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Preface

Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship in 2010 cast a spotlight on a region that most Europeans, certainly prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union, would have considered *terra incognita*.¹ Central Asia, which has an area of over four million square kilometres and a population of some 60 million, is the topic of the special focus section in the OSCE Yearbook 2010.

In January 1992, not long after achieving independence, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan were admitted to the CSCE/OSCE. The decision was not without controversy at the time, but the view was to prevail that an integrationist policy – i.e. one that supported granting all the successor states of the Soviet Union participation in the CSCE/OSCE – would not only contribute to overcoming the political and economic crises that followed the break-up of the multinational USSR, but was also in accord with the OSCE's inclusive and co-operative concept of security.² Institutional relations between the Organization and the states of the region have been successively expanded since the establishment of a long-term mission in civil-war-struck Tajikistan in 1993/94; since 1999, the OSCE has had a presence in each of the five states.

According to the OSCE's multidimensional understanding of the concept, security – in Central Asia as elsewhere in the OSCE area – should be established in the politico-military, the economic and environmental, and the human dimensions. From the very start, however, the extent to which European conceptions of security, with their close links to democracy, the rule of law, and human rights, could be transposed to Central Asia was a subject of dispute. A critical analysis in a recent OSCE Yearbook painted a less than rosy picture. It argues that while all the states of the region spoke positively of intensifying co-operation with the OSCE in the 1990s, none acted consistently in accordance with its fundamental principles. The author concludes that this could not be attributed to a lack of resources and capacities alone – there was also a shortage of political will.³ In all five Central Asian states,

1 There is no standard definition of which countries belong to the region of Central Asia. The primarily political understanding of the term used here and within the OSCE encompasses the five former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Although these states indisputably share certain qualities, they by no means constitute a homogeneous group, and in terms of social and economic development, for instance, demonstrate considerable differences.

2 Cf. Tim Epkenhans, *The OSCE's Dilemma in Central Asia*, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), *OSCE Yearbook 2006*, Baden-Baden 2007, pp. 213-222, here: p. 213.

3 Cf. *ibid.*

autocratic presidential regimes were established, while deficits in democratization and human rights are noted to this day.⁴

Both the OSCE's noble aspirations and expectations and the growing sense of disenchantment must be seen alongside the West's concrete interests. Central Asia has for some time now been moving increasingly rapidly towards the centre of European and international policy concerns, as evinced, for example, by the adoption of the EU Strategy for Central Asia in 2007. Besides Central Asia's strategic importance, which results from its proximity to Afghanistan, its key role in securing the EU's new external borders, and its role in combating the illegal trade in drugs and arms, the interests of the West in Central Asia are largely economic and trade-based, above all the desire to secure Europe's energy supply. Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have major oil and gas reserves, particularly the latter; Central Asia is the second largest source of natural gas after the Persian Gulf.⁵ Furthermore, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are among the world's ten largest producers of Uranium, a strategically vital metal whose importance is likely to grow significantly in the near future.⁶

Central Asia is the only major OSCE region significantly shaped by Islam. Three authors dedicate their contributions to this topic in this year's Yearbook: Tim Epkenhans, the former director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, who analyses the role of Islam in the security discourse of the Central Asian states, and Arne C. Seifert and Esen Usabaliev, whose joint contribution considers relations between the secular state and the Muslim community in Kyrgyzstan.

In another contribution in the special focus section, Leonid Golovko discusses the opportunities for comprehensive legal reform in Central Asia and the barriers that stand in its way.

Central Asia is home to well over 100 different nationalities – more than 130 in Kazakhstan alone. In her contribution to the special focus section, Beate Eschment discusses nationalities policy and the situation of national minorities in Kazakhstan. Moreover, as a consequence of the arbitrary borders drawn between the republics in the 1920s with no reference to ethnic

4 In the Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2010 Status Index (which ranks transition countries in terms of democratization, rule of law, and market reforms), Kazakhstan comes 76th, Kyrgyzstan 83rd, Turkmenistan 115th, Tajikistan 118th, and Uzbekistan 120th of 125 countries. In the categories "Political Rights" and "Civil Freedoms" (human rights) of Freedom House's 2010 "Freedom in the World" rankings, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan each achieved scores of 6 and 5 on a scale from 1 (free) to 7 (unfree), while Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan each merited a 7 in both categories. For further information, see: Stillstand auf niedrigem Niveau? Die zentralasiatischen Staaten in den neuesten politischen Länderrankings [Stuck at the Bottom of the Table? The Central Asian States in Recent National Comparisons], in: *zentralasien-analysen* 29/10, 28 May 2010, pp. 12-24, at: <http://www.laender-analysen.de/zentralasien/pdf/ZentralasienAnalysen29.pdf>.

5 Cf. Miguel A. Pérez Martín, *Geo-Economics in Central Asia and the "Great Game" of Natural Resources: Water, Oil, Gas, Uranium and Transportation Corridors*, Real Instituto Elcano working paper, Madrid, 19 April 2010, p. 14.

6 Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-25.

considerations, each of the Central Asian states contains significant national minorities of ethnic groups that form the titular nation in adjacent states. The recent events in Kyrgyzstan – the political unrest and overthrow of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev in April and the bloody clashes (not seen since 1990) between ethnic Kyrgyz and members of the Uzbek minority in Osh and Jalal-Abad in June 2010 – present a paradigmatic example of just how fragile the states in the region are. In their contribution, Thomas Kunze and Lina Gronau consider why it has not proven possible to stabilize Kyrgyzstan following the Tulip Revolution of 2005.

For Central Asia, and particularly for Kazakhstan, Europe is a “sought-after modernization partner”,⁷ something that finds expression not least in Kazakhstan’s “Strategy 2030”. Ailuna R. Utegenova presents this long-term development programme in her contribution to this year’s special focus section.

Away from the special focus topic, contributions by prominent international academics, diplomats, and senior military personnel in the OSCE Yearbook 2010 provide the usual comprehensive and in-depth coverage of the activities of the world’s largest regional security organization. Following the Foreword by the Organization’s current Chairperson-in-Office, Kazakhstan’s Secretary of State and Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev, the section on “The OSCE and European Security” contains analyses of the OSCE Summit in Astana by Wolfgang Zellner and Andrei Zagorski. Vladimir I. Voronkov, Graeme P. Herd and Pál Dunay, Marcel Peško, Przemysław Grudzinski, and Rachel S. Salzman then discuss the Russian draft Treaty on European Security, ongoing developments in the Corfu Process, and the future of Euro-Atlantic security from a range of perspectives.

The focus of Oleh Protsyk’s contribution are the challenges old and new facing Ukraine’s current leadership following the 2010 presidential election; Stanislav Raščan reviews relations between Slovenia and the OSCE.

The Corfu Process is not only a dialogue on security policy at ambassadorial and ministerial level, it also affects numerous areas of the OSCE’s activity. This is elucidated by Alice Ackermann and Herbert Salber from the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre with respect to “Conflict Prevention and Dispute Settlement”. In the chapter with the same name, Silvia Stöber asks how effective the now closed OSCE Mission to Georgia was and was allowed to be. Frank Evers focuses on the Ukrainian domestic political situation, with particular reference to interethnic and inter-religious relations in Crimea.

A major chapter of the OSCE Yearbook is always dedicated to the Organization’s activities in the three dimensions of security. Jens-Hagen

7 According to the EU Special Representative for Central Asia, Pierre Morel, in an interview with Beate Eschment in: *zentralasien-analysen* 31-32/10, 30 July 2010, pp. 29-35, here: p. 30, at: http://www.laender-analysen.de/zentralasien/pdf/Zentralasien_Analysen31-32.pdf.

Eschenbächer and Bernhard Knoll from ODIHR in Warsaw consider the proposition that election monitoring in Western democracies is both reasonable and necessary. Sarah Riese, Nora Roehner, and Christoph Zuercher present the results of a research project to examine the effectiveness of external democratization strategies in post-war societies, with special reference to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Roland Bless's contribution is dedicated to the question of how combating terrorism impacts the protection of media freedom, while Natalie Sabanadze introduces the most recent recommendations of the High Commissioner on National Minorities as applied to the South Caucasus. Finally, Patrice Dreiski discusses the place of "energy security" on the OSCE's agenda.

In the chapter on the structures and institutions of the OSCE, Kurt P. Tudyka evaluates the activities of the Organization's Greek Chairmanship in 2009; Murat Laumulin from the Kazakh Institute for Strategic Studies outlines the challenges that faced Kazakhstan's 2010 Chairmanship.

Three contributions on the external relations complete this year's anthology: Nikolai Bordyuzha, Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the military alliance of CIS states, furnishes an insight into his organization's structure and functioning; Alice Ackermann, John Crosby, Joop de Haan, and Erik Falkehed from the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre discuss the OSCE's contribution to mediation. And last but not least, Monika Wohlfeld provides an overview of relations between the OSCE and its Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

The editors and editorial board are greatly obliged to the authors that have contributed to the current volume, without whose dedication, expertise, and wealth of experience the OSCE Yearbook would not be possible.

There were high expectations of the Summit in Astana, and the failure of the Heads of State or Government to reach agreement on the wording of the "Astana Framework for Action" and thus to adopt the Summit's main document is deeply disappointing. Certain ideological rifts clearly go deeper than was thought. However, it is not the OSCE that has failed (and the blame certainly does not lie with the Kazakh Chairmanship). Summits are only one – if politically the highest – level of the Organization. The OSCE today is no longer merely a conference, a forum for dialogue, even if this remains its most important function. The conference has long been transformed into an organization with permanent structures and institutions charged with performing a broad variety of concrete tasks. Yet an organization is only as strong as its members allow it to be. There is frequently a lack of correlation between the tasks it is charged with performing and the instruments it is provided with to perform them. The OSCE still lacks legal personality, the ability to apply more than minimal sanctions, not to mention the option to deploy troops – if only for peacekeeping purposes – yet among the things it does possess is the mandate to resolve the "frozen conflicts"; its failure to do so is

leveled at it in accusation. Furthermore, a lasting and reliable peace can only be achieved if the conflict parties (and their allies) demonstrate the political will for a peaceful resolution. This too is lacking in the case of the “frozen conflicts”. The irreconcilable positions of Russia and the USA and Russia and Georgia with regard to Abkhazia and South Ossetia are well known and more or less rule out any consensus on a concrete mandate with regard to the frozen conflicts for the time being. Yet this is precisely why the conflicts require continuous attention – in terms of both practical measures on the ground and diplomatic dialogue. The day after the Summit ended, the German news magazine *Spiegel* wrote that OSCE is “de facto unemployed” – but that is precisely what it is not. The OSCE is an organization that performs a wide range of tasks at operational level – via its institutions, the departments of its Secretariat, and its missions and presences on the ground. Nothing about its responsibilities in these areas has changed. Of course, the Organization also remains a forum for discussion – where else can contradictory positions be discussed among equals? How else can they be overcome except in dialogue? However, this does not only take place at the level of the Heads of State or Government, but rather among the permanent representatives of the 56 participating States, who meet in Vienna, week in week out, to discuss contradictions, rifts, and conflicts and to search for solutions. However difficult and time consuming they are, these discussions continue to be necessary, because they represent the only peaceful means there is to overcome the rifts and contradictions, bring peace where there is conflict, and establish trust. For that reason, a functioning OSCE is also in the interest of the Heads of State or Government.