

Jos Boonstra/Natalia Shapovalova/Richard Youngs

Reviving OSCE Democracy Support

The OSCE has much unfulfilled potential in the area of support for democracy. The Organization's Copenhagen Document had significant transitional influence in the 1990s and provides the OSCE today with a comprehensive body of democracy-related commitments. The subsequent Moscow Document of 1991 further developed mechanisms to help implement these commitments. Most of the OSCE's participating States recognize the Organization's track record in building democracy-related agreements nested within a variety of security-related concerns.

However, the implementation of the Copenhagen and Moscow Documents now stands much diminished. OSCE States have become less active and assertive in urging compliance with these agreements. This retrenchment is particularly evident with regard to the human rights- and democracy-related achievements of the early 1990s. Many of the Organization's members now cast doubt over whether the OSCE has any future as an organization that uses concrete mechanisms for actively promoting democracy. Assistance for democratic reform in OSCE participating States in Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia is nowadays pursued mainly on a national basis by individual governments or through EU institutions and international non-governmental organizations.

While the political context conditioning the OSCE's democracy policies has changed significantly, it would be premature to assign the Copenhagen and Moscow Documents to the realm of unrealizable aspiration. We shall assess how they can help enhance the effectiveness of democracy programming activities on the ground. National and EU documents and strategies that deal with Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia still frequently refer to OSCE standards in the sphere of democracy. The challenge lies in ensuring that the commitments made in the documents can help to revive the OSCE's democracy support programmes.

This article analyses the significance of the OSCE Copenhagen and Moscow Documents of the early 1990s as a basis for investigating ways to make increased use of democracy commitments in the practical programming currently undertaken by ODIHR and other OSCE institutions and activities such as the field operations. The article compares the two documents with the activities of other organizations, foremost among them the European Union, the Council of Europe, and the United Nations; this comparison is necessary to help the OSCE to develop better niche areas of relative expertise. The paper concludes with five broad recommendations to "revive" the spirit of Copenhagen through practical democracy programming.

The Copenhagen and Moscow Documents

The OSCE's June 1990 Copenhagen Document was highly significant not just for the Organization itself, but also for the wider panoply of international democracy commitments. The document was designed as a tool of wide-ranging co-operation, but in particular helped pave the way for democracy-support strategies that were subsequently adopted by a range of other organizations.

The political and historical context that produced the Copenhagen Document is well-known. The CSCE was well-placed to play a vanguard role in democracy and human-rights promotion by virtue of its wider strategic importance during the final years of the Cold War. The early 1990s witnessed substantial growth in CSCE participating States' commitments to democracy and human rights. The end of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, plus reforms in the USSR, engendered revolutionary support for democratic change. The United States and Western European countries saw the CSCE as a useful vehicle for promoting democratic change in the Eastern bloc through consensual discussion and agreements.

The June 1990 Copenhagen Document states that "pluralistic democracy and the rule of law are essential for ensuring respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms".¹ It does so in five chapters, in which the link between democratic governance and the rule of law is pivotal. Indeed, the document was significant in deriving its conceptualization of democracy from a particularly broad and well-developed definition of the rule of law. The text states that governments should protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and can do this only through the rule of law; democracy is regarded as an integral element of the rule of law.

The commitments included in the rest of the document are in line with those adumbrated by other organizations, mainly the UN and the Council of Europe, in areas including elections, independent media, freedom of expression and association, and constitutional law. Particular emphasis is placed on certain topics, such as the rights of children, migrants, and prisoners; the issues of conscription, torture, and capital punishment; minorities; and racial and ethnic hatred, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and discrimination.

Other international organizations developed similar standards using the Copenhagen Document as a reference point. This applies in particular to the European Union and NATO, which sought a formulation of democracy criteria with a view to guiding the enlargement process. The OSCE's framework drew strength from, among other things, the large number of states that had pledged themselves to the Copenhagen Document. Moreover, the Copen-

1 Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE, Copenhagen, 29 June 1990, in: Arie Bloed (ed.), *The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Analysis and Basic Documents, 1972-1993*, Dordrecht 1993, pp. 439-465, here: p. 440; also available at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/14304>.

hagen Document served as the basis for a plethora of subsequent OSCE commitments. It was soon buttressed by the Paris Charter of November 1990, in which the participating States agreed “to build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only system of government of our nations”.²

A year later, the participating States agreed to the Moscow Document.³ In the preamble to this document, participating States declared that “they categorically and irrevocably declare that the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension of the CSCE are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned.” At first sight this would seem to be a supranational aspect of an intergovernmental organization, were it not for the fact that the OSCE agreements are political by nature and not legally binding. The formulation did, however, offer a strong notion of joint commitment to democracy and it strengthened the idea of comprehensive security in which the lack of democratic practice in one country can have a negative bearing on its partners.

The Moscow Document was especially significant in attempting to strengthen the monitoring mechanism. This is one of the few OSCE mechanisms that do not require consensual decision-making. One such use of the mechanism is the provision to ask *rapporteurs* to investigate abuses of human rights and democratic standards. While the mechanism has a great deal of potential, it has not been mobilized in any systematic fashion. The OSCE’s capacity to set up a group of *rapporteurs* quickly is limited, findings are not binding, and the political follow-up is patchy at best.

The mechanism can be initiated if one OSCE participating State, supported by at least nine others, considers that a serious threat to the fulfilment of the provisions of the (OSCE) human dimension has arisen in a participating State. It allows for an investigation to be launched without consensus and independently of the OSCE’s Chairmanship, institutions, or decision-making bodies. In practice, tensions concerning the human dimension and participating States’ growing reluctance to openly “name and shame” democratic transgressors have limited the use made of the Moscow Mechanism. The OSCE lacks a system of sanctions and cannot force a member to comply. Indeed, the Mechanism has been invoked only a handful of times and only once since 2003 when it was used in Turkmenistan (although the *rapporteurs* did not have access to that country). The Andijan massacre in Uzbekistan in 2005 and the ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan in 2010 are two of the most serious abuses that have been perpetrated, but arguably they met with insufficient response from the OSCE. These were precisely the kind of issues that the Moscow Mechanism was designed for. In April 2011, 14 OSCE participating

2 Charter of Paris for a New Europe, Paris, 21 November 1990, in: Bloed (ed.), cited above (Note 1), pp. 537-566, here: p. 537; also available at: <http://www.osce.org/mc/39516>.

3 Document of the Moscow Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE, Moscow, 3 October 1991, in: Bloed (ed.), cited above (Note 1), pp. 605-629; also available at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/14310>.

States invoked the Mechanism in response to Belarus's closure of the OSCE Office in Minsk and its stalling in the implementation of its OSCE commitments. If it is not deployed sufficiently and in the most necessary cases, the operational relevance and efficiency of the OSCE's Moscow Mechanism can be questioned.

Implementation: Advances and Shortcomings

A great deal of focus has been placed on flaws in the OSCE's monitoring of democratic credentials. But the issue of democracy support programming is also salient. The Copenhagen Document does not mention "democracy support" and was not designed explicitly with this in mind. Yet it is clearly germane to assess how the standards defined in the two crucial documents outlined above relate to the OSCE's own programming activities. The OSCE promotes democracy through assistance programmes in countries that welcome such support, and ODIHR and the field missions are the main actors undertaking democracy assistance programmes.

ODIHR's monitoring task is threefold. First, it follows human rights developments, reminding participating States of shortcomings – although over the years, ODIHR has become more careful in confronting countries publicly. ODIHR increasingly uses "quiet diplomacy" via letters to high officials to urge participating States to address shortcomings. Second, it organizes annual Human Dimension Implementation Meetings, supplementary meetings, and seminars in co-ordination with the Chairmanship in order to encourage peer review among OSCE States on selected topics. Third, it has election observation and assessment as its core mandate.

The first monitoring activity specified above is broad and looks at the whole range of human-dimension issues such as combating trafficking in human beings; Roma and Sinti issues; monitoring freedom of association, assembly, and religion; civil society; freedom of movement; rule of law; gender equality; and combating racism and related forms of intolerance. It is impossible for ODIHR to keep track of all human-dimension-related issues in all participating States on an annual budget of some 15 million euros (about ten per cent of the entire OSCE budget). This is one of the reasons why the Office relies largely on information provided by missions on the ground. The limited budget also makes it important to choose topics for monitoring, instead of trying to cover all issues and doing so ineffectually. The topics for the human-dimension meetings are only proposed by ODIHR and submitted to the Permanent Council by the Chairman-in-Office for approval.

The annual meetings serve to review implementation and give the national delegations the opportunity to debate the human dimension. Although independent experts are invited, the meetings are essentially political; even the agenda has to be agreed upon by consensus beforehand by the Permanent

Council in Vienna. Most of its scope is left to focus attention on less sensitive – though still conscientiously debated – topics that are part and parcel of the human dimension, such as promoting diversity and participation in pluralist societies and reinforcing the fight against intolerance, discrimination, and trafficking in human beings. The annual reviews and the Human Dimension Meetings are still important opportunities to take stock of progress by states in implementing commitments relating to the human dimension, and to develop new areas of engagement.

In election assessment and observation, ODIHR benefits from almost two decades of experience. In that period, a thorough methodology was developed. Long-term observation missions undertaken by ODIHR constitute the backbone of the exercise, which is complemented by the more visible short-term observation missions of experts and elected representatives.⁴ This part of its mandate has become a source of tension between several CIS members on the one hand, and the US, the EU, and countries with a Euro-Atlantic integration perspective on the other. The former group, led by Russia, believes that the great attention paid to CIS members' elections has stirred unrest because initial reports on the quality, fairness, and freeness of the elections are immediately made public and can serve as a powerful tool in the hands of a defeated opposition or even revolutionary forces. The debate was intensified after the "democratic revolutions" in Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004). One of Russia's reactions was to hinder ODIHR participation in the observation of the 2007 parliamentary and 2008 presidential elections and to curtail the number of observers. Russia and several other CIS members remain critical of ODIHR and believe it is too independent of consensus procedures that take place in the Permanent Council. Moreover, Russia complains that elections are not monitored thoroughly "West of Vienna". The increase in attention paid to the more shallow election assessments in Western Europe have done little to change that perception.

The examples of the "democratic revolutions" in Georgia and Ukraine were significant as they highlighted the crucial role of international election observation based on a thorough methodology. Critical ODIHR post-election reporting was thought to incite revolution by some participating States. A contrasting case was the Moldovan election in April 2009, which was assessed by international observers as "positive on the whole", although riots still broke out and the opposition demanded new elections; Moldova had a change of government a few months later after new elections.

Those who support ODIHR election observation do so because they recognize the unique methodology and high professional standards that are applied during missions. A focus on strengthening longer-term observer mis-

4 For further information on OSCE/ODIHR election observation, see: Nicolas Kaczorowski, Election Monitoring: Lessons Learned and Possible New Orientations, in: Daniel Warner (ed.), *Consolidating the OSCE*, PSIO Occasional Paper, 4, Geneva 2006, pp. 107-124, and Hrair Balian, ODIHR's election work: Good value? in: *Helsinki Monitor* 3/2005, pp. 169-175.

sions in order to supplement the familiar short-term observers that flood a country for a few days has received greater attention in recent years. Nowadays, accumulated knowledge can also be used outside the OSCE area, as was the case in 2009 in Afghanistan; the latter welcomed an election support team for its presidential and local elections. But within the OSCE area, too, ODIHR election monitoring experience has helped other organizations, especially the EU, to improve their approaches to the electoral cycle.

In addition to its extensive monitoring function, ODIHR is also involved in rule of law, civil society, and democratic governance programmes. It does so mainly, although not exclusively, via training and awareness raising. ODIHR supports programming in relation to all aspects of the Copenhagen Document, which particularly concern the rule of law, democracy, and human rights – with the exception of free media and minorities, which are dealt with by the Hague and Vienna offices. Illustrative examples: ODIHR organizes training for police officers in the OSCE area on how to prevent hate crimes, and it hosts round tables on a variety of human dimension-related topics such as gender rights and extremism, which mostly address a civil society audience.

Warsaw-based ODIHR also offers legal advice on national legislation in the human dimension. It comments on draft laws (if requested by a participating State or OSCE field mission) and brings expertise in law-making to bear via recommendations and workshops. This legal capacity is often coordinated with the Council of Europe's Venice Commission.

Next to ODIHR, the field missions play a leading role in OSCE democracy monitoring and programming. The OSCE is currently active with field operations in seventeen countries, ranging from the Balkans to Central Asia. The missions differ in size and mandate, but one way or another all are involved in monitoring human-dimension commitments and in programming. The monitoring aspects lie in the daily work of field mission staff, while the Heads of Mission report to the Chairperson-in-Office and the Permanent Council on violations of commitments in specific countries.

The breadth of mandate has often been controversial. In 1999, the Mission to Ukraine was downgraded to an OSCE Project Co-ordinator, bereft of a monitoring and reporting mandate. In 2006, Uzbekistan succeeded in reducing the OSCE Centre in Tashkent to a Project Co-ordinator, who is unable to meet freely with NGOs and has a time-limited mandate. Other Central Asian regimes have contemplated similar options. The exception is Tajikistan, which in 2008 approved a strengthened mandate that has resulted in more funds, projects, and staff for the OSCE Office in Tajikistan. Overall, democratization activities in Central Asia are limited. While there has been some progress in democratization projects in Kazakhstan, the work of the OSCE generally in the Central Asian republics has been minor or seriously curtailed.

In June 2009, the OSCE's most substantive South Caucasus mission was closed: The mandate of the Mission to Georgia could not be extended because of disagreement over the status of South Ossetia, where the OSCE acted through mediation and observers on the ground. The Russian government argued that the OSCE could work in South Ossetia only through a new and separate mission, thus forcing other participating States indirectly to recognize South Ossetian independence. Most OSCE States wanted to have access to South Ossetia through the Georgia Mission, which had been the case up to the outbreak of war in August 2008. A Russian veto ended the OSCE's work in Georgia, and the UNDP has taken over most governance programming in Georgia.

In Eastern Europe, OSCE missions focus less on democratization programming. In Belarus, the mandate and the host country restricted the scope for this,⁵ while in Moldova emphasis has been placed on the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, although several democratization programmes are being implemented through the Mission in Chişinău. In the South Caucasus, the OSCE Offices in Baku and Yerevan undertake projects that are particularly (although not exclusively) related to freedom of the media, electoral reform, and civil society capacity-building.

OSCE programming in the Western Balkans covers almost every aspect of democratization: capacity-building and good governance in national and local authorities; parliamentary oversight; the rule of law and the judiciary; the development of political parties; gender issues; and media and civil society support. Civil-military relations and security-sector governance can be taken up in the politico-military dimension, and are obviously relevant for democratization. Good-governance programming often constitutes part of the OSCE's economic dimension.

The OSCE spends 65 per cent of its budget on field operations. The largest share of these funds goes to operations in the Western Balkans and, more specifically, the operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Nonetheless, the budgets for most field operations and their work in promoting democracy are dwarfed by many other donors' efforts. It is possible for participating States and associated countries to support projects through extra-budgetary donations. These funds are important since they do not have to be approved by the Permanent Council, although they are invariably limited in magnitude.

OSCE Comparative Advantages

It will be important for the OSCE to find niche comparative advantages relative to other organizations. Several other international bodies are active across the same region in supporting democracy and human rights. There is

5 Nonetheless, the OSCE mission to Minsk was forced to close on 31 December 2010.

an increasingly confusing overlap between these organizations' initiatives and programmes.

Council of Europe (CoE) activities cover monitoring, policy guidance, and technical assistance in a greater number of human rights and democratization areas; unlike the OSCE, the CoE does not include transatlantic partners or Central Asian states. The OSCE has the advantage in terms of geographical breadth.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has a strong presence in the OSCE region and increasingly pursues democratic governance objectives, in particular by supporting public administration and local government reform and citizen participation. It remains heavily focused on relatively technical governance issues and not on the key political questions that (ostensibly) lie at the core of the OSCE's mandate.

The European Union (EU) is also active in promoting democracy in the OSCE area and often refers to OSCE human-dimension agreements in documents concluded with partner states to the east. It does so through, for example, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the more recent Eastern Partnership (EaP), which specifically applies to Eastern European and South Caucasian states of the ENP, and the 2007 EU Strategy for Central Asia. Besides using the OSCE as a reference point, the EU is also a substantial supporter of the OSCE's work. EU member states provide 70 per cent of the OSCE's annual budget and support OSCE institutions, including ODIHR, with extra-budgetary funds for specific programmes. The OSCE's advantage is, once again, that its standards are formally backed by a wider range of states and may thus be used as a legitimizing tool by the EU.

The Copenhagen Document outlines in detail the commitments of the participating States to hold free elections, while the Charter of Paris established the Office for Free Elections in Warsaw (since 1992: ODIHR) "to facilitate contacts and the exchange of information on elections within participating States". Since then, the CoE (through European Court of Human Rights case law and the efforts of the European Commission for Democracy through Law – the "Venice Commission") and the UN at the global level have also contributed to the development of election standards.

Although delegates from the European Parliament and the CoE Parliamentary Assembly participate in international election observation missions along with the OSCE/ODIHR delegations, the EU relies heavily on the latter's expertise. It routinely refers to ODIHR assessments and recommendations under the rubric of, for example, the ENP Action Plans. Only ODIHR has sufficient political capabilities and expertise to ensure long-term election observation.

On the basis of OSCE documents, ODIHR's work focuses on various aspects of democratic governance that go beyond electoral democracy and include such issues as transparency of the policy and legislative process, citizen participation in policy-making, and multi-party democracy. In these

fields, ODIHR programming complements that of the UNDP's work in the OSCE region. The Venice Commission also provides opinions on draft legislation on issues relating to political parties. A number of European and American private foundations active in the region also work on issues of government transparency and accountability, citizen participation, and assistance in improving intra-party democracy.

ODIHR's work on issues such as the fight against racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and intolerance, and on strengthening the rule of law and independence of judiciaries is complementary to the efforts by other organizations – the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and EU/CoE joint programming relevant to rule of law and judiciary issues.

While the UN, the CoE, and the EU focus on human rights through monitoring and assistance mechanisms, ODIHR's niche rests in the overlap between the human dimension and security. Its programming focuses on the complex relationship between human-rights protection and security, for example by providing legal advice and technical assistance on human-rights protection in the fight against terrorism by and within armed forces. Other organizations deal with such issues, but their formal standards and commitments are less well-developed than those of the OSCE.

Through the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM), the Organization plays an important role in monitoring media freedom and journalists' rights. The RFOM provides early warning on violations of freedom of expression and promotes full compliance with OSCE media-freedom commitments. Importantly, the RFOM observes media developments and makes relevant statements on countries both "East and West of Vienna". The RFOM's monitoring and early warning activities are reinforced with assistance relating to freedom of the media, professional journalism, and access to public information provided by the OSCE field missions. None of the other organizations working in the OSCE area undertake quite such systematic monitoring or assistance in this field.

Another distinctive field of activity for the OSCE is provided through the institute of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), which is an instrument for conflict prevention at the earliest possible stage with regard to tensions involving national-minority issues. Commitments to protect national minorities have been undertaken by the OSCE participating States in a number of CSCE/OSCE documents from the Helsinki Final Act through the Copenhagen and Moscow Documents to the decision to establish the HCNM post at the Helsinki Summit in 1992. Again, this is an area that is relatively underplayed by other organizations.

A final potential comparative advantage of the OSCE is that it links human rights and democracy with security. The organization that focuses most on promoting democratic practices in security matters is NATO, but its

democratization efforts concentrate on defence reform and apply mostly to countries that seek membership. The OSCE goes much further in addressing the broader security sector. It has a wealth of experience in support of policing services, border guards, and civil-military relations in OSCE participating States. It is true that in practice, the linking together of the OSCE's politico-military and human dimensions leaves much to be desired; yet this remains an area that is emphasized and should be strengthened as a relatively strong point compared to the standards of other organizations.

Ways Forward

All in all, three steps lead us to consider how OSCE democracy programming and monitoring can be revived: First, the Copenhagen and Moscow Documents contain a wide range of standards that can serve as founding reference commitments; second, implementation of these commitments has become progressively more tepid; and third, despite all the difficulties, the OSCE can still count on several comparative advantages relative to other organizations.

There are no magic solutions for improving programming activities. Ultimately, the political context remains crucial. As long as familiar political differences persist, the scope for advances at the micro-level of programme implementation will be restricted. There is simply no escape from this reality. Nevertheless, there may be some limited room for harnessing agreed OSCE standards and commitments to inject more energy into democracy-funding and monitoring on the ground.

Most noticeably, ways must be found for ODIHR to increase funding sources for its programming. European Union member states in particular should be pressed to increase their hitherto very limited "extra-budgetary funding" to ODIHR. The proposed reform of some EU funding procedures to introduce more flexibility should also be considered. The scope for project-based funding is increasing and might represent a potential growth area for the OSCE. This will revive the proactive role the Organization has played in setting broad standards in the fields of rule of law, minorities and other issues and serve as a solid basis for enhanced programming.

It is at this level that co-ordination with other organizations is required. OSCE officials insist that there is already sufficient information exchange and high-level dialogue with the EU, the Council of Europe, and the UN in the field of democracy promotion and monitoring. But there remains a need for quicker progress on the ground to ensure the effective division of labour. The different organizations still sometimes appear to act as competitors rather than partners. This does a disservice to citizens pressing for reform in their respective countries. The rare positive examples should be built upon. Georgia was one such example, with the UNDP taking over OSCE projects when the latter was forced to close its field mission.

The role the OSCE could play through its all-inclusive membership and broad scope of interest should be one of a bridge-builder between, first, regional organizations active in democracy promotion and monitoring (EU, CoE, UN); and second, regional security organizations that have little contact with each other in the OSCE area, such as the EU and NATO, on the one hand, and the “Eastern” regional security initiatives, primarily the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), on the other. Whereas these organizations might not have a “human dimension”, they are developing into regional security actors that have weak links with the EU or NATO. In short, the OSCE with its inclusive membership could help to build bridges between organizations and create a common security discourse that takes in not just both sides of the Atlantic – but also and especially the former “East” and “West”.

One of the OSCE’s advantages is the depth of its presence on the ground in the form of field missions. This is the case particularly in Central Asia, where fewer international organizations are active and fewer OSCE participating States have embassies. A new effort is needed to exert pressure and offer incentives to prevent states from reducing missions to merely humanitarian engagements. The field missions also need more professionalized and qualified personnel. The OSCE is good at quiet diplomacy and monitoring emerging threats, but it must link these functions more systematically to difficulties experienced by missions and projects on the ground.

A promising way forward would be to renew the spirit of linking democracy to comprehensive, collective security. The OSCE’s comparative advantage is that it nests democracy promotion within a broader set of security objectives. It is also valuable to the extent that it gives scope for trade-offs and leverage. Of course, the link between conflict resolution and political reform remains the area where the OSCE is expected to play a distinctive role just as it does in facilitating mediation – with the Organization having been chosen as the vehicle for conflict resolution in Transnistria and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Efforts must be made to seek a quid pro quo that can temper the dissatisfaction of those states that have blocked most of the OSCE’s democracy work in recent years: For the OSCE to support democracy more effectively, it must take on board Russia’s security concerns and intensify co-operation at the level of shared hard-security challenges. Returning to the spirit of cooperative security will itself open the way for a greater focus on democracy.

To make this work, the US must change its position on the question of the OSCE. It has sought to use the OSCE as a means of undertaking critical scrutiny of former Soviet states, but has been hesitant to back its status as a fully-fledged pan-European security organisation. Washington must recognize that the former is not possible without the latter. The signs are positive, though, with Vice President Joe Biden’s May 2010 proposal for OSCE crisis-

prevention mechanisms and reference to an increased security role for the Organization.⁶

It has also been suggested that the EU “should seek to foster the return to co-operative security in the OSCE, recognizing that it is impossible to achieve the desired transformation without addressing the alienation experienced in those countries where it is hoped the transformation will take place”.⁷ There is a clear link between OSCE and EU democratization standards and assistance. But the link with the EU’s overarching security policy needs to be strengthened. In practical terms, this should entail linking the democracy *acquis* to the security sector through enhanced programming. Democratization and security meet in a practical context in the field of security sector reform (SSR). The OSCE has been a frontrunner in SSR with the 1994 Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, which serves as a guideline for participating States on how to run defence and security structures in a democratic fashion. It tackles issues such as the democratic control of armed forces and international transparency of defence matters. Although the Code is comprehensive and refers not only to armed forces but also to police and intelligence services, it has been partly overtaken by events. It does not, for instance, take terrorism and its implications for civilian control of security into account. Security sector reform goes somewhat further than the Code and is currently being advanced in EU and OECD documents.

The OSCE has not yet been able to agree on a new security sector reform text, although some participating States have made proposals over the last few years. However, a new and up-to-date text is not necessary for the OSCE to engage on this broad issue. The OSCE deals with the topic through its field missions and work with armed forces, police, border guards, ministries, parliaments, courts, civil society, etc. All these institutions are part and parcel of the security sector. As part of SSR, the focus can also be on governance (security sector governance) which brings the theme even closer to democratization and the provisions laid down in the Copenhagen Document.

Whereas several “less democratic” OSCE members resist activities involving the human dimension, the topic of SSR is dealt with mostly in the politico-military dimension. There have already been positive examples of the OSCE organizing workshops on issues such as democratic control of the armed forces and security sector governance. This is an opportunity to address issues of democracy and security in transitional societies that only recently opened up their security sectors to public debate. SSR is nowadays a well understood topic in most of the OSCE area, but it will be a challenge to pursue extensive training and projects in Central Asia, where armed forces

6 Advancing Europe’s Security, Op-Ed by Vice President Joe Biden, *International Herald Tribune*, 6 May 2010.

7 Pál Dunay, *The OSCE in Crisis*, Chaillot Paper no. 88, Paris 2006, p. 73.

and internal security structures remain the means of safeguarding the regimes rather than the local populations. In the South Caucasus, too, SSR is beneficial in tying security threats to overall democratic practice. This is a field where the OSCE can grow further, but it must work to mainstream human-rights standards into security training. At present, the latter tends to include relatively vague and generic human-rights modules that fall well short of a concerted effort to increase tangible civilian control over security forces.

Finally, in light of recent events, consideration could be given to expanding the partnership with Mediterranean countries with a view to implementing programmes in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia. This would be a good way for ODIHR to expand on the basis of democracy assistance projects if so requested by the countries concerned.