



STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE  
DIRECTOR OF THE CONFLICT PREVENTION CENTRE

Delivered by Ambassador Steffen Kongstad at the Permanent Council  
Vienna, 8 November 2018

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

Like others, I wish to thank the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC), Ambassador Marcel Peško, for his extensive report to the Permanent Council.

The director has reported on the wide range of activity the centre has undertaken. It is clear that the CPC is a hub of OSCE operations. Before commenting on specifics in the report, we do well to recall why the CPC was established.

With the Charter of Paris in 1990, participating States decided to establish a centre to assist the decision-making bodies of the OSCE in reducing the risk of conflict. In 2011, the participating States assigned the CPC a central role in the OSCE's efforts for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation.

The OSCE addresses these issues primarily through the activities of its field operations, the CPC, and the interaction between these. Today, the CPC also provides policy advice, support, and analysis. Its role in operations and policy support for the field operations, as part of a concerted effort to prevent conflict, is essential to achieve the objectives of the OSCE.

It is commendable to structure the report around the CPC's principal tasks in relation to the OSCE's overall mandate for conflict prevention and conflict resolution. As part of this, we note the reporting on gender mainstreaming, which mentions a selection of activities. Conflicts disproportionately affect women. The appropriate gender perspective must be integrated into all aspects of the CPC's activities and reported on as such. The word gender appears nowhere in the report outside of the three paragraphs

devoted to mainstreaming, which may indicate that gender has not been properly mainstreamed.

The report notes the state-driven nature of the Structured Dialogue. This process does not need interference from secretariats, think tanks and NGOs. They are a distraction, and not relevant for the dialogue. The Structured Dialogue should not be an academic, but a political exercise. Relatedly, the report indicates a purported increased demand for accurate military data. From where does this demand stem? How was it decided that the CPC should develop a software application to address this? At the very least, software development appears to lie beyond the periphery of the CPC's principal task of conflict prevention.

The report also elaborates on the proposed merger of the FSC Support Unit and the Communications Network. As part of the budget discussions, several participating States have voiced concerns about specifics of this merger in a time of shrinking resources. The primary value of the OSCE lies in its operations in the field. As such, our limited resources in Vienna should be spent efficiently and in support of these operations. The merger appears to do neither.

Security sector governance and reform (SSG/R) plays an important part in conflict prevention. We support the call of the incoming Slovak chairmanship for an OSCE-wide approach to this topic. We value the CPC's efforts to integrate SSG/R into the work of the organisation. It is important that the CPC remain focused on what it does best: supporting the effective implementation of SSG/R.

Thank you