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The ASEAN Regional Forum and Fields for Co-operation with the OSCE¹

The OSCE and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) are security institutions on two neighbouring continents that, despite a high level of economic integration, have undergone asymmetrical development and have very different security situations. That in itself would suggest that they should co-operate on security issues. However, while the CSCE/OSCE has for years embodied a modern (i.e. comprehensive, collective, and sustainable) security structure, the ARF so far reflects merely the desire to establish modern security concepts and structures in Asia.

Some two decades separate the start of the CSCE process from the founding of the ARF. This is reflected in the different degrees of institutionalization of the two organizations and the scope of their political norms and commitments. They also vary in the extent to which they interfere in their members' political affairs.

The OSCE and the ARF resemble each other in terms of their general objectives, which have no force under international law but are only politically binding. The memberships of both institutions, which extend to three and four continents, respectively, reflect the powerful influence of global actors on security matters. A large bloc of states is present in each. Half of OSCE participating States are directly (Canada, Russia, USA) or indirectly (via the EU) represented in the ARF. Four of the OSCE's five Asian partners are also ARF members.

The current contribution provides an overview of the ARF, draws some comparisons between it and the OSCE, and examines specific national interests in co-operation between the two organizations. It takes as its starting point the thesis that although neither organization belongs to the leading multilateral security actors, they are useful for facilitating the transfer of security expertise between Europe and Asia and for embedding local and regional security management in supraregional security arrangements. The contribution concludes by suggesting areas and topics for co-operation between the OSCE and the ARF.

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

The ARF is the most important regularly convening multilateral security body of significant size in Asia. The annual Forum represents the security

¹ The current contribution discusses events up to June 2006.

policy dimension of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Efforts to found it were set in motion at the 1992 ASEAN summit by means of the Singapore Declaration and the demand for an intensified security policy dialogue² and concluded at ASEAN's 26th Ministerial Meeting and the follow-up conference to the meeting (Singapore 1993). The inaugural meeting of the ARF was held in Bangkok on 25 July 1994.

The ARF is active in the same general environment as such varied institutions as the subregional Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO),³ the regional Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA),⁴ and supraregional institutions, such as the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC),⁵ the ASEAN+3 discussion forum,⁶ the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD),⁷ the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD),⁸ and the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM)⁹. These and similar organizations or initiatives all embody attempts by various sides to create an overall framework for the security architecture of the Asian continent and Asia's subregions in a way that will enable negotiation and regulation.

The ARF Members and Their Links to OSCE Participating States

The members of the ARF are the ten ASEAN states and a group of ASEAN dialogue partners, specifically:

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- 2 Cf. *Singapore Declaration of 1992*, at: <http://www.aseansec.org/5120.htm>.
 - 3 The SCO was founded by China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan in 2001 as an intergovernmental organization for Asian security building – mostly by means of border adjustments, the reduction of armed forces, confidence-building measures, counter-terrorism, economic, infrastructure, and other forms of co-operation.
 - 4 The CICA is a conference platform that was initiated by Kazakhstan in 1992. Its members are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, the Palestinian Authority, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Uzbekistan. Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Lebanon, Malaysia, South Korea, Thailand, Ukraine, the USA, and Vietnam have observer status.
 - 5 APEC is an annually convening economic and trade forum with 21 participating states that aims to encourage co-operation.
 - 6 Founded in 2001, ASEAN+3 consists of the ten ASEAN states, plus China, Japan, and South Korea.
 - 7 The ACD was founded in 2002 as an annual meeting, focusing mostly on economic topics, of foreign ministers from 28 states: Bangladesh, Bahrain, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Laos, Myanmar, Mongolia, Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam.
 - 8 The NEACD is an informal Track-Two forum, pursued by China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, North Korea, and the USA. It has convened regularly since 1993.
 - 9 Established in 1996, ASEM is an informal dialogue forum for the heads of state or government of the 25 EU states, the European Commission, the seven ASEAN states Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, as well as China, Japan, and South Korea. From the European point of view, the goals of ASEM are bilateral relations, the CFSP, and areas of foreign policy that are the EU's responsibility. ASEM is wide-ranging, dealing with political issues as well as trade and economics, culture, education, and social matters.

1. *The ASEAN states* Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, plus
2. *The ASEAN dialogue partners* Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, North Korea, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea (observer status), South Korea, the Russian Federation, Timor Leste, and the USA.¹⁰

In its current formation, more than half of the OSCE participating States work together with four of the OSCE's five Asian partners (Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, and Thailand) in the ARF. ARF documents contain references to co-operation with Europe (i.e. the European Union) starting with the Fourth ASEAN Regional Forum (1997).¹¹ From an Asian perspective, the participation of all five official atomic powers is equally important.

The General Goals and Priorities of the ARF

The ARF is a dialogue forum for the pursuit of ASEAN's key security policy goals. In ASEAN's preferred terminology, these are described as regional harmony and stability. The ARF supports consultations on security matters and has been established (1) to promote confidence-building measures (CBMs), (2) to develop mechanisms for preventive diplomacy, and (3) working out approaches to conflict management.¹² The ARF's three intended development stages are defined in terms of the plan for the successive take-up of these three key areas. Currently, the ARF is concerned above all with CBMs and preventive diplomacy. In addition, participation in international anti-terrorism efforts has been a particular priority since late 2001.

On the one hand, the ARF is concerned with conventional security issues such as the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, other WMDs, and small arms, on the other with new security threats such as terrorism, cross-border crime, trafficking in drugs and human beings, and piracy and other threats to maritime security. The ARF has an option of undertaking peacekeeping operations. Like the OSCE, it positions itself primarily by means of its decisions and declarations, thus committing its members to maintain a particular political climate among themselves. In contrast to the OSCE, the ARF is not yet involved in conflict management. It has never directly dealt with specific problem areas, such as the Korean question, North Korea's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons, or the Taiwan question. In 2004, Pakistan was only allowed

10 Bangladesh joined the ARF in July 2006.

11 See *Chairman's Statement*, The Fourth ASEAN Regional Forum, Subang Jaya, 1997. These and other references to ARF documents are taken from the ARF Document Series, at: <http://www.aseansec.org/ARF-Doc-Series-2004.htm>, which has been updated to the end of 2004. Documents can also be accessed at: <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org>, which has been updated to 2006.

12 Cf. *Chairman's Statement* and *The ASEAN Regional Forum – A Concept Paper*, The Second ASEAN Regional Forum, Bandar Seri Begawan 1995.

into the ARF after explicitly promising not to place its differences with India on the Forum's agenda.

The underlying idea of the ARF – formulated in terms of challenges, stages of development, and organizational questions – was summarized in the Chairman's Statement made at the Second ARF in 1995, and in The ASEAN Regional Forum – A Concept Paper.¹³

The Principles and Core Criteria of ARF Participation

In the ARF, as in the OSCE, the principle of the equality of participants applies, but the former also upholds the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs. An equivalent to the 1991 Moscow Document, with which the OSCE removed human dimension issues from the sphere of exclusively domestic concerns, does not exist in the ARF. The ARF, like the OSCE, reaches decisions by consensus.

The four core criteria for participation in the ARF are commitment, relevance, gradual expansion, and consultation. These criteria were adopted in 1996; they refer to the *commitment* of the member states to contribute to reaching the collective goals of the Forum; the *relevance* of each state's security contribution to North-East and South-East Asia and Oceania; and the possibility envisaged by the ARF for *gradual expansion* while keeping the number of participants to manageable levels. New accessions will only be possible after *consultations* between the ARF Chairmanship and ARF members as well as the unanimous agreement of the ten ASEAN states.¹⁴

The Organs of the ARF

The ARF is far less institutionalized than the OSCE. The highest decision-making body of the ARF is the annual meeting of foreign ministers, which follows the meeting of ASEAN foreign ministers in June or July each year in the country holding the revolving chairmanship. The meeting is convened by the Chairman of the ARF, who is also the ASEAN Chairman, and which is thus also a position that rotates annually. In preparation, Senior Officials' Meetings (SOMs) are usually held in May. The ARF Chairman, or indeed any ARF member, can call upon "Eminent/Expert Persons" (EEPs) to give their opinions on specific topics. The establishment of a group of "Friends of the Chair" or a Troika was discussed in 2004, albeit without results.

The ARF has no secretariat of its own, although it has frequently been proposed that one be established. Instead, merely an "ARF Unit" was created within the ASEAN Secretariat in 2004. Its task is to support the ARF Chair, but it reportedly consists of only three people, including its leader. Countries holding the ARF Chairmanship have tended to set up an ARF Contact Point.

13 Cf. *ibid.*

14 Cf. *Chairman's Statement*, The Third ASEAN Regional Forum, Jakarta, 23 July 1996.

Between the annual meetings, meetings of the Intersessional Support Group on Confidence-Building Measures (ISG on CBMs) are held. They are chaired on a co-chairmanship basis by an ASEAN member and one of the dialogue partners. Cambodia and the EU were the co-chairs in 2004-2005. The results of the ISG meeting are presented at SOMs of the ARF. The mandate of the ISG must be renewed each year.

The Defence Officials Dialogue have held a luncheon during the ISG meeting since 2001 and had their first official meeting in 2002. In 2004, the ARF foreign ministers agreed to a Chinese proposal to hold an ARF security policy conference.

The ARF also holds Intersessional Meetings (ISMs), whose topics have included peacekeeping, search and rescue co-ordination and co-operation, and disaster relief. ISMs on counter-terrorism and transnational crime have been held since 2002.

The basic discussions on the establishment of the above-mentioned ARF bodies took place at the Second ARF in 1995.¹⁵

The ARF's Two Negotiating Levels: Track One and Track Two

Efforts to keep potentially controversial topics away from the ARF's official discussions and deal with them elsewhere reflect the nature of political and negotiating culture in Asia. This is why, as well as the meetings of government representatives designated "Track One", a "Track Two" was also established. This dialogue allows the unofficial exchange of views between experts from national strategic institutes and relevant NGOs. The advantage of this division into two strands lies in the way it expands the range of topics considered within the ARF.¹⁶ Track Two also opens up the ARF to other organizations. Proposals from organizations such as the academic umbrella group, Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP),¹⁷ may, from time to time, directly influence ARF decision making.¹⁸ The ongoing dialogue taking place under Track Two must certainly count among the comparative advantages of the ARF. At the same time, by addressing "experts", this dialogue has a narrower focus than the OSCE's civil-society dialogue, which, while it does not have its own "track", does address the entire spectrum of non-governmental partners, and does so in all three baskets/dimensions, both from the centre and via its field presences.

15 Cf. *Chairman's Statement*, cited above (Note 12).

16 Cf. *ibid.*

17 CSCAP is a Track Two platform established in 1992 by some two dozen strategic research centres in Australia, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, and the USA.

18 Cf. *CSCAP's List of Proposals on Enhancing Interaction between Track I and Track II*, The Seventh ASEAN Regional Forum, Bangkok 2000.

The ARF Process and the Establishment of the ARF Acquis

As a political process, the ARF is manifested above all in:

- ARF Statements
- ARF Concepts and Principles
- Chairman's Statements
- Co-Chairman's Summary Reports
- Summary Reports (of the content of events and meetings)
- Concept Papers
- "Distillations" and "Lists" of measures, such as CBMs.

A number of these decisions and documents have been published in the ARF Document Series. The collection of norms and commitments of the ARF participants presented therein is derived from the Forum's activities and decisions and thus acts as a sort of ARF *acquis* that is permanently being updated.¹⁹

The ARF also publishes an Annual Security Outlook – a collection of reports submitted voluntarily by ARF states. The sixth such compilation was unveiled at the Twelfth ARF in Vientiane (2005). It contained reports from eleven members (including China, the EU, Japan, Russia, South Korea, Thailand, and the USA).

Finally, the ARF also publishes Voluntary Background Briefings on Regional Security Issues.

The ASEAN Background to the ARF and the Three ASEAN Communities

For our purposes, the following may be considered the key ASEAN decisions upon which the activities of ASEAN and the ARF are based:

1. The ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok 1967);
2. The Declaration of ASEAN Concord – Bali Concord (Bali 1976);
3. The Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality Declaration (ZOPFAN, Kuala Lumpur 1971);
4. The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC, Bali 1976);
5. The Manila Declaration on the South China Sea (Manila 1992);
6. The Singapore Declaration (Singapore 1992);
7. The Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ, Bangkok 1995);
8. The Declaration of ASEAN Concord II – Bali Concord II (Bali 2003).

¹⁹ The ARF Document Series, cited above (Note 11).

ASEAN's strategic orientations are set down in ASEAN Vision 2020 (Kuala Lumpur 1997),²⁰ the Hanoi Plan of Action 1999-2004 (Hanoi 1998),²¹ and the action plans derived from this, and the Vientiane Action Programme 2004-2010 (Vientiane 2004).²² This is the basis for capacity-building measures such as the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI)²³ and the Roadmap for the Integration of ASEAN (RIA).

The development of ASEAN and, hence, the activities of the ARF were given a new conceptual framework in October 2003. Bali Accord II reflects a general conviction that ASEAN should develop over time to become more of a community. The community idea was also boosted by the solidarity and co-operation during the outbreak of SARS in 2003 and the catastrophic aftermath of the Tsunami in 2004.

Bali Concord II is oriented towards the creation of an ASEAN Community based on the three pillars of political and security co-operation, economic co-operation, and socio-cultural co-operation.²⁴ The ASEAN Community is thus to consist of three sub-communities: the ASEAN Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. The ASEAN Security Community (ASC), which is our concern here, is designed to make a contribution to the peace and security of the broader Asia-Pacific region, but not as a defensive pact, military alliance, or the source of a common foreign policy. It is conceived as an open co-operative arrangement with ASEAN's friends and the ASEAN dialogue partners, is intended to take advantage of existing ASEAN institutions and mechanisms, as well as to help with the development of national and regional capacities in fields such as counter-terrorism, the fight against trafficking in drugs and human beings, combating transnational crime, and keeping South-East Asia free of weapons of mass destruction. In this, ASEAN's existing political instruments (ZOPFAN, TAC, SEANWFZ, etc.) are to continue to play a key role in CBMs, preventive diplomacy, and conflict management. Mechanisms should be created in areas such as norm-setting, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and post-conflict rehabilitation. In accordance with regional needs, maritime issues are granted particular prominence.

The members of the ASC are committed to exclusively peaceful resolution of intraregional differences. They recognize the sovereign rights of the other member countries to their own foreign policies and defence arrangements and adhere to the principles of comprehensive security, non-intervention, decision making on the basis of consensus, national and regional resilience,

20 Cf. <http://www.aseansec.org/1814.htm>.

21 Cf. <http://www.aseansec.org/8754.htm>.

22 Cf. <http://www.aseansec.org/VAP-10th%20ASEAN%20Summit.pdf>.

23 Cf. <http://www.aseansec.org/14013.htm>.

24 "An ASEAN Community shall be established comprising three pillars, namely political and security cooperation, economic cooperation, and socio-cultural cooperation that are closely intertwined and mutually reinforcing for the purpose of ensuring durable peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region", Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II), at: <http://www.aseansec.org/15159.htm>.

and renunciation of the use or threat of violence. The ASC also provides the general political context for the ARF's co-operative activities. Within the ASC, the High Council of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation is to stand as the essential component reflecting the commitment to peaceful conflict resolution. At the same time, the ARF is to remain the most important element in the overall regional security dialogue.²⁵ There is a separate *ASC Plan of Action*.²⁶

The Key Focuses of the ARF

As noted above, the three key focuses/development stages of the ARF encompass (1) the promotion of confidence-building measures, (2) the development of preventive diplomacy mechanisms, and (3) the development of conflict resolution mechanisms. They define the general matrix of ARF activities, on top of which come a number of one-off and interdisciplinary topics, such as non-traditional threats.²⁷

Confidence-Building Measures

As the core of the first development phase, confidence-building measures have played a prominent role in the ARF since the start. As far as the ARF is concerned, their key goals were already set down in the ASEAN documents ZOPFAN and SEANWFZ.

A first step was to include CBMs as Annex A (measures for immediate consideration) and Annex B (medium- and long-term measures, which can also be considered in the immediate future in the Track-Two process) in the above-mentioned ASEAN Regional Forum – A Concept Paper at the Second ARF (1995). Since then, they have evolved in terms of both scope and content.²⁸ Since the Third ARF (Jakarta 1996), the ISG on Confidence Building Measures has ensured that CBMs have a permanent place on the agenda of the annual forum. As such, the discussions on confidence-building measures are themselves considered to be an example of CBMs. They include the two areas of (a) the development of principles and (b) transparency. In detail, they cover the development of basic principles for inter-state relations and shared perceptions of security, defence policy publications, high-level defence contacts, exchanges between defence staff colleges and training, considerations of the establishment of ARF contact points, observation of manoeuvres and

25 Cf. *ibid.*, Section A. ASEAN Security Community.

26 Cf. *ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action*, at: <http://www.aseansec.org/16826.htm>.

27 This topic has been dealt with in events such as the seminar on Enhancing Cooperation in the Field of Non-traditional Security Issues, Sanya 2005.

28 Cf. *Distillation of Agreed CBMs from the First up to the Fourth ARF*; and *List of New ARF CBMs*, The Fifth ASEAN Regional Forum, Manila 1998.

other monitoring activities, arms control, and WMD non-proliferation.²⁹ Measures designed to promote transparency include the publication of the Annual Security Outlook, the distribution of position papers on questions of national and regional security, notification of manoeuvres, mutual inspections of military sites, the exchange of military staff, an annual meeting of chairmen of national defence academies, and participation in the UN Register of Conventional Arms.

In practice, CBMs comprise above all seminars, workshops, and training events. They have also included the establishment of an ARF Regional Maritime Information Centre (ARF-RMIC).

Preventive Diplomacy

As well as discussing confidence-building measures, ARF activities focus above all on talks on the topic of preventive diplomacy.³⁰

The adoption in 2001 of three further key documents was a further vital step towards increasing the emphasis on preventive diplomacy. In the vocabulary of the ARF, the idea of the overlap between the phase of CBMs and that of preventive diplomacy plays a key role. The relevant documents are as follows:

- *Enhanced Role of the ARF Chair* – among other things, this envisages granting the Chairman opportunities to influence and co-ordinate. He would act as the contact person for consultations and be granted the right to call *ad hoc* meetings and to organize informal co-operation with third parties, such as the chairmen of international and other organizations.³¹
- *Concept and Principles of Preventive Diplomacy* – this defines the concept and eight basic principles of preventive democracy, considered not as a legally binding obligation, but as a common understanding of consensual diplomacy and political action carried out by sovereign states, with the agreement of the directly involved parties in each case.³²
- *Co-Chair's Paper on the Terms of Reference of the ARF Eminent/Expert Persons (EEPs)* – this foresees the creation of a kind of council of eminent persons. The members of this body would be available to the Chairman as a pool of expertise that could be called to perform specific tasks. Each ARF member country would have the right to nominate five candidates from among its own people. A register of EEPs will be kept, they will have the status of ARF advisors and present their views as non-binding professional opinions or recommendations. Not only the

29 Cf. *Chairman's Statement*, cited above (Note 14).

30 Cf. *Chairman's Statement* and *The ASEAN Regional Forum - A Concept Paper*, cited above (Note 12).

31 Cf. *The Eighth ASEAN Regional Forum*, Hanoi 2001.

32 Cf. *ibid.*

Chairman but any ARF member state may call upon the services of EEPs.³³ Further details of the EEP mechanism were determined at the Eleventh ARF (Jakarta 2004).³⁴ Nonetheless, the EEPs were not formally entrusted with carrying out research or analysis until 2005, but were merely invited to SOMs on preventive diplomacy. Further progress is being held up by differences of opinion between ARF members over the question of whether the EEPs should primarily fulfil a passive research function or should rather have an active role in supporting the Chairman in carrying out diplomatic activities. The first plenary meeting of the EEPs was held in South Korea at the end of June 2006.

In the view of the ARF, the integration of CBMs and preventive diplomacy is also to be supported via the regular publication of the Annual Security Outlook and Voluntary Background Briefings on Regional Security Issues.

The Emphasis on Subregional Security-Building and the North-East Asian Dialogue within the ARF

The ARF expresses its views on regional, subregional, and bilateral developments. While it does take a position on conflicts such as those on the Korean peninsula or the situations in Indonesia and Myanmar, as mentioned, it does this without becoming directly involved.

The limited degree of ARF interference in the internal affairs of its member states is rooted in the strong diversity of political interests among the continent's key players. Their mutual security interests clearly reflect individual relationships at subregional level.

Consequently, the ARF adopts a pragmatic approach, according to which regional security building in Asia is best achieved on the basis of subregional components, themselves formed from bilateral dialogues. This is clearly illustrated by the *North-East Asian* dialogue offered by the ARF, which is of particular interest to the OSCE, although the ARF was founded on a *South-East Asian* platform (ASEAN). At the same time, the ASEAN+3 format, in particular, indicates the possibility of involving further parties in bilateral and subregional discussions to create a context that is less controversial for the concerned parties and hence more conducive to their success. As an example of this, the first East Asia Summit (Malaysia, December 2005), which was attended by Australia, New Zealand, India, and the ASEAN+3 nations, served a particularly valuable purpose by offering the "plus 3" states – Japan, China, and South Korea – a forum for discussion.³⁵ The lack of an

33 Cf. *ibid.*

34 Cf. *The Eleventh ASEAN Regional Forum*, Jakarta 2004.

35 On related subregional security expectations see also: Yamada Takio, *First East Asia Summit and the Prospect of an East Asian Community*, at: <http://www.rieti.go.jp/en/events/bbl/06011201.html>.

Asian regional security organization that goes beyond specific issues (Korea, Taiwan, South China Sea) to create continent-wide bonds in the way the OSCE does has also been considered a deficit by many parties in northern Asia. Representatives of Japan and South Korea indicate their governments' desire to influence the creation of regional and subregional security networks as early as possible. They also underline the connection between the gradual formalization of a regional security dialogue and the simultaneous establishment of subregional contacts. This is where the ARF can play a key role and where opportunities exist to learn from European experiences with the CSCE process and the OSCE.

In general, it appears that subregional security building is being treated as a priority because of both the unequal concentration of economic and military potential and the cultural diversity of Asia's subregions. The ARF envisages precisely a pan-Asian context for establishing and maintaining individual subregional discussions, whose results may also at times be transferable to other subregions of Asia.

Co-operation between the ARF and Europe

Relations between ASEAN and the ARF with the European Union

The origins of the ARF's co-operation with Europe are to be found in ASEAN's relations with Western Europe. These are based on the EC-ASEAN Co-operation Agreement of 1980 and the EU-ASEAN Dialogue, which has come with time to take on the form of regular Ministerial Meetings. Created in the wake of the 1980 agreement, the Joint Co-operation Committee (JCC) convenes once every year or eighteen months and is largely focused on economic matters. Its work is divided among six subcommittees: for Trade and Investment, Economic and Industrial Co-operation, Science and Technology, Forestry, Environment, and Narcotics.

In a communication entitled *Europe and Asia: A Strategic Framework for Enhanced Partnerships*, the European Commission declared ASEAN to be the most important economic and political partner in the EU's relations with Asia.

As mentioned above, thanks to its status as an ASEAN dialogue partner, the European Union is already a member of the ARF. As well as with Western Europe, the ARF also co-operates with Russia, a further ASEAN dialogue partner and ARF member. This is not always acknowledged in the European context.

ARF documents contain references to co-operation with the European Union since the Fourth ASEAN Regional Forum (Subang Jaya 1997), in particular.³⁶ Among the topics mentioned are joint events on specific issues in

36 Cf. *Chairman's Statement*, cited above (Note 11).

the area of subregional co-operation (Fourth ARF), training measures for peacekeeping operations (Fifth ARF, Manila 1998), disaster preparedness and the regional provision of aid (Fifth ARF), and preventive diplomacy (Fifth ARF). Europe's involvement in the Korea process was welcomed (Eighth ARF, Hanoi 2001). The Ninth ARF (Bandar Seri Begawan 2002) saw a European Union briefing of the ISG on CBMs on European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The Tenth ARF (Phnom Penh, 2003) acknowledged contacts between the ARF Chairmanship and the EU and meetings between ARF and EU officials. In January 2003, the ARF and the EU adopted a joint declaration on co-operation in combating terrorism. The Eleventh ARF (Jakarta 2004) saw a European Union briefing of the ISG on CBMs on the European Security Strategy, the EU strategy against WMDs, and the International Criminal Court (ICC). The EU contributed to the Second ISM on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (Manila 2004). Chaired jointly by Cambodia and the EU, the ISG on CBMs met in Phnom Penh and Potsdam/Berlin in 2004/5. Overall, relations between the EU and the ARF reflect the fact that the latter is still at the start of its potential development.

Relations between the ARF and the OSCE

The ARF has sought contacts with the OSCE since the 1999 Thai Chairmanship. Under its Austrian Chairmanship in 2000, the OSCE reacted in a generally positive way to the ARF's desire for dialogue. After all, the OSCE, thanks to participating States including Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, and partners such as Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, Thailand, and Afghanistan, is directly present in Asia.

Nonetheless, as relations between the two organizations develop, they remain on a modest scale. Although this is frequently criticized, it merely reflects the generally lukewarm level of interest, the dominance of EU-ASEAN relations in the relevant European-Asian contexts, and the difference between the OSCE and the ARF in terms of the depth of their involvement in their respective continents' security mechanisms.

It was agreed to initiate informal contacts with the OSCE at the Seventh ARF. Here it was also proposed that relations with the OSCE (and with the UN and the OAS) be used to continue the exchange of information and the sharing of experience.³⁷ Contacts between the ARF Chair and the OSCE were acknowledged at the Tenth ARF, while the Eleventh recorded the report of the ISG on CBMs and its recommendations on closer links with the OSCE.

Meetings between the OSCE and the ARF included the participation of ARF members in the OSCE-Thailand conferences (Bangkok 2002 and 2005) and the OSCE-Japan conferences (Tokyo 2000 and 2004). The second of the

37 Cf. *Chairman's Statement*, The Seventh ASEAN Regional Forum, Bangkok, 27 July 2000.

two OSCE-Japan conferences was held at the same time as the ARF seminar on preventive diplomacy, whose attendees also visited it. In terms of both the topics it dealt with and meetings between experts, the Japan conference established a sense of compatibility and closeness between the two organizations; and this was later referred to several times. In 2005, the OSCE was also involved in the above-mentioned ISG on CBMs in Potsdam and Berlin, with representatives of the Organization reporting on the OSCE's counter-terrorism measures.

In 2005, then Secretary General Ján Kubiš proposed holding a joint OSCE-ARF conference.³⁸ OSCE partners for co-operation Japan and South Korea have expressed particularly strong interest in closer co-operation between the two organizations. In 2005, both proposed strengthening co-operation with the OSCE – Japan in reference to a possible exchange of information on the OSCE Code of Conduct, and South Korea in terms of co-operation on new security threats and the OSCE's experience of institutionalization.³⁹

The Parallels between the CSCE/OSCE and the ARF

The history of ASEAN, like that of the CSCE, stretches back to the time of the Cold War. In the CSCE Final Act (Helsinki 1975), the Treaty on Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia (1976), and subsequent rulings of both processes/organizations, we find similar norms and principles, such as the right of a state to choose its own political and social system, the settlement of international conflicts using peaceful means, and principles for economic co-operation. The principles of state sovereignty and the consensus rule both apply in the OSCE and in the ARF. In a way similar to the earlier CSCE process, the current ARF can be considered as an open cycle of conferences on security issues.

In contrast to the OSCE, the ARF does not encompass an entire continent but merely a selection of interested states. Furthermore, it did not arise from a bipolar confrontation. It rather serves the purpose of discussing a range of separate, if more or less interdependent, subregional security issues. In contrast to Europe, Asia has no agreement on a core concept of security of whatever form.

With the example of its creation, its norms, principles and commitments, and structures, the OSCE offers a range of features that the ARF could seek to emulate. It possesses a unified concept of security that is recognized by all European states without exception and is politically binding throughout the continent. As is well known, this includes guiding principles for interstate

38 Cf. OSCE-Thailand Conference Opening Statement on *Sharing of Experiences in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings: Opportunities for Cooperation*, Bangkok 2005.

39 Cf. *New Security Threats and a New Security Paradigm*, Concept Paper, South Korea, PC.DEL/1/05.

relations, the universal and comprehensive approach to security and the division into three dimensions, the Platform for Co-operative Security, the Security Strategy for the 21st Century, and rules for co-operation with partners outside the OSCE region. The OSCE can offer the Asian continent comparative benefits for co-operation such as its experience in managing conflicts at the national and regional level. It has experience in dealing with simultaneous state failure, local and regional conflicts, and economic and political transformation. Leading OSCE States have expertise in the settlement of global tensions, and the management and peaceful reunification of nations that are divided into two states. The OSCE and its participating States also have experience relating to complex human tragedies such as ethnic cleansing and terrorist attacks.

While Europe today is an essentially stable region, whose peripheries remain the only zones where a greater or lesser degree of instability may be found, Asia is characterized not only by rapid economic growth but also by high levels of military spending and open or latent tensions. There are obvious reasons, therefore, why transfer of the OSCE's security expertise to Asia could be beneficial. Moreover, it is the openly expressed interest of the OSCE participating States to counteract any threat originating in regions adjacent to Europe through the early identification of joint interests and opportunities for co-ordinated action in the future. The OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century makes mention of co-operation with relevant regional organizations. Co-operation between the OSCE and the ARF could easily be based upon co-operation between the OSCE and its existing partners. This was most recently dealt with in the Decision on Further Dialogue and Co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and Exploring the Scope for Wider Sharing of OSCE Norms, Principles and Commitments with Others⁴⁰ as well as being discussed in detail in the Ladsous Report (June 2001)⁴¹ and in the Härkönen Report of October 2004.⁴²

For their part, ASEAN and the ARF have indicated their intention of intensifying external dialogue on security issues several times, including in the Singapore Declaration (ASEAN 1992) and in the Chairman's Statement at the First ARF (Bangkok 1994). The ASEAN Bali Concord II underlines the desire of the ASEAN Security Community to seek better co-operation with the UN and other international and regional organizations.

40 OSCE, Permanent Council, Decision No. 571/Corrected re-issue, *Further Dialogue and Co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and Exploring the Scope for Wider Sharing of OSCE Norms, Principles and Commitments with Others*, PC.DEC/571/Corr.1, 2 December 2003.

41 *Draft Report on Recommendations Concerning Future Applications for Partnership*, PC/DEL.344/01/Rev.3.

42 *Finnish Food for Thought Paper on the Present State of Affairs and Potential Additional Fields of Co-operation and Interaction with the OSCE Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation*, PC.DEL/0366/04/Rev.1.

In discussing European-Asian security co-operation between the OSCE and the ARF, the most important topics are CBMs, preventive diplomacy, the fight against terrorism, small arms and light weapons (SALW), and trafficking. In these fields, it is possible to identify not only opportunities for the mutual transfer of security-relevant experience, but also potential security benefits for both sides.

The ARF lacks the institutional preconditions for operational activities. It has a need for a powerful secretariat, or, at the very least, a larger unit within the ASEAN Secretariat. If the role of the Chairman were to be strengthened, he could become active in the time between the forums and could even offer mediation services on his own account.

The areas dealt with by the ARF and those covered by the OSCE are fundamentally identical. However, the ARF has so far done little beyond the level of CBMs, and only a few of those activities are comparable with the work carried out by the OSCE.

The Interests of Selected States in Co-operation between the OSCE and the ARF

For the ARF, co-operation with the OSCE takes on particular political significance because of the EU and the participating States central to European and Asian security – France, Germany, Russia, Turkey, the UK, and the USA. The attractiveness of Central Asia to both Europe and Asia could also be significant.

The key interests of the states considered below in security co-operation within the ARF framework and between the ARF and the OSCE vary from case to case. The following descriptions summarize above all the statements of the EU, Japan, South Korea, and Thailand in the Sixth ARF Annual Security Outlook (Vientiane 2005). They also draw upon statements made in the OSCE context and conversations held by the author with diplomatic representatives of the various countries in Vienna in April/May 2004 and September 2005.

The Position of the European Union

The EU's statements in the ARF context have been based on the Security Strategy it adopted in 2003 and the key threats to security defined therein, such as terrorism, the proliferation of WMDs, regional conflicts, state failure, and organized crime. The EU considers multilateral activities as a means of combating these threats. The framework for EU activities in Asia is, above all, ASEM, which convenes biennially. In this forum, the EU focuses primarily on the fight against terrorism. In the ARF context, the EU also stresses its efforts in preventing WMD proliferation and in promoting disarmament on the

Asian landmass – work in which it collaborates with the UN and other international expert organizations. As well as these general topics, the security interests that the EU raises within the ARF are mostly focused on specific bilateral problems such as the questions of Korea and Taiwan. The fact that the European Union has not yet formulated its position on how to instrumentalize the OSCE in various fields in the context of the CFSP has been raised several times in the current discussion on OSCE reform. This defect also has an effect on the reluctance of the OSCE to adopt decisions on co-operation with the ARF.

The Position of Japan

In its ARF statements, Japan makes reference to traditional and, above all, non-traditional dangers, such as the rise of non-state actors (especially terrorist organizations) and the proliferation of WMDs and ballistic missiles. Japan believes that states are becoming increasingly interdependent, while also stressing the juxtaposition in the Asia-Pacific region of large-scale disarmament (i.e. on the part of Russia) and ongoing extremely high troop levels and modernization efforts.

Japan shares the view of most that establishing a security organization in Asia that functioned effectively, especially in Track-One terms, would be extremely complicated. Maintaining long-term Track-Two relations appears to be more feasible. It might be assumed that Japan's expectations of the ARF would be relatively modest. In fact, however, Japan is one of the most active ARF states in terms of proposing initiatives, and consistently contributes to both its everyday work and to planning its future development. Japan assumes that questions such as that of China's growing military potential are beyond the scope of the ARF. Consequently, on issues such as military transparency and arms budgets, the ARF context saw nothing more than unilateral statements – and these topics were otherwise dealt with in a bilateral framework. Nonetheless, Japan apparently sees a possibility that the ARF could develop over time into an effective security instrument for Asia as a whole and for some of Asia's subregions. Japan is evidently interested in an expansion of preventive diplomacy and the assumption of a dispute settlement function by the ARF. In addition, from a Japanese point of view, the ARF opens up opportunities for bilateral and multilateral co-operation with security organizations within the region and beyond, and especially with Europe. In this connection, Japan has explicitly expressed its desire for co-operation and information exchange between the OSCE and the ARF, and its interest in reaching a joint understanding on the security situation in Europe and Asia.

In line with the new guidelines of its national defence programme (December 2004) Japan relies above all on threat prevention, especially by means of actively improving the international security environment. Japan's actions in the ARF and the OSCE should be seen in this context.

Japan sees the OSCE as a source of information and security expertise. It emphasizes the territorial overlap between the European OSCE and the continent of Asia. Above all, Japan is interested in European experiences in Central Asia. Japan refers to the specific regional contact it enters into via the "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue. In addition, Japan occasionally mentions the possibility of a partnership between the OSCE and China. This is seen as an opportunity not only to familiarize China with European experience in the field of security, and to discuss this with the OSCE Asian partners, but possibly also to encourage China to engage in similar activities in the Asian context.

Japan co-operates with the OSCE in many different ways. These include regular participation at annual OSCE events, the financing of events such as the two OSCE-Japan conferences, financial contributions to missions, the Secretariat, and activities on specific issues, and the secondment of experts, observers, and trainees to OSCE field missions and other OSCE institutions. Japan has suggested inviting interested ARF members to meetings of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC).

The Position of South Korea

South Korea's statements in the ARF point out, in particular, the fluctuating relationship between the main players in international security while recognizing that the main tendency is towards stability. South Korea's view of security stresses above all the danger of unwelcome side-effects stemming from globalization. It believes that these manifest themselves above all in growing inequality, expansion of cross-border goods and passenger traffic, and a resulting increase in transnational problems such as terrorism, trafficking in drugs and human beings, epidemics, WMD proliferation (including their acquisition by terrorist groups), and heightened competition for natural resources and energy.

Within the *North-East-Asian* region, South Korea recognizes economic dynamism and intraregional interdependence as positive factors, but also considers economic growth as a cause of shifts in the regional balance of power. Links between these shifts and new nationalisms are seen to carry danger. South Korea has identified a double security challenge for North-East Asia in the combination of traditional (territorial disputes), and non-traditional (terrorism, international crime, piracy, environmental degradation and environmental risks, energy shortages) dangers. South Korea hosted the OSCE-Korea conference in Seoul in April 2005 to discuss these issues under the heading of New Security Threats and a New Security Paradigm.

For obvious reasons, South Korea emphasizes the development of regional CBMs. South Korea has criticized the slow pace of various international security processes involving the ARF, ASEAN+3, NEACD, APEC, and ASEM, while simultaneously recognizing the potentially groundbreaking

role of the Six-Party Talks.⁴³ South Korea would like to see them become the starting point for developments analogous to those that could be observed in Europe in the CSCE process and, later, in the OSCE.⁴⁴ The Six-Party Talks are cited as an example of subregional co-operation in which South Korea also detects important potential security sources for Asia. South Korea would like to see stronger multilateral security co-operation in North-East Asia, and believes the ARF could play a key role in this.⁴⁵

South Korea is interested in closer and more egalitarian involvement in the work of the OSCE, and is critical of Japan's privileged status in the group of OSCE partners.⁴⁶

Thanks to its principles of equality and consensus, the OSCE may offer South Korea a better model of security processes in (North-East) Asia than NATO could. In addition, from the South Korean perspective, the OSCE's early experience in particular – i.e. the CSCE process – could provide a model for current Asian security-building efforts.

South Korea welcomes the statements of the OSCE Panel of Eminent Persons on regional and subregional co-operation. In the document they produced in 2005, *Common Purpose – Towards a More Effective OSCE*,⁴⁷ the Eminent Persons recommended co-operating with suitable partner organizations and placing field activities in regional and subregional contexts. They also advised the OSCE to remain prepared to contribute to security and democracy in OSCE partner countries, and this is certainly applicable to the ARF context, among others.

South Korea is interested above all in the OSCE's first basket and CBMs with regard to its relations with China, Japan, South Korea, and North Korea. With a view to subregional co-operation, South Korea also notes that a possible partnership between the OSCE and China would create new opportunities in the context of North-East Asia. At the same time, South Korea has pointed out the relatively low subregional significance of the ARF compared to an organization such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The Position of Thailand

Among the members of the ARF, Thailand is the only ASEAN state that is also an OSCE partner. As a result of its geographical position, Thailand particularly stresses those changes in the perception of Asian security that have

43 The Six-Party Talks are a series of meetings held between six participating States: China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Russia, and the USA.

44 Cf. Park Song-wu, Seoul to Hold Multilateral Security Forum, in: *The Korea Times*, 29 June 2006, at: <http://times.hankooki.com/lpage/nation/200606/kt2006062918055711990.htm>.

45 Cf. *ibid.*

46 Japan tends to provide a sort of an answer to assorted comments on its special status within the group of Asian OSCE partners by referring to the scale of its voluntary contributions to the OSCE budget.

47 Reprinted in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), *OSCE Yearbook 2005*, Baden-Baden 2006, pp. 359-379.

placed the stability of the continent in a broader Asian-Pacific context, and which have been institutionalized, for instance, in the form of the CSCAP and the APEC.

The security issues that Thailand stresses most include not only traditional threats and non-traditional dangers such as terrorism, transnational crime, and maritime security, but also epidemics and natural disasters. Thailand considers these as threats to states and to human security.

Human security is a central concept in Thailand's understanding of security – and not only in terms of foreign policy (Thailand has a ministry for human security). Thailand considers this to be the most important field for the prevention of threats to security – above all via development programmes for underprivileged social groups. During its chairmanship of the Human Security Network in 2005-2006, Thailand has addressed above all the two topics of freedom from fear and freedom from want.

Topics included under the heading of freedom from fear encompass the elimination of landmines and efforts to stop the spread of weapons. Freedom from want focuses mainly on promoting human-centred development and combating poverty.

Questions that Thailand considers to be at the intersection of these two fields are the promotion of human rights and the fight against HIV/AIDS. The conference held in Thailand in June 2005 on Sharing of Experiences in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings: Opportunities for Cooperation facilitated the exchange of views between OSCE representatives, their Asian cooperation partners, and ARF members. In 2006, Thailand is hosting the OSCE-Thailand conference in Bangkok on the topic of Challenges to Global Security: From Poverty to Pandemic. In the field of counter-terrorism, Thailand's position in the ARF concentrates on the exchange of information and intelligence, document security, and the implementation of legal precautions. This was also the focus of the Third Intersessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (Bangkok, April 2005). The harmonization of legislation governing extradition and mutual legal assistance was addressed by Thailand at two workshops of the Legal Issues Working Group of the Bali Regional Ministerial Meeting on Counter-Terrorism. In the UN context, Thailand has stressed efforts to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorist and criminal groups.

Thailand argues that a standing invitation (i.e. one that does not need to be renewed but is valid for all time) from the OSCE to its partners to attend OSCE events would be desirable. So far, only Japan has received such an invitation. From the Thai point of view, this creates an (undesirable) two-tier system of OSCE partners. Thailand is interested in continuity in relations with the OSCE and is striving to put contacts between the OSCE and the ARF on a more permanent basis and to give them a more processual character. At the 2002 OSCE-Thailand conference, Thailand favoured formalizing relations between the two organizations. At the same time, Thailand sees the

possibility of a link between the Korea process and the ARF process. Thailand has proposed examining joint training activities in Thailand for ASEAN and ARF members. This suggestion touches above all on the human dimension of security.

Recommendations for Co-operation between the OSCE and the ARF

Regardless of the clear parallels in the development and (intended) functions of the OSCE and the ARF, co-operation between the two organizations is likely to remain on a modest scale. The two organizations are either no longer or perhaps not yet able to count themselves among the dominant security players on their respective continents. The OSCE finds itself in a crisis of adaptation, while the ARF is still in the early stage of its existence.

A stronger emphasis on OSCE external relations and thus on co-operation with partner organizations such as the ARF would therefore seem most likely in the event of the current discussions on OSCE reform achieving only limited success. Nonetheless, the desire to co-operate that is voiced by many within both the OSCE and the ARF should not be ignored. This was underscored several times at the OSCE-Korea conference in April 2005 and the Ministerial Council in December 2005. In the following, detailed proposals are given, some of which have already been proposed by the OSCE or the ARF:

1. *Contacts at the highest level, invitations to annual events.* The proposed contacts between the Secretary Generals of OSCE and ASEAN could be placed in a more direct relationship with the ARF. At the same time, side events for ARF members could be organized within the scope of annual OSCE events or joint activities with OSCE partners, or these could be linked with topics of ARF interest. As the Chair of the Contact Group with the OSCE's partners in Asia in 2006, Slovenia has called for the invitation of the OSCE's Asian partners to such events to be applied consistently. A further symbolic means of stressing the co-operative relations between the OSCE and the ARF would be to hold a joint conference, as was proposed by the former OSCE Secretary General Ján Kubiš at the OSCE-Thailand conference in Bangkok, 2005.
2. *Inviting eminent/expert persons.* ARF eminent/expert persons could be invited to share experiences with OSCE institutions such as the HCNM, the Representative on Freedom of the Media (FOM), the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (CEEA), or with Personal Representatives and Envoys of the Chairman-in-Office.
3. *Track Two co-operation.* Because of the special significance of Track Two of the ARF, co-operation in the academic field appears as particularly attractive. This could take advantage of the OSCE Researchers-in-

Residence programme. It is also recommended that contacts be established between specialized European institutes and the *Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific* (CSCAP) – the umbrella organization of the ARF's Track-Two think tanks. There could be a role here for the OSCE Academy in Bishkek and its European partner institutes. In the long term, this could lead to the creation of a network of research institutes.

4. *Training initiatives.* It is recommended that OSCE training measures be implemented in its Central Asian participating States and that these be opened to the participation of ASEAN/ARF members. A proposal to this effect was already made at the OSCE-Thailand conference in 2002. This proposal also mentioned joint capacity-building in Asia and partnerships with OSCE institutions.
5. *Short visits, secondment, internships.* This proposal is to encourage, within the overall framework of co-operation with the OSCE partners in Asia, the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) to organize short visits to OSCE field missions or to restore the practice of secondments to field missions, to send invitations to participate in ODIHR election observation missions, or to arrange internships in Vienna. Invitations to participate in these activities could also be given to ARF states. It would also be conceivable to send invitations to the head or members of the ARF Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat.

First Basket Recommendations

6. *Sharing experience on CBMs and CSBMs.* The ARF's strong orientation towards confidence-building suggests the value of developing dialogue between the ARF and the OSCE in the area of CBMs and CSBMs. The applicability of relevant OSCE experiences to Asia was already raised at the OSCE-Korea conference in 2001. The OSCE's and ARF's different concepts of CBMs could be discussed, including the OSCE's entire range of measures and activities under the headings of security dialogue and arms control. Participants could also share experiences on the establishment of effective arms-export controls, which were recently dealt with in the ARF Statement on Non-Proliferation.⁴⁸
7. *Co-operation in combating terrorism and organized crime.* With a view to co-operation in the fight against terrorism and cross-border organized crime, the OSCE Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) could provide general advice on practical steps such as formulating anti-terrorist le-

48 The ARF Statement on Non-Proliferation was adopted at the Eleventh ARF (Jakarta 2004). In it, the ARF members commit themselves to, among other things, compliance with or implementation of all multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties that they have signed, including UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Cf. *The Eleventh ASEAN Regional Forum*, Jakarta 2004.

- gislation, strengthening the anti-terror capacities of individual ARF members, improving the effectiveness of the police, and developing border-management strategies.
8. *Dialogue within the OSCE FSC and the ARF ISG.* ARF members could be invited to FSC meetings or side events. The *Härkönen Paper* made a similar proposal, as did Japan. A further-reaching proposal jointly made by Belgium and Bulgaria raises the possibility of regular contacts between the FSC and other international organizations (such as the ARF).⁴⁹ Other possibilities would include the participation of OSCE experts in ARF ISG events or the holding of joint technical workshops.
 9. *Sharing experience on SALW.* The OSCE and the ARF could hold joint events on the topic of SALW. Appropriate proposals have already been circulated by the OSCE CPC and in the *Härkönen Paper*.
 10. *Co-operation on maritime security.* Given the importance of this topic, the possibility should be examined of the OSCE passing on to the ARF individual participating States' experience of dealing with maritime security issues and to seek to learn from the ARF's collective experience in turn. It should be noted that in Bali Concord II, maritime co-operation was given a special role in the development of the ASEAN Security Community.
 11. *Sharing experience on conflict management.* There should be an exchange of views and experience on OSCE conflict management, including the management of territorial conflicts and legal disputes. This primarily concerns the OSCE's institutional experience in Vienna, The Hague, and the Organization's field missions. It could also include topics such as the OSCE Court of Conciliation and Arbitration. While this would anticipate potential ARF engagements, it would be relevant to activities such as the implementation of the Manila Declaration on the South China Sea (1992), which is not dealt with at ARF level but in an ASEAN-China Joint Working Group but nonetheless potentially affects the ARF.

Second Basket Recommendations

12. *Invitation to the Prague Economic Forum and preparatory seminars.* It would be possible for co-operation with the ARF to touch upon the OSCE's economic and environmental dimension. In particular, the preparatory events for the annual Economic Forum that are held in the Central Asian participating States, as well as the Forum itself, can provide an opportunity for side events involving ARF members. The invi-

49 Cf. *Background Paper on Promoting dialogue and co-operation between OSCE Partners and participating States in the politico-military dimension: Assessment and possibilities for increased interaction and implementation*, circulated by Belgium and Bulgaria at the Annual Security Review Conference 2005, PC.DEL/577/05.

tation of OSCE partner organizations is, in any case, already an accepted aspect of the Forum. The entire range of topics within the economic and environmental dimension could be discussed here without exception.

Third Basket Recommendations

It appears unlikely that topics such as the promotion of democracy, civilian control of the military, or the promotion of human and civil rights, which are so sensitive for many parties, could be dealt with at an official level. Nonetheless, as in the case of minority issues in basket one, there is no reason they could not be dealt with in Track Two.

13. *Exchange of views on technical issues.* Technical matters appear likely to provide the most scope for an exchange of views between the OSCE and the ARF in the human dimension. An example would be to involve ODIHR in the training of election monitors. The OSCE's partner states in Asia already take part in these activities. But regular events such as the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting could also be a location for sharing experiences with participants of the academic umbrella group CSCAP. There could also be an opportunity to put on side events involving interested ARF members.
14. *Exchange of views on trafficking, gender equality, anti-drugs efforts.* Any human dimension-related discussions should focus on cross-dimensional questions such as trafficking in human beings. This was already an issue at the OSCE-Thailand conference in 2002. Thought should be given as to the extent to which the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings can be translated to the ARF context. Gender equality and anti-drugs efforts are further topics for consideration.
15. *Training events in OSCE partner states.* It might be possible to hold training events on the human dimension in OSCE partner states, as proposed by Thailand for ASEAN and ARF members. These could be attended by experts from the OSCE or its participating States.