

*Lamberto Zannier*

## The OSCE and Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter – Contributing to Global Peace and Security

The founders of the United Nations (UN) displayed considerable foresight when they included a Chapter on regional arrangements in the UN Charter. At the time, no-one could have anticipated the significant role that regional organizations would play in addressing myriad challenges to peace and security, especially since the end of the Cold War. Chapter VIII of the UN Charter encourages member states that have entered into regional security arrangements such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to “make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies before referring them to the Security Council”. It also allows the Security Council to utilize such regional arrangements for enforcement action under its authority and requires that the Security Council “be kept fully informed of activities undertaken or in contemplation under regional arrangements or by regional agencies for the maintenance of international peace and security.”

In the 1990s, many regional organizations, particularly but not only in Europe, developed structures, mechanisms, and policies that allowed them to deal more effectively with the acute challenges that emerged when the old order collapsed. Not least the bloody conflicts in the ex-Yugoslavia and in some former Soviet republics called for urgent attention and spurred organizations with a focus on security to develop new instruments to better respond to conflict in all its different phases. This was also the time in which the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) went through an institutionalization process that culminated at the December 1994 Budapest Summit, where the Conference became the Organization known as the OSCE.

Similarly, in the wake of geopolitical change after 1989 the UN was confronted with an unprecedented number of challenges to stability and peace in many regions of the world. As new approaches to peacemaking and peacekeeping were emerging, engaging with regional organizations and making use of their regional expertise gained in attraction and importance. In the 25 years that have since elapsed, the UN and the OSCE have worked together, experienced episodes of success and failure, and shared lessons learned. It is a relationship that has continued to develop as a function of the challenges encountered and experience and expertise gained. Co-operation has helped both organizations achieve progress in confronting existing and emerging challenges.

In recent years, Chapter VIII has been experiencing a gradual revival. To start with, the UN Security Council (UNSC) began taking note and en-

dorsing the diplomatic efforts undertaken by regional organizations, either on their own or in co-ordination with the UN. Increasingly, explicit reference to Chapter VIII was made in such statements. In the CSCE/OSCE context, it was in relation to places like the former Yugoslavia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia, and Tajikistan that the UNSC first acknowledged and endorsed the role of the CSCE. As their respective engagement on the ground expanded within the OSCE area, both organizations began co-ordinating very closely in operational terms. Owing to the particular circumstances of each situation, different forms of co-operation developed. This was accompanied by discussions, held at headquarters level, on ways to enhance co-operation and encouraged by the overlapping membership.

Joint engagement, particularly in the post-conflict phase in the Western Balkans, was where OSCE co-operation with the UN became most intense. This was the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the OSCE became part of a co-ordinated international effort to implement the Dayton Peace Accords of 1995 and later inherited a significant number of activities, notably police support. This culminated in July 1999 with the OSCE Mission in Kosovo taking the lead role in matters relating to institution- and democracy-building, rule of law, and human rights as a distinct but integral component of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). This longstanding close co-operation in Kosovo within the framework of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1244 successfully continues to this day, even though developments on the ground have led to considerable changes in the activities of the two missions. Today, the appointment of the OSCE Head of Mission in Kosovo still takes place in close co-ordination with the UN and is followed by a letter of confirmation signed by the UN Secretary-General.

#### *The OSCE as a Regional Arrangement under Chapter VIII*

The OSCE is one of a limited number of international organizations that have consistently engaged in discussions on Chapter VIII internally, with other regional organizations, and with the UN, including during UNSC sessions dedicated to UN co-operation with regional organizations. In March 2006, the OSCE Permanent Council adopted a Declaration welcoming UNSCR 1631 (2005) on UN co-operation with regional organizations and declaring the OSCE's readiness to further strengthen co-operation with the UN.<sup>1</sup> In August 2013, a UN Security Council Presidential Statement underscored the importance of further developing and strengthening co-operation between the UN and regional organizations, highlighting the important role that regional and sub-regional organizations can play in conflict prevention, peaceful settlement of disputes, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacebuilding.

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<sup>1</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Permanent Council, *Declaration on Co-operation with the United Nations*, PC.DOC/1/06, 16 March 2006.

The OSCE's co-operation with other organizations, including the UN as *primus inter pares*, was comprehensively defined in the Platform for Co-operative Security adopted at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999. The goal of the Platform is "to strengthen the mutually reinforcing nature of the relationship between those organizations and institutions concerned with the promotion of comprehensive security within the OSCE area".<sup>2</sup> It outlines a set of principles and modalities for other security-related organizations to work co-operatively with the OSCE, including a declaration that their members are "ready in principle to deploy the institutional resources of international organizations and institutions of which they are members in support of the OSCE's work, subject to the necessary policy decisions as cases arise".<sup>3</sup> The participating States singled out "the particular relevance of co-operation in the areas of conflict prevention and crisis management".<sup>4</sup> The Platform for Co-operative Security continues to be the determinant framework for the OSCE's interaction with its international partners, as has been reconfirmed on numerous official occasions. Since then, the OSCE has established regular patterns of consultation at both the technical and the political levels with the UN and a number of other organizations, including the EU, NATO, and the Council of Europe.

As a security organization with a comprehensive security concept encompassing three main dimensions of security (the politico-military, economic-environmental, and human dimensions) the OSCE has a lot to offer. Moreover, it covers a broad spectrum of security-related issues, allowing it to address security from many different angles in a uniquely comprehensive manner. Its inclusive membership stretching across an area "from Vancouver to Vladivostok" is another key strength when differences between participating States need to be bridged and managed. What is more, the OSCE is an organization built on principles that reinforce the UN-led international order. In this spirit, the OSCE has equipped itself with tools to support OSCE participating States in their implementation of OSCE and other international commitments. It is continuously building up its capacity to address all stages of the conflict cycle, including early warning and early action, conflict prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution, and post-conflict rehabilitation. Moreover, the OSCE's strong accent on promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms, democratic institutions, and the rule of law contributes to social stability, thus strengthening security. In short, the OSCE is a highly developed example of a regional organization that has the ability to make a difference in today's ever-changing security environment and to

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2 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *Charter for European Security, Istanbul November 1999*, SUM.DOC/1/99, 19 November 1999, reprinted in Institute for Peace Research and Security Co-operation at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), *OSCE Yearbook 2000*, Baden-Baden 2001, pp. 425-443, Operational Document – the Platform for Co-operative Security, pp. 441-443, here: p. 441.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

make a positive contribution to global peace and stability, primarily within the area covered by its membership and in its neighbourhood.

In considering areas where the OSCE can work together with other regional organizations and the UN to more fully carry out the task of being a first responder for the peaceful settlement of local disputes, it is important to recall that the OSCE is a neutral and inclusive collective security organization, not a collective defence organization. The OSCE uses soft security tools and has no enforcement mandate. Therefore, Article 53 of Chapter VIII, which relates to enforcement action by regional arrangements under the authority of the UNSC, does not appear applicable to the OSCE in its current form. Even so, the OSCE is widely seen as the most comprehensive regional arrangement in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian space. It has also served as a model and inspiration for other regional organizations, such as the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), a dialogue forum for addressing issues of security and co-operation among a number of Asian countries, or recent initiatives for developing multilateral security co-operation in North East Asia.

Like other international organizations, the OSCE relies on the continuous engagement of its participating States and their confidence in the Organization's capacity to make a difference in situations that require an international security response, building on its ability to promote a balanced approach and to ensure inclusiveness. The OSCE has been confronting a number of challenges over recent years that have come to a head in the current crisis in Ukraine: differences in the interpretation and implementation of OSCE commitments, divergent threat perceptions,<sup>5</sup> a "rhetoric of division", and a lack of engagement, often coupled with preference given by groups of like-minded countries to other institutions to address security-related issues. Despite difficulties and setbacks in the implementation of OSCE commitments, the Organization has continued to work with uneven but not insignificant progress in a number of areas. The 2013 Ministerial Council in Kyiv took place in a difficult environment, and yet consensus was reached on a substantial package of decisions, including a decision to establish a first set of confidence-building measures in the area of cybersecurity – an initiative that places the OSCE in the vanguard on this topic.

The 2012 Dublin Ministerial Council launched a broad-based and informal political dialogue known as the *Helsinki +40 Process*. The idea behind this is to use the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act as an opportunity to address the deficit of trust among OSCE participating States, encourage progress towards fulfilling the vision of a Eurasian and Euro-Atlantic security community put forward at the 2010 Astana Summit, re-establish unity of purpose, and think creatively and strategically about the future of the

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5 The OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions published a study on "Threat perceptions in the OSCE area" in April 2014 available at [www.osce-network.net](http://www.osce-network.net) and the OSCE website.

OSCE. Adapting the Organization, including its working methods and instruments, to the evolving security environment is also an important objective of the process. A number of thematic clusters under discussion are closely related to the OSCE's role as a Chapter VIII organization. They include enhancing capacities across the conflict cycle, reinvigorating efforts towards resolving protracted conflicts, addressing transnational threats, and increasing interaction with international partners. In light of developments in Ukraine, careful consideration will need to be given on how to pursue this process in a way that helps bridge divisions and foster areas of convergence. In fact, the crisis in Ukraine has added to the need for a strategic debate on the future orientation of the OSCE. Deepening the discussion on the role of the OSCE as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII provides a good opportunity to address some aspects of this challenge.

#### *The OSCE's Partnership with the UN*

The OSCE engages in political dialogue, co-ordination, and information exchange with the UN at both the political and expert levels. This covers global challenges (non-proliferation, terrorism, trafficking, organized crime, environmental degradation, etc.) and conflicts that may be primarily regional but have global implications and, for political or other reasons, require the engagement of numerous actors. The OSCE Chairmanship, the Secretariat, and the Institutions and field operations work with a wide range of UN entities to enhance security across the OSCE area and in adjacent regions.

The OSCE regularly works in support of UN-driven processes, for instance by promoting the implementation of a number of UNSC Resolutions and UN Conventions in OSCE participating States. These include UNSCR 1540 on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which has a strong focus on the political problem posed by non-state actors, an area in which close co-operation has been developed with the UN Office for Disarmament as a key partner; the decade-long promotion of the UN Economic Commission for Europe's Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, also known as the *Aarhus Convention*; and UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security where, in co-operation with UN Women, the focus is on the OSCE's own executive structures, particularly its field operations, in addition to sharing experience among OSCE participating States. There are many more such examples of successful co-operation, often involving partnerships with several organizations, including the UN. In some instances, the OSCE has taken the lead within a particular field of expertise. For example, in fighting human trafficking, the OSCE-led Alliance against Trafficking in Persons has, over the past fourteen years, become the main annual forum for joint advocacy of organizations working in this area.

The OSCE is also committed to supporting the UN by helping to create synergies in key countries and regions of common concern such as Ukraine, Central Asia/Afghanistan, the Caucasus, the Balkans, and the neighbouring region of the Southern Mediterranean. In Central Asia, the OSCE and its five field offices highly value their close relationship with the UN regional office. The OSCE's field presence in the region is also the main conduit for OSCE efforts to support transition in Afghanistan, a major concern for both organizations. Here, OSCE activities need to feed into wider UN-led activities, including through the UN Special Representative and Head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan but also in co-operation with important regional programmes, such as the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries in the area of countering narcotics.

In relation to the so-called protracted conflicts in the OSCE region, co-operation is most evident in the Geneva International Discussions on the consequences of the 2008 war in Georgia, whose co-moderators are the OSCE, the UN, and the EU. Through close co-ordination of their respective high-level envoys, the same three organizations managed to respond in a synchronized way to the unrest in Kyrgyzstan in 2010.

Over the years, it has become customary for the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to address the UNSC, highlighting the Chairmanship's priority areas for greater collaboration with the UN. In 2013, the Ukrainian OSCE Chairmanship also took part in a UNSC debate on co-operation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security that was held on 6 August 2013 in New York.

The OSCE maintains close contact at senior and operational levels with numerous UN agencies and institutions. Regular meetings take place between high-ranking officials of the two organizations, including at Secretary-General level. Around a dozen senior UN officials are invited to speak at OSCE Permanent Council or Forum for Security Co-operation meetings every year.<sup>6</sup> Annual staff talks take place with the Europe Division of the UN Department of Political Affairs and with UNODC.

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6 Over the past two years, speakers have included the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the Secretary General/Executive Director of the UNODC, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Deputy Executive Director of UN Women, the Director of the UNHCR Bureau for Europe, and the Chair of the UNSC Committee on UNSCR 1540.

*Responding to Developments in and around Ukraine*

The OSCE's toolbox allows the Organization to carry out a wide variety of functions in the fields of crisis management, conflict prevention, early warning, and conflict resolution, complementing other aspects of security cooperation with its broad regional and thematic expertise and the wide range of instruments at its disposal.

From the start, the OSCE put most of its toolbox to work in response to developments in Ukraine, demonstrating its continued relevance in responding to crises in the OSCE area. This involved high-level diplomacy and multilateral dialogue, carrying out a one-month project to assess avenues for national dialogue, military visits as a confidence-building measure under the OSCE 2011 Vienna Document, and, most prominently, fielding a large monitoring mission. On 21 March 2014, the OSCE Permanent Council authorized a Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to gather information and report on security conditions in order to provide an unbiased understanding of the situation on the ground. The monitors (up to 500 of whom may be deployed if needed) maintain contact with local, regional, and national authorities, civil society, and representatives of the local population. Their focus is on identifying humanitarian and security needs, building confidence, reducing political and inter-ethnic tensions, and promoting respect for OSCE principles and commitments. The mission's larger goal is to help create conditions for inclusive political dialogue aimed at achieving a sustainable transition.

The OSCE's specialized institutions became involved immediately on the strength of their respective mandates. The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), Astrid Thors, visited Ukraine several times, including Crimea, in early March. Since the office was established in 1993, the HCNM has a long history of engagement in Ukraine, particularly in relation to Crimea, minority rights, language use, and education. In March-April 2014, the HCNM contributed to a Human Rights Assessment Mission, in cooperation with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Crimea is at the centre of the Institution's attention, particularly the situation of the Crimean Tatars and the Ukrainian community, as well as language policy, including the revision of the 2012 Language Law and subsequent implementation. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM), has likewise been raising issues of media freedom in Ukraine for a long time and visited Ukraine (Kyiv and Crimea) in March and April to make a first-hand assessment of the media freedom situation and to meet with senior government officials and representatives of civil society and the media. The RFOM monitors the media freedom situation in Ukraine closely and has issued numerous press releases raising grave violations of media freedom commitments, particularly regarding the safety of journalists and restrictions on media plurality. Finally, as well as the aforementioned human rights assessment, ODIHR also carried out the largest ever OSCE ob-

servation mission for the presidential elections held on 25 May 2014 and another sizeable mission to observe the parliamentary elections on 26 October 2014. On both occasions, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly joined ODIHR in observing the elections and also used parliamentary channels to organize a number of meetings bringing together parliamentarians from Russia and Ukraine.

OSCE action on the ground was considerably assisted by the presence of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine (PCU) with its extensive experience and contacts, and ability to provide short-term logistical support. The PCU has been engaged with projects in key areas, including support for democratic election processes; promoting the role of civil society in policy-making; supporting parliament to ensure legislation meets international standards and OSCE commitments; and the elimination of the Soviet heritage of toxic rocket fuel known as *mélange*. The PCU could play an important role in promoting reform of the judiciary, media, and police, as well as supporting anti-corruption activities.

The OSCE's crucial advantages in this situation, including its inclusive membership, consensus-based decision making, and comprehensive security concept, were recognized when it came to deciding on an operational engagement of the international community in Ukraine. As the only regional organization that includes Ukraine, its neighbours, and the key stakeholders, the OSCE was chosen to assume a lead role, with the UN and other regional organizations standing back and supporting the OSCE's engagement. This was possible thanks to the comprehensive political support of the OSCE's participating States and the backing of OSCE action with considerable human and extra-budgetary financial resources. The OSCE certainly also benefited from a highly motivated Chairmanship led by the Swiss President and Foreign Minister, Didier Burkhalter, who advocated a proactive response and spared no effort to forge consensus on fielding a visible OSCE presence on the ground as early as possible.

Faced with the serious developments in Ukraine, the UN and the OSCE maintained active channels at various levels in Vienna, New York, and Kyiv from the very outset, which helped ensure close co-operation and an effective division of labour. The Chairman-in-Office's briefing to the UNSC on 24 January 2014 offered an important opportunity to highlight the need for close UN-OSCE co-ordination in response to the crisis. As events unfolded, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and I held regular consultations with the UN Secretary-General, his Deputy, and the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. In areas where, for institutional reasons, both the UN and the OSCE are engaged in activities in the same area of competence, co-ordination, co-operation, and complementarity were assured. For example, both the UN and the OSCE have a strong mandate on human rights, and both conducted separate but co-ordinated field research and assessments. At the request of the Ukrainian government, ODIHR and the HCNM conducted the aforemen-



tioned human rights assessment mission from early March to mid-April 2014. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) also deployed a human rights monitoring mission to Ukraine starting in early April. The UN team co-operated closely with the ODHIR and the SMM and developed an excellent working relationship in Kyiv as well as other places such as Donetsk and Odessa. On 19 May, only days after the UNHCHR report was released, UN Assistant Secretary-General Ivan Šimonović joined the Heads of OSCE institutions in an OSCE-hosted informal meeting in Vienna to discuss the human rights situation in Ukraine on the basis of relevant reports.

This kind of co-ordinated approach gives an idea of the close relationships between the OSCE and the UN that have been built across many fields of activity. As another example, in May 2014, the UN Department of Political Affairs deployed experts from its stand-by Mediation Support Team to Kyiv to support OSCE efforts related to the national dialogue project in Ukraine. This is an excellent example of how the UN can use its expertise and resources to support the efforts of a regional organization like the OSCE. Combining the OSCE's regional expertise and field presence with the UN's global experience and resources seems to be a good model for how to make Chapter VIII work in practice.

Co-ordination and co-operation are particularly challenging in times of crisis, when international activities attract most political attention. As always, there will be lessons that we in the OSCE, other regional organizations, and the UN can learn for future co-operation from the situation still unfolding in Ukraine. The principle must be to actively seek synergies rather than just try to avoid duplication. The question is how we can work in partnership, share methodologies and policies to improve international response to crises, especially at the early stages, moving from early warning to early action and avoiding delays and spanners that might be thrown into the works by those most concerned. Much depends on establishing close relations "in peacetime" that are robust in the face of challenges. This also requires an understanding of respective competitive advantages and better communication vis-à-vis other international actors.

### *Regional Organizations and Conflict Resolution*

In May 2014, I hosted an informal track-II conference on Chapter VIII of the UN Charter: Confronting Emerging Challenges in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Space. This event was part of a series known as the OSCE Security Days, which brings together representatives of OSCE participating States, international and regional organizations, academia, think tanks, civil society, and representatives from OSCE Partners for Co-operation to discuss topical issues on the OSCE's agenda. The aim of this particular OSCE Security Day was to offer a platform to start a debate within the OSCE and to encourage

discussion in the UN and other regional organizations on ways to operationalize Chapter VIII, particularly in the areas of conflict prevention (early warning and early action) and conflict resolution (mediation). It built on the recommendations from a high-level retreat of the UN Secretary-General with heads of regional organizations, held in New York in 2012, and looked forward to a similar event planned for 2015.

A number of points raised in the discussion during the OSCE Security Day event are worth retaining:

Today's rapidly evolving security context, coupled with widespread economic hardship, requires international and regional organizations to find ways to work together more effectively. Emerging threats to peace and security in the OSCE area are presenting new challenges, but also opportunities for enhanced interaction between the UN, the OSCE, and other regional organizations. Regional and global security should be seen in a complementary rather than a hierarchical relationship. Although the UN is a natural platform for co-ordination of international efforts towards peace and security, the division of labour between the UN and regional organizations needs to be situation-specific. Maximizing synergies and complementarities can be best achieved if the UN and regional organizations learn from each other and take advantage of lessons from the past. The UN's considerable practical experience accumulated over decades can help guide the work of regional organizations. Meanwhile, the role of regional organizations in conflict prevention and resolution is gaining importance, as the UN increasingly relies on regional expertise and networks for mediation.

The OSCE can play a significant role in supporting and co-operating with the UN in its efforts to further operationalize Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. OSCE tools and experience in security through co-operation may provide useful insights for other regional organizations, and the OSCE could likewise benefit from shared expertise. Such transfer of experience on concrete, thematic, or operational issues would appear to be most effective under UN leadership and could provide an opportunity for the UN to strengthen its ties with relevant regional organizations.

Chapter VIII provides a good framework for deepening co-operation in conflict prevention. Most efforts toward the peaceful settlement of local disputes have primarily focused on a culture of "reaction" (peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and post-conflict rehabilitation) rather than a culture of "prevention" (early warning and early action). To move toward a culture of prevention will require an increase in knowledge and the drawing of lessons from both positive and negative past experiences, since tools, norms, and best practices in this area are relatively recent. More effectively communicating the impact of preventive action and the considerably higher costs of non-action to policymakers and the public is essential to building political will and ensuring that more resources are devoted to conflict prevention. It is also needed to help overcome reluctance among those on the receiving end of

such action. Regional organizations can take the lead, and the UN can assist their efforts as necessary. Although conflict prevention efforts by the UN and regional organizations are increasingly aligned, further steps should be taken to develop a more systematic relationship. While maintaining situation-specific flexibility, some more formal mechanisms to foster interaction between the UN and regional organizations might be useful, such as, for example, UN Security Council briefings on emerging conflicts by relevant regional organizations. More could be done in terms of comparing concerns and analysis, sharing information and best practices, issuing joint early-warning announcements, and co-operating to foster a more solid culture of prevention. Launching low-key joint missions could also be considered.

In 2011, the role of regional organizations in mediation and conflict resolution was recognized by UN General Assembly Resolution 65/283 and further defined in subsequent resolutions in 2012 (66/291) and most recently 2014 (68/303). To provide input for this latest resolution on strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution, the OSCE co-organized a conference in February 2014 in Cairo, together with the League of Arab States, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, and the UN – a showcase event highlighting co-operation on issues of common interest.<sup>7</sup> Similar to the UN context, a number of OSCE participating States have established an OSCE Group of Friends to help strengthen the OSCE profile in mediation. Regional organizations have important assets as mediators. Due to their proximity to the areas of conflict, they can provide tailor-made approaches to conflict resolution. The OSCE has made progress in developing a mediation-support capacity over the last year. It not only strengthens the OSCE's efforts to resolve political crises and protracted conflicts, but also the daily work of field operations.

Security Sector Governance/Reform (SSG/R) is gaining traction in the OSCE and feeds into many of the Organization's thematic efforts, including conflict prevention, early warning, and crisis management. A recent mapping study mandated by the Swiss Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2014 ascertained that the OSCE has collected a wealth of conceptual and operational experience in SSG/R but has yet to develop a coherent approach. In many operational contexts at field level, both the UN and the OSCE are providing support to a variety of activities related to Security Sector Reform (SSR). Co-operation with the UN is becoming increasingly important, particularly given the UN's long-standing experience in this field. Since the first open UNSC debate on SSR in 2007, the UN system has been working on the development of a coherent, system-wide approach to SSG/R and there have since been two UN Secretary General Reports on SSR (2008, 2013). The UN Inter-Agency SSR Task Force (IASSRTF), which is co-chaired by the UN Department of

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7 This was the third meeting of regional, sub-regional, and other international organizations on preventive diplomacy and mediation. Previous meetings took place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (April 2012), and Vienna (December 2010).

Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), with the DPKO's SSR Unit providing its secretariat, has achieved much progress in consolidating the UN's approach to SSR, through support for the development of guidance, standards, and practices for the UN; support of field operations and offices; the facilitation of consultations with regional organizations; and the delivery of training on SSR. In view of the clear potential for strategic co-operation between the UN and the OSCE on these issues, a one-day conference on strengthening OSCE-UN co-operation on SSR took place on 7 July 2014. The focus of the conference was on sharing experiences and enhancing collaboration. Supporting active dialogue between the two organizations on SSG/R could translate into enhanced coherence of multilateral support for SSR in the field.

### *Looking Ahead*

As Secretary General of the OSCE, I am convinced that we need to further develop a pragmatic, results-driven relationship with the UN and among regional organizations. I have met with the UN Secretary-General and his Deputy on numerous occasions, including in the margins of the opening session of the UN General Assembly, to discuss preventative diplomacy, mediation, building closer operational links through staff exchange, and enhancing relations between the UN and regional organizations under Chapter VIII. At successive retreats for heads of regional organizations convened by the UN Secretary-General in recent years, I have seen that the debate on how to operationalize Chapter VIII is deepening and that there is growing understanding that strong partnerships and shared strategies are the only way to effectively address the increasingly complex security challenges we are facing.

The OSCE, as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII, plays a key role in conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation in the OSCE area. The OSCE has a good track record of partnership with the UN, both at headquarters level and in the field. Yet there is always room for improvement – new synergies can be found and complementary strengths and advantages can be better utilized.

Over the past two decades, the OSCE has come to embody an organization that the UN can rely on to support its universal responsibility for maintaining peace and security. In the current crisis in Ukraine, there has been excellent exchange of information and interaction between international organizations active on the ground. At a time in which fundamental principles of the Organization have been violated (including the prohibition on the threat or use of force, and the principle of territorial integrity), the launch of a large field mission, the first in many years, is a show of confidence in the Organization even though it comes as a result of a major crisis in European security. Nonetheless, the security challenges facing Ukraine and the wider region

are a test for the OSCE and could have an impact on its future. In light of the ongoing crisis in and around Ukraine, it is clear that there is need for a strategic debate on the future orientation of the Organization. Therefore, holding a discussion on the role of the OSCE as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII also provides a good opportunity to address some aspects of this challenge, and I hope that the debate will continue both within the Helsinki +40 Process and in consultations with the UN and other regional organizations.

In order to make full use of their combined potential, the UN, the OSCE, and other regional organizations should join forces to strengthen cooperation under Chapter VIII, in particular against the background of multi-dimensional and transnational threats that affect state and human security at both the regional and global levels. There are many potential growth areas for working together in the spirit of Chapter VIII. As noted above, regional organizations can act as a vanguard for the UN by building regional consensus around security issues before they are taken up at the global level. The OSCE's decision to develop a first set of confidence-building measures on cybersecurity should help stimulate discussion at the global level. Regional organizations can play an effective role in promoting UN norms and principles and building national capacities to implement UN resolutions. The OSCE already has a considerable track record in this field, laying the groundwork for further progress and for greater exchange of best practices and lessons learned.

As security challenges continue to evolve, the nature of OSCE cooperation with the UN must evolve as well, becoming more pragmatic and action-oriented. Especially in times of economic hardship, enhancing synergies and finding new ways of working together that capitalize on the relative strengths of each organization is critical. A renewed effort at identifying where the two organizations can best work together – or in parallel but not in competition – should be made. Effective, pragmatic co-operation that builds on the respective mandates and strengths of the UN and the OSCE will remain a key objective for the coming years.