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The OSCE's Comprehensive Approach to Border Security and Management

Introduction

The OSCE's approach to border security and management is embedded in the Organization's notion of comprehensive and co-operative security, which can be traced to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, the founding document of the OSCE. It outlined for the first time the major principles and commitments of the OSCE, then still called the CSCE (Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe), including those provisions pertaining to the three "baskets of security", later renamed the three dimensions. The complementary and interconnected nature of these three dimensions – the politico-military, economic and environmental, and human dimensions – are also reflected in the way the OSCE approaches issues related to border security and management.

While the Helsinki Final Act already provided the basic parameters for comprehensive security and co-operation across national boundaries in the three dimensions, several documents agreed upon by the participating States over the following thirty years addressed in more detail a number of risks and challenges to security and the appropriate mechanisms of co-operation to manage them. Major documents included the Charter of Paris for a New Europe (1990), the Charter for European Security (1999), the Bucharest (2001) and Porto (2002) Ministerial Council Documents, and the Maastricht Ministerial Council's "OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century" (2003).

From the OSCE's perspective, security threats and challenges emanating from porous borders and weak border management remain a major concern to the Organization's participating States and their citizens. Among these challenges are illicit trafficking of human beings, narcotics, and weapons, illegal migration, terrorism, and other forms of transnational organized crime, such as the increase in criminal networks and corruption. In

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some cases, the demarcation/delimitation of borders also poses challenges. Unresolved conflicts, armed confrontations, and other forms of instability can also have an impact on the border security of neighbouring states and local communities. At the same time as the Organization has to respond to these security challenges affecting its borders, the OSCE is also committed to ensuring the free and secure movement of people and goods across borders and to enhancing economic development and prosperity by facilitating regional cross-border co-operation. In many ways, the OSCE has to maintain a fine balance: It must ensure security while not undermining its commitment to promote economic and social well-being among its participating States.

Among the earliest documents directly related to border security and management was Decision IX on “The CSCE and Regional and Transfrontier Co-operation” in the 1992 Helsinki Document,¹ which welcomed activities involving development and increased contacts at the governmental, regional, and local levels. Other documents followed suit, including the “Elaboration of an OSCE Border Security and Management Concept”, adopted at the 2004 Sofia Ministerial Council,² and the “Border Security and Management Concept – Framework for Co-operation by the OSCE Participating States”,³ agreed upon at the 2005 Ministerial Council in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The Border Security and Management Concept (BSMC) is one of the major milestone documents for border-related activities in the OSCE, laying down the basic principles, political commitments, and obligations of participating States regarding border security and cross-border co-operation. The underlying security challenges targeted through the BSMC pertain primarily to illicit trafficking of human beings, narcotics, and weapons, illegal migration, transnational organized crime, and terrorist activities.

Specific decisions on issues such as combating terrorism, trafficking, and other forms of transnational crimes as well as economic governance were also adopted over time, defining the role of OSCE institutions and bodies, units of the Secretariat, and field operations in the comprehensive approach to border security and management.⁴ All of these efforts have contributed to

1 CSCE Helsinki Document 1992: The Challenges of Change, Helsinki, 10 July 1992, in Arie Bloed (ed.), *The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Analysis and Basic Documents, 1972-1993*, Dordrecht 1993, pp. 701-777, here: p. 763.

2 Decision No. 2/04, Elaboration of an OSCE Border Security and Management Concept, MC.DEC/2/04 of 7 December 2004, in: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *Twelfth Meeting of the Ministerial Council*, 6 and 7 December 2004, MC.DOC/1/04, Sofia, 7 December 2004, pp. 16-18.

3 Border Security and Management Concept – Framework for Co-operation by the OSCE Participating States, MC.DOC/2/05 of 6 December 2005, in: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *Thirteenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council*, 5 and 6 December 2005, Ljubljana, 6 December 2005, pp. 9-15.

4 For an overview of specific provisions related to the relevant areas, such as combating illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, action against terrorism, police matters, combating trafficking in human beings, and economic and environmental governance, see OSCE Secretariat, Conflict Prevention Centre/Operations Service, *The OSCE Concept of Comprehensive and Co-operative Security*, SEC/GAL/100/09, 17 June 2009.

one objective – the enhanced management of borders in all its aspects through extensive co-operation among the OSCE’s participating States, and with the assistance of all relevant parts of the OSCE structure. In particular, the OSCE supports Central Asian participating States on a number of economic and environmental issues that require regional and border co-operation, such as cross-border trade, promoting efficient use of water and energy resources across borders, improving cross-border transportation, and improving customs services.

The OSCE’s comprehensive approach to border security and management also came to the forefront of public attention when, in October 2008, the Finnish Chairmanship organized a seminar entitled “A comprehensive Approach to Border Security and Management in the OSCE Area”. The seminar addressed issues across the three dimensions, all of which had a border-related component. In the politico-military dimension, the seminar focused on the benefits of a comprehensive approach in combating terrorism and arms proliferation; in the economic and environmental dimension, enhancing the effectiveness of international and regional co-operation was explored; and on the human dimension side, the seminar examined the issue of ensuring a gender-based approach to border security and management and in identifying victims of human trafficking.⁵

When it comes to addressing and managing challenges to the borders of the OSCE participating States, Afghanistan remains of pivotal concern, as porous borders between Afghanistan and Central Asian states are likely to continue to jeopardize security and stability in the region. To this effect, the OSCE participating States adopted, in November 2007, Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/07 on “OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan”,⁶ pledging support to enhance the OSCE’s involvement with Afghanistan across a spectrum of activities and to strengthen the management of borders between the Central Asian participating States and Afghanistan.

To illustrate the OSCE’s comprehensive approach to border security and management, this chapter will focus in more detail on the following: the 2005 Border Security and Management Concept – one of the major milestone documents underlying the OSCE’s border-related activities over the last few years; the implementation of the comprehensive concept of border security and management; and the issue of the OSCE’s engagement with Afghanistan, with a particular focus on the border security and management of the Central Asian participating States.

5 See the agenda of the seminar, PC/GAL/150/08, 17 October 2008.

6 Decision No. 4/07, OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan, MC.DEC/4/07/Corr.1 of 30 November 2007, in: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *Fifteenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council*, 29 and 30 November 2007, Madrid, 30 November 2007, pp. 19-22.

*The Border Security and Management Concept (2005) –
The Major Milestone Document for OSCE Border-related Co-operation*

The major milestone document for OSCE border-related co-operation is the Border Security and Management Concept (BSMC). Adopted in 2005, it contains provisions for OSCE contributions across the OSCE's three dimensions of security, reflecting the Organization's comprehensive and co-operative approach to security. In essence, the BSMC entails four key provisions: It provides the OSCE with a mandate for promoting wide-ranging cross-border co-operation between border services, customs authorities, law enforcement and other competent national structures; it allows for the various segments of the OSCE executive structures – the Secretariat, the field operations, and institutions – to work together and to assist and support the participating States in implementing the BSMC; it calls for co-operation with international organizations and partners, to be guided by complementarity, comparative advantage, and added value; and it provides a list of possible contributions that aim at making the BSMC operational.

With the BSMC, the participating States reaffirmed the obligations and commitments already undertaken at the global, regional, subregional, and bilateral levels. The participating States also agreed to “promote co-operation between their border services, customs authorities, agencies issuing travel documents and visas, and law enforcement and migration agencies, as well as other competent national structures”.⁷ The BSMC acknowledges the OSCE's role as the appropriate political framework for border-related commitments and activities, to be supported by its structures and institutions, including the Organization's contribution based on “its concept of common, comprehensive, co-operative and indivisible security”.⁸

Recognizing that there is no uniformity of borders in the OSCE area, one of the principles of co-operation is that each participating State “has the sovereign right to choose how to secure and manage its borders, taking into account relevant political, military, economic and social considerations”.⁹ In this respect, each border has a particular character that may call for specific policy choices. Other principles of co-operation affirm that the enhancement of common prosperity and security can be accomplished by increasing beneficial cross-border movement; that co-operation should proceed at the bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels; and that for the purpose of generating solutions with added value benefiting all participating States, cross-border dialogue, transparency and confidence-building are essential components.

The particular benefits to be gained from cross-border co-operation are outlined in the form of eight common objectives, comprising the promotion of free and secure movement of persons, goods, services, and investments;

7 Border Security and Management Concept, cited above (Note 3), p. 10.

8 Ibid., p. 11.

9 Ibid.

the reduction of the threat of terrorism, including by preventing cross-border movement of persons, weapons, and funds connected with terrorist and other criminal activities; the prevention and repression of transnational organized crime, illegal migration, corruption, smuggling, and trafficking in weapons, narcotics, and human beings; the promotion of high standards in border services and competent national structures; the promotion of the dignified treatment of all individuals crossing borders; the creation of beneficial conditions for economic, social, and cultural development in border territories; the fostering of common spaces of freedom, security, and justice in the OSCE area; and ensuring the security of international transport routes for the supply of commodities.

In the spirit of the “Platform for Co-operative Security” (1999), the BSMC underlines the importance of co-operation with other international regional and subregional organizations, mandating “political and operational co-ordination”,¹⁰ with an emphasis on complementarity, comparative advantage, and added value that can be achieved through concerted action and joint deployment of resources.

Making activities concrete enough so that all participating States can benefit is another underlying element of the BSMC. Such concrete actions, in other words the implementation of the provisions of BSMC on the ground, have taken two forms: policy support and advice, with a focus on assisting participating States, as for example with their national border legislation; and capacity building, such as imparting practical skills and training to specific activities that enhance border security and management. The BSMC document also outlines a list of possible OSCE contributions, including the following:

- facilitation (e.g. political dialogue between participating States, confidence-building measures in border areas, technical dialogue);
- general forms of contribution such as technical assistance in the development and implementation of national strategies and action plans, or in the development and implementation of training programmes;
- specialized assistance in combating terrorism, transnational organized crime, illegal migration, and illicit trafficking of narcotics, human beings, and nuclear, biological, chemical, and conventional weapons and their means of delivery, as well as hazardous waste (e.g. crime-specific training for border services, technical and non-technical means of detection of illegal or false documents, promotion of implementation of multilateral international norms);
- free and secure movement of persons (e.g. technical assistance and expert advice on exit and entry procedures);

10 Ibid., p. 12.

- activities related to economic and environmental issues, such as sharing best practices on border-crossings and customs procedures for import, export, and transit; fostering economic cross-border co-operation and facilitation of local border trade; facilitation of cross-border co-operation on environmental issues and in case of natural disasters or serious accidents.

*The Border Security and Management Concept at the Operational Level:
Comprehensive and Co-operative Security in Practice*

Among the main OSCE structures and institutions involved in the implementation of the BSMC are the Conflict Prevention Centre's (CPC) Operations Service/Borders Team, the Office of the Co-ordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA), the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU), and the Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU) as well as the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Moreover, many of the border-related activities are implemented in the host countries with the assistance of OSCE field operations. Co-operation and co-ordination with other international organizations and partners also takes place, as stipulated in the BSMC.

The major focal point for all border security and management issues is the CPC's Operations Service/Borders Team, located within the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna. The Borders Team works closely with all OSCE structures and field operations. It develops and co-ordinates specific border projects in co-operation with OSCE field operations and provides OSCE assistance on border security- and management-related issues with other relevant international agencies. It also responds to requests from OSCE participating States for comprehensive national and regional assessments and concrete assistance in strengthening their border security. Moreover, the Borders Team maintains the OSCE Border Security and Management National Focal Point Network, the establishment of which was mandated by Permanent Council Decision No. 757 (2006)¹¹ to consist of the following: National Focal Points in the participating States and a contact point in the OSCE Secretariat. The primary objective is to "facilitate information-sharing between participating States on border security- and management-related issues".¹²

The BSMC is implemented through a variety of activities and projects that include, for example, assessment missions, exchange of information and best practices, specific training courses, workshops, and conferences, tech-

11 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Permanent Council, Decision No. 757, *Terms of Reference for the OSCE Border Security and Management National Focal Point Network*, PC.DEC/757, 5 December 2006.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

nical assistance in enhancing border structures, strengthening international exchange networks, and other capacity-building initiatives. The following examples, selected from across the OSCE area, provide an overview of the wide-ranging, cross-cutting, and cross-dimensional nature of border-related activities. They also highlight some of the achievements of the OSCE, all within a relatively short period of time, demonstrating the close co-operation among many actors inside as well as outside the Organization.

Central Asia remains the focus of OSCE border-related activities and has also been declared the priority region for the 2009 and 2010 OSCE Chairmanships. The region is prone to a multitude of cross-border security threats and challenges, many of which also have a direct impact on other OSCE participating States. These include narcotics trafficking, particularly of opiates originating from Afghanistan; other forms of illicit trafficking such as the smuggling of small arms and light weapons; possible cross-border terrorist activities; not to mention economic and environmental challenges associated with sustainable development, secure transport, border crossing facilitation, and trans-boundary water management and co-operation. Lack of demarcation/delineation of borders in the region also remains a challenge.

A few specific examples will demonstrate the nature and scope of the assistance provided by the OSCE, at both the policy-relevant and capacity-building levels. In 2006 and 2007, for example, the CPC's Borders Team conducted national assessments on border security and management in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, as requested by the two participating States. These assessments resulted in concrete recommendations and subsequent technical assistance projects. The Borders Team also supported the drafting of Tajikistan's "National Border Management Strategy", which was finalized in the spring of 2009 and currently awaits adoption by the Tajik government. Other OSCE projects have focused on building the surveillance capacities of border guards and customs officials in the region.

Field operations are also in the frontline of initiating and implementing projects that address border-related issues, often with other international organizations. For example, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek has been involved in border management projects since 2004. In 2008, the Centre conducted an interesting project called "Positive peace building in Jalalabad and Batken provinces" along the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan borders, aimed at improving local governance, cross-border conflict prevention mechanisms, and cross-border dialogue among border agencies. The OSCE Centre in Astana has been implementing a project entitled "Enhancing border control on the land border of Kazakhstan", since 2007, in co-ordination with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the EU Border Management Programme in Central Asia (BOMCA), and the Border Service of Kazakhstan, focusing on infrastructural capacity building and training.¹³

13 Cf. Border Security and Management National Focal Point Network, *OSCE Newsletter*, Issue 4, September 2008.

In 2008, the OSCE Secretariat's ATU, together with the CPC's Borders Team, the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, and the Austrian Federal Ministry for the Interior, conducted a train-the-trainers course for the detection of forged documents. The training is part of the ATU's comprehensive assistance programme for travel document security. Courses have also been held in the Kyrgyz Republic, and follow-up activities are continuing in 2009. Future training courses on travel document security are also planned for Tajikistan.¹⁴ In March 2009, the OCEEA, together with the OSCE Centre in Astana, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Transport Division, and the Customs Committee of Kazakhstan, organized a seminar on improving the implementation of international legal instruments to facilitate cross-border trade and transport operations¹⁵ on the basis that "cumbersome customs and border-crossing procedures create an additional burden for landlocked developing countries in Central Asia".¹⁶ In June 2009, the OSCE's SPMU conducted training on basic precursor identification and backtracking investigations in Turkmenistan with law enforcement officers, including border police and customs officers.

The South Caucasus also demonstrates well the OSCE's involvement in border-related activities. Trafficking of narcotics and human beings, illegal migration, and the illicit movement of dual-use commodities are among the major security challenges in the region. Cross-border co-operation is also hampered by the unresolved conflicts and strained relations among South Caucasus participating States.

With regard to addressing border-related security issues in the context of armed conflict, the OSCE Border Monitoring Operation (BMO) was an important preventive and confidence-building measure. Established in 1999, the BMO deployed unarmed border monitors in Georgia to observe and report on border crossings at the Dagestan, Ingush, and Chechen segments of the border between Georgia and the Russian Federation. Following their withdrawal in 2005, the OSCE Mission to Georgia launched the OSCE Transitional Institutional Support Programme (TISP) in the region, which has focused on border co-operation and the sharing of experiences in Georgia, Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.¹⁷

There are several notable examples of activities addressing border-related issues within the BSMC context in the South Caucasus. In the area of

14 Cf. *ibid.*

15 Cf. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, *Activity Report June 2008 – May 2009*, May 2009.

16 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Press Release, *OSCE hosts seminar on facilitating Kazakh cross-border trade, transport*, SEC.PR/100/09, 17 March 2009.

17 In August 2008, the OSCE also increased the number of military monitoring officers in the OSCE Mission to Georgia as part of the Organization's response to the armed confrontations in the same month. The operation ended with the closure of the Mission to Georgia on 30 June 2009.

trafficking in human beings, the EU has funded a multi-year anti-trafficking project that is being jointly implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), and the OSCE. The project provides assistance to Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia in the development of a comprehensive response to trafficking in human beings, primarily through the establishment of a National Referral Mechanism (NRM), which aims to assist and protect victims of trafficking. Such efforts are further supported by specific interagency and cross-border co-operation initiatives.¹⁸

Enhancing cross-border co-operation in the South Caucasus is also moved forward by means of joint activities involving Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. The OSCE Office in Yerevan has facilitated cross-border co-operation between Armenian and Georgian border and customs officials, as was the case in October 2008, when international, Armenian, and Georgian experts conducted training on combating the smuggling of narcotics, nuclear materials, trafficking in human beings, and detection of forged documents. The OSCE Office in Baku assisted the host country in developing programmes to reform the border security and management system and to fight trafficking in human beings, and in training border guards and customs officers. All of these activities were conducted in co-operation with the CPC's Borders Team, ODIHR, the OCEEA, and the OSCE Mission to Georgia.¹⁹

Unfortunately, the closure of the OSCE Mission to Georgia on 30 June 2009 is likely to have a negative impact on further facilitating cross-border co-operation in the region. The Mission was instrumental in supporting the Georgian Border Services and in implementing, in co-operation with the OSCE Offices in Baku and Yerevan, the TISP, launched in May 2008, which operated within the context of the BSMC.

The OSCE also performs relevant activities in *Eastern Europe and South-Eastern Europe*. The ATU, for example, in co-operation with Interpol, has developed a project aimed to deploy Interpol's Mobile Interpol Network Database (MIND) in the Republic of Moldova, allowing first-line border-control law-enforcement end-users real-time access to Interpol's database. In its capacity-building efforts aimed at combating illegal transboundary transportation of hazardous waste, the OCEEA has been active in projects that increase the capacity for prevention and detection of illegal waste transportation in Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus. Further cross-border support is also provided, primarily through the field presences, including training aimed at reforming and increasing the efficiency of the State Border Guard Services of Ukraine.

In South-eastern Europe, the OSCE Secretariat and OSCE field operations have been instrumental over many years in efforts to promote and fa-

18 Cf. OSCE Efforts to Strengthen Border Security and Management in the South Caucasus, *OSCE Newsletter*, Issue 5, March 2009.

19 Cf. *ibid.*

cilitate cross-border co-operation, even prior to the decision on the BSMC in 2005. The OSCE, in partnership with the European Union, NATO, and the Stability Pact (the Ohrid Border Process Partner Organizations) supported the “Ohrid Border Process”, a joint effort of five countries in South-eastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia). The four Partner Organizations addressed sensitive border-related issues through relevant initiatives such as the transition process (leading up to full military withdrawal and the handing over of responsibility for border control to specialized professional border police services in accordance with European standards), the harmonization of integrated border management standards, joint meetings for cross-border information sharing or cross-border co-operation between national border agencies, and anti-organized crime units.

While the Ohrid Border Process officially ended in 2007, the OSCE, in particular through its field operations, continues to support cross-border co-operation and other border-related activities carried out by the various countries in the region and their respective border agencies. This is demonstrated, for example, by successful joint patrolling programmes between the countries in South-eastern Europe, and courses to train border police and customs officers to fight international car theft and to recognize false travel documents.

On a more general note, the extensive network of actors working together in the field and at headquarters level, and their collective institutional experience on border-related issues is also evident in the development of a collaborative project, the *Handbook of Best Practices at Border Crossings*. This handbook, to be published in 2010, is being developed by the OCEEA, in co-operation with the UNECE, and with the support of the CPC’s Borders Team, the ATU, and other relevant units of the Secretariat. Preparatory meetings in Minsk and Bishkek in October 2008 were part of the initial planning phase. The objective of the handbook is to assist OSCE participating States in creating more efficient border and customs policies, particularly states that are land-locked and have limited access to global markets. Intended as a reference work for national policy-makers, senior customs and border guards/police officials, and heads of regional customs chambers/border crossings, the publication will focus on border-crossing points along roads and railways, as well as ports and airports. Concrete examples from across the OSCE area will provide guidance on how border-crossing points can be made more efficient, and on how countries can promote trade and transport to enhance regional economic development and prosperity, while at the same time reducing opportunities for illicit trafficking, terrorist activities, transnational crime, and corruption.²⁰

It should be also emphasized that the implementation of politico-military commitments, including those on border security- and management-

20 For further details, see the website of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities at: <http://www.osce.org/eea/34787.html>.

related issues, is reviewed each year from a cross-dimensional perspective at the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) held by the OSCE Chairmanship. The 2008 ASRC, for example, focused on transnational challenges to security in the OSCE area, exploring the implementation of OSCE decisions on combating terrorism, illicit trafficking of weapons and narcotics, and the fight against trafficking, and assessing the operationalization of the BSMC so far.

OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan – Another Phase in the OSCE’s Efforts to Promote Border Security and Management

The relevance of the BSMC is particularly crucial when it comes to the OSCE’s engagement with Afghanistan. Although not a participating State, Afghanistan has had the status of an OSCE Partner for Co-operation since 2003. Following the adoption of Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/07,²¹ the OSCE’s engagement with Afghanistan has assumed a more structured and focused approach. This decision identifies the need for OSCE activities in three areas: border security and management, policing, and combating trafficking. Throughout 2008, the OSCE participating States considered the adoption of a “programme of activities” related to the decision, outlining sixteen projects developed by the Secretariat. Although no consensus was reached on the implementation of the package containing the sixteen projects (a particular problem was that two of them were to be initiated on Afghan territory, something that was opposed by several delegations), some of the projects have already been launched, with additional ones expected to be implemented in the near future. The package includes project proposals to strengthen border security and management, to facilitate cross-border cooperation, and to enhance national law enforcement capacities – with the inclusion of Afghan participants in such activities. All of the projects are to take place first and foremost in Central Asia.

The implementation of these activities started in 2009 with ongoing patrolling and customs projects in Tajikistan and the design of new border initiatives in Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan, which are to involve Afghan border officials. The Bishkek customs training facility project, which started in early 2009, is a 27-month initiative that involves the creation of a national customs training facility in Kyrgyzstan. The main areas of the project are curriculum development, infrastructure renovation, and course implementation, as well as the provision of comprehensive institutional and

21 Decision No. 4/07, *OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan*, cited above (Note 6). For further elaboration on this decision and its implementation, see Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), *OSCE Yearbook 2008*, Baden-Baden 2009, pp. 361-368; and Alice Ackermann, Engaging with Afghanistan – An OSCE Perspective, in: *Defence Nationale et Sécurité Collective*, January 2009, pp. 41-45.

systematic training of the Kyrgyz Customs Service. The expected impact of such training is to guarantee collection of customs revenue, which would increase state income, and to combat narcotics trafficking.

The OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, which was launched on 27 May 2009, could be considered the OSCE's flagship project in the field of border security and management, as it constitutes a long-term effort in institution- and capacity-building that is expected to lead to a harmonization of border standards and procedures. The Staff College's activities are co-ordinated by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan and the CPC's Borders Team, with the Senior Border Issues Advisor also representing the OSCE Secretariat on the academic advisory board. Its objectives include enhancing senior managers' knowledge of the border security and management agencies of the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation and promoting exchange of information and co-operation; functioning as a centre for research and development that will link the staff college to border management training and research institutes in the OSCE area; and facilitating an outreach programme of workshops and seminars within Central Asia that will support cross-border and inter-agency co-operation by means of the exchange of information, lessons learned, and best practices. At present, the Staff College will conduct four security and management staff courses per year for current and potential senior managers from border agencies (border guard, border police, and customs) from OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, including Afghanistan.²²

Concluding Remarks: Taking the OSCE Agenda on Border Security and Management Forward

It is expected that the Kazakh Chairmanship in 2010 will further enhance the OSCE's engagement in Central Asia, with an emphasis on border security- and management-related initiatives, including economic and environmental activities. While the priorities of the 2010 Chairmanship have not yet been publicly announced, they are likely to include enhancing good governance at border crossings, strengthening the security of land transportation, and facilitating international transport. Continued support for Afghanistan will also be an important issue for the Kazakh Chairmanship, especially if the security situation in northern Afghanistan were to deteriorate further.²³

The OSCE has already achieved a great deal in the area of border security and management, considering that the BSMC was only adopted at the end of 2005. And it is well-placed to further enhance its engagement in this field.

22 Cf. The OSCE Border Management Staff College: A flagship project takes off, in: *OSCE Magazine* 2/2009, pp. 7-8.

23 Cf. also Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Potential Kazakh Chairmanship and Agenda, in: Daniel Warner (ed.), *The OSCE at a Turning Point: OSCE Chairmanship and Other Challenges*, PSIO Occasional Paper 4/2007, Geneva.

The key to this is the Organization's approach to comprehensive and co-operative security, which is reflected in the cross-dimensional nature of the BSMC as well as in its co-operative approach towards the implementation of activities – whether working with actors inside or outside the Organization. Hence, border security and management issues of all kinds across all three dimensions and all the OSCE's regions can be addressed in ways that are complementary.

Other inherent advantages of the OSCE in carrying forward the border security- and management-related agenda include the following: a well-established network of international partners, essential for sharing expertise and the joint funding of programmes and projects; the OSCE's extensive field presences, allowing implementation of activities across the entire OSCE area and securing national ownership of the process; an established consensus by participating States that cross-border threats and challenges must be addressed for the purpose of common security and stability across the OSCE area – including the readiness of participating States to commit voluntary contributions in addition to their unified budget contributions; the frequent exchange of lessons learned and best practices across regions as a result of the variety of border systems and standards in the OSCE area; and the facilitation of dialogue across borders – between national governments, border and law enforcement agencies, and, most importantly, local communities – thus giving also a human face to cross-border co-operation.