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Problems and Difficulties of the OSCE's Long-Term Missions

The Essential Thematic Points of Reference

In October of 1997 I was invited to a round-table discussion in Bonn on "Evaluating the state of the OSCE" to speak on "The mystery of the missions of long duration. Problems in the field and with the Vienna headquarters".¹ This title, which is perhaps a bit overdrawn, may give the best indication of the main points that have to be kept in mind in dealing with this subject.

The OSCE Yearbook 1997 described a number of missions in terms of the specific activities required by their mandates and the circumstances in each case.² The particular purpose of this paper, apart from dealing with the special responsibilities of certain groups of missions, is to throw light on the characteristics and criteria common to the entire system of OSCE outposts.

Terminology, History, Extent

How many missions are there? We first have to deal with the question of terminology. There are 18 outposts altogether of which *ten* are actually described as "missions". For reasons of political mimicry and of the convenience offered by compromise (more on this below) the rest of the OSCE's representations carry a variety of names, some of which are misleading or meaningless to those not in the know; they can be looked up in the OSCE document already referred to. In official OSCE terminology they are referred to summarily as "other OSCE field activities" and as "OSCE assistance in the implementation of bilateral agreements".

1 Round Table in Bonn on "Evaluating the state of the OSCE", 24-25 October 1997, arranged by the Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut im Wissenschaftszentrum Nordrhein-Westfalen [The Cultural Institute of the North Rhine-Westphalian Centre for Scholarly Research] in co-operation with the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH) and the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) in Flensburg.

2 Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (Ed.), OSCE Yearbook 1997, Baden-Baden 1998. In addition, the OSCE Secretariat publishes several times a year a document entitled "Survey of OSCE Long-Term Missions and other OSCE Field Activities" which provides information on the current status of the long-term missions. A summary of the results of the above-mentioned Round Table, written after its conclusion by Professor Dr Kurt P. Tudyka of IFSH, is also very much worth reading; this document was distributed to OSCE Delegations in Vienna on 28 November 1997.

There is *one* mission at the present time which is not active (see below): the "Missions" in Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina. It has the peculiarity of being regarded as a *single* administrative unit but, owing to the three areas it was (formerly) responsible for, is always spoken of in the plural. The OSCE Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint Commission on Military Pensioners is at the same time the Head of the OSCE Mission to Latvia; thus it is not viewed as a separate representation. The actual number of active outposts at the present time is thus 16.

The reason for the variations in terminology already mentioned is that some of the host states view the term "mission" as harmful to their own international reputation. In one case - that of Nagorno-Karabakh - there are even *two* separate entities (one in Vienna and therefore not included in the enumeration of outposts) that deal with the problems there, but the name of the region does not appear in the title of either one. In Albania, the former government's resistance to the title of "Mission" led to the use of the term "Presence" ("*Präsenz*", which sounds somewhat odd in German). The title of Head of Mission, usually abbreviated in English as "HOM", is given in Albania as "HOP" (Head of Presence) which could also evoke unserious associations in German.

A list of outposts can be found in the information sheets issued regularly by the Secretariat in the official OSCE languages which can be obtained upon request from the Secretariat's Public Information Officer.

The Geo-political Distribution of the Network of Outposts

The OSCE's formal *field* activities all take place within the domains of the former Soviet Union and in the area between the Danube and the Adriatic. I chose the latter form of expression because some capitals do not like to have their territory described as belonging to "the Balkans" and the term South-eastern Europe is, on the other hand, too broad. The expression did not originate with me but with the initiators of a study conference on the same region which was held at the Federal Academy for Security Policy in Munich in December 1997.

To put it another way, the early warning and conflict prevention activities of the OSCE, as well as its involvement in crisis management, relate only to that part of Europe which was formerly under communist rule. One is of course justified in asking whether there are no trouble spots that have to be cleaned up in the "old" democracies on our continent (especially in connection with minority problems) - whether they stem from ethnic or religious and social causes.

My purpose in this article is not to duplicate a very penetrating study of these issues which appeared in the last OSCE Yearbook.³ For the most part I agree with Mr. Heintze's statements when he assumes in principle that countries with strongly rooted democratic traditions have adequate tools at their disposal to provide effective protection to minority rights and to prevent such problems from spilling over into other countries - so that OSCE missions are not needed. But is it really true that the "West" (in the sense of the division created by the Cold War) contains nothing but systems of perfect democrats and human rights advocates? And I am not entirely in agreement with Heintze's statement that the long-term missions serve only the purposes of early warning and conflict prevention. Crisis management and the solution of conflicts are very much in the OSCE's repertoire - just think of Nagorno-Karabakh, Chechnya and Albania.

The subject is too complicated to be covered in a few sentences. But it can be said, as a general proposition, that one should beware of restricting the area of OSCE operations *in principle* to the former "socialist states". The fact that the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE sent a delegation to Turkey in 1995 to look into minority issues should be seen as an indication, as Heintze says, that one "cannot avoid coming to grips with the problems of minority protection in Western countries. They are a subject for the OSCE."⁴ This leads us to a question that may appear somewhat provocative: is it possible that in the not too distant future the position of an OSCE "HOM" in a member country of the EU or NATO will be advertised?

The Concept of "Long Duration"

What do we really mean by "missions of long duration" or "long-term missions"? Who decides how long they are to last? These questions, which seem simple enough, are not so easy to answer. A long-term mission, as understood by the OSCE, is any mission that goes beyond the nature of an "itinerant" delegation (which stays somewhere for a short time to find facts, carry on negotiations, etc.) *and* - this is important - has been given a mandate by the Permanent Council.

When first issued the mandates are usually limited to six months; in some cases the initial period depends on the attainment of certain objectives, e.g. holding elections. Sometimes the limitation to six months is contained in the Memorandum of Understanding (a kind of agreement specifying privileges and immunities) which the mission usually concludes with the host country;

3 Hans-Joachim Heintze, Minorities in Western Europe - (Not) a Subject for the OSCE?, in: OSCE Yearbook 1997, cited above (Note 2), pp. 215-226.

4 Ibid., p. 226.

in other cases the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is concluded for the duration of the mission's activity in the country in question. There seems to be no uniform practice, but the extension of an outpost's activity is in any case decided by the Permanent Council in the form of an extension of mandate.

There are significant differences of opinion on the question of *when* a mandate can be regarded as having been fulfilled, so that the mission would be disbanded and withdrawn. So far, no long-term mission has been formally ended by the leadership of the Organization as a result of having fulfilled its mandate.

As already mentioned, the activities of the OSCE Missions operating in Kosovo, Sandjak and the Vojvodina (since September 1992) were suspended in 1993 because the government in Belgrade refused to extend the MOU. This resulted in the withdrawal of the mission members.

Volatility or Permanence?

During the Swiss chairmanship of the OSCE there were emphatic efforts to dissolve one Mission on the theory that work has to be carried out rationally and operationally and that even the chairman of an international organization, like the board of private firms, should produce concrete successes. One aspect of success, however, is that organizational elements created for a specific purpose should, in the interest of the firm's productivity, be disbanded once their envisioned goal has been achieved.

Practice has shown that that is not the case or, rather, that it cannot be. Why? Opposing such efforts to introduce a style of leadership based on the criteria of private industry there are other arguments which have so far succeeded in upholding a policy of retaining, in principle, all outposts once they have been created. This attitude reminds one in some ways of the efforts of national governments to keep diplomatic missions going, at all costs, once they have been opened. At the national level the parliaments usually intervene and make more or less rigorous use of their red pencils. But what organ of the OSCE could do this? Certainly not the Parliamentary Assembly, which has its Secretariat in Copenhagen, far from the field of battle, and has no financial sovereignty comparable to that of a national parliament.

For practical purposes the Informal Financial Committee of the Permanent Council is the organ which comes closest to the way a budget committee in a national legislature works. But this body is completely dependent on the instructions it receives from the national delegates in the Permanent Council. It so happens that there are various groups of countries there which support the retention in principle of all or certain missions - Russia, for example, acting

from very egoistic motives, because in Moscow's view certain missions were set up mainly to protect Russian minorities in the states formerly members of the Soviet Union, and disbanding them could imply that the problems had finally been solved - which does not correspond to the Russian ideas and view of the situation.

There are other OSCE participating States - especially larger ones - which see the retention of the missions as a vehicle for exercising greater influence in certain regions of Europe or Central Asia. Some countries want in this way to keep, as it were, a permanent collective "eye" on restless neighbouring countries.

To put it briefly, there is a line of thought which views a fairly large number of operational missions as an outstanding indicator of prestige for the Organization and its members, calculated to elevate the OSCE to the same level as other international and regional organizations with a large regional or global presence, such as the European Union, NATO or the United Nations.

On the other hand, there have always been cases in which countries hosting missions within their borders have, in a kind of periodic rhythm, pressed for their withdrawal. There are two opposing facets to this problem. One is that the "receiving states" often regard the existence of the mission as a mark of shame and an indicator of crisis conditions that might deter potential foreign investors. But why do these countries not simply refuse to agree to an extension of the mission? It is a known fact that missions can neither be established nor their mandate extended without the agreement of the receiving state; in most cases they actually have to be "invited" by it. Often, however, "friendly hints" or "recommendations" (sometimes very emphatic ones) are to be heard in the Permanent Council and in bilateral contacts to the effect that the maintenance of peace and regional co-operation require such measures. And this kind of pressure (my experience tells me that this term is not too strong) may as well be applied against a large country, in which case the question of financial support, of joining certain organizations and similar considerations will play a not insignificant role.

To be sure, it has become clear in a number of cases that with patient and discrete persuasion on the part of the mission the host country can be convinced that the presence of an OSCE representation provides valuable protection against the greed of powerful neighbours and is therefore in their own most deeply rooted interest. It is in this area that the diplomatic abilities of the mission members, especially of the "HOM", are of vital importance. More will be said about this in the section on personnel matters in the missions.

Fulfilment of its Mandate by the Mission

As already explained, the mandate of an OSCE mission is normally issued for six months even though a longer term is assumed from the very beginning - not least for financial reasons, since it would otherwise not be possible to establish annual budgets. The mandates do not always conform to a uniform pattern. Those for Estonia and Latvia, for example, are worded quite differently although the situations are more or less the same. There are significant variations even in the volume of responsibilities and the formulation of details. For example, the Latvia mandate focuses on citizenship issues. If one looked only at the text of the mandate it would be much easier to view this restrictive mandate as having been fulfilled than the Estonian one, with its much more comprehensive listing of responsibilities. It has already been explained that activities in their practical application offer quite a different picture from what would correspond to these theoretical considerations.

The Mission as the Result of an Institutionalized Security Paradigm?

From the standpoint of a generally acceptable principle of equality it would appear opportune to manage to come to fundamental principles on the duration of long-term missions. Do we want them to be a flexible and temporary instrument for early warning and conflict prevention in the sense of "troubleshooting" or do we want to create a system - or, rather, a model or paradigm - of more or less permanent *multinational representations in the nature of embassies for dealing with the human dimension and for settling disputes in the broadest sense of the word* - a system of Atlantic-Eurasian inspection and monitoring units, as it were, which are permanently employed in areas where operational support for avoiding or solving conflicts is seen to be a long-term necessity?

But is the OSCE community really in a position to get together to this kind of long-term strategic thinking and, given the prevailing consensus (or consensus-minus-one) principle, to put it across?

The Mission and the Receiving State(s)

Viewed from the outside, the Head of a long-term mission generally has the attributes of the Head of a diplomatic mission: diplomatic status, special license plates, etc. - all on the basis of the above-mentioned Memorandum of Understanding with the receiving state. Unless he happens at the moment to be in bad odour with the government, he is usually invited to state ceremo-

nies, official receptions and similar grand events. But these are often the only similarities between him and normal, bilateral diplomats. Again and again there are attempts by the political representatives of the host country to treat the mission and its Head as one of themselves - after all, the country is an OSCE participating State and this fellow is a representative of that Organization. Does not, then, one fifty-fourth part of him (or one fifty-fifth, if one insists on including the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) belong to them? And doesn't he have to subordinate himself to their wishes? After all, they are among the ones paying for his mission...

Sometimes the line of argument is carried even further. The "HOM" really ought to take the desires of the receiving state into account in his reporting. If he doesn't do it of his own accord, it might be possible to give him a little help. If his next report does not deal with certain things in the manner desired by the host state, would it not be appropriate at the next meeting to ponder aloud the idea of non-extension of the mission's mandate? This sort of thing can quickly assume the proportions of diplomatic blackmail. It is up to the Head of Mission to decide what to do in these cases. If such actions are once allowed, it can tempt the host government to do more of the same, resulting in a curtailment of the mission's ability to act independently.

Such games in dealing with an OSCE mission are not unusual, particularly in "new" countries with relatively young officials. No one would dare to act this way against the representative of another subject of international law (i.e. a state) - but such a person is of course in no way considered to be partially an employee of the host country. Sometimes functionaries of the receiving state try to intimidate the mission or to treat it in haughty fashion in order to make a positive impression on their own superiors, to convince them of their own "elan" and to make the OSCE representatives look bad because of their alleged uncooperativeness.

In the heading to this section I indicated that the word "receiving state" could be used in the plural. For a number of missions there are practically several receiving states - or ones which regard themselves as such. The Baltic region can be mentioned in this connection, or the successor states to Yugoslavia, or certain areas in the Caucasus and Central Asia. In these places, the mission inevitably gets caught in the crossfire between opposing positions, not only on the scene but also in the Permanent Council and in the corridors of the Vienna Hofburg where the Permanent Council and its subordinate bodies hold their meetings. It usually does not pay for the Head of Mission to try to "sit on the fence", to use the graphic English expression, and tell both sides they are right. Nor, in most cases, does a one-sided and uncompromising role as ombudsman for minorities do justice to the contents of an OSCE mandate or to the fundamental character of the missions as peacekeepers and mediators. As experience has shown, ineptitude in these matters, which on the local

scene are generally seen as of first and essential importance, can in extreme cases lead to conflicts, including the recall of the Head of Mission. Not least for the sake of the dignity and reputation of the Organization, a Head of Mission should pursue a consistent and predictable policy line and defend it against the excesses of both sides (for such encroachments - or, better, blows below the belt - almost never come from just *one* side!) with the methods of classical diplomacy or, when necessary, even by unconventional methods. The latter would appear justified if the rules of civil society in dealing with international mediators have not yet been quite adopted in the receiving state. A code of behaviour along these lines would do a lot more for the image and prestige of the OSCE as a whole than do mission members who try, without principled positions of their own, to work their way through the difficulties in such a way as to avoid displeasing any of the protagonists.

In many countries that are now independent and used to be republics of the Soviet Union the missions have to take into account the local version of what nowadays, particularly in English, is called "*political correctness*". In the West, for example, we know from our school days that it is not appropriate to put Stalin on the same level of loathsomeness as Hitler and that the Nazi atrocities must in principle be classified as another, far more serious form of historical evil than those committed by Stalin. As Isaac Deutscher says in his biography of Stalin, "(...) For all these reasons, Stalin cannot be classed with Hitler, among the tyrants whose record is one of absolute worthlessness and futility. Hitler was the leader of a sterile counter-revolution, while Stalin has been both the leader and the exploiter of a tragic, self-contradictory but creative revolution (...)"⁵

This evaluation is not shared everywhere in the region under discussion. If one commits a "violation" of the locally accepted version of political correctness in this respect it can lead to diplomatic complications which under certain circumstances can result in the "guilty" OSCE functionary or functionaries having to leave the post involuntarily and in untimely fashion. The question can then arise in the course of a mission's daily work whether one should indirectly imply agreement with historical views of this kind by acting in such a way as to allow that interpretation, e.g. by accepting (official) invitations to memorial services even though people are being glorified there who in fact fought on Hitler's side and were even members of his elite units. And what if one is told that the Chairman of the local Jewish community will also be present? A certain amount of tact is required in such situations to find the correct way - here in the *diplomatic* sense of the word. Nor is it always possible to co-ordinate one's approach with colleagues from the bilateral side, as the OSCE is often treated differently from the representatives of individual

5 Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin. A Political Biography*, London/New York/Toronto 1949, p. 569.

countries when it comes to issuing invitations; people from the OSCE are simply more "involved".

The Large Number of Organs that Issue Instructions

Anyone who transfers from a national foreign ministry to the OSCE structure comes from a more or less homogeneous command structure or hierarchy through which instructions and reporting run their course. The levels of the OSCE hierarchy are of a somewhat different kind and sometimes surprise new recruits who have been trained in a national foreign service or the military. Here they are confronted with a complex hierarchical ladder made up of individual command centres that have varying levels of autonomy and these individual centres or bastions demand the attention of the mission within a system that often tends to operate in a horizontal-parallel fashion rather than vertically and hierarchically.

In view of the annual rotation at the highest command level - the country holding the chair and its Foreign Minister, who is the *Chairman-in-Office* of the OSCE - the missions face periodic modifications of the leadership parameters to which they must adapt themselves. Methods of work tend to vary from one Chairman to another. Sometimes orders come directly from the capital city of the Chairman and mission members have to take the time to get a sense of how the various functions in the OSCE office of the Chairman are arranged and who is responsible for what. It is advantageous to obtain somehow an organizational chart of the bureaucracy as it has been rearranged *ad hoc* or enlarged for the new Chairman's year in office, so that one can dial through directly to the extension one needs.

Other "one-year-rulers" grant greater freedom of movement to their Ambassador to the OSCE in Vienna - who (and this is important) at the same time is the Chairman of the Permanent Council (PC) - thus making him the actual "commander" and communicator visible to the mission.

Apart from the Chairman's idiosyncrasies, however, there are frequent situations in which the Chairman of the PC needs immediate and direct reporting because the Council is meeting and the delegates of the participating States want to be informed about the situation in a certain region and about the instructions that have been issued by the Chairman-in-Office. If co-operation between a mission and the PC Chairman were to fail in a crisis situation, when it can usually only be carried on by telephone, it could lead to serious problems at the political-strategic level.

It is natural that the *Secretariat* in Vienna also functions as a control and command mechanism for the missions. Sometimes the *Secretary General* of the Organization demands or expects a report directed specifically to him. He

needs this in concrete situations because in the conference room he is often under pressure to have full knowledge of all the events being discussed there. Sometimes the information is meant to serve as a basis for certain requests, initiatives or decisions that are required of the Secretary General in specific cases. Occasionally direct reports of this kind are expressly requested by fax or telephone. When this happens the delicate question arises whether the same report should also be sent to the Chairman of the Permanent Council, the Chairman-in-Office and other leading figures.

It is well to say a word here on the position of the Secretary General. Not long ago there were efforts to elevate his position and give him a larger measure of political responsibility. I do not want to go into detail here but in essence it must be said that these efforts have failed simply because the other actors did not want to have their hands tied. The situation today, to put it briefly, is that the Secretary General is used for jobs of political significance only on an *ad hoc* basis. This does not mean that he cannot exercise substantial influence behind the scenes if he has the necessary contacts and the right kind of personality. I mention this problem because it can affect the operational methods of missions and their flexibility within the OSCE system in ways that ought not to be underestimated. If a mission is in difficulty and urgently needs action by the central office, the effectiveness of various actors can often be determined only by "trial and error". The request is put to a number of different command units and the mission then waits to see who reacts fastest.

The *Conflict Prevention Centre*, represented by its Director and diplomatic staff, also needs to be regularly informed. It is, so to speak, the official channel for the decisions the OSCE has to make in all situations of tension and conflict in which it becomes involved.

Theoretically, there are rules specifying the people to whom reports should be faxed or mailed. They are often interpreted or applied in a contradictory manner, however, both by the command centres and the various actors in the field. It can also happen that certain changes are made when the job of Chairman-in-Office is transferred at the end of the year. But such changes are sometimes made by headquarters in Vienna as well. The reason is usually that a particular centre is given priority with respect to information or that there is at least a need to adapt it in terms of timing and substance to the availability and requirements of one of the other "bastions" in the OSCE family. After all, quicker access to information confers a kind of power - for the purpose of formulating and implementing appropriate initiatives.

In many cases, the description of the situation at a given location is supplemented by telephone reports or faxes directed personally to a particular functionary. Occasionally, this personalized way of reporting may result from an exaggerated craving for recognition on the part of the person engaging in it.

But experience has shown that parallel or selective reporting of this kind, given the existing command structures, can in critical situations be a real necessity.

The Secretariat's *Mission Support Section* plays a highly significant, often vital, role in the functioning of missions - in personnel matters and also in the important areas of logistics and procurement. There are situations, however, in which this section tends to exaggerate its role or move into areas that are no longer part of its field of competence. This raises an issue which can also appear in other forms: to what extent does an OSCE mission play the part of a traditional diplomatic representation - an Embassy under the terms of the Vienna Convention? And to what degree should the mission be allowed the trappings (the expression "paraphernalia" perhaps has more substance to it) of an Embassy? How far should one go in permitting a Head of Mission to engage in social activities (which are reflected, among other things, in the size of the so-called representation funds) for the purpose of generating a favourable mood in the people he talks to? Or should it be regarded as frivolous misuse of OSCE funds if he exceeds a minimum which is regarded as adequate by the above-mentioned section? Is this something that the head of the section for support and logistics is in a position to judge? The way out of this dilemma is to turn directly and on a selective basis to a "higher official" with diplomatic and political experience who might well be more susceptible to persuasion in this field.

The Organs outside of the Main Line of the Hierarchy

In any list of the authorities with which a mission must deal, the *High Commissioner on National Minorities* and the *Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)* should not be forgotten. Depending on the region and the specific responsibilities of the mission, these institutions can have an important influence on its work and also on the composition of its staff. This is a good place to ask, based on the practical experience of missions, whether it makes sense, from the standpoint of synergy and productivity, to have these two OSCE offices located geographically so far away from headquarters. This sort of question is seen as heretical in some quarters and in putting it one can step on the toes of some people whose location I would prefer not to discuss here. Objectively speaking, however, it is important to call into question a historically based dispersal of this kind, which is of course copied from elsewhere - one need only recall Article 23 of the UN Charter ("[...] equitable geographical distribution [...]"). But does this principle always have to prevail, even when what is at issue is optimizing and streamlining an apparatus designed for early warning and conflict avoidance?

In both of these OSCE sub-organizations, independent or very personal opinions, methods and attitudes towards events and processes are developed - not least, perhaps, because they are located so far from the centre and its general political-strategic line of thinking. These postures then have to be accepted (or perhaps not) by the person responsible for the outpost in question. The appraisals and decisions required of a Head of Mission in such cases can hardly be delegated to any other member of the OSCE family, particularly in acute situations. One must learn to make use of the alternatives offered by a system with a large number of command structures and, with the leverage for manipulation (in the positive sense of the word) that they provide, to come closer to one's own assigned objectives.

Command structures can become even more specialized if, for example, the Head of Mission (as was the case in Albania during the first six months), as Resident Deputy, is subordinated to a Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office. In this situation, many urgent decisions were made over the telephone by these two functionaries while the other decision-making actors were informed after the fact.

Frequently the Ambassadors of the *Troika* countries, who regard themselves as the personal representation of the current threesome on the local scene, also influence the way OSCE work is done at the outposts. Occasionally they try to implement initiatives of their own with the idea of impressing their superiors. Thus, on the local scene too, the Head of Mission is regarded as an executive body with a reporting responsibility. A lack of current information or failure to bear in mind the importance of inviting the Troika to all relevant OSCE occasions can, in individual cases, lead to complaints against the Head of Mission.

Long-Term Missions and Power Politics at the National Level

Finally, interested governments, in more or less concealed fashion, can act as guidance-providing organs. A practical example: An OSCE operation is accompanied by troops because the local security situation is rightly regarded as so critical that the military presence - which has been invited by the country in question - is indispensable to the success of the OSCE's efforts. The next step, then, is a search for a field headquarters for the OSCE representation and a very forceful invitation is received from a powerful troop provider to run OSCE operations from a spot somewhat outside the country's capital. The newly designated Head of Mission refuses because the proposed building is not appropriately situated for free communications with the local authorities or with other international representations and bilateral missions; moreover, the road leading to it is full of deep pot holes. The location is

heavily guarded by military units of two participating countries, presenting such a daunting appearance that there are scarcely any local politicians or journalists who would dare to enter such a "fortress". The awkwardness of access makes it difficult and risky to travel by automobile, thus greatly weakening the argument that the objective is to provide protection. It is clear that the "inviter" wants to keep the OSCE Head of Mission and his staff under friendly supervision, check all visitors, etc. When the HOM resists this kind of "banishment", non-papers begin to show up in the foreign ministries of interested countries, as well as in OSCE headquarters in Vienna, accusing him of gambling frivolously with the lives of his staff. Often enough the only thing that helps in such a situation is a threat to cease all work or simple refusal to move to the new location. Then counter-intrigues are set in motion at a higher level and he waits it out. In the case described here there was the satisfaction, not long afterward, of seeing the troops that had been intended to protect the OSCE mission themselves left the place in a headlong flight owing to problems with the local Mafia organizations which came close to costing lives. This is a crass example, but such interference, perhaps in somewhat more discrete form, occurs again and again. For example: a newly appointed OSCE Head of Mission, walking through the corridors of the Secretariat in Vienna, encounters a man he does not know but who introduces himself with the words "I am your deputy", at the same time waving a piece of paper on which his Foreign Minister has designated him for the job. Upon inquiry in the Secretariat, the HOM hears an uneasy reply: "Yes, we've already heard about that fellow...".

Evaluation of People and of the System in Connection with Long-Term Missions

This portrayal of parallel hierarchies which are often complicated and seem to be confusing ought not necessarily to be interpreted as negative criticism but, rather, as a basis for discussions of the meaning and purpose of certain structures. On the other hand, we need to ask ourselves seriously whether the OSCE could act as quickly and effectively if it had a different command structure. Might it not lose the flexibility that distinguishes it from other international organizations if the hierarchy were made more rigid and if at the level of Heads of Mission there were less freedom for tactical creativity and resourceful thinking - qualities that are often badly needed in critical situations?

At the very least this system calls for a high level of integrity and a deep sense of responsibility from mission staff and, in particular, from the Head of Mission. A fairly loose system of this kind engenders a certain temptation to

get involved in intrigues and to play one's superiors (or participating States!) off against each other - if it is permissible to employ here an expression customarily used to describe relationships of superiority and inferiority at the national level. The people who like to use such tactics are often enough those who are seeking to cover up their lack of flexibility and of ideas for overcoming problems or, in some cases, their overweening ambition.

The awareness of working with colleagues who are similarly motivated and have like objectives - who in times of tension and crisis and, particularly, in moments of acute danger must in honesty and good conscience stand together - should inspire all participants to carry out their responsibilities in the service of protecting peace and human rights with *esprit de corps* and without selfish national preoccupations or personal vanity.

A soulless and mechanical approach to carrying out orders does not work in a mission. Sometimes badly needed instructions do not come on time or at all, and it is necessary, acting on one's own, to use common sense and to obtain *ex post facto* approval of the chosen course.

Recruiting Mission Personnel - Relationships within the Mission

Relationships within an OSCE mission are often very different from the atmosphere in a national representation, particularly when the members have had to be selected from a very limited reservoir of candidates without regard to appropriate professional qualifications. In particular, the setting up of a mission in an acute crisis, when speed is of the essence and there is not enough time for thorough examination of personnel, can lead to serious personnel problems.

The system of "secondment", through which participating States send personnel to the missions, certainly has financial advantages for the Organization and also makes it easier to provide for staff needs. But the Secretariat having to recruit qualified staff for the missions tends to get caught in precarious situations because of this system.

There is one positive observation that needs to be stressed, however. The Department in the OSCE Secretariat which is responsible for filling positions and recruiting personnel for the missions has succeeded again and again, despite a rapidly growing work load and in the face of all other difficulties, in securing the staff-related infrastructure of the outpost network; and, despite threatening bottlenecks, the responsible people in the Secretariat have been able for the most part to meet personnel needs which have grown rapidly in recent months, especially for the Missions to Croatia and Bosnia.

Broadly speaking one can say that the people best qualified for working together smoothly in a mission are those whose experience comes from a dip-

lomatic or military career. Purists, theoreticians and prophets of various theories of human happiness tend to create difficulties in a mission. In any event, to the extent that time and personnel policies allow, the Head of Mission should be given the greatest possible latitude in choosing his team.

Specialists in particular fields do not always produce positive results in a mission over the medium and long term. They are useful for tasks of limited duration and content but experience has shown that in terms of human relations they often become a burden rather quickly when living conditions become difficult and opportunities for recreation are inadequate.

Another disadvantage of recruiting by advertisement in the participating States is that the time limits on the resulting secondments are often unacceptably short. Mission press spokesmen who are replaced every three or four weeks, for example, are simply unable to work very efficiently, no matter how well qualified they may be as individuals. For posts where living conditions and the quality of life are very difficult the candidates should receive psychological testing in advance.

The fact that beginning in 1996 seminars have been organized for mission members is certainly an improvement, but they are not yet obligatory and there ought to be more of them, since the brief training provided by the Secretariat before new people go to their posts has in many cases proved inadequate.

The Other Organizations on the Local Scene

A lot has been written on this subject - co-operation with the representations of other international or regional organizations located in the same place or region. There is undoubtedly a fair amount of duplication in the business of providing international support. It turned out in the case of Albania that the OSCE Presence in Tirana, at least when assistance from outside was first being provided, constituted a focal point for international efforts and this role as co-ordinator was expressly acknowledged by the international community. Nevertheless, a word of clarification is needed on what the term "co-ordination" really means in individual cases. What the OSCE really did in Albania - to use this example once again - was somewhat *less* than full co-ordination, which implies a certain right to issue instructions to others. In the end it lay somewhere between liaison, clearing house and co-ordination in the strict sense of the word. Even so, the OSCE's headquarters in Albania, which was used by the Council of Europe and the WEU as well, constituted a kind of interface with high symbolic value, both towards the outer world and for the Albanian public.

The Long-Term Missions as a Proven Instrument in Security Policy and for Ensuring Peace

I believe that any comprehensive evaluation and judgement of the numerous facets of the system of long-term missions as it has evolved so far, which are often only briefly touched upon in this article, must conclude that the subtitle above does not require a question mark at the end but, on the contrary, can be regarded *grosso modo* as a *fact proven by the experience of the last six years*.

All the same, in view of the difficulties and problems discussed here, continuous efforts must be made to improve and perfect the existing standards. The proposed *Charter on European Security*, based on the experience so far gathered, should give adequate attention to the role of the *long-term missions*. How should developments be evaluated in this connection? In Decision No. 5 of the OSCE Foreign Ministers of 19 December 1997 on the Guidelines on the Document-Charter, it was decided to refine the instruments, tools and mechanisms of the Organization, to perfect them, and where necessary to develop *new ones*; and to work for greater acceptance on the part of participating States of the use of this whole range of instruments (point 5, *lit. b, c, g*). The agreement on the Guidelines was also included in the Chairman's Summary of the Copenhagen Ministerial Council. These decisions justify the assumption that the long-term missions will continue to be an important item on the agenda of future OSCE consultations.