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## Twenty Years after the Istanbul Platform for Co-operative Security: How Can the OSCE's Contribution to "Effective Multilateralism" Be Strengthened through Co-operation with Other International and Regional Organizations?

One vital element of international co-operation is the mutual reinforcement of the joint efforts of international and regional organizations, and of collaboration between the United Nations and regional arrangements. The Platform for Co-operative Security was attached to the Charter for European Security as an operational document. The Charter was adopted at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul on 19 November 1999, reaffirming and strengthening the OSCE's role as an inclusive and comprehensive organization for consultation, decision-making, and co-operation in the region.<sup>1</sup> It was designed as the conceptual and practical foundation for the OSCE's interaction with other security organizations and institutions operating in the Euro-Atlantic/Eurasian area, and as a tool for advancing political and operational coherence among them.

The Platform advocates strengthening "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> in order to "mak[e] better use of the resources of the international community"<sup>3</sup> and avoid duplication of effort. For Sandra Sacchetti, political and operational "coherence" in the Platform is key.<sup>4</sup>

While identifying a set of basic principles on which the OSCE could work co-operatively with other organizations and institutions, the Platform also outlines practical modalities of co-operation, for example, in the field, and in responding to specific crisis situations.<sup>5</sup>

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Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the OSCE and its participating States. The author warmly thanks Alice Nemcova, OSCE Documentation Centre in Prague, for her support and suggestions, and Michael Raith, Conflict Prevention Centre, for his review.

- 1 Cf. Charter for European Security, Istanbul, November 1999, in: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Istanbul Summit 1999, Istanbul Document 1999, Istanbul 1999, January 2000/Corr., pp. 1-45, para. 7, available at: <https://www.osce.org/mc/39569>. William H. Hill recalls the premises and challenges of the Charter, cf. William H. Hill, *No Place for Russia: European Security Institutions Since 1989*, New York 2018, pp. 153-157.
- 2 Operational Document – the Platform for Co-operative Security, in: Charter for European Security, cited above (Note 1), p. 43-45, here: p. 43.
- 3 Charter for European Security, cited above (Note 1), para. 1.
- 4 Cf. Sandra Sacchetti, *The OSCE's Platform for Co-operative Security: An Opportunity for Multilateral Coherence, Security and Human Rights* 1/2014, pp. 119-129.
- 5 The Platform did not cover the OSCE's relations with organizations operating outside of its area. This gap had to be filled in the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and

In parallel, the Charter for European Security offers the OSCE, “when appropriate, as a flexible co-ordinating framework to foster co-operation, through which various organizations can reinforce each other drawing on their particular strengths”, and as “a forum for subregional co-operation”.<sup>6</sup> This acknowledges the growing importance of subregional co-operation as an element to enhance security across the OSCE area, and as a catalyst for integrating countries into broader structures.

Underlying the Platform is the fundamental consideration that no one organization alone can effectively address the multi-faceted challenges to security that have arisen since the beginning of the 21st century. In addition to fostering the emergence of a real culture of co-operation, the 1999 document was also intended to contribute to the creation of a common security space for Europe, based on a comprehensive, indivisible and co-operative notion of security, and free of dividing lines.

Twenty years after its adoption, the Platform’s record is undoubtedly mixed. Its political context was soon overtaken by evolving reality. In particular, its fundamental objective to support the OSCE’s role in peacekeeping, conceptualized seven years before at the Helsinki Summit,<sup>7</sup> was never translated into operational arrangements since it became clear, in the mid-2000s, that the operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo would remain historical, specific, unique, and pioneering cases, unlikely to recur. Similarly, the Platform’s vision of the OSCE as a “key instrument” has proven to be a myth. The context of the early 1990s, which had raised the hope of a “triumph of multilateralism”, was soon replaced by a more competitive, indeed at times confrontational co-existence between security actors in the Euro-Atlantic/Eurasian region. The 1999 Istanbul Summit may well be seen as the OSCE’s “apogee”, to take William H. Hill’s words,<sup>8</sup> but Sandra Sacchetti is right when she explains that, at the beginning of the 2000s, the OSCE would

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Stability in the Twenty-First Century, adopted at the OSCE Maastricht Ministerial Council in 2003, which invites the OSCE to develop further contacts with regional organizations beyond the OSCE area when addressing threats emanating from “adjacent regions”, cf. OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century, para. 23, available at: <https://www.osce.org/mc/17504>. Even before, the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism had already made reference to the need to broaden dialogue with partners outside the OSCE area, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC, then: the Organisation of the Islamic Conference), the League of Arab States (LAS), and the African Union (AU), cf. The Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism, para. 28, MC(9).DEC/1, 4 December 2001, Annex, available at: <https://www.osce.org/atu/42524>.

6 Charter for European Security, cited above (Note 1), paras 12 and 13.

7 “Peacekeeping constitutes an important operational element of the overall capability of the CSCE for conflict prevention and crisis management [...]”, CSCE Conference for [sic!] Security and Co-operation in Europe, 1992 Summit, Helsinki, 9-10 July 1992, CSCE Helsinki Document 1992, The Challenges of Change, Helsinki Decisions, Early Warning, Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management (Including Fact-Finding and Rapporteur Missions and CSCE Peacekeeping), Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, para. 17, available at: <https://www.osce.org/mc/39530>.

8 Hill, cited above (Note 1), p. 157.

not be given primary responsibility for security on the European continent, and was even starting to be pushed into a “peripheral position”. As a result, the OSCE “could not credibly establish itself as a hub for strategic discussions between international, regional and subregional organizations”.<sup>9</sup> While some international organizations such as the European Union (EU), NATO, and the Council of Europe (CoE) have often agreed to act “with” the OSCE, they have shown reluctance, despite some exceptions, to work “through” the OSCE and to be co-ordinated by it, even flexibly.

The extensive web of partnerships and vibrant relations that the OSCE has set up with various international and regional organizations since its inception has developed independently from the Platform for Co-operative Security. The OSCE’s partner organizations have rarely referred to it, even the EU, whose member states introduced the document and have done much to further its adoption.

All in all, the Platform for Co-operative Security may well have remained “an abstract concept, the result of a diplomatic mind game far removed from the operational requirements of international organizations”.<sup>10</sup> But let us play the devil’s advocate.

The adoption of the Platform put a political “varnish” on a practice which, until 1999, had mainly been driven by the field and the post-Cold War adjustments in the Eurasian region. Formally, it gave a mandate to the OSCE to develop co-operation with other international organizations in a more coherent and institutional way. It allowed the Secretariat to function and structure itself to this end.<sup>11</sup>

The 20th anniversary of the Platform for Co-operative Security coincides with an intense debate over effective multilateralism, one of the priorities of the 2019 Slovak Chairmanship of the OSCE. Multilateral co-operation has lost

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9 Sandra Sacchetti, cited above (Note 4), p. 126.

10 Ibid., p. 125.

11 In 2000, the OSCE Permanent Council “place[d] the External Co-operation Section under the direct supervision of the Secretary General” and stated that: “Together with other Sections within the Secretariat it will be responsible for the implementation of the modalities of co-operation in accordance with part II of the Operational Document of the Charter for European Security” (meaning the Platform), Organization for a Security and Co-operation in Europe, Permanent Council, Decision No. 364, Strengthening the OSCE Operational Capacities (REACT, Operation Centre, Restructuring of the OSCE Secretariat), PC.DEC/364, 29 June 2000, p. 3. In 2002, the Porto Ministerial Council mandated the OSCE Chairmanship with the overall responsibility “for the external representation of the OSCE” and further stipulated that “especially in order to ensure effective and continuous working contacts with other international organizations and institutions” the Chairmanship shall “be assisted by the Secretary General, to whom representational tasks are delegated as appropriate”. Decision No. 8, Role of the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office, MC(10).DEC/8, in: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Tenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council, 6 and 7 December 2002, Porto, 7 December 2002, pp. 48-50, here: p. 49. The Sofia Ministerial Council Decision No. 15/04 confirmed the role of the Secretary General as the representative of the Chairperson-in-Office, including by “ensuring the effective and continuous working contacts with other international organizations and institutions”. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Ministerial Council, Sofia 2004, Decision No. 15/04, Role of the OSCE Secretary General, MC.DEC/15/04, 7 December 2004, p. 1.

the power of attraction that it once had, with its key institutions being questioned and at risk of being weakened.<sup>12</sup> In this context, this commemoration presents a good opportunity to explore how the OSCE and the other institutional actors with which it co-operates could better promote shared values and common interests, maximize their complementarity, effectiveness, and added value in tackling global challenges, respond more quickly in concert at the outset of a crisis, and learn from each other. Ultimately, it also presents an opportunity to examine how this co-operation could enhance the OSCE's effectiveness, since mutually reinforcing co-operation and regular institutional links, both in the field and in the headquarters, contribute to a strengthened OSCE.

*“Positive Overlap” Rather than a Strict Division of Labour*

The notion of “effective multilateralism” has often been linked to a clear division of labour and ownership of functionally and geographically defined areas of responsibility, each organization playing to its strengths and comparative advantages. In line with this logic, NATO would be responsible for the military security of its members; the EU dealing with the social and economic agenda of Western Europe and neighbouring countries; the OSCE responsible for dialogue on comprehensive security, the guardian of important treaties and documents in the field of arms control and confidence-building measures, and a well-tested forum for discussion on these matters; and the CoE setting standards of democratic behaviour and monitoring their implementation. Such a clearly defined division of labour was implemented in the context of the agreements which ended hostilities in South-Eastern Europe in the 1990s and early 2000s, for instance the 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) with the EU being responsible for the “political track”, NATO for the “security track”, and the OSCE for the “police development track”. The CoE demonstrated the highest degree of “obsession” with defining its particular sphere of action and the division of responsibilities between the main European organizations, as well as building a specific *modus operandi* with organizations working to promote democratic principles.<sup>13</sup>

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12 Cf. G. John Ikenberry, *The Future of Multilateralism: Governing the World in a Post-Hegemonic Era*, *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, 3/2015, pp. 399-413, at: [https://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/gji3/files/the\\_future\\_of\\_multilateralism-august\\_2015.pdf](https://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/gji3/files/the_future_of_multilateralism-august_2015.pdf); Julia C. Morse/Robert O. Keohane, *Contested Multilateralism*, *The Review of International Organizations*, 4/2014, pp. 385-412, also at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267761740\\_Contested\\_Multilateralism](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267761740_Contested_Multilateralism); Elena Lazarou, *The future of multilateralism: Crisis or opportunity?* European Parliamentary Research Service, Briefing, May 2017, PE 603.922, also at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/603922/EPRS\\_BRI\(2017\)603922\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/603922/EPRS_BRI(2017)603922_EN.pdf).

13 Cf. *Common Catalogue of Co-operation Modalities between the Council of Europe and the OSCE*, 12 April 2000, available at: [https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2003/7/30/99ef6a46-9489-4cf8-97a7-d0d806e4d929/publishable\\_en.pdf](https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2003/7/30/99ef6a46-9489-4cf8-97a7-d0d806e4d929/publishable_en.pdf). This document was signed by the Secretary General of the CoE and his OSCE counterpart and circulated under

Of course, co-operation is easier if the mandates of the international organizations are clear, as often advocated by the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC).<sup>14</sup> In some cases, there is no contest when it comes to effectively sharing the burden, for instance between the OSCE and the EU on election monitoring.<sup>15</sup> What the OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions calls the “niche strategy” – more focused functions and activities on the basis of the strategic needs emerging with respect to the maintenance of peace and international stability<sup>16</sup> – might sometimes be relevant: Nobody would dispute the OSCE’s recognized expertise on politico-military confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs). But, generally speaking, the vision of a strict division of labour is unsustainable, and has been irreversibly obviated by new arising threats, the changes in the global order, and the geographical and thematic expansion of international organizations’ competencies “out of area”, taking on new functions in the field of security and undergoing functional despecialization/generalization. Even NATO has started to devote reflexion and brain-storming to “human security”, a concept which includes women, peace and security, child protection, and the responsibility to protect. And what about new avenues for co-operation which are transversal by nature (climate change, UN Sustainable Development Goals, resilience and early recovery from crisis, building connectivity, artificial intelligence)? Which international actor could be in the position to claim ownership of these?

Therefore, we believe that the cross-dimensional nature of co-operation between international organizations should be preserved and developed. A certain degree of “positive overlap” may not be a bad thing *per se*, as this can help partners to mutually reinforce their activities and their impact.

#### *Improving the OSCE’s Ability to Work with Others on the Conflict Cycle*

Defusing tensions and preventing conflicts, actively contributing to the peaceful settlement of disputes, and building sustainable peace and security remain central tasks for the OSCE. Our Organization, as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and a primary organization

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SEC.GAL/30/00, 4 April 2000; cf. also Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 1506 (2006), External relations of the Council of Europe, paras 11, 15.3, and 21.2, at: <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-EN.asp?fileid=17451&lang=en>.

14 Cf. OSCE, The Secretariat, Conflict Prevention Centre, Co-ordination and Co-operation among International Actors in Support of the Host Country, Food-for-Thought Paper, SEC.GAL/77/11, 28 April 2011, p. 3, available at: <https://www.osce.org/cpc/77264>.

15 The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), in co-operation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA), monitors the elections in the OSCE region; the EU does so in other parts of the world.

16 Cf. Teija Tiilikainen (ed.), Reviving Co-operative Security in Europe through the OSCE, Contribution of the OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions to the Panel of Eminent Persons, 2015, available at: <https://www.osce.org/networks/188176>, p. 13.

for the peaceful settlement of disputes within its region,<sup>17</sup> is a key instrument for early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, crisis management, post-conflict rehabilitation, and peacebuilding, as acknowledged by the 2011 MC Decision on “Elements of the Conflict Cycle”.<sup>18</sup> The OSCE, over the past decade, has demonstrated its capacity to respond successfully to a crisis situation, prevent the spillover of tensions, and promote post-conflict rehabilitation in co-ordination with other players, as demonstrated by the 2010 crisis in Kyrgyzstan<sup>19</sup> and the co-operation between the OSCE, the EU, and NATO in managing the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement in the then FYROM. The joint contribution of the UN, the OSCE, and the EU in the Geneva International Discussions, set up straight after the armed hostilities between Georgia and the Russian Federation in 2008, also constitutes a unique international platform where three major international actors manage conflict resolution together.<sup>20</sup>

Paradoxically, with the notable exception of a structured working-level dialogue launched in March 2019 between the CPC and the Directorate Integrated Approach for Security and Peace (ISP) of the European External Action Service (EEAS), the conflict cycle does not always appear to be the most common topic for day-to-day co-operation, probably due to its political sensitivity. The following ideas could be further explored or more systematically brought into practice.

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17 At the 1992 Helsinki Summit, the participating States declared the OSCE (then CSCE) to be a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, a status which had been granted by the UN General Assembly on 28 October 1992 (UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/47/10), cf. Helsinki Summit Declaration, in: CSCE Helsinki Document 1992, cited above (Note 7), para. 25. In 1993, the United Nations gave the CSCE observer status. In the 1999 Charter for European Security, participating States reaffirmed their full adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and “the OSCE as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and as a primary organization for the peaceful settlement of disputes within its region and as a key instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation”, while recognizing “the primary responsibility of the United Nations Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security and its crucial role in contributing to security and stability in [the OSCE] region.” Charter for European Security, cited above (Note 1), paras 7, 11.

18 Cf. Organization for a Security and Co-operation in Europe, Ministerial Council, Vilnius 2011, Decision No. 3/11, Elements of the Conflict Cycle, Related to Enhancing the OSCE’s Capabilities in Early Warning, Early Action, Dialogue Facilitation and Mediation Support, and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation, , MC.DEC/3/11, 7 December 2011, available at: <https://www.osce.org/mc/86621>.

19 “In Kyrgyzstan this year we have shown what we can do together”, Address by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the opening of the Astana Summit Meeting, on 1 December 2010, SUM.DEL/74/10, 14 December 2010; cf. also case study on Kyrgyzstan (2010), in: United Nations Department of Political Affairs, United Nations Conflict Prevention and Preventive Diplomacy in Action, pp. 10-11, June 2018, at: <https://dppa.un.org/en/united-nations-conflict-prevention-and-preventive-diplomacy-action>, and OSCE Annual Report 2010, Vienna 2011, p. 112, at: <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/76315>.

20 On the conflict in Georgia, and especially on the role of international actors, cf. Cécile Druey/Eliane Fitzé (eds), *The Caucasus Conflicts: Frozen and Shelved?*, *Politorbis*, no. 60, 2/2015, especially pp. 49-73, at: <https://www.swisspeace.ch/assets/publications/downloads/Articles/575f80b44f/caucasus-conflicts-frozen-shelved-15-politorbis-caucasus-swisspeace.pdf>.

- *Developing joint training programmes* or at least improving the compatibility of training programmes. In 2001, the EU Commission suggested developing common modules/programmes with the OSCE for staff training for field operations, in relation to the OSCE system of Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams (REACT).<sup>21</sup> “We could consider joint training and education for our own staffs before we deploy them”, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen proposed again at his opening of the Annual Security Review Conference in 2011.<sup>22</sup> Pending the availability of funding, the OSCE could supervise “horizontal training” and joint table-top exercises to increase the operational coherence of various international organizations in response to crises. Institutions such as the OSCE Academy in Bishkek or the facilities of the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (UN DPPA) at the Turin System Staff College (UNSSC) for training in early warning and conflict prevention could be promoted. Protection of civilians could be seen as a topic for expertise and knowledge-sharing through training, in order to jointly define a role model and a protection checklist.
- *Mutual secondment*: In 2002, for instance, the European Communities assigned one senior and one junior police expert to the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, assisting in the long-term development of police reforms in accordance with the Ohrid Framework Agreement. One can only regret that, beyond the monitors seconded by OSCE participating States (including many EU member states), no international or regional partner organization has seconded a liaison officer or observer to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) in Ukraine.
- *Intensifying and continuously strengthening the sharing of early warning indicators and check lists for root causes of conflicts*, including the role of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, as well as socio-economic factors; undertake periodic reviews, develop watch lists, and improve methodology for early warning; set-up a joint database to facilitate problem-solving in the field of conflict settlement activities, as suggested by the Russian Federation.<sup>23</sup>
- *Continuing and further developing co-ordination of policies at a country/region-specific level*, following the example of the annual consultation

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21 Cf. Commission of the European Communities, Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention, Brussels, 11. April 2001, COM(2001)211 final, p. 28. A Joint Pilot Workshop on Human Rights Training for Field Missions was co-organized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR/UNHCHR), the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the OSCE from 11-16 July 1999. The aim of the pilot course was to develop a coherent and quality-based approach to training on human rights monitoring with a focus on skills development.

22 Cited in: OSCE, Joint responses needed to promote stability in Europe and neighbouring regions, says NATO Secretary General at OSCE security conference, Press Release, SEC.PE/243/11, 30 June 2011, also at: <https://www.osce.org/cio/80465>.

23 Cf. Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the OSCE, Draft of a section of the Charter on European Security, PC.SMC/84/98, 11 September 1998, para. 11, p. 3.

- between the OSCE Secretariat and the EU Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) on the EU “enlargement package” in South-Eastern Europe.<sup>24</sup>
- *Making information sharing more systematic and targeted*, including “tool boxes”, in order to enhance “network multilateralism”, as UN Secretary-General António Guterres suggested at the High-Level Interactive Dialogue with Heads of Regional and Other Organizations held on 12 and 13 June 2018 at Greentree Estate, New York.
  - *Co-operation between Situation Rooms*, promoted by Javier Solana in 2001,<sup>25</sup> is already well on track, but could be enhanced and include joint threat scenarios.<sup>26</sup> The 2018 OSCE Conflict Cycle Seminar: “Strengthening the OSCE’s Capacities for Conflict Prevention and Resolution — Good practices and lessons learned” provided timely recommendations in that regard, including on establishing a network of situation and crisis rooms in the OSCE area.<sup>27</sup>
  - *Issuing joint political messages and statements*: a powerful advocacy tool, as demonstrated by repeated initiatives of the Heads of Mission of the EU, the NATO Liaison Office, the OSCE, and the United States in Skopje since 2013, to urge all sides in FYROM/North Macedonia to enhance political dialogue, to focus on the country’s strategic priorities, and to put the best interests of the country and its citizens first.<sup>28</sup>
  - *Strengthening co-ordination between envoys and special representatives*. The co-operation between the OSCE Mediation Support Team at the CPC and the German Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF) on Inter-organizational High-level Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Approaches and Good Practices for Mediation in Protracted Conflicts might be considered good practice.<sup>29</sup>

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24 “It is not a deficiency for a country that is looking towards the EU to make use of all the possibilities offered by the OSCE to bring its practices and standards up to the level of EU criteria”, statement by Ambassador Ivo Petrov, Head of the Bulgarian Delegation to the OSCE and Chairman of the Permanent Council, welcoming the EU Commissioner for External Relations, Christopher Patten, Press Release, SEC.PR/423/04, 15 July 2004, also at: <https://www.osce.org/pc/56531>.

25 Cf. Address to the OSCE Permanent Council by Dr Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, PC.DEL/27/01, 18 January 2001, para. 28.

26 Calls for a “global SitCenter” were expressed at the UN Secretary-General’s 2018 High-Level Interactive Dialogue with Heads of Regional and Other Organizations.

27 Cf. Perception Paper on OSCE Conflict Cycle Seminar: “Strengthening the OSCE’s Capacities for Conflict Prevention and Resolution — Good practices and lessons learned” (Vienna, 5 October 2018), CIO.GAL/179/18, 28 November 2018.

28 Cf. SEC.PR/38/13, 14 February 2013, and OSCE, Joint statement of the Heads of EU Delegation, US Embassy, OSCE Mission and NATO Liaison Office in Skopje on yesterday’s incidents at the Parliament, Press Release, 28 April 2017, at: <https://www.osce.org/mission-to-skopje/314491>.

29 Cf. Center for International Peace Operations, Inter-organizational High-level Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Approaches and Good Practices for Mediation in Protracted Conflicts, 28 May 2019, at: <https://www.zif-berlin.org/en/about-zif/news/detail/article/hochrangiger-inter-institutioneller-fachaustausch-zu-vermittlung-im-kontext-verschleppter-konflikte.html>.



- *Concerted exploration of new forms of joint action in crisis regions.*<sup>30</sup>
- *“Policy transfer” and lessons learned:* conduct a joint evaluation of experiences in a common field of activity, with a view to developing common lessons learned – a joint exercise like this was envisaged between the EU and the OSCE after the August 2008 conflict in the Caucasus; establish guidelines, databases and repertoires of best practices, possibly in form of a compendium of the peacebuilding and conflict prevention capabilities of the United Nations and regional organizations, as suggested at the third meeting between the UN and the regional organizations in 1998.
- *Pooling resources or co-operation in the establishment of joint or shared facilities,* as already suggested by the Danish OSCE Chairmanship in 1997.<sup>31</sup> In this regard, the OSCE should pursue its efforts to gain access to UN strategic deployment stocks and UN support for operational planning.<sup>32</sup>
- Linked to pooling resources, *fully exploiting new technologies* in an effort to increase co-operation with other regional and international organizations.<sup>33</sup>

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30 On the way to the adoption of the Platform for Co-operative Security, the OSCE participating States had imagined implementing “democratization teams”, cf. Status Report by the Chairman of the Permanent Council on the Security Model Discussion in 1997, in: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Sixth Meeting of the Ministerial Council, 18-19 December 1997, MC.DOC/1/97, Copenhagen, 16 March 1998, pp. 31-35, here: p. 32, available at: <https://www.osce.org/mc/40427>. The idea of “country co-ordination teams” was expressed at the Regional EU Conference on Conflict Prevention “Partners in Prevention” held in Helsingborg, Sweden, on 29-30 August 2002, cf. The Helsingborg Agenda, Chairman’s Conclusions, circulated under SEC.DEL/182/02, 3 September 2002, para. 8 iv, p. 4, and Secretary General Ján Kubiš’s speech under SEC.GAL/164/02, 17 September 2002, p. 3.

31 Cf. Modalities for a Platform for Co-operative Security, annexed to PC.SMC/2/97, 4 September 1997.

32 A Letter of Understanding was signed in 2018 with the UN Department of Field Support (DFS), aiming at providing the OSCE access to UN Systems Contracts and technical training. The proposal, made by the Executive Director of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in 2018 to put the CTBTO’s new permanent facility for inspector training in Seibersdorf, Austria, at the OSCE’s disposal, is also worth mentioning.

33 Although put on standby, the experience of the Crisis Response Executive Advisory Team (CREATE) might be recalled here. The main goal of CREATE, which comprised the OSCE, UN, EU, and NATO under the aegis of former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari and his Crisis Management Initiative, was to increase the awareness and understanding among international organizations about their shared needs in information and communications technology (ICT) issues, and to provide the concrete means to enhance the interoperability of their ICT systems. CREATE focused on technical standardization of management tools for administrative processes (i.e. international organizations’ reporting to member states, using standardized formats), common situational awareness in the field (military, political, incident reporting, security status), risk management, and early warning.

### *A Return to Inclusiveness*

The 1999 Platform commits the OSCE to co-operate with organizations and institutions “concerned with the promotion of comprehensive security within the OSCE area”<sup>34</sup> and whose members subscribe to the UN Charter and to a series of principles (transparency and predictability in the spirit of the Vienna Document 1999; openness and free will in their membership of international organizations; the OSCE’s concept of common, comprehensive and indivisible security, and a common security space free of dividing lines; etc.). “It has however remained unclear who decides on which organizations fit the above criteria and which might not and the procedure for doing so”<sup>35</sup>, Oleksandr Pavlyuk rightly observes.

Against the backdrop of the deep political confrontation and distrust between the Russian Federation and the West, which has often hampered the efficient utilization of existing co-operative security institutions in the Euro-Atlantic region, there has been a tendency to marginalize certain regional organizations created in the 1990s which, for some participating States, do not correspond to the OSCE’s “values”. Although these organizations are duly mentioned in OSCE documents such as the 2001 Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism or the 2003 Maastricht Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century, and regularly invited to the UN retreats of regional organizations, they are not credited with the same level of respectability as the historical main players. The following EU statement, expressed in 2010 before the Astana Summit, is particularly revealing:

We believe that this can be achieved through co-operation between the OSCE and a *select few organisations* with expertise in the OSCE region, rather than measuring the effectiveness of such co-operation in terms of the sheer number of organisations attending OSCE meeting. [...] we wish to stress that in assessing the merits of such co-operation, it is paramount to consider the actions and decisions of an organisation and *their compatibility with OSCE values*. The EU is particularly interested in synergies with *organisations with a proven track record in honouring principles the OSCE stands for* [...].<sup>36</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the EU suggested focusing on the United Nations and the Council of Europe “as the two Organisations that the OSCE should actively pursue co-operation with”, but also encouraged OSCE-NATO co-operation

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34 Operational Document – the Platform for Co-operative Security, cited above (Note 2), p. 43.

35 Oleksandr Pavlyuk, The Platform for Co-operative Security: Ten Years of Co-operation, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), OSCE Yearbook 2009, Baden-Baden 2010, pp. 343-359, here: p. 349.

36 EU Statement on Co-operation with international, regional and sub-regional organizations, institutions and initiatives, OSCE Review Conference, Vienna, 22 October 2010, RC.DEL/281/10, 22 October 2010 (author’s emphasis).

where there is added value, which *de facto* implies excluding the organizations “East of Vienna”. NATO member states’ reservation about “Russia-driven” organizations has grown even stronger; the open appeal of the foreign ministers of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) to their NATO counterparts in May 2019, for strengthening mutual trust and developing co-operation, has remained unanswered.<sup>37</sup> Russia’s behaviour vis-à-vis the Atlantic Alliance often proceeds from a similar degree of sensitivity and mistrust, for instance when the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to NATO expressed concerns about representatives of the SMM in Ukraine briefing the North Atlantic Council. Since 2015, this mutual exclusiveness has led to an impasse on the modalities of the Ministerial Council.

In our opinion, the OSCE has no alternative but to be inclusive. The Platform’s underlying principles are inclusiveness, equality, transparency, comprehensiveness, and complementarity. The importance of a non-discriminatory and inclusive approach to all relevant actors (international, regional, and sub-regional organizations and institutions) has been underlined from the very beginning. “We should respect the principle of inclusiveness and involve all relevant players”, Secretary General Ján Kubiš emphasized in his address to the Regional EU Conference on Conflict Prevention “Partners in Prevention”, held in Helsingborg in 2002.<sup>38</sup> A dynamic and responsive multilateral system cannot be based on a fixed “balance-of-power” arrangement. On the contrary, “the potential of the emerging organizations in the Eastern part of the OSCE space should be acknowledged and they should be integrated into co-operation networks”.<sup>39</sup> If the system is to function, there is a constant need to work with partners. This means entering into dialogue and outreach, in order to discern where common purpose with those partners may lie. And it means making efforts to listen to and understand the perspectives of others in order to achieve overall positive results and inter-institutional progress.<sup>40</sup>

#### *Further Revitalizing Chapter VIII*

As a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, the OSCE is genuinely interested in increasing interaction with the UN. The OSCE is already strongly invested in UN-led global processes on issues ranging from

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37 Cf. SEC.DEL/207/19, 24 May 2019.

38 Cf. SEC.GAL/164/02, 17 September 2002, p. 2.

39 Wolfgang Zellner (co-ordinator)/Yves Boyer/Frank Evers/Isabelle Facon/Camille Grand/Ulrich Kühn/Lukasz Kulesa/Andrei Zagorski, *Towards a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Security Community: From Vision to Reality*, Hamburg/ Paris/Moscow/Warsaw 2012, p. 26, at: <https://interaffairs.ru/i/IDEAS.pdf>.

40 Cf. Christina Kokkinakis/Christoph Weidinger, *Concept note for the Austrian MFA Retreat at the European Forum Alpbach 2018: The Resilience of Values: Reconciling Diversity and Universality*, 25-26 August 2018, p. 3.

counter-terrorism<sup>41</sup> and the fight against violent extremism to climate change, migration governance, or sustainable development. In particular, the OSCE has a complementary role to play within its mandate in addressing the challenges postulated in the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the UN General Assembly and the Sustaining Peace Agenda. However, the 2014 Security Day on The OSCE and Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter: Confronting Emerging Security Challenges in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Space<sup>42</sup> did not exhaust all aspects of this issue in terms of aligning the OSCE agenda with the global initiatives and commitments of the UN, complementarity of OSCE efforts with those in the UN – indeed the vital cornerstone of multilateral responsibility and action – mainstreaming UN strategies at regional level, and bringing the regional-global partnership to a new level of clarity, practicality, and seriousness.

Focusing on Chapter VIII, missions could allow the OSCE to reconnect with its role as a “flexible framework for co-operation” (Platform for Co-operative Security, para. II, 7) and a “forum for subregional co-operation” (Charter for European Security, para. 13). On several occasions in the past, the OSCE has successfully taken upon itself the bridging role offered by the 1999 Platform. In 2002, Secretary General Ján Kubiš, building on the OSCE’s mandate as a forum for subregional co-operation, convened a meeting with regional and subregional organizations and initiatives on preventing and combating terrorism. For the first time ever, representatives of some 25 organizations, among them almost all of the regional and subregional organizations and initiatives operating in the OSCE area, as well as the OSCE’s traditional partners (the UN, CoE, EU, and NATO), came together to exchange information on their activities and projects on countering terrorism and to identify modalities for future co-operation. “I was surprised to see such a strong positive response

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41 The OSCE’s co-operation with the UN on countering terrorism is multi-faceted and includes: preventing violent extremism, border security and management, countering terrorist financing, countering the use of Internet for terrorist purposes, critical infrastructure protection and soft target protection, biometrics, and advance passenger data. See the OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism, adopted on 7 December 2012, PC.DEC/1063, 7 December 2012, Annex, para. 16, in: Organization for a Security and Co-operation in Europe, Permanent Council, Decision No. 1063, OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism, PC.DEC/1063, 7 December 2012, at: <https://www.osce.org/pc/98008>. Based on this mandate, the Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) within the OSCE Transnational Threats Department (TNTD) also promotes the implementation of the international legal framework against terrorism and assists participating States in the ratification and implementation of the 19 universal UN counter-terrorism instruments (UATI). As of April 2018, the ratification rate among the OSCE participating States in relation to the 17 UATI then in force was approximately 83 per cent. Cf. OSCE, Status of the Universal Anti-Terrorism Conventions and Protocols as well as other International and Regional Legal Instruments related to Terrorism and Co-operation in Criminal Matters in the OSCE Area, July 2018 Update, p. 4, available at: <https://www.osce.org/atu/17138>.

42 See OSCE Security Days, The OSCE and Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter: Confronting Emerging Security Challenges In the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Space, Vienna, 27 May 2014, Report, SEC.DAYS/13/14, 1 July 2014, available at: <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/120607>.

from subregional organizations and their endorsement of this move, considered to be an expression of a natural role for the OSCE”, Kubiš noted.<sup>43</sup>

Of course, this was in 2002, and as previously observed, international and regional partner organizations have often shown reluctance to be “co-ordinated” by the OSCE. Nonetheless, our Organization can certainly play a significant role bridging inter- and intra-regional initiatives. In the last few years, there have been numerous calls for convening a high-level meeting of the heads of subregional organizations and initiatives operating in the OSCE area, to share information and experience, to analyse prospects, and to identify areas and modalities for closer co-operation. “To develop the dialogue on pan-European security we propose a meeting of the heads of key international organizations – OSCE, NATO, the EU, the CIS and CSTO – on the basis of the Platform for Co-operative Security which we accepted within the framework of the OSCE [...]. The theme of this meeting would be to examine the security strategies of each of these organizations”, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov proposed in 2009.<sup>44</sup> If French President Emmanuel Macron’s recent call for a new confidence and security architecture that would go from Lisbon to Vladivostok were to materialize,<sup>45</sup> it would need to be supported by all the institutions operating in the region. The OSCE, as the most inclusive platform for dialogue in the northern hemisphere, could play a significant role in operationalizing these views.

### *Effective Multilateralism in the Field*

OSCE field operations are at the heart of the OSCE’s work, and one of the Organization’s major assets. All of them share information, co-operate and, as necessary, co-ordinate in implementing projects and other practical activities with other organizations present in their respective country, in accordance with their individual mandates. Co-operation in the field has led to considerable development of practical instruments and work modalities and has established

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43 Keynote Address by the OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Ján Kubiš, at the International Peace Academy Conference: The UN, the EU, NATO and Other Regional Actors in the 21st Century: Partners in Peace? SEC.GAL/210/02, 20 November 2002.

44 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov opening the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference on 23 June 2009, cited in: OSCE, Collective response urgently needed to address indivisible security, Russian Foreign Minister tells OSCE states”, Press Release, SEC.PR/281/09, 23 June 2009, also at: <https://www.osce.org/pc/51076>. See also: Revitalizing the OSCE Role as a Forum for Sub-regional Co-operation, Lithuania, Food-for-Thought Paper, PC.DEL/483/10, 4 June 2010, p. 2.

45 Cf. Christian Losson/Pierre Alonso/Hala Kodmani, Fort de Brégançon: entre Macron et Poutine, un petit pas et ça repatine [Fort de Brégançon: between Macron and Poutine, one small step and it’s back on track], Libération, 19 August 2019, at: [https://www.liberation.fr/planete/2019/08/19/fort-de-bregancon-entre-macron-et-poutine-un-petit-pas-et-ca-repatine\\_1746105](https://www.liberation.fr/planete/2019/08/19/fort-de-bregancon-entre-macron-et-poutine-un-petit-pas-et-ca-repatine_1746105), and President Macron’s speech at the Ambassadors’ Conference on 27 August 2019, at: <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2019/08/27/discours-du-president-de-la-republique-a-la-conference-des-ambassadeurs-1>.

pragmatic complementarity between international organizations where it counts most.

Paradoxically, co-operation in the field is probably the area where the modalities of the 1999 Platform have been least concretely implemented. “Regular information exchanges and meetings” are of course routine, but neither “joint needs assessment missions”, nor “secondment of experts by other organizations to the OSCE, appointment of liaison officers, development of common projects and field operations, and joint training efforts” seems to be common practice.

Therefore, as rightly emphasized by the CPC, there is room to further strengthen international co-operation and co-ordination in the field.<sup>46</sup> As there is sometimes a multitude of international actors present in the host country, each with its own mandate and agenda, effective interaction among international actors and with the host country is imperative in order to maximize their impact, avoid duplication, competition, and waste of resources, and, in certain areas, make sure that the host country will not relapse into conflict or crisis.

“In general, sharing operational information is more easily achieved than formulating joint strategic policy”,<sup>47</sup> but jointly elaborating viable strategies assisting and promoting regional solutions and co-operation should remain an objective. Joint missions should be revisited, in light of historical precedents.<sup>48</sup> Since 2018, OSCE regional heads of mission meetings have provided a useful forum for exchanging information, experience, and ideas with the heads of EU missions in South-Eastern Europe and in Central Asia, and for familiarizing them with the challenges faced by the OSCE field operations and with opportunities for co-operation.<sup>49</sup> In the future, an invitation to such regional meetings could also be extended to the heads of UN country teams, especially in the Western Balkans. Once set up with the consent of participating States, OSCE Thematic Centers/Hubs on economic and environmental issues could also become a catalyst for creating a network to facilitate exchange between international stakeholders.<sup>50</sup>

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46 Cf. OSCE, The Secretariat, Conflict Prevention Centre, cited above (Note 14), p. 4.

47 Ibid., p. 3.

48 A joint visit to Tirana, Albania, by the OSCE and the CoE was followed by a declaration issued by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, the President of the EU Council, the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the CoE, and the Chairman-in-Office of the Western European Union (WEU) Council on 23 September 1998, calling upon the government and the opposition to show moderation. Joint assessment missions were also carried out by OSCE/ODIHR and the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE. During his visit to the EU Institutions in Brussels in February 2001, Secretary General Ján Kubiš suggested that an OSCE representative could be invited to participate in the visits of the EU Troika to regions where the OSCE was particularly present and active.

49 In particular, the Regional Meeting of Heads of Field Operations in South-Eastern Europe, held in Pristina, Kosovo, on 30 September-1 October 2019, provided the occasion for a fruitful half-day exchange on the challenges and opportunities for co-operation with the five heads of EU missions and senior officials from the EEAS and the EU Commission.

50 See Ambassador Ivo Petrov/Dr Luis Gomez-Echeverri/Matthias Boss, draft feasibility study on the establishment of OSCE Thematic Hubs or Centres for Analysis and Research in the Second Dimension, 28 August 2019, p. 21.

*Is There a Need for a New Inter-institutional Setting for Co-operation?*

At a time when calls for multilateralism are on everyone's lips, the observer in 2019 cannot help but acknowledge the overall deterioration, not of the substance, but of the institutional framework for co-operation between international and regional organizations. A good example of this lies in the relationship between the UN and the OSCE. The resolution on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 20 December 2002, was the last of its kind.<sup>51</sup> This might well, in Oleksandr Pavlyuk's opinion, mirror the consistent failure by the OSCE participating States to agree on a political declaration since the Porto Ministerial Council in 2002.<sup>52</sup> With the end of this tradition, the UN Secretary-General's practice of drawing up a report on co-operation between the UN and the OSCE, sending it to the OSCE Secretariat to keep it informed early on, also disappeared.<sup>53</sup> There is an obvious contrast between the level of preparation and follow-up of the UN High-Level Meetings with regional organizations in the 2000s, and nowadays. The fifth High-Level Meeting on "New challenges to international peace and security, including international terrorism", held in New York on 29-30 July 2003, was followed by a detailed report officially transmitted by Secretary-General Kofi Annan to all participants. The report included the conclusions of the Chairman, Annan's own opening remarks, and the Framework for Cooperation in Confronting New Challenges to International Peace and Security, including International Terrorism that was agreed upon by participating organizations on that occasion.<sup>54</sup> As for the sixth High-Level Meeting on "United Nations-regional organizations: partnership for a more secure world", which took place in New York on 25-26 July 2005, not only a concept for discussion with guiding questions was submitted to the participating organizations, but also: the recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change related to the question: "What is our response?"; the conclusions of the six working groups established at the fifth High-Level Meeting in 2003, in view of their adoption; and finally, new areas for action. In contrast, only an invitation letter and a short agenda reached the OSCE in 2018, as well as a rather informal two pages-summary note after the event.

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51 United Nations, General Assembly, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly, 57/298. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, A/RES/57/298, 6 February 2003, available at: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/482289>. A draft resolution to be adopted by the 59th session of the UN General Assembly in 2004 was prepared, but failed to be adopted (draft circulated under CIO.GAL/94/04, 6 October 2004).

52 Cf. Pavlyuk, cited above (Note 35), p. 355 (there: Note 32).

53 Cf. United Nations, General Assembly, Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Report of the Secretary-General, A/57/217, 16 July 2002, available at: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/473090>.

54 Cf. UN Doc. A/58/444-S/2003/1022, 17 October 2003, circulated by OSCE Secretary General Perrin de Brichambaut under SEC.GAL/197/03, 5 November 2003.

The number of co-operation mechanisms and frameworks that have disappeared since 2000, or are simply dormant, is striking. Some of these mechanisms fulfilled their tasks and ceased to operate for obvious historical reasons, such as the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, placed under the auspices of the OSCE in 1999 and developed into a genuine framework for co-operation among international organizations active in the region until 2008, when it was replaced by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). For some others, quite worryingly, a lack of political willingness and the deterioration of the overall political environment in Europe might have simply prevailed.

Tripartite high-level meetings took place annually from 1993 onwards between the respective Secretaries General of the OSCE and the CoE, as well as the Director of the UN Office in Geneva.<sup>55</sup> These aimed to build mutual awareness of the organizations' respective activities in order to facilitate practical co-operation in conflict prevention and democratic institution-building, share information, and improve practical co-operation by drawing on each other's expertise and know-how, but are no longer convened. In 2011, it was acknowledged that the outcome of this tripartite consultation no longer corresponded to its aim. Despite the efforts of the CoE, which circulated a "Concept of structure and modalities of Tripartite CoE-OSCE-UN meetings as from 2012" suggesting, *inter alia*, regularly inviting the EU as an "affiliate member" with a view to possibly changing the format into a quadripartite meeting, the format did not survive any further.

With the EU, the practice of holding Troika meetings biannually since 2002, both at the ministerial and ambassadorial levels, was interrupted in 2014, due to growing difficulties with scheduling. Finally, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), a forum for political dialogue and consultation between NATO and partners able to identify and discuss early warning and conflict prevention issues, was put on hold in 2013, due to the deterioration of the NATO-Russia relationship.<sup>56</sup>

Do these mechanisms need to be replaced? Could establishing a joint consultative structure lead to better co-ordination of international efforts? The failure of the *ad hoc* consultative mechanism put forward in the OSCE Maastricht Strategy<sup>57</sup> is not very encouraging. According to Oleksandr Pavlyuk, it was

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55 Beginning with 1996, their composition has been enlarged to include the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the Director of ODIHR, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UNHCHR, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). In 2000, for the first time, the European Commission was also invited to participate.

56 Cf. Loïc Simonet, *The OSCE and NATO: Side by Side in a Turbulent World*, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), *OSCE Yearbook 2017, Baden-Baden 2018*, pp. 279-313, here: p. 310.

57 "More effort should be devoted to enhancing the functioning of the Platform for Co-operative Security in order to meet common threats more effectively and efficiently. To accomplish this, it will be proposed to establish a new ad-hoc consultative mechanism, in consultation with other international organizations and institutions, as part of the overall



perceived as “untimely and/or offering no added value”, hence the lukewarm response from partner organizations.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, the Peacebuilding Commission, meant to offer a forum for co-ordination in the area of post-conflict peacebuilding between the UN system and regional and subregional organizations, in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly resolution 60/180, has apparently not been very effective. Based on these experiences, it may simply not be realistic to crystallize any structure or framework for co-operation with other actors, considering their different memberships, mandates and priorities, different methodologies, and even different cultures, and also the need for flexibility and to adjust co-operation to specific circumstances. Having said that, some past suggestions deserve to be kept in mind and cannot be automatically ruled out under the pretext of “flexibility”.

The participants in the fifth High-Level Meeting between the UN and the regional organizations in 2003 in New York, in which Secretary General Perrin de Brichambaut participated, agreed “to establish a coordination centre/informal advisory council, at a high or working-level, between the UN and regional organizations to confront new challenges to international peace and security”.<sup>59</sup> To this end, an interim, full-time secretariat was established in the then UN Department of Political Affairs (UN DPA) in March 2005, and the Comparative Regional Integration Studies Programme of the UN University (UNU-CRIS) started to provide research and analytical support to the six working groups settled in June 2004 to implement the decisions of the meeting. The concept of an “interlocking mechanism of regional-global peace and security” was discussed at the sixth High-Level Meeting. Again, at the UN Secretary-General’s retreat with heads of regional and other organizations in Greentree Estate in 2010, the LAS suggested establishing a permanent commission or a group – a “G” – for co-ordination among international and regional organizations to enhance the multilateral system, under the chairmanship of the UN Secretary-General.

At a time when centres of excellence are proliferating (NATO alone has 25 accredited centres of excellence), it would be conceivable to build-up a “centre of excellence on effective multilateralism” placed under the *aegis* of the UN, which could, *inter alia*, support the co-ordination of international efforts with food for thought, concepts (including in better understanding the root causes of conflict), and strategies; collect lessons learned and best practices;<sup>60</sup>

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effort to jointly analyse and cope with threats. The OSCE offers this tool as a flexible framework for consultation by initiating contacts with relevant organizations and institutions as a specific threat arises or intensifies.” OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century, cited above (Note 5), para. 57.

58 Pavlyuk, cited above (Note 35), p. 357.

59 UN Doc. A/58/444-S/2003/1022, OSCE Doc. SEC.GAL/197/03, cited above (Note 54).

60 In 2014, Luk Van Langenhove, director of UNU-CRIS, suggested “creating a global mechanism of learning transfer from one organization to another or from one case to another” as a way to build trust between the different regional organizations and the UN at the highest level. Luk Van Langenhove, Chapter VIII, in: Security Community 2/2014, pp. 19-21, here: p. 20, available at: <https://www.osce.org/magazine/122525>.

and harmonize and standardize trainings in order to make the recruitment and deployment of experts more effective. The sustainability of such an institution, also in terms of capacity and resources, would, however, remain a big question mark.

In more operational terms, alliances and *ad hoc* coalitions could help conduct dialogue on specific themes; what UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, at the 2010 retreat, called “creative and case-specific” partnerships. The models of the Friends of Albania Group<sup>61</sup>, ENVSEC<sup>62</sup> or the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, which has served as a platform for joint advocacy by international, regional and subregional organizations dealing with combating trafficking in human beings since 2004, could be replicated to areas such as arms control, climate change, cyber/ICT security, and artificial intelligence. Such forms of “flexible multilateralism” would be particularly useful in the case of insufficient consensus among governments to move ahead.

*Revitalizing the Secretary General’s Annual Report to the Permanent Council on Interaction between Organizations and Institutions in the OSCE Area*

The 1999 Platform for Co-operative Security actually provides that “the Secretary General shall prepare an annual report for the Permanent Council on interaction between organizations and institutions in the OSCE area” (para. 8). Unfortunately, this practice was promptly overtaken by a Permanent Council Decision on Improving Annual Reporting on the Activities of the OSCE, stating that: “The Annual Report [of the Secretary General] will include the report on interaction between organizations and institutions in the OSCE area, as requested in the 1999 Istanbul Charter for European Security, the Platform for Co-operative Security, as a separate chapter” (PC.DEC/495, 5 September

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61 A pragmatic example of OSCE co-ordination of activities by the international community, the Friends of Albania Group was initiated by the OSCE and co-chaired by the OSCE Presence in Albania and the EU Mission. This flexible co-ordinating framework for international efforts, which held its inaugural meeting in Brussels in September 1998, was open to countries and international institutions that wished to actively support Albania in its development efforts. It brought together bilateral and multilateral donors, together with a number of major non-governmental organizations, and provided a forum for information sharing, consultation, and co-ordination between international actors engaged in Albania.

62 The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) includes the OSCE, the UNDP, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UNECE; one of ENVSEC’s original partners, the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), has been dissolved in the meantime, and NATO has left the initiative. ENVSEC addresses environmental problems that may threaten security and offers joint expertise and resources in co-operation with relevant national ministries, national experts, NGOs, and think-tanks. Cf. OSCE, ENVSEC – The Environment and Security Initiative: Transforming Risks into Co-operation, 7 June 2016, at: <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/245211>, and ENVSEC Environment and Security, Transforming Risks into Cooperation: The Environment and Security Initiative 2003-2013, at: <http://www.envsec.org/publications/ENVSECTransformingRisks.FINAL.web.pdf>. A new Memorandum of Understanding between the four partners was signed in 2019.

2002) and a decision of the Maastricht Ministerial Council on the Annual Report of the Secretary General: “It will include, as a separate chapter, a report on the results of interaction between organizations and institutions in the OSCE area, as requested in the Charter for European Security adopted at the Istanbul Summit, the Platform for Co-operative Security, and a report on interaction with Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation”, the latter allowing reporting about interaction with regional organizations outside the OSCE area (MC.DEC/1/03, 24 October 2003). The result is a loss of visibility of this particular aspect of the OSCE’s co-operation with other institutional actors, now merged into a voluminous annual report, at the end of the document.

It is true that information on meetings with other organizations and institutions is regularly provided in the weekly reports of the Secretary General to the PC. Nonetheless, one might regret the abandonment of this tradition of a special report to the PC and advocate for its resumption, as Secretary General Lamberto Zannier did explicitly in 2016.<sup>63</sup>

*Conclusion: “Make Multilateralism Great Again” through Co-operation between International Organizations*

“We need a recommitment to multilateralism”, Minister Miroslav Lajčák said when he presented the priorities of the Slovak Chairperson-in-Office.<sup>64</sup> Even if “the world will not return to a ‘golden era’ of multilateral governance”,<sup>65</sup> effective multilateralism is still a “life or death” issue in 2019.

Co-operation among organizations is an ever-moving target. It requires constant attention and effort at all levels. It needs the political will and guidance by member and/or participating States. Such commitment actually begins in the capitals.<sup>66</sup> For the Warsaw Reflection Group in 2005, “effective multilateralism” required states “to co-operate more intensively not only within the organisations but also across the structures. The responsibility for organising this co-operation should not only rest with the group of delegates designated

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63 Cf. talking points of the OSCE Secretary General on “Co-operation with International and Regional Organizations”, as delivered at the 1117th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna, 3 November 2016, SEC.GAL/166/16, 9 November 2016.

64 OSCE Slovakia 2019, Statement by the Chairperson in Office, H.E. Miroslav Lajčák, Presentation of Priorities, Vienna, Austria, 10 January 2019, CIO.GAL/4/19, 10 January 2019, at: <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/408602>.

65 Ikenberry, cited above (Note 12), p. 410.

66 The 2005 Declaration on Co-operation between the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation calls for “more active involvement of the Member and participating States, in order to produce synergies and avoid unnecessary duplication, giving the fullest account however to the different nature and membership of the two Organizations, and make best use of their comparative advantages” and for “better co-ordination within the national administrations of the Member and participating States [...]”. PC.DEC/670, 28 April 2005, Annex to: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Permanent Council, Decision No. 670, Co-operation between the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Council of Europe, 28 April 2005, p. 1, available at: <https://www.osce.org/pc/14503>, p. 1.

by states to represent their interests within a particular institution. There should be an equal responsibility for the officials in capitals that are in charge of different organisations to consult and co-operate when developing their thinking about agendas and activities”.<sup>67</sup> The responsibility in taking decisions on co-ordination and co-operation between organizations, as well as making priorities and allocating resources, lies ultimately with the member and participating States.

The problem is that political will is often lacking. To some extent, states may sometimes be seen as the main obstacles to effective multilateralism. In this regard, it is difficult to understand why some participating States object to the opening of OSCE liaison offices in capital cities hosting major international organizations (such as Brussels, New York, or Geneva). One of the proposals made by OSCE Secretary General Thomas Greminger in his 2018 “Fit for Purpose” strategy paper, after decades of advocacy by his predecessors and many states, and dozens of proposals and food-for-thought papers, was that such liaison arrangements would further operationalize the OSCE strategic relationship with key partner organizations and significantly improve the scope and effectiveness of our co-operation. It would also contribute to balancing the OSCE’s loss of comparative advantage in comparison with other international and regional organizations represented abroad by substantive and long-standing presences.<sup>68</sup> Paradoxically too, one of the two OSCE participating States promoting an “alliance for multilateralism” reaching out to “all members of the international community, international organizations, regional institutions and other relevant actors, as essential and active partners”,<sup>69</sup> has been one of the fiercest advocates of the “zero nominal growth” policy which is endangering the Organization’s ability to effectively monitor, prevent, and respond to a growing number of complex crises and challenges.

The political will of all states to rely on multilateral responses to challenges must be strengthened. “Co-ordination will be very difficult if participating States themselves do not have a clear vision of the role of the OSCE, of their own responsibilities to implement OSCE commitments and of how they

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67 Dena W. Gurgul/Grzegorz Sieczak (eds), *Towards Complementarity of European Security Institutions: Achieving Complementarity between NATO, EU, OSCE and the Council of Europe*, Report of the Warsaw Reflection Group, 31 January-1 February 2005, Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Warsaw 2005, p. 7.

68 The CoE (in 2011), the LAS, NATO (in 2018, following a non-permanent liaison arrangement set up two years earlier), the UN (a liaison office representing the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs/DPPA, Peace Operations/DPO, and Operational Support/DOS has been set up in 2016), and the UNHCR (in 1998) have all opened a permanent presence in Vienna, whereas the EU is represented by its delegation to the international organizations in Vienna; something that the OSCE has been unable to reciprocate.

69 Cf. Permanent mission of France to the United Nations in New York, *Alliance for Multilateralism – Building the Network and Presenting Results*. Side-event at UNGA74, 26 September 2019, Statement by the Co-Chairs, at: <https://onu.delegfrance.org/Alliance-for-Multilateralism-Building-the-Network-and-Presenting-Results>. Cf. also Jean-Yves Le Drian/Heiko Maas, *Non, le multilatéralisme n’est pas dépassé* [No, multilateralism is not outdated], *Le Figaro*, 12 November 2019, at: <https://www.lefigaro.fr/vox/monde/jean-yves-le-drian-et-heiko-maas-non-le-multilateralisme-n-est-pas-depasse-20191111>.

wish to see the OSCE interact with other international organisations. Effective co-operation between international organisations can only be developed if there is basic political will to do so among the participating States of the organisations involved.<sup>70</sup> This starts with the Chairperson-in-Office whose responsibility, both as Foreign Minister of a participating State and as leader of the political work ahead of the next Ministerial Council, makes it vital for bilateral contacts with other organizations, as clearly underlined by the 1999 Platform.<sup>71</sup>

Beyond participating States, effective multilateralism through co-operation between institutional actors is also an issue of broader communication. Indeed, what matters is not only the OSCE's own perceptions about its role and capabilities, and therefore its added value, but also whether our perceptions are known, understood, shared, and respected by others, particularly our key institutional partners. "To win support, our added value must become more apparent", Secretary General Greminger highlighted in a speech at Princeton University in 2018.<sup>72</sup>

This may be achieved by enhancing the capacity of the OSCE as a whole to speak with one voice to the "outside world". As a precondition for effective co-operation with other organizations, "the OSCE should mainstream the culture of co-operation and solidarity within its structures" and "assess current forms of intra-institutional co-operation", as advocated by several participants in the 2014 OSCE Human Dimension Seminar.<sup>73</sup> Respect for the Secretary General's pre-eminence as the representative of the Chairman-in-Office in "ensuring the effective and continuous working contacts with other international organizations and institutions"<sup>74</sup> and sharing information between the Secretariat and its departments, the institutions, and the field operations, are essential to ensure continuity, coherence, and oversight of efforts with regard to co-operation with external partners, especially with the EU in Brussels.

The renewal of multilateralism to address current challenges and emerging trends should also include focusing on reinvigorating popular support for

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70 Lars-Erik Lundin, Working together: the OSCE's relationship with other relevant international organisations, Nine steps to effective OSCE engagement, Food-for-thought paper commissioned by the CIO, CIO.GAL/83/12/Corr.1, 9 July 2012, p. 9, available at: <https://www.osce.org/cio/92009>.

71 "Participating States encourage the Chairman-in-Office, supported by the Secretary General, to work with other organizations and institutions to foster co-ordinated approaches that avoid duplication and ensure efficient use of available resources." Operational Document – the Platform for Co-operative Security, cited above (Note 2), p. 45.

72 OSCE, "The future of European Security", Keynote by OSCE Secretary General Thomas Greminger, Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination, Princeton University, 28 September 2018, SEC.GAL/151/18, 8 October 2018, p. 3, also available at: <https://www.osce.org/secretary-general/399071>. "Sharpening and raising the OSCE's profile" is one of the seven areas for reforms in Secretary General Greminger's "Fit for Purpose" agenda.

73 OSCE/ODIHR, OSCE Human Dimension Seminar, Improving OSCE Effectiveness by Enhancing Its Co-operation with Relevant Regional and International Organizations, Warsaw, 12-14 May 2014, , Consolidated Summary, ODIHR/GAL/37/14, 14 July 2014, p. 7, also available at: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/121099>.

74 Sofia Ministerial Council Decision No. 15/04, cited above (Note 11), p. 54.

the multilateral order. This vision of multilateral institutions “built for people”<sup>75</sup> was well understood by the 2019 Slovak Chairmanship, whose priority has been to bring the OSCE “closer to the people it is working for, in terms of both goals and impact”.<sup>76</sup>

The Platform for Co-operative Security adopted in Istanbul twenty years ago was a milestone for the first generation of the OSCE’s external relations with international and regional partner organizations. Based on twenty years of experience, there is now a need to bring this co-operation to a new generation. In the words of the UN Secretary-General’s message on the first observance of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace on 24 April 2019, “networked multilateralism” through close co-operation among international and regional organizations, is not enough: We need an “inclusive multilateralism”, rooted in partnerships with civil society, businesses, the academia, and other stakeholders, including women as well as young people;<sup>77</sup> we need a “meaningful multilateralism”, “one that brings added value to national efforts and is not the result of abstract plans or bureaucratic processes”.<sup>78</sup> The OSCE is ideally suited to achieving this “effective multilateralism”.

The current Chairmanship’s focus on effective multilateralism will remain highly relevant as we move into 2020. The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe (1990) and its call for a “Europe whole and free” will certainly allow for a review of the contribution made by international organizations in addressing this challenge. The UN’s 75th anniversary in 2020 will also offer an opportunity to capture the collective commitment of member states to multilateralism and their shared vision for a common future.<sup>79</sup>

Let us give the final word to NATO Secretary General Lord George Robertson, addressing the PC in 2001:

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75 “Our multilateral institutions were built for people. Not for politicians. Not for diplomats. But people. If we lose sight of that, we lose sight of our overall mission”, Slovakia’s Foreign and European Affairs State Secretary Lukáš Parížek addressing the OSCE Permanent Council, Press Release, SEC.PR/387/18, 19 July 2018; also at: <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/388631>.

76 OSCE Slovakia 2019, Programme of the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship 2019, p. 11, at: <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/408353>.

77 Cf. The Secretary-General, Message on the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, 24 April 2019, *United Nations Information Service*, UNIS/SGSM/928, 23 April 2019, at: <http://www.unis.unvienna.org/unis/en/pressrels/2019/unisgsm928.html>.

78 Remarks by Secretary General Thomas Greminger at the workshop “International Institutions in Turbulent Time”, University of Oxford, 14 May 2018.

79 Cf. United Nations, General Assembly, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 14 June 2019, 73/299. Commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, A/RES/73/299, 18 June 2019, at: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/299>; cf. also An Innovation Agenda for UN 75 – The Albright-Gambari Commission Report and the Road to 2020, The Stimson Center, 2019, and its Roadmap for Maximizing Results at the UN 75 (2020) Leaders Summit, *ibid.*, pp. 56-63, at: <http://www.platformglobalsecurityjusticegovernance.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Innovation-Agenda-for-UN-75-June-2019.pdf>.

Our institutions are not rivals but partners. The emerging Euro-Atlantic security architecture is not a system of competing institutions, nor is it a Darwinian system of “survival of the fittest.” Of course, our institutions are continuing to evolve; and of course, the relations between them are evolving as well. But this is a very positive evolution: towards common philosophies, common approaches to problem solving, and – I hope – regular institutional links between our two organizations.<sup>80</sup>

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80 NATO, Intervention by Secretary General at the OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna, Austria, 2 November 2000, at: <https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2000/s001102a.htm>, circulated under PC.DEL/668/00, 2 November 2000.