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Romania and the OSCE

Roots of the CSCE Process

For a country like Romania - a Central European country that fell under the sphere of influence of the communist Soviet Union following the Second World War, only to rediscover its natural place within the family of free and democratic European nations half a century later - the CSCE/OSCE has always been a unique pan-European forum for political dialogue, an indispensable framework for all participating States to discuss topical issues of security policy.

Romania's active involvement in this process goes back a long way, for, in historical terms, the efforts to organize a Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe began some years before the actual convening of the first CSCE Conference, in a period of relative *détente* in East-West relations, when a policy of accommodation between states with divergent interests was preferable to an ever more divisive Cold War.

It was in December 1965, at the twentieth regular session of the UN General Assembly, that Romania initiated Resolution 2129 on "Actions on the regional level with a view to improving good neighbourly relations among European States having different social and political systems". This resolution, which at the time gained the support of another eight European countries, either neutral or non-aligned, members of NATO or of the Warsaw Pact, stipulated that the General Assembly "welcomes the growing interest in the development of good neighbourly relations and co-operation among European States having different social and political systems, in the political, economic, technical, scientific, cultural and other fields" and "emphasizes the importance of maintaining and increasing contacts between those States for the purpose of developing peaceful co-operation among the peoples of the European continent, with a view to strengthening peace and security in Europe by all possible means".

Only a few months later, on 6 July 1966, the Warsaw Treaty states took up the same idea and adopted the *Bucharest Declaration*, which underlined the importance of convening a pan-European conference, in order to discuss security-related issues and the need for real European co-operation, based on the peaceful settlement of disputes, consultations and exchange of information on topics of mutual interest, so as to contribute to the development of economic, technical, scientific and cultural exchanges between them. According to this Declaration, such a conference would contribute to creating a system of collective secu-

riety in Europe and would represent an event of paramount importance for the contemporary history of the continent.

Three years later, through the Budapest Appeal of 17 March 1969, the same countries of Eastern Europe underlined the fact that, in their contacts with other states following the Bucharest Declaration, no European government had objected to the idea of organizing a pan-European conference and that there were real chances of putting this initiative into practice. Arguing that such a conference would meet the interests of all European states and allow them together to find ways and means of eliminating the division of Europe into military blocs and to ensure peaceful co-operation between European states and peoples, the participants launched an appeal to all governments to join forces and transform Europe into a continent of fruitful co-operation among equal nations, into a factor of global stability, peace and understanding.

Within the three years of preparatory negotiations on the rules of procedure and the organization of the Helsinki Summit in 1975, launched at the initiative of the Finnish Government, Romania was the animator of a larger group of small and middle-sized, neutral and non-aligned countries in firmly promoting a democratic orientation of the CSCE process. Still enjoying considerable international prestige for an imaginative and independent foreign policy, Romania's ruling political class of the time saw European security as a system of clear and precise commitments, freely entered into by all states, accompanied by palpable measures to offer all countries a sense of security against any act of aggression, the opportunity to develop freely, according to their own interests and their own will, and to co-operate on the basis of the fundamental principles of international law.

In terms of procedure, the Romanian delegation argued in favour of the principle of rotation for the chairmanship of plenary sessions and working groups, the participation on equal grounds of all states, regardless of military alliances, in all forms of debate and negotiation and the granting of strictly technical responsibilities to the secretariat of the conference. In order for these rules to be correctly observed, the Romanian delegation promoted and, in the end obtained, the application of the rule of consensus in the decision-making process.

As for the substance of the pan-European conference, Romania subordinated its efforts to the concept according to which any authentic system of European security must be based on the principle of refraining from the threat or use of force, thus succeeding in placing this principle in second position within the Helsinki Decalogue, immediately after the principle of the sovereign equality between states, insisting on a broad and precise definition of this principle, as well as of the complementary one regarding the peaceful settlement of disputes. Other initiatives, such as that of adopting confidence- and stability-building measures, ensuring a diverse programme in the field of economic co-operation, or setting up an organized framework to allow for the continuation of co-opera-

tion among participating States, were all included in the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act.

CSCE Attempts to Bridge the Cold War

In the following decade and a half, an evaluation of proposals formulated by Romania as well as by other states during the CSCE follow-up meetings - most clearly in the case of the Vienna Conference (1986-1989) - shows an evident interest in the first two baskets of the CSCE process, political and military issues, on the one hand, and economic affairs, on the other, accompanied by serious reservations about meeting Western proposals regarding the human dimension. Desiring to address human rights issues from the "fundamental" perspective, laying emphasis on the right to life, work, education, housing and other matters, and considering that the civil and political rights promoted by Western counterparts were only "collateral aspects", Romania came to take an obstructionist approach to issues such as the right of citizens to contribute, individually and in association with others, to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms; the freedom of believers to develop and maintain direct ties between themselves, in their own country or abroad; as well as the establishment of a monitoring mechanism for the implementation of commitments undertaken by participating States in the human dimension field.

Romania's Presence in the CSCE after the Cold War

With the fall of the communist systems in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, including the Ceausescu regime in Romania, a new phase of pan-European cooperation began. For the first time, the end of the Cold War allowed participating States, one and all, to share the same system of political, economic, moral and cultural values and to propose common objectives, defined without the former intentional ambiguity which all too often marked CSCE documents before 1989. Romania began its new relations with and within the CSCE by withdrawing the reservations it had expressed to the Final Document of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting in 1989, as well as by adopting an open and co-operative attitude, with a view to reintegrating itself within the pan-European forum. With a new foreign policy directed, in an effort to define its strategic interests, towards the European and Euro-Atlantic structures, namely the OSCE, Council of Europe, European Union, NATO and WEU, and starting from the assumption that the new security architecture must be conceived as a harmonious web of interlocking, mutually-supporting relations, it was only natural that particular importance

would be attached to the OSCE. This concept of European security and the role incumbent on the OSCE was, in fact, presented in the document entitled "European Architecture and the Strengthening of Security in Europe", which Romania submitted to the attention of the other participating States, on the occasion of the first meeting of the CSCE Council of Ministers, which took place in Berlin in June 1991.

In the years which have passed since 1989, Romania has made efforts to adapt to the new developments within the CSCE and, at the same time, to contribute to the process of turning the Organization into a useful and efficient tool for conflict prevention and crisis management, as well as ensuring a co-operative and comprehensive approach to issues of European security. With this in mind, various proposals were formulated in answer to the ever more numerous and complex risks and challenges confronting Europe today. Indeed, throughout the 1990s, Romania's activity within the OSCE, both in Vienna and in the various OSCE specialized meetings, was centred on the following guidelines:

- asserting and implementing OSCE principles and norms in international and inter-European relations, with a view to preserving the OSCE as a forum for dialogue and political consultation;
- assisting the OSCE to adapt to the new, post-Cold War realities in Europe, by ensuring a precise delimitation of OSCE responsibilities and areas of concern, as well as of forms of co-operation with other European and Euro-Atlantic institutions with similar interests, with a minimum of over-lapping;
- broadening and enlarging OSCE membership, by welcoming the new countries of the former Soviet and Yugoslav space as participating States;
- enhancing the operative capabilities of the OSCE, as well as the functions and mechanisms at the disposal of OSCE bodies for preventive diplomacy, early warning, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation.

Co-operative Security at the Core of OSCE Activities

Considering that security-related matters stand at the very core of OSCE concerns, Romania, from the outset, supported the development of the OSCE approach to co-operative security, based on democracy, observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, rule of law, market economy and social justice - which excludes any attempt at domination and, rather, presupposes mutual confidence and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Romania shares the belief that the OSCE can and must play a central role in achieving the goal of building a common space of security, based on the recognition and observance of well defined values, commitments and norms of conduct, including the right of any

participating State to choose or change its security arrangements, including alliance treaties.

According to the Lisbon Summit Declaration of December 1996, participating States are called upon to encourage bilateral and regional initiatives aimed at developing relations of good neighbourliness and co-operation. Furthermore, since no country alone can face up to the challenges of the post-Cold War period, it will be necessary to develop a solid working relationship between the various institutions and organizations active in this field - OSCE, European Union, Western European Union, NATO, Council of Europe, United Nations - as well as with sub-regional arrangements and initiatives (Romania is active in forms of sub-regional co-operation such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Central European Initiative, SECI, multilateral co-operation in South-eastern Europe).

In this context, Romania is certainly interested in actively participating in discussions within the OSCE on the new Security Model for Europe for the 21st Century, which will have to be based on the legitimate right of states to integrate into European and Euro-Atlantic structures if they so desire and, at the same time, to offer to those states which do not choose to join them the possibility of participating in an elaborate mechanism of consultations.

In political terms, a top-priority foreign policy concern of Romania, which has found eloquent expression within the OSCE, is the development of solid relations of good neighbourliness and co-operation, as an incontestable pillar of stability and security throughout the region. In this context, Romania has brought its specific contribution to the process of defining the main objectives of the Pact on Stability in Europe and, later on, to transforming this initiative into a useful and realistic exercise in good neighbourliness, a possible model for other regions - Caucasus, Mediterranean, South-eastern Europe. As a follow-up to this effort, Romania has suggested that a regional round table be convened, dedicated to historic reconciliation and reconstruction in South-eastern Europe, through a process of good neighbourliness, stability- and security-building in this troubled region. This exercise in good relations, better known as the "Royaumont Process", is to be developed, in agreement with the Paris Declaration of 13 December 1995, on the basis of the equal and fair participation of all the countries in the South-eastern European area.

As regards Romania's relations with its own neighbours, it is perhaps worth mentioning that it was within the OSCE that Romania first presented its proposal and invitation to historic reconciliation with Hungary, similar to the French-German model half a century ago. After a number of years of negotiations, with the moral support of the international community, including most definitely the OSCE, the bilateral Treaty of Understanding, Co-operation and Good Neighbourliness between Romania and Hungary was signed in August of 1996 and is now in the process of being implemented. Moreover, the results of

the November 1996 general elections in Romania have allowed, for the first time in Romanian history, the representatives of the Hungarian minority (approximately seven per cent of the population) to join the governmental coalition and directly participate in the decision-making process of public life in Romania. In the same spirit, the bilateral treaty with Ukraine is close to being concluded, as well as a special agreement with the Republic of Moldova, taking into consideration the common historical and cultural background of the two countries. In this general context of re-establishing traditional ties in Central Europe, for the first time in almost a decade, close relations of solidarity and of active and strategic partnership have developed, e.g. in Romania's relations with countries such as Hungary, Poland and Ukraine.

Romania has taken an active part in the political and security activities carried out by the CSCE/OSCE, including the Forum for Security Co-operation, carrying out in good faith commitments undertaken through the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), as well as provisions of documents on confidence- and security-building measures. It has argued for new commitments by participating States on the non-proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons and the control over transfer of conventional weapons and military technology. Furthermore, Romania has ratified the multilateral Open Skies Treaty, yet to come into force, successfully implementing this pact in its bilateral relations with Hungary.

Romania has also expressed its willingness to work actively together with the other OSCE participating States, in the field of implementing political and military agreements adopted at the Budapest Summit (1994), drafting the future framework of arms control, defining the politico-military dimension of the new Security Model for the 21st Century, and implementing the 1994 Vienna Document. In this context, since it is situated in the flank region, as defined by the CFE Treaty, Romania is interested in seeing a swift and efficient settlement of the problems which have arisen in this area as a result of the positions promoted by the Russian Federation and Ukraine; it desires the observance of the spirit and relevant provisions of the document, so as not to lead to a concentration of conventional weapons at various places in the area of application. Such trends have significant destabilizing potential, and should therefore be avoided at all costs.

Throughout the years, Romania has also made remarkable efforts with a view to adequately making use of the considerable OSCE potential for the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes. A case in point is Romania's interest in the political settlement of the crisis in the Trans-Dniester region of the Republic of Moldova, with particular emphasis on ensuring a mutually acceptable statute for this region based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova and the early, orderly and complete withdrawal of Russian troops from the region.

Another example is Romania's constructive involvement, based on the traditionally good relations with all the new republics of former Yugoslavia, in the activities carried out by the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a view to ensuring a positive implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords and the organization and monitoring of free and fair local elections there.

More recently, acting on its expressed willingness to participate in peace-keeping operations with a view to creating stability in the troubled region of the Balkans, Romania has joined seven other European states in sending military forces to Albania, at the recommendation of the OSCE and under authorization of the United Nations, so as to ensure the protection of humanitarian aid and contribute to the restoration of peace and order in the region.

Accent on Economic and Human Dimension Aspects of Security

Within the context of economic security, underlining the importance of reforms launched in Central and Eastern Europe, Romania proposed the setting up of a specialized OSCE body to support the transition process to a market economy; this initiative, taken up by a number of other countries, including the United States, has been given the blessing in the form of the OSCE Economic Forum. By means of the instruments at the Forum's disposal, Romania has been able to promote its position in favour of giving greater attention to the economic dimension of the OSCE, as an important component of the common and comprehensive concept of security developed by the OSCE. Indeed, recent dramatic developments in transition countries such as Bulgaria and Albania show the extent to which this economic dimension can lead to instability, tension and even conflict, if not treated with sufficient attention and care.

In this context, Romania is interested in stepping up the consideration given to the economic dimension of the OSCE, especially in regard to identifying areas of concern and possible remedies, participating in the process of economic reconstruction in the South-eastern European region and more clearly delimiting the responsibilities incumbent on the ECE/UN and other regional economic organizations. The OSCE should include among its preoccupations current social issues in transition economies (unemployment, illegal drug trafficking, etc), so as to support the transition process and prevent its being rejected for social reasons. To this end, Romania would favour the integration of the economic and social dimensions of the OSCE into the work on the Common and Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the 21st Century.

As for the human dimension of the OSCE, Romania has consistently argued in favour of better and more efficient use of existing resources, in terms of mechanisms and OSCE bodies, taking into account that their potential can be considerably improved.

The individual experience of Romania has been characterized by a number of features. First of all, a positive trend of co-operation with the institution of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities has been developed, as confirmed by the almost one dozen visits paid by Mr. Max van der Stoep to Romania since June 1993, concretely contributing to a better understanding by the international community of the situation in Romania, as well as to the easing of certain animosities existing at the level of inter-ethnic relations in the country. At the Budapest Review Meeting of 1994, the Romanian delegation was one of the initiators and promoters for the establishment of an OSCE Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, functioning within the Warsaw Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. In May of 1995, within the context of the International Year of Tolerance, the Romanian government organized in Bucharest the International Seminar on Tolerance, in co-operation with the OSCE and the Council of Europe and under the auspices of UNESCO, which enjoyed a broad participation at the level of government officials, representatives of NGOs and international organizations, and addressing subjects of topical importance for Europe and the world.

Romania is undoubtedly one of the new democracies on the continent which have greatly benefited from the experience and specific instruments of Western countries and international organizations, in its efforts to build a pluralist democratic society based on the rule of law, ensuring the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including those of persons belonging to national minorities. In the future, it would like to see its own experience passed on to countries that still have problems in this area, in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding. Moreover, Romania considers that more serious attention should be given to the observance, in good faith and by all OSCE participating States, of commitments repeatedly undertaken in fields such as freedom of movement, human contacts, cultural and scientific co-operation, which, unfortunately, have been somewhat marginalized in terms of the attention they receive. These are, undoubtedly, major prerequisites in the general effort of building a peaceful, united and democratic Europe.

Future of Romanian Participation in the OSCE

Today's OSCE is a heterogeneous, Asian-European structure with the active participation of two powerful Northern American states. Romania holds significant potential for the OSCE, due to its particular geo-political features, its location at the crossroads between East and West, as well as at the confluence between Northern Europe and the Mediterranean South. A country like Romania, with traditionally good relations both with Turkey and Greece, Croatia and Serbia, Macedonia and Albania, could serve as an indispensable instrument within

the OSCE, in the context of efforts made by the Organization to create peace, stability and security on the European continent. Throughout the crisis situations evolving in the former Yugoslav and Soviet area, Romania has proven to be "an island of stability" in the region, a solid security provider and not just consumer, in the interest of the continent as a whole.

An additional advantage is Romania's traditional approach to issues of European security, in the sense of the accent placed on the importance of observing international law and working together for the settlement of disputes.

Romania's interest and determination to continue its active participation within the OSCE is firm and unconditional, irrespective of its future membership in other European and Euro-Atlantic political and security arrangements. An expression of this interest is Romania's commitment to upgrade its involvement in OSCE mechanisms and structures (permanent bodies, missions in the field), as well as the intent, expressed at the 1996 Lisbon Summit by Romanian President Constantinescu, to assume responsibility by providing the OSCE Chairman-in-Office in the near future, and thus build upon the positive experience acquired thus far.