

Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy
at the University of Hamburg / IFSH (ed.)

OSCE Yearbook 2019

Yearbook on the Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)



Nomos

OSCE Yearbook

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Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy
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Yearbook on the Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Edited by the IFSH in co-operation with

Pál Dunay, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies,
Garmisch-Partenkirchen

P. Terrence Hopmann, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International
Studies, Washington

Adam Daniel Rotfeld, Member of the Executive Board of the European
Leadership Network, Warsaw

Andrei Zagorski, Institute of World Economy and International Relations,
Moscow

Editor-in-Chief: Ursel Schlichting, Hamburg

Translator/Editor: Caroline Taylor, Hamburg



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The Slovak OSCE Chairmanship in 2019: An Appeal for Stronger Multilateralism and More Dialogue

Established almost 45 years ago as an antidote to festering Cold War divisions in Europe, the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) reached across the iron curtain and created what was unthinkable at that time: a platform for dialogue between East and West, with an overarching aim for peace, stability and prosperity on the continent.

In 1995, the Conference became the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Since then, the OSCE has evolved to become the largest regional security organization in the world, with mandates spanning political and governance support, election observation missions, field operations, human rights, and issues of social, economic, and environmental development. But one fundamental characteristic has remained until today: the OSCE is still the only dialogue platform where 57 participating States from within and beyond Europe come together with equal voices and equal rights – whether big or small, likeminded or not – to discuss a co-operative approach to security.

When Slovakia took over from Italy to lead the OSCE in 2019, we did so deeply humbled by the great honour and the trust that had been placed in a small nation like ours, but also fully aware of the great responsibility it entailed. We did not enter into this naively thinking we could change the fate of multilateral co-operation, the region, or the Organization in only one year. But despite these natural limitations, we were determined to make a difference where it really matters – for the people on the ground, to open up new spaces for dialogue, to recommit to the basics we may forget at times, and we did so fully aware that the stakes were high. So, in 2019, we guided our work for people, dialogue, and stability in the OSCE region, focusing on three areas.

Ongoing Conflicts in Europe – Alarming Trends

Unsurprisingly, the conflict in and around Ukraine was a top priority for us. The number of casualties we have witnessed in eastern Ukraine in the past five years is higher than anything we have seen elsewhere in Europe this century. However, the real tragedy becomes clear only when you look at the hundreds of thousands of people severely impacted by the conflict, living along the contact line in dire humanitarian situations. Their daily struggle does not make headlines on the front pages of our newspapers, but it is very real.

Back in January, things looked bleak. We had just seen a spike in tensions, and the path forward seemed uncertain.

This is why we decided to put our primary focus on people, aiming to find very concrete ways to ease their suffering. Early in the year, we proposed nine simple and tangible confidence-building measures (CBMs) on issues such as improving the situation with regard to checkpoints, facilitating the exchange of detainees, boosting humanitarian demining, and, importantly, repairing the damaged bridge in Stanytsia Luhanska. The bridge became my personal mission in 2019, simply because, during my first trip to Ukraine as Chairperson in January, I was shocked by what I saw: the suffering these people – most of them elderly – had to go through in crossing the bridge. Because of the damage done to the bridge by the conflict, simple tasks like collecting pensions or seeking healthcare put people’s lives in danger. This November, however, after intense negotiation, the damaged bridge was repaired, and they can now cross in safety and with dignity – an important symbol of progress and hope.

We have also seen progress through our other humanitarian CBMs. After four trips to Ukraine as OSCE Chairperson, I can attest to the great work being done on the ground by the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) and the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) to continue to alleviate the suffering of people. In fact, the more than 1,300 SMM monitors, under the new leadership of Ambassador Yaşar Halit Çevik, are the eyes and ears of the international community on the ground.

In 2019, we also witnessed what none of us predicted: the power of political will with the landslide victory of President Volodymyr Zelensky and his firm determination to end the war in the east. Since then we have seen unprecedented political progress, culminating in the first Normandy Four Summit in Paris in three years, with concrete outcomes such as ceasing fire, additional disengagement, and a second exchange of detainees, which will be followed by another meeting in four months’ time. All of these represent real steps towards implementing our best and only chance at a political solution: the Minsk Agreements. And we need to keep this extremely important momentum alive.

Unfortunately, Ukraine is not the only home to hostilities in Europe. People elsewhere continue to suffer the adverse impact of unresolved conflicts. When it comes to Nagorno-Karabakh, there remains a real risk of escalation. In Georgia, people are living with the reality of frequent denials of fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of movement. And, in the Transdniestrian settlement process, it is positive that we managed to adopt a Ministerial Statement on the negotiations in the “5+2” format at the Ministerial Council in Bratislava, but without concrete commitments on the way forward, the progress made in recent years is at risk of backsliding. In all these cases, the OSCE’s efforts to de-escalate tensions and open channels for new dialogue remain invaluable, and it is clear that the Organization will be the first to offer its support for concrete steps towards peace.

We cannot, however, focus only on the conflicts of today. We must also respond to another trend.

The Uncertainty Surrounding Future Threats to Peace and Security

Slovakia chose the theme “A Safer Future” as a second priority for its Chairmanship. All over the world, challenges to peace and security have changed rapidly in recent years and are not as easy to detect as they used to be. More conflicts are now fought within, rather than across, borders. Regular armed forces are, in many cases, outnumbered by non-state actors. Cyber-attacks or the decision to go down the path of violent extremism do not come with sirens or flashing lights. And, from climate change to anti-Semitism, hate, and intolerance, the drivers of conflict are more expansive and complex than ever.

To achieve security in Europe, we not only have to react to these realities; we must also scan the horizon for new ones. All new and emerging challenges must be on the table – from energy, natural resources, and climate change to cyber threats. We must also seriously exploit opportunities in other areas, such as the full inclusion of women and young people throughout our work, and support longer-term prevention, like Security Sector Governance and Reform (SSG/R). Engaging with OSCE tools like the Structured Dialogue, or indeed ensuring these tools can evolve, for example by modernizing the Vienna Document, are also key areas where positive changes can be made.

I am glad that we managed to adopt two commemorative declarations at this year’s Ministerial Council in Bratislava, on the 25th anniversary of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and of the Principles Governing Non-Proliferation respectively. However, commemorative texts are not enough to move our Organization forward.

A serious concern in planning for a safer future is that, although our work around democratic institutions and human rights remains a cornerstone of our understanding of comprehensive security, it is becoming more and more difficult to hold the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) of the OSCE, Europe’s largest annual human rights and democracy conference. Spending weeks discussing modalities does not advance security, human rights, or prosperity in the region and it does not help people on the ground. I made this point very clearly to ministers in Bratislava this December, and I hope we see some flexibility and progress in the years ahead.

The Dangers Facing Our Multilateral Order

Finally, the third trend we addressed – and aimed to counter – in 2019 relates to the dangers facing our multilateral order. These days, multilateralism has become a buzzword, but the meaning behind it goes back centuries. It is the idea that we can gain more working together than alone; that co-operation and dialogue can prevent conflict and create opportunity; that as diverse as the 57 participating States of the OSCE region are, from Vancouver to Vladivostok, joint solutions to our common challenges are more likely to stick.

The OSCE is multilateralism in action, but it is not a lone wolf. In fact, it is operating in quite a crowded landscape. In 2019, Slovakia worked to support complementary partnerships across this landscape – from regional organizations, like the European Union, to the global framework of the United Nations. This is why I am glad that we finalized a joint statement with the UN Secretary-General to supplement the framework for co-operation and co-ordination between our two organizations.

Lately, we have heard more and more voices speaking up in support of multilateralism. We also heard the same from the more than 50 decision-makers participating in this year’s Ministerial Council in Bratislava. And we have seen it through two countries, Sweden and Poland, showing their commitment to picking up the slack and deciding to lead the Organization in 2021 and 2022 respectively. With Albania as the Chair for 2020, this provides us with continuity and the chance for more long-term planning. And I thank all three countries for taking on the challenge.

However, while speaking up for multilateralism is very positive, and we should continue to do so, our words alone will not change anything. This is why I issued my Bratislava Appeal¹ ahead of the Bratislava Ministerial Council, urging my colleagues to recommit to what we all believe in – co-operation, dialogue, our principles and commitments, and joint solutions – and show our belief in the very fundamentals of the OSCE through the way we conduct our day-to-day affairs.

Multilateralism requires commitment and compromise, or consensus in the case of the OSCE.

And although more than 40 ministers joined me in my call, the outcome of our negotiations painted a different picture. The bleak reality of 2019 is that we are unable to find consensus; to adapt to the changing security environment around us; and we are not well equipped to respond to the challenges of today and tomorrow.

If we cannot even agree on the basics, from our annual budget to agendas for our events, what chance do we have of realizing the full vision of the Helsinki Final Act?

For peace and stability in Europe, a recommitment to multilateralism is crucial.

Throughout the year, whether in our series of Chair’s Dialogues with Vienna-based Permanent Representatives, or through our Informal Ministerial Gathering in the Slovak High Tatras mountains, I have heard that the OSCE’s 57 participating States believe in our regional multilateral system, in the principles the Organization stands for, in solution-based and interactive dialogue, and in our shared responsibility to the people on the ground.

1 OSCE, OSCE Chair Lajčák kicks off 26th Ministerial Council with his “Bratislava Appeal”: calls for increased flexibility and willingness to compromise, Bratislava, 5 December 2019, at: <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/441173>.

And I myself witnessed the OSCE's irreplaceable role and vast potential in bringing the dream of lasting peace in Europe to life when I visited 15 OSCE field operations.

But I have not seen any manifestations of this spirit in the negotiations during this year's Ministerial Council, which continued after the ministers left Bratislava. And here, once again, I would repeat my appeal to all participating States to show their recommitment through actions and not just words.

Now it is time to hand over the reins to Albania for 2020. And all that is left is my sincere hope that, in 2019, Slovakia made a small but important contribution to strengthening our regional multilateral system and that the benefits will be felt, not just in Vienna, but by people on the ground.

Preface

The adoption of the Istanbul Charter for European Security in November 1999, and the Platform for Co-operative Security contained therein, was a promising step towards enhanced co-operation between the security organizations operating in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area. This year marks its 20th anniversary, which is honoured in this edition of the OSCE Yearbook with an in-depth and multi-faceted contribution by Loïc Simonet. However, the Platform proved unable to fulfil the expectations placed in it to the extent hoped for. As Simonet writes, “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.” The year 2019 has not seen many major OSCE anniversaries and it is not until 2020 that we will celebrate the 45th anniversary of the adoption of the Helsinki Final Act and the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Paris – and thus the end of the Cold War.

During our research on the topic of “anniversaries”, however, we came across an innovative idea in an essay by Douglas Wake from 18 January 2019: “Did the Cold War end in Vienna thirty years ago this week?”¹ In his article, Wake refers to the Concluding Document of the third CSCE Follow-up Meeting adopted on 15 January 1989,² which had begun more than two years earlier on 4 November 1986. At the time, the document was considered “a tremendous step forward in European security co-operation” (Wake). For example, in the politico-military sphere, the previous negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures were now structured more clearly. Of particular importance was the launch of separate negotiations on a treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe (CFE) within the CSCE with clear guidelines, for example, for “the scope and areas of application” and for the monitoring of compliance with the provisions of the future treaty through “an effective and strict verification regime which [...] will include on-site inspections as a matter of right and

1 Douglas Wake, *Did the Cold War End in Vienna Thirty Years Ago this Week?* Security and Human Rights Monitor, 18 January 2019, at: <https://www.shrmonitor.org/did-the-cold-war-end-in-vienna-thirty-years-ago-this-week/>.

2 Concluding Document of the Vienna Meeting 1986 of Representatives of the Participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Held on the Basis of the Provisions of the Final Act Relating to the Follow-Up to the Conference, Vienna 1989 (herein after: Concluding Document), available at: <https://www.osce.org/mc/40881>.

exchanges of information”.³ Even details such as the agenda and work programme of the negotiations, working methods, and financial issues were specified. The CFE Treaty was signed in November 1990 and advanced soon to become a cornerstone of European security.

In the human dimension, the Concluding Document not only created a mechanism that allows a participating State to raise questions relating to the human dimension in another OSCE participating State,⁴ but also contains concrete guidelines for the “agenda, timetable and other organizational modalities” for the meetings on the human dimension, including detailed work programmes for each meeting.⁵ The results of the meetings in Copenhagen (1990) and Moscow (1991) in particular are still regarded as milestones for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Although Wake notes that the Vienna Concluding Document “may appear in hindsight as a logical step in [the] development of the OSCE *acquis* from the 1975 Helsinki Final Act to the 1990 Charter of Paris” it was clearly a “tremendous step” given the political situation at the point of departure for its negotiation. However, with Mikhail Gorbachev becoming the leader of the Soviet Union in 1985, the mid-80s also became a point of departure for unexpected, rapid, and fundamental political changes in Europe and in international relations – finally, it was indeed the Charter of Paris that ended the Cold War. 2020 will therefore mark a much bigger anniversary in the history of the OSCE.

This year, for the opening chapter of the OSCE Yearbook, “The OSCE and European Security”, OSCE Secretary General Thomas Greminger has authored an article that deals with the questions of how the OSCE contributes to the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations Agenda 2030, and how the Organization can further strengthen its involvement in the global framework set by the Agenda. The need to involve the OSCE is clear: Its many and varied efforts to strengthen security in Europe and prevent conflicts are, according to Greminger, of fundamental importance for inclusive and sustainable development. In his contribution, Heinz Gärtner notes that Europe’s role in world politics is mostly ignored in American academic debates – wrongly, in his view. He argues that Europe has concepts and instruments that have successfully contributed to the management and resolution of conflicts outside the EU area and have lost none of their relevance today, one of these being the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. “Europe’s Goal Should Be Helsinki” is therefore the motto at the heart of his contribution. Vladimir F. Pryakhin takes a look back to the time of the Cold War and draws conclusions for the future: He recalls the Scientific Forum of the CSCE, which took place in February and March 1980 at the Congress Centre in Hamburg. Intended to

3 Concluding Document, Annex III, Chairman’s Statement, Negotiation on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, pp. 43-53, here: p. 45.

4 Cf. Concluding Document, p. 35-36; cf. also OSCE ODIHR, OSCE Human Dimension Commitments, Vol. 1, Thematic Compilation, 3rd edition, Warsaw 2011, p. xx, pp. 15-16.

5 Cf. Concluding Document, Annex X, Agenda, Timetable and other Organizational Modalities of the Meetings on the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE, pp. 73-80.

promote scientific exchange in the natural sciences, medicine, and the humanities and social sciences across the rifts between East and West, it proved to be a great success despite previous resistance and differences of opinion at the political level. Forty years later, in the face of today's global problems, Pryakhin advocates a revival of the Scientific Forum: In his eyes, such a revival would provide the international academic community with an opportunity to make an objective prognosis for the development of humanity in the 21st century and the challenges to be met.

In the chapter on domestic developments in individual participating States and their multilateral engagement, Ekaterina Dorodnova describes the developments in Armenia since the peaceful transfer of power in Yerevan in April 2018, an event which is widely regarded as an achievement in democracy building. At the same time, however, she asks whether the still fragile democracy in Armenia can guarantee security there, or whether there is a risk that it will lead to instability in a complex domestic, regional and global context. Using the example of former Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Thomas Kunze examines how leaders in Central Asia who plan to voluntarily withdraw from active politics can prepare and steer their political succession in such a way that they can avert the greatest danger they face after leaving office. This danger lies not in the loss of power as such, but in the loss of their financial and physical integrity and that of their families. In his contribution, Vadym Vasiutynskyi deals with socio-psychological aspects of the presidential elections in Ukraine from the disintegration of the Soviet Union to the present day – “from a communist ideologist to an actor-comedian”.

Since its outbreak in 2014, the Ukrainian conflict has regularly been the subject of detailed analyses in the OSCE Yearbook. In 2014, the conflict was a focal point, at the heart of which was a contribution by Claus Neukirch on the timely deployment and rapid growth of the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) – a prompt and strong OSCE response, a success story that unexpectedly catapulted the Organization into the centre of international attention. In 2015, the conflict continued to be a focus of interest, with a contribution by Heidi Tagliavini, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office from June 2014 until June 2015 in the negotiations between Russia and Ukraine in the framework of the Trilateral Contact Group, which she moderated, making a central contribution. In 2016, Marcel Peško took stock of the OSCE's response to the crisis; in 2017, Walter Kemp looked at the risks and dangers for a civilian mission operating in a war zone; and in 2018, Lukasz Mackiewicz wrote about the human dimension in the SMM. In 2019, we now focus on another interesting aspect of the SMM: Cono Giardullo of the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), Rome, Walter Dorn of the Royal Military College of Canada, and Danielle Stodilka of the Canadian International Council (CIC) describe the innovative technologies used by the SMM, which include state-of-the-art remote camera systems, satellite images, and long-range unmanned

aerial vehicles (UAVs). These technologies are used for night-time observation, to monitor areas inaccessible to regular patrols, and to document the consequences of the conflict for the population and infrastructure.

Günther Baechler, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the South Caucasus from 2016 to 2019 and Co-Chair of the Geneva International Discussions (GID), gives an insider's perspective on the mediation efforts of the international community in the conflict in Georgia and the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. He provides a detailed and stimulating explanation and comparison of both negotiation formats and concludes: "If the numerous actors in the South Caucasus were to focus more on economic integration and infrastructural communication channels than on identity and territorial issues, then the educated youth, who are still leaving the region in large numbers, would have a good future ahead of them." Elia Bescotti deals with the conflicts in Georgia from a different perspective. The focus is not on the pragmatic stabilization and calming of the situation in the conflict areas, among other things in order to make life easier for the population, but rather on fundamental solutions to the tension between Georgia's territorial integrity and the status quo of the de-facto states against the background of Russian security interests.

Few conflict resolution efforts have received the same ongoing coverage in the OSCE Yearbooks as the process of political settlement of the Moldova/Transnistria conflict. This year, too, one article is devoted to this topic – this time, however, the conflict itself is relegated to the background: The turbulent domestic political developments in Moldova prompted the editorial team to approach one of the most renowned experts on the situation in Moldova, William H. Hill, who headed the OSCE Mission to Moldova for many years. After the parliamentary elections in February 2019 failed to produce a clear result, the pro-Russian Party of Socialists and the pro-Western Alliance ACUM agreed on a coalition government shortly before the deadline for new elections had expired. The ruling Democratic Party (PDM) of oligarch Vladimir Plahotniuc nevertheless tried to stay in power for a week and refused to leave the government buildings. It was only when Russia, the EU and the US agreed to support the new coalition that the PDM gave up and Plahotniuc fled the country and Maia Sandu became the new prime minister. Hill's contribution this year therefore not only deals with "steps forward and stumbles back" in the conflict resolution process, but also includes an analysis of domestic political events. The chapter closes with a detailed contribution by Namig Abbasov on the federal, regional, and local dimensions of conflict in the North Caucasus, in which he explains his thesis, against a detailed historical background, that the conflict in the North Caucasus has not ended, as Putin announced in February 2008, but is merely "frozen".

Until 2019, Anita Danka was Human Rights Adviser in the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), whose mandate is largely to collect and analyse information on the implementation of OSCE commitments on human rights and fundamental freedoms in the OSCE region.

To this end, ODIHR carries out targeted monitoring activities, for example with regard to the right to fair trial, the application of the death penalty, the situation of human rights defenders, and the freedom of peaceful assembly. Using the example of monitoring freedom of assembly in OSCE participating States, Danka illustrates the work of ODIHR human rights observers, in this case their independent, impartial, and objective reporting of demonstrations and protests, including documentation of the conduct of both assembly participants and law enforcement officials, which makes a valuable contribution to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the OSCE participating States.

The assassinations of three journalists – Daphne Caruana Galizia in October 2017, Ján Kuciak in February 2018, and Jamal Khashoggi in October 2018 – are just a few prominent examples of the alarming increase in violence against journalists in recent years, as well as the daily harassment, threats, and intimidations. In his contribution, Representative on Freedom of the Media Harlem Désir pays tribute to the Ministerial Council Decision No. 3/18 on “Safety of Journalists” of 7 December 2018 and calls on participating States to give greater priority to the safety of journalists and to develop legislation to ensure that attacks on journalists are investigated without exception and the perpetrators brought to justice.

In his contribution, Kurt P. Tudyka notes that the OSCE’s involvement in the cultural field of the human dimension has been steadily decreasing over the years and presents a wealth of ideas that could be initiated, supported, or implemented by the OSCE and its institutions, particularly in conflict-prone “hot spots”. His ideas include cultural meetings, and events such as exhibitions, film screenings, concerts, festivals, and opera and theatre performances.

The first formal United Nations Security Council debate on the link between climate change and security was held in April 2007, and the topic found its way onto the OSCE agenda that same year. In the OSCE, climate change is dealt with mainly through projects led by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) and implemented in co-operation with international partners and OSCE field operations. In her informative and detailed contribution, Esra Buttanri, senior advisor in the OCEEA, discusses the potential security implications of climate change in both global and OSCE contexts, provides an overview of the international debate, and outlines the OSCE’s response to these challenges. In her conclusions, she summarizes possible future actions to address the security implications of climate change, including enhanced multilateral co-operation while combating climate change at the regional level.

In the section on OSCE Institutions and Structures, Lamberto Zannier and Eleonora Lotti present the experience of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) in relation to the Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies. The Guidelines, which were adopted in 2012, state that it is not enough to simply recognize the culture, identity, and political

interests of minorities. Instead, they recommend that states develop and implement policies to promote the integration and cohesion of ethnically heterogeneous communities. If states do not do this, there is a risk that large communities in particular will become increasingly isolated from one another. Such a development would pose a serious risk to the stability of multiethnic states.⁶ As Zannier/Lotti write: “Classic inter-state conflict has almost disappeared. Instead, we are now witnessing acute crises and hybrid conflicts characterized by internal strife, sometimes in the context of failed or dysfunctional states, or violent separatism, in some cases accompanied by quasi-military operations affecting the civilian population.” Furthermore, it is increasingly difficult to juggle protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and, at the same time, ensuring the rights of peoples to self-determination, including minorities. Modern conflicts therefore require a shift in the OSCE’s approach to conflict prevention, and the HCNM’s main working method of quiet diplomacy may therefore have to be complemented by new tools. In addition, according to Zannier/Lotti, “there is also a need to forge and strengthen coalitions with other international players, including the United Nations, regional organizations and arrangements [...] as well as with civil society.”

As mentioned above, this year we also have an anniversary to celebrate: On 19 November 1999, in the framework of the Istanbul Summit Meeting, the Heads of State or Government of the OSCE participating States adopted the Platform for Co-operative Security in order to strengthen co-operation between the OSCE and other international organizations concerned with comprehensive security within the OSCE area. Twenty years later, Loïc Simonet asks whether and how the OSCE’s contribution to “effective multilateralism” can be strengthened. The starting point for Simonet’s answer to this question is the assessment that, 20 years after its adoption, the Platform’s record is mixed: Its fundamental objective to support the OSCE’s role in peacekeeping was never translated into operational arrangements; the Platform’s vision of the OSCE as a “key instrument” has proven to be a myth; although international organizations such as the EU, NATO, and the Council of Europe have often agreed to act “with” the OSCE, they have shown reluctance to work “through” the OSCE and to be co-ordinated by it. Simonet then presents and discusses a wealth of ideas and prospects for effective multilateralism going forward.

Last but not least, Anastasiya Bayok deals with a very complex topic that is not (yet) at the centre of discussions in Europe: “Challenges and threat perceptions regarding Central Asia in China and the EU”. She examines the attitudes of China and the EU to Central Asia in terms of interests and threat perceptions in the region. In her conclusions, she states that, on the one hand,

6 Cf. Hans-Joachim Heintze, The Significance of the Thematic Recommendations of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), OSCE Yearbook 2012, Baden-Baden 2013, pp. 249-265, here: pp.264-265.

China and the EU actually share similar threat perceptions with regard to Central Asia, such as terrorism, religious extremism and radicalization, organized crime, and drug trafficking. On the other hand, she concludes that closer cooperation between China and the EU in combating common security threats, working together on conflict prevention, fighting against corruption, and deepening economic co-operation could be beneficial for the region, as well as for relations between China and the EU. For China, the deeper involvement of the EU in Central Asia has advantages, such as the promotion of economic development and the opportunity for jointly combating terrorism and contributing to maintaining regional security and stability. However, it also has disadvantages related to the intensified competition between the great powers in Central Asia, including the strategies of the US, Japan, Turkey, and Russia.

The editors would like to take the opportunity to thank all the authors for their dedicated work and the wealth of vivid presentations, detailed analyses, and interesting ideas.

Our special thanks also go to this year's OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Slovak Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajčák, who combines his foreword to the OSCE Yearbook with an important concern: his "Bratislava Appeal" for stronger multilateralism and more dialogue. Against the backdrop of rapidly changing global challenges to peace and security that can only be met by working together, the threat to the multilateral order in Europe that he has observed takes on particular significance. The source of this danger, however, is the often hopelessly discordant participating States themselves: "We are unable to find consensus" Lajčák writes in his foreword, and continues: "If we cannot even agree on the basics, from our annual budget to agendas for our events, what chance do we have of realizing the full vision of the Helsinki Final Act?" In his Bratislava Appeal, he therefore calls for "increased flexibility and willingness to compromise in order to broaden and strengthen our interactive dialogue" and to "to focus on finding what unites us rather than divides us."⁷ It is to be hoped that his appeal will also find resonance in everyday political life.

7 OSCE, OSCE Chair Lajčák kicks off 26th Ministerial Council with his "Bratislava Appeal"; calls for increased flexibility and willingness to compromise, Bratislava, 5 December 2019, at: <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/441173>.

I.

States of Affairs – Affairs of State

The OSCE and European Security

Sustaining Peace, Sustaining Development – The Role of the OSCE

Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda)¹ created a global framework, a common language, and shared goals that we can all rally around to transform our world. Governments are integrating these goals into national plans and policies. Donors are using them as a benchmark for their support. Business leaders are showing commitment and civil society is mobilizing to help create further momentum. In 2019, we have had significant exchanges on how the OSCE contributes to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how these Goals help to focus the work of the OSCE. With its inclusive membership, geographical reach, convening power, and depth of expertise on multiple security issues, and with its institutions, field operations, and programmatic activities, the OSCE has significant capacity and potential to support SDG implementation at the national level. While a few OSCE participating States appear reluctant to formally link the OSCE's work with the SDGs, many others have raised their voice in support. They note that the OSCE's comprehensive security concept and the holistic nature of the 2030 Agenda fit together well, and not just in relation to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). They point out that implementation of the SDGs is a shared responsibility of all UN member states. And they feel that working through regional organizations like the OSCE can be one important way in which states can further their national and collective SDG-related objectives. Even in the absence of a specific OSCE mandate, there are sufficient markers that explicitly link the OSCE to the 2030 Agenda, including in Ministerial Council Decisions in the OSCE's second dimension of security, the Economic and Environmental Dimension. And for all practical purposes, the SDGs have already become an important point of reference for partner organizations far beyond the UN and affiliated agencies. As the world's largest regional security organization, the OSCE can only benefit from aligning its activities with the 2030 Agenda in an open spirit, in a demand-driven manner, and in response to the needs of OSCE participating States.

Note: The author would like to thank Mr David Buerstedde for his assistance during the preparation of this contribution.

1 United Nations, General Assembly, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, 70/1. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, A/RES/70/1, 21 October 2015, at: https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf. See also: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

The 2030 Agenda

UN member states adopted the 2030 Agenda at a summit in September 2015. They committed to achieving 17 SDGs and 169 associated targets by 2030 “in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet”. Compared to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDGs are broader, more ambitious, and also more political. They translate legitimate aspirations for social justice into political commitments. Whereas the MDGs mostly targeted developing countries, the SDGs commit 193 countries, including 56 of the OSCE’s 57 participating States.² Significantly, from an OSCE perspective, the 2030 Agenda reinforces the nexus between development and peace. It firmly introduces peace and security into a development concept that at the UN has traditionally focused on economic, social, and later also environmental aspects. For a security organization, notably one such as the OSCE that is premised on a comprehensive approach to security that incidentally dates back to the mid-1970s, this link is an essential starting point when considering our relationship with the SDGs.

Furthermore, UN member states made a commitment not only to work towards SDG implementation in their own countries, but to also support each other, including at regional and global levels. As the world’s largest regional security arrangement under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, the OSCE contributes to global security within its region through conflict management responses in crisis situations, but above all through longer-term structural conflict prevention and confidence-building. The 2030 Agenda promises to re-energize international action to advance development, peace, and security around the globe. It also opens up UN action to a wide network of collaboration and offers a unique opportunity for the OSCE to better articulate its position as a linchpin between the global and national levels of policy development and implementation. Since the 2030 Agenda is the key international framework promoted by the UN, it is difficult to imagine a modern interpretation of Chapter VIII without strong references to the SDGs.

The Five Ps

Both the OSCE and the UN have long focused on peace and security, conflict prevention, the protection of human rights, and many other security-related issues. As we shall see, there is also significant cohesion between the SDGs and the OSCE’s commitments and mandates. In fact, the OSCE connects to all 17 SDGs and many of their individual targets, as well as to the five major themes that group some of the Goals: *people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership*.

2 The Holy See is a permanent observer at the UN, not a UN member state.

Of these five themes, *peace* is the key theme for us. As stated in the preamble to the 2030 Agenda, there can be no sustainable development without peace, and no peace without sustainable development. Diverse OSCE efforts have an impact on peace and development. Today, Europe is living through times of profound mistrust and growing tensions. In the current polarized security environment, the OSCE remains the only platform for inclusive East-West dialogue and co-operation on multiple hard and soft security issues. We contribute to peace by investing in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, and conflict resolution, as well as post-conflict rehabilitation. The OSCE's response to the crisis in and around Ukraine, in particular the deployment of the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine in 2014, is a prominent example of the Organization's early action and crisis management capabilities.

The theme of *people* is also of great significance for us. The Helsinki Final Act was not centred on interstate relations alone, but also on *people*. Along with rules for how states should treat each other, it established norms for how states should treat their citizens. It was this approach that made respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in one country a matter of concern for the entire OSCE community. OSCE institutions monitor the implementation of human rights and fundamental freedoms and promote integration in diverse societies. One of our main priorities has always been to reduce the vulnerability of people in conflict-affected areas. Current examples are to be found in Ukraine, where the SMM continues to be instrumental in brokering so-called "windows of silence" to facilitate the repair of critical civilian infrastructure such as water distribution systems disrupted by the fighting. The 2019 Slovak OSCE Chairmanship has put a strong emphasis on improving the lives of individual people.³ For example, it has pushed hard for the much-needed repair of the Stanytsia Luhanska Bridge as the only crossing point for civilians between government and non-government controlled areas in Luhansk Oblast in eastern Ukraine.

Prosperity is strongly linked to the OSCE's second dimension of security. Our institutions and field operations, and above all the Office of the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA), promote good economic governance and the rule of law as prerequisites for building peaceful and prosperous communities. Our activities are designed to strengthen cross-border economic co-operation, enhance good governance and the climate for business and investment, and counter corruption.

Planet refers to the environmental challenges that are threatening livelihoods and impacting on security world-wide. The OSCE brings a strong security perspective to the international environmental discourse and fosters cross-border and regional co-operation to address environmental challenges, including at the nexus between climate and security.

3 OSCE Slovakia 2019 Slovensko, Programme of the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship 2019, available at: <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/408353>.

Finally, *partnership* is critical to making progress towards an ambitious agenda that spans the globe but ultimately has to be implemented locally. The OSCE works with the UN and many other partner organizations to forge effective responses to traditional and emerging challenges. Global and regional partnerships and coalitions that include national governments, international and regional organizations, the private sector, civil society, the research community, and women and youth will be important drivers for implementing the SDGs.

Linkages with the SDGs

For the OSCE, SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) is the Goal that most closely matches our mandates. It sums up a substantive part of what we are trying to achieve. In UN terminology, SDG 16 is now often referred to as SDG 16+ because it is considered an enabler or catalyst for the successful implementation of many other SDGs. So, this makes SDG 16 even more relevant from an OSCE perspective.

The OSCE promotes peaceful, just, and inclusive societies in a number of ways, including through dialogue and confidence-building, capacity-building, and the sharing of good practices in numerous relevant areas, such as police and justice reform, border management, democratic oversight of the security forces, and many other issues. In times of political crisis, OSCE field presences underpin the OSCE's early warning role and its capacity to defuse tensions through dialogue facilitation at the local level. Many of them offer long-term support to make institutions more effective, inclusive, and accountable. They often do so in conjunction with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the OSCE's in-house knowledge hub on democratic governance, the rule of law, and human rights and fundamental freedoms. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM) specializes in free media and the freedom of expression. And the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) engages with governments and national minorities in support of peaceful coexistence in diverse societies.

All of this relates to sustainable peace, and to SDG 16 in particular, but the OSCE also has multiple linkages with the other SDGs. SDG 4 (Quality Education) is one example. Education can play a key role in preventing conflict by fostering a sense of opportunity and belonging, accommodating diversity and languages, or allowing for multiple views on history. The HCNM regularly reminds both government and national minority representatives of the right to education in minority languages on the one hand, and the importance of mastering the state language on the other. ODIHR and the Organization's field operations promote a culture of peace and non-violence through programmes to combat hate crime and promote tolerance in communities and schools. For example, the Mission to Skopje contributed to policy discussions that led to