



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Conflict Prevention Centre

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The OSCE's role in borders is firmly anchored in a number of official documents, and not least the Helsinki Final Act. More recently the principles of common, comprehensive and indivisible security, based on the sovereign equality and solidarity of the participating States, were reconfirmed and further operationalised at the Porto Ministerial Council in Dec 2002. Here both a Charter on Combating Terrorism and a Declaration on Trafficking in Human Beings were adopted, and these documents brought even greater increased attention by the OSCE to border issues generally.

At Maastricht in 2003, the participating States agreed on an OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century. In particular, paragraph 35 states that *'Threats of terrorism and organized crime are often interlinked, and synergetic approaches to deal with them will be further explored. Cross-border movement of persons, resources and weapons as well as trafficking for the purpose of financing and providing logistic support play an increasing role for terrorist activities. The OSCE is committed to addressing these problems and to strengthening its capacities to promote open and secure borders, inter alia, through the elaboration of an OSCE Border Security and Management Concept in order to enhance capacity building and mutually beneficial inter-State co-operation'*.

In dealing with border management issues, the challenge is to find ways to enhance border management and security to a level that is commensurate with the threats of illegal cross-border activities, while facilitating legitimate cross-border travel and commerce, protecting human rights and promoting human contacts.

The OSCE is well placed to pull together its expertise and experience acquired over years of border-related activities in its three dimensions, and to use this experience to formulate a coherent border management strategy. However, such a strategy will require a cross-dimensional and inter-institutional approach, and herein lies the challenge, for the potential scope for activities in this field is very wide indeed, and here I would make three points:

- the first is that there is a clear need for co-operation and co-ordination between IOs to avoid overlap and shortfalls, and this not least because there

are a number of organisations and initiatives devoted to the subject of borders in all its forms.

- Second, and following on from the above, there is a need to identify our own respective comparative advantages, which again calls for a co-operative approach. We need to ensure complementarity, and develop our skills in the areas that are best suited for us to operate in.
- Third, and this is particularly applicable to the OSCE, there is no 'one size fits all' approach to the question. All regions have their respective challenges to address and so apply different approaches to the solutions. Any strategy needs to be not only cross dimensional but must embrace an inter-institutional approach as well.

On all these three points we are most keen to develop synergies with you.

Activities undertaken by various OSCE bodies, institutions and field operations have focussed on a variety of aspects of border management and security, including police, travel document security, customs and immigration. In order to assist in this, a small sub-unit has been set up within the CPC, with the aim of ensuring both internal and external co-ordination of border related activities, including the management of specific border related projects as appropriate.

To provide a few examples, in the field of **border monitoring**, the OSCE has launched a sizeable border monitoring operation along the Chechen, Ingush and Dagestan Republic sections of the Georgian border with the Russian Federation. Other past taskings have seen a monitoring operation in Albania along the Kosovo section of the Serbia and Montenegro border during 1998 and 1999 - this in order to report first hand on the crisis - and a smaller operation based on the Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, that had a similar mandate during the crisis in 2001 and 2002.

In the area of **cross border co-operation**, and in line with commitments made at the May 2003 Ohrid Regional Conference on Border Security and Management in South Eastern Europe, the OSCE has developed the OSCE SEE Regional Cross Border Co-operation Programme. This programme involves full ownership by the States of the region, and is designed to address immediate problems of cross border co-operation, with particular attention paid to the state of agreements, or lack of them, between the countries. In addition, the question of transitioning border forces from military to civilian led police forces, including the necessary training, will also be addressed.

Other items under this subject of co-operation include regional workshops on Travel Document Security, and a small project involving customs legal advice centres is underway in Central Asia.

Anti-trafficking activities have embraced a number of different initiatives, from the training of border guards to combating illicit movement of SALW, co-operation with IAEA regarding the issue of radiological materials, seminars for border guards designed to raise public awareness over border issues, and by enhancing the capacity of the Serbian MoI to deal with Human Trafficking through both assessment and purchase of equipment.

Border Policing has involved assistance in legislation reform, where following an initial project proposal for Tajikistan, discussions are ongoing with the EU to co-ordinate any future action with the EC BOMCA initiative; giving assistance in establishing legal assistance centres in Kyrgystan which is a joint project in 2004 with the Eurasian Foundation; assistance to the police forces of Serbia and Montenegro has included the development of criminal intelligence analysis capacity for Serbian Border Police; and assistance to and training of border police officers in Montenegro.

In regard to **Border Security** there are a number of projects, some pending, for border guard training in Central Asia, including the EU Border Management programme for Central Asia (BOMCA). The OSCE is on the steering committee of this programme for Border Services Training.

In the field of **Border Service Reform**, between 1998-2003, ODIHR, in co-operation with field offices of the IOM, implemented a number of projects on assistance to border services of the countries of Southern Caucasus and Central Asia.

In addition, the OSCE set up Sanctions Assistance Missions between 1992 and 1996 to strengthen the enforcement of sanctions against Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). In the area of customs reform and trade facilitation for South Caucasus, there has been multi-sectoral dialogue in Azerbaijan and Armenia. A workshop on business co-operation in a security perspective to increase co-operation at the Tajikistan/Afghanistan border has taken place, and support to the establishment of bilateral commission between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakstan is an ongoing project on water utilisation of the Chu and Talas rivers.

In November 2002, a Border Assessment Mission composed of representatives of a number of participating States, as well as an expert from the European Commission, reviewed the level of co-operation with respect to border and customs control along the Moldovan-Ukrainian land border, including the segment of the border controlled by the Transdnestrrian authorities, and made a number of specific recommendations.

Additionally, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine has supported projects related to border delineation and border installation security at the request of the State Border Guard Committee, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the State Service of Cartography.

Finally, another important aspect of the OSCE's involvement in border security and management issues is the Travel Document Security Programme, developed by the Action against Terrorism Unit. This programme strengthens efforts to prevent the falsification of travel documents. The OSCE, in collaboration with ICAO, recently held a major workshop in Vienna, bringing together travel document issuing and immigration authorities. This event was an excellent example of co-operation between a regional - OSCE - and an international - ICAO - organization that can be repeated in other regions of the world.

In closing, I would just add that the increasing awareness of the need for proper border management and security policies to address the wide range of security concerns involved leaves little doubt that the OSCE will increase its involvement and commitment over time. While most of our field missions and operations are already addressing border issues as an integral part of their respective mandates, in other cases a more prominent focus on borders will be the result of our institutions addressing cross dimensional threats and challenges. In fact, comprehensive border management must take into account the need for security and law and order, and the economic benefits of trade across open borders, while at the same time ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. These aspects broadly reflect the OSCE's three dimensions of security. The challenge for the OSCE will be to pull together its expertise and experience in the three dimensions into one coherent border management strategy, which will allow our organisation to better interact with other international players.