of field operations – especially in Central Asia and the Caucasus – provides an early warning system that prevents local tensions from turning into open conflicts. These activities are particularly useful in restraining the role and influence of violent organizations that appeal to Islamic fundamentalism.

Existing long-term missions need to become more professional. Staff recruitment based on secondment and rotation should be reduced and to a large extent replaced by a contract system based on competition and professional qualifications. Field missions need more experts, especially in finance, project management, policing and environmental management.

Some OSCE participating States will probably never join the Council of Europe or the EU. Nor will NATO take over all those tasks that are currently carried out by the OSCE.[13] However, the most urgent necessity for the OSCE is that it re-define its tasks to adapt to an evolving security environment.

The Agenda Ahead

It would be a mistake to limit the OSCE's mandate to activities in a decreasing number of states in Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Balkans. In his address at the opening plenary session during the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw (9-19 September 2002), Martti Ahtisaari, former President of Finland, focused his attention on trafficking in human beings, stating that:

> Trafficking is one of the gravest human right violations and so far the ability of the international community to deal with the issue effectively has been lacking. The increased ease and speed of travel, and the availability of the latest information technology has increased the capacity of criminal networks to engage in trans-national crimes.[14]

In the context of the global struggle to combat international terrorism, one has to take two simple facts into consideration. Firstly, trafficking in human beings, as Ahtisaari rightly noted, has increased throughout the world, and

13 In his essay "Eradicating the seeds of terror", Robert Barry recently wrote, "Whatever direction NATO takes after it enlarges and establishes the NATO-Russia Council, it is in no position to do conflict prevention or post-conflict 'peace-building' in former Soviet republics that are not NATO members. Nor does the Council of Europe include members from Central Asia." Global Beat Syndicate, 16 September 2002.

14 Address by Martti Ahtisaari, Opening Plenary Session of the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, Warsaw, 9 September 2002.

the problem is exacerbated in size and seriousness by the growing involvement of organized criminal groups. Secondly, no multilateral organization includes as many of the major countries of destination and transit of this trade as the OSCE.

Moreover, trafficking in human beings is by no means a minor problem: Every year, about 600,000 people are illegally smuggled from the East to the West. This shameful procedure mostly involves women and children. They are the slaves of the twenty-first century, forced to take part in criminal activities and used by organized-crime syndicates, especially those linked with pornography, sexual services and drug trafficking. This is a two-sided problem. Not only is it essential to combat and prevent such activities, but it is also vital to provide assistance to the victims. When deciding on concrete steps and measures, it is important to see whether and where the OSCE can complement the efforts of others. Currently, the legislation of many OSCE countries fails to treat trafficking in human beings as a serious human-rights issue but rather approaches it as a question of prostitution or illegal migration. There can be no doubt that the OSCE can contribute to the combined actions already being undertaken by many international security institutions in this field. The Action Plan, as proposed by Mircea Geoană, the Romanian Foreign Minister in his capacity as OSCE Chairman-in-Office, covered three main categories of activities:[15]

- International legal and political commitments (the twelve UN conventions and protocols related to terrorism, the use of the OSCE's Forum for Security Co-operation in combating terrorism, the Code of Conduct, the Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons)
- Preventive action, e.g. the democratic institution-building process, the promotion of human rights, the promotion of media freedom and the fight against organized crime, including anti-terrorism legislation and the freezing of terrorist financial assets
- Providing a platform for co-operative security. In co-operation with other global, regional and sub-regional security structures (the UN, NATO, the EU, the Council of Europe) in both Europe and Central Asia, the Action Plan was developed into a more definite collection of activities.[16] In the view of some American analysts "the OSCE offers the United States a ready-made platform to advance its anti-terrorism agenda in a strategically vital part of the world".[17]

15 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Ninth Meeting of the Ministerial Council, Bucharest, 3 and 4 December 2001, II. Decision on Combating Terrorism and the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), OSCE Yearbook 2002, Baden-Baden 2003, pp. 391-417, here: pp. 395-402.

16 Cf. David Norris, The EU and the OSCE in the War on Terrorism, in: BASIC Notes, 5 September 2002.

17 Ibid.; see also Barry, cited above (Note 13).

The September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States proved that there is no clean-cut distinction between internal and external security. It is true that the headquarters of the terrorist network that planned the attacks was outside the United States; however the attacks themselves were carried out from inside the country. Moreover, they were carried out without using any advanced weapons or other sophisticated means. If the nature of such threats is changing, it is vital to find a proper way to prevent them. The added value of using the OSCE framework, procedures and mechanisms in fighting terrorism is that the organization acts mostly to affect the domestic situation in participating States. This is not the case with other international organizations that are still developing their activities, and which observe the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states.

It would be a mistake to reduce the OSCE's new mandate to the fight against terrorism, but a greater mistake still to fail to make best use of the wide rage of possibilities inherent in the OSCE framework, mechanisms and procedures. For example, maintaining international security nowadays necessitates an effective fight against such phenomena as money laundering and corruption, which, by undermining the rule of law and trust in public administration, justice and local government, act like cancers within the body of civil society.

Nor should one forget the political-military dimension. Future OSCE policy should concentrate more on supporting the involvement of civil society in security policy, border control, security-sector reform and the control of small-arms exports. The non-conventional character of the new threats facing the world constitutes a challenge to the existing OSCE instruments in the military realm. Because these have been created to perform specific tasks in the areas of prevention and confidence building, they do not provide the capability to get to the roots of the new threats we are faced with. In different times, the most important CSBMs were established for interaction between states; now they should address internal problems and involve conflicting parties within a nation's domestic environment.

Another issue is the adoption under national law of regulations and norms regarding the protection of the environment and efforts to encourage compliance. Nowadays, it is vital to address those and similar problems as part of the process of providing security. Until now, they have been regulated by the norms adopted within the "second basket" mentioned earlier; it is now time, however, that they were redefined and new mechanisms of implementation that guarantee efficiency established.

In many ways, the OSCE has been a pioneering organization. For example, the basic OSCE documents did not define the field missions. The way these came into being is, in many respects, the opposite of the norm: Institutions such as the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the Representative on Freedom and Media (FOM), the Rapid Expert Assistance and

Co-operation Teams (REACT) and many others were created not out of the abstract concepts of theoreticians, but in response to concrete, urgent, everyday needs.[18] The work performed by Ambassador Wilhelm Höynck as Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia is an excellent example of a rapid and appropriate response to threats and challenges in the OSCE's new areas of activity.[19] Although pragmatism has generally prevailed, some decisions made by the Organization did not correspond to real needs. It is, for example, still unclear why the Conciliation Commissions and the Arbitral Tribunals – which were based on a Swiss proposal for a European system of peaceful settlement of disputes, and together constitute the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration (under the 1992 Convention on Conciliation and Arbitration within the CSCE) – failed to work in practice. After ten years of inactivity, the time is ripe to take some radical decisions regarding this institution.

Conclusion

The challenges that the organization currently faces concern more the purpose, goals and substance of its activities than the need for structural reforms. Getting to the roots of terrorism, supporting the democratic transformation of newly-created states and building civil society in those countries is much more important for the future of the OSCE then the internal restructuring of the Organization itself. In order to maintain continuity and certain minimal common standards, it would be desirable to introduce guidelines for the Chairman-in-Office or to create the position of Permanent Deputy to the Chairman-in-Office (similar to the position of under-secretary of state in ministries of foreign affairs) to be filled by a senior and experienced diplomat. Creating such a position will, on the one hand, ensure continuity in activities originated by the Chairman-in-Office while, on the other, providing stability in relations between the Chairman-in-Office, the Secretary-General and other institutions. Other tasks could include reviewing and evaluating the efficiency of the OSCE's structure and institutions in carrying out new missions. As a result of such a review

- Institutions that have accomplished their missions should be closed (especially some long-term missions, whose number would *g*radually be reduced).

18 The activities carried out by these institutions are reflected in various OSCE reports; cf. e.g. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, The Secretary General, Annual Report on OSCE Activities 2002, Vienna 2002, at: http://www.osce.org/publications/annual_report.

19 Ambassador Höynck took an active part in the organization of the international conference entitled "Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terrorism", Bishkek, 13-14 December 2001.

- Institutions that under-perform (especially within the "second basket" or the Conflict Prevention Centre/CPC) should be assisted and, if necessary, transformed and their mandates revised in order to increase their efficiency. The role of the CPC, now just the operational control and communication office for existing missions, could be enhanced to make it comparable to two already existing institutions, ODIHR and the HCNM.
- Institutions that have never fulfilled their functions (because of a too-ambitious mandate or misguided political expectations) should be reassessed (e.g. the Court of Arbitration and Conciliation in Geneva), with the intention of defining new tasks for them commensurate with the real needs and requirements of the situations with which they were designed to deal.

In addition, there are some non-governmental institutions and activities – such as the *Geneva Cluster of Competence*, the *Centre for OSCE Research (CORE)* in Hamburg and the *Helsinki Monitor* in The Hague – that play an important, if under-appreciated, role in the OSCE process. A brainstorming session that would bring together, under the auspices of an independent research institution, representatives of such bodies and OSCE officials to deal with the issues mentioned above would be highly desirable. Such a meeting could be initiated by one of the OSCE delegations with the intention of facilitating an exchange of views among a competent group of security analysts and thinkers on the one hand and officials and practitioners on the other.

Generally, then, there is a need to initiate a serious debate on the future of the OSCE. All those who are interested in revitalizing the Organization and strengthening its position should take part in such a debate.[20] I have in mind both representatives of interested states (politicians and diplomats) and independent scholars and NGOs who participate in OSCE processes. This debate should cover both the ultimate purpose of the OSCE and the question of its new mandate (the role of major powers and medium and small states, new threats, problems of integration, globalization, etc.), as well as institutional solutions and new structures. The outcome of this debate will provide us with an answer to the question of whether the OSCE has a future and, if this is the case, what the future of the OSCE might be.

20 A Dutch report published in 2002 stated that: "the OSCE's practical effectiveness is hampered by uncertainty about the organization's position in the international area, a lack of clarity about the OSCE's role (as a result of which it is entrusted with a large number of disparate responsibilities and activities), the questionable loyalty of the participating states, the fact that the organization is actually still a conference, inadequate decision-making procedures, a lack of operational continuity and a political divide within its own ranks. This raises the question of whether the OSCE is at risk of losing some of its ability to act. If so, the OSCE will lose its political relevance and face a crisis." Advisory Council on International Affairs, The Netherlands and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in 2003: Role and Direction, The Hague May 2002, p. 42.