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Preparing for the OSCE Chairmanship – CORE Training Courses and Capacity Building

The Centre for OSCE Research (CORE) at the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH) operates as a politically independent think tank, combining basic research on the OSCE and other multilateral organizations with on-demand capacity building. CORE provides a range of services, including institution building, training, curriculum development, and more. Working on a contract basis with governments, international and non-governmental organizations, and other partners, CORE aims to foster co-operation and multilateralism, promote dialogue, and strengthen conflict prevention.

OSCE-Related Chairmanship Training

CORE's involvement in capacity building developed out of its experience in academic teaching, which has seen the Centre actively involved in conceptualizing and teaching OSCE studies in various formats at universities and academies in Hamburg, Venice, Bishkek, and elsewhere. Through its research and other project activities, CORE staff members have been aware for some time of a general need to increase knowledge of the OSCE as an international security organization. When Kazakhstan became the first CIS member state to apply for the OSCE Chairmanship, the need for capacity building and skills development within ministries for foreign affairs that have little OSCE experience became obvious and CORE decided to develop the first OSCE-related Chairmanship training measures.

The general objective of the training course is therefore to build up and strengthen the participating State's knowledge of how the OSCE operates and, specifically, to prepare it to assume the OSCE Chairmanship. It imparts both information on OSCE activities as well as practice- and policy-relevant knowledge of the challenges faced by a Chairman-in-Office (CiO) of the OSCE.

The planning, conceptualization, and implementation of OSCE-related training courses is provided by CORE and takes place either in Hamburg or elsewhere on demand. The example of an all-inclusive 24-day CiO-training course includes six modules of varying length and provides introductions into OSCE history, commitments, the three dimensions of security, conflict prevention and field operations, institutional structures, negotiation and decision-making bodies, reform discussions, and CiO procedures. The composition of these modules is flexible, and individual modules can be booked

separately. As the training places a strong emphasis on practical application, it includes on-site seminars at the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in Warsaw and at OSCE headquarters in Vienna (Permanent Council [PC] Committees and Working Groups, CiO, OSCE Secretariat, national delegations). Other elements that can be part of the programme include an excursion to Berlin with meetings in the Federal Foreign Office, the German Bundestag, the Centre for International Peace Operations (ZIF), and other think tanks.

The training courses are given by CORE staff members and external experts. The lecture-based teaching carried out in Hamburg involves 20-25 leading experts, among them representatives of the OSCE Secretariat, ODIHR, the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), and the permanent missions to the OSCE. Contributions have also been made by former OSCE ambassadors and members of OSCE task forces. During the excursion to Vienna, classroom training is complemented by interviews with leading representatives of the OSCE and of national delegations. Course participants are given the unique opportunity to exchange opinions on OSCE developments with a number of senior officials and leading experts of national delegations.

The training places a strong emphasis on employing a diversity of methodologies in order to enhance the participants' motivation and active involvement. The use of modern media and participatory methods such as issue-oriented briefings and practical skill-oriented training exercises on interview techniques, taking minutes, analysing texts, drafting statements, and delivering brief reports helps to maximize effectiveness. Finally, the training aims at improving the participants' command of English, with English being the language of instruction throughout. The participants are regularly asked for feedback on the content, scope, and methodology of the training. Modifications are made where necessary to reflect the participants' training needs. The trainees have extensive support from CORE staff. All necessary materials are provided by CORE in both electronic and paper forms. The training finishes with a final colloquium, which gives the participants a chance to prove their knowledge and analytical skills.

The 2010 Kazakhstan Chairmanship and Training Courses for Kazakh Diplomats

On 18 February 2003, the then head of the Kazakh delegation to the OSCE, Ambassador Rakhat Aliev, announced Kazakhstan's candidacy for the 2009 OSCE Chairmanship. The declaration of this political ambition awakened a variety of expectations and misgivings among OSCE participating States from the start. On the one hand, questions arose concerning the opportunities and limitations for Kazakhstan to implement its unfulfilled commitments and

the domestic reforms associated with them, on the other, there was much discussion of changes in the role and structure of the OSCE in Euro-Asian security and East-West relations in general.¹

Kazakhstan's intentions were welcomed in principle by a majority of OSCE participating States. European countries in particular expressed above all their hope that the candidacy would lead to reform in Kazakhstan.² The German government,³ along with Finland, Norway, and the Netherlands, announced its support for Kazakhstan's candidacy as early as 2003. As a candidate for the Chairmanship, Kazakhstan demonstrated a consistent desire to actively share in shaping the OSCE, as demonstrated by the participation of Ambassador Kuanysh Sultanov in the OSCE Panel of Eminent Persons, which discussed OSCE reform, as well as Kazakh involvement in the OSCE working group on transnational threats, and the holding of the first ever ODIHR Tolerance Implementation Meeting in Almaty in 2006. At the same time, Kazakhstan remained true to its multi-vector policy with regard to its relations with the great powers: It supported the Astana Appeal and the Moscow Declaration,⁴ but also considered the possibility of its playing a bridging function in overcoming East-West tensions.

The Kazakh leadership went on the offensive to tackle potential doubts as to the country's readiness for reform. On 30 October 2003, then Foreign Minister Kassymzhomart Tokaev made this statement in Brussels: "As far as Kazakhstan is concerned, we know that there are some doubts abroad [...] We want to apply for this chairmanship in the OSCE because first of all, we fully understand the importance and the difficulty of this issue. It is a challenge not only for OSCE itself, but for Kazakhstan. It is an impetus for us to

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- 1 Cf. Markus Kaim/Andrea Schmitz, Die Frage des kasachischen Vorsitzes und die Zukunft der OSZE. Der OSZE-Ministerrat in Brüssel [The Question of the Kazakh Chairmanship and the Future of the OSCE. The OSCE Ministerial Council in Brussels], in: *SWP-Aktuell* 57, November 2006, available online at: http://www.swp-berlin.org/common/get_document.php?asset_id=3478; Andrei Zagorski, Kazakhstan's Chairmanship Bid: A Balance Sheet of Pros and Cons, in: Daniel Warner (ed.), *The OSCE at a Turning Point: OSCE Chairmanship and Other Challenges*, Geneva 2007, pp. 93-124.
 - 2 On 22 July 2003, the Co-operation Council of the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement between Kazakhstan and the EU "[...] expressed the hope that Kazakhstan would pursue successfully its ambition for OSCE Chairmanship in 2009". Available online at: http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_2586_en.htm. On 31 July, in the OSCE Permanent Council, the EU made the following statement: "We hope to see further progress in Kazakhstan on these [reform] issues over the coming years and would underline that a firm commitment to and compliance with OSCE principles and standards is a requirement for any participating state, in particular for those wishing to offer their services as Chairmanship of this Organisation."
 - 3 On 5 December 2003, at the German-Kazakh Business Forum in Astana, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder stated that "Germany supports Kazakhstan's bid for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2009". Available at: <http://www.kazakhstanlive.com/3.aspx?sr=7>.
 - 4 Cf. *Appeal of the CIS Member States to the OSCE Partners*, Astana, 15 September 2004 (unofficial translation from the Russian), at: http://www.ln.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/70f610ccd5b876ecc3256f100043db72?OpenDocument; and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Information and Press Department, *Statement by CIS Member Countries on the State of Affairs in the OSCE*, Moscow, 3 July 2004, at: http://www.ln.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/3be4758c05585a09c3256ecc00255a52?OpenDocument.

follow up with the political reforms in order to make the country in full compliance with the international standards and those adopted by OSCE itself. So our commitment in this respect is quite clear. When addressing to OSCE, to our partners within this organisation, we want to see your support, to obtain your spiritual assistance and your understanding [...] pursuing liberal, drastic reforms during the last several years is not so easy because of the complicated geopolitical situation around the Central Asia.”⁵

With its willingness to accept support in preparing for the OSCE Chairmanship, the Kazakh government created opportunities for finding co-operative solutions to problems, e.g. through capacity-building projects. The German government was one of the first OSCE participating States to grasp this chance and entered into an arrangement with the Kazakh foreign ministry in 2006 and again in 2007 to co-finance training courses for foreign ministry officials. These courses were carried out by CORE in September 2007 and June 2008.

The decision on a Kazakh OSCE Chairmanship, originally tabled to be made at the Brussels Ministerial Meeting in December 2006, was postponed for a year, because the USA and the UK, in particular, were not convinced that their expectations were being met regarding Kazakhstan’s progress in the domestic adoption of OSCE commitments (free and fair elections, standards in the areas of freedom of speech and press freedom, and the release of political prisoners). After Foreign Minister Marat Tashin promised at the Madrid Ministerial in December 2007 to instigate the relevant legislative reforms (media law, election law, mechanisms for dialogue between government and civil society) and to protect the mandate and activities of ODIHR, the participating States decided to award Kazakhstan the OSCE Chairmanship for 2010. The first ever decision on three future OSCE Chairmanships (Greece 2009, Kazakhstan 2010, Lithuania 2011) and the establishment of the informal Quintet (i.e. the Troika countries of Spain, Finland, and Greece and the two incoming Chairmanships of Kazakhstan and Lithuania) demonstrated how the Organization was adapting institutionally to changes in Euro-Asian security co-operation. For its part, Kazakhstan has participated in the usual preparations for the Chairmanship and continues to make efforts to raise its profile, e.g. at the first meeting between the General Secretaries of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and the OSCE in June 2008,⁶ and as the host of a session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Astana in July 2008.

While it still remains valid to ask, despite the fundamental decision in favour of Kazakhstan, whether Kazakhstan will implement its reform plans

5 H.E. Dr Kassymzhomart Tokaev, *Lecture “The major Geopolitical Challenges of Central Asia Today”*, Brussels, 30 October 2003, available online at: <http://www.irri-kiib.be/speechnotes/02-03/031030-TOKAEV.pdf>.

6 Cf. Press release on the meeting, at: <http://portal.mfa.kz/portal/page/portal/mfa/en/content/news/nws2008>.

effectively and in a timely fashion,⁷ the Kazakh government has demonstrated its constructive approach in the area of capacity building. The Kazakh side participated in the preparations and implementation of the training courses attentively and enthusiastically. A total of 15 diplomats from the foreign ministry received training in Hamburg in 2007 and 2008. The first group consisted of five, the second of ten junior officials from various departments. The second group included an equal number of male and female participants. The trainees were given a comprehensive working knowledge of OSCE issues and have established personal ties to OSCE structures and delegations. Special highlights during both courses were lectures by former OSCE Ambassador, Dr Dieter Boden, and former OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Dr Wilhelm Höynck, and meetings with OSCE Secretary General, Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, in Vienna and State Minister, Gernot Erler, at the German Federal Foreign Office.

Prospects for CORE Capacity Building

While the next Chairmanship training course, for a mixed Lithuanian-Kazakh group of trainees in 2009, is in preparation, CORE is striving to expand its capacity-building activities. In the area of institution building, it continues to develop teaching programmes for newly established teaching and training institutions in the CIS area that have a special focus on the OSCE. This follows the example of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, which was established from 2001-2004 in close co-operation with CORE.⁸ The most recent institution-building project concerns the future Armenian Diplomatic Academy, for which CORE completed a needs assessment in 2008 in co-operation with the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and commissioned by the OSCE Office in Yerevan. Further capacity-building services include the organization of international conferences,⁹ evaluations,¹⁰ and the drafting of policy papers

7 For a well structured overview, see Zagorski, cited above (Note 1) 2007, pp. 102-106.

8 CORE developed an overall model of the Academy, and assisted in fundraising, curriculum development, selection of teaching staff and students, academic teaching, and supervision of masters theses. Cf. Frank Evers, A New Think-Tank for the OSCE and Central Asia. Establishing the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), *OSCE Yearbook 2003*, Baden-Baden 2004, pp. 337-345.

9 See Anna Kreikemeyer/Wolfgang Zellner, *The Quandaries of Promoting Democracy in Central Asia: Experiences and Perspectives from Europe and the USA*, Report of a Transatlantic Workshop at the Centre for OSCE Research in Hamburg, 2007, available online at: http://www.core-hamburg.de/documents/CORE_Working_Paper_18.pdf; CORE international conference on "Co-operation with Central Asia – The Potential of the EU's Central Asia Strategy 2008", in co-operation with the Protestant Academy Loccum. Proceedings will be published in 2009 at: www.loccum.de.

10 See *Working in OSCE field missions*, 2003, details available at: http://www.core-hamburg.de/CORE_english/serv_bee_misseval.htm; *Evaluation of EC Pilot Training Courses on Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management 2003*, unpublished manuscript.

on demand.¹¹ CORE's consulting and teaching activities have included the development upon request of general plans and specific curricula for masters programmes and summer school courses. CORE researchers also act as teaching staff, academic supervisors, and mentors for scholars and students from CIS states.¹² Last but not least, CORE is active in the field of mediation. Since 2001, CORE staff members have accumulated broad knowledge in creating peace-building dialogues between moderate Islamist and secular forces in Tajikistan, and, since 2007, in Central Asia as a whole.¹³ In all these activities, CORE co-operates with local experts from political institutions, academia, and the private sector.

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- 11 See two reports on the reform and future of the OSCE undertaken by CORE in co-operation with a group of international experts as commissioned by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Wolfgang Zellner, in consultation with Pál Dunay, Victor-Yves Ghebali, P. Terrence Hopmann, Sinikukka Saari, Andrei Zagorski, *Identifying the Cutting Edge: The Future Impact of the OSCE*, CORE Working Paper No. 17, Hamburg 2007, available online at: http://www.core-hamburg.de/documents/CORE_Working_Paper_17.pdf; and Wolfgang Zellner, in consultation with Alyson Bailes, Victor-Yves Ghebali, P. Terrence Hopmann, Andrei Zagorski, *Managing Change in Europe. Evaluating the OSCE and Its Future Role: Competencies, Capabilities, and Missions*, CORE Working Paper 13, Hamburg 2005, available online at: http://www.core-hamburg.de/documents/CORE_Working_Paper_13.pdf.
- 12 In co-operation with the Central Asia Research Initiative (CARI) of the Higher Education Support Programme (HESP) of the Open Society Institute, the OSCE Centre in Astana and the Kazakh National University (KAZGU) in Almaty, and with DAAD Germany.
- 13 See Anna Kreikemeyer/Arne C. Seifert (eds), *Zur Vereinbarkeit von Islam und Sicherheit im OSZE-Raum* [On the Reconcilability of Islam and Security in the OSCE Area], Baden-Baden 2003; and Jean-Nicolas Bitter et al., *From Confidence Building Towards Co-operative Co-existence. The Tajik Experiment of Islamic-Secular Dialogue*, Baden-Baden 2005.