

**FSC CHAIRPERSON'S PROGRESS REPORT
TO THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ON
FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OSCE DOCUMENT ON
STOCKPILES OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION**

Executive Summary

Stockpiles of conventional ammunition and the liquid rocket fuel, *mélange*, pose serious security, humanitarian and environmental threats in the OSCE area. Conventional ammunition and *mélange* are often stored inadequately and dangerously close to populated areas or vulnerable infrastructure such as industrial facilities, oil pipelines, or even nuclear power stations. In certain circumstances, in the case of ammunition, there is a risk of proliferation or explosion. Similarly, in the case of *mélange*, this highly toxic and volatile substance is often poorly stored or maintained resulting in a potential environmental and humanitarian threat to neighbouring populations or areas.

The OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (Stockpiles document) has proved to be instrumental in optimizing the OSCE participating States' cross-dimensional response. This response includes a framework for possible OSCE assistance, and better co-ordination with other international actors, in particular NATO and UN. Development of Best Practices Guides, based on national and international experiences, will further improve the ability of participating States to tackle these problems themselves.

Participating States are responsible for their own stockpiles, however, under the Stockpiles document they can request assistance. Five participating States have requested assistance in disposal of conventional ammunition (Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Ukraine) and five in elimination of liquid rocket fuel component *mélange* (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan). The OSCE's response centered on the FSC as the OSCE leading body, OSCE field operations, the Conflict Prevention Center, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and Press and Public Information Service. Until now, delegations of Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden and United States donated or pledged funds on requests for ammunition destruction and rocket fuel *mélange*.

Prior to development of the Stockpiles document the OSCE received requests for assistance from Georgia and Moldova with conventional ammunition or *mélange* problems. Donations were made for these projects by Switzerland, Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Turkey and the United States.

Important lessons have been learned. Experience has shown that there may be a need for practical guidelines on how requesting States could better present and prioritize their request for assistance and how the OSCE and potential donor States could respond to requests. Combined requests for assistance involving both SALW and ammunition problems require careful co-ordination and maximum transparency. Experience has also shown that the FSC Chair, Troika, CPC and OSCE field missions all play a key role and should be included in the assistance process as much as possible. Co-operation with other relevant international organizations is essential and has improved significantly. Finally, more needs to be done in the area of awareness-raising.

Introduction

Background

Although stockpiles of conventional ammunition, explosive material and detonating devices are historically of military provenance, the risks that emanate today from their presence go beyond the politico-military dimension of the OSCE. Given its cross-dimensional nature, touching on humanitarian, economic and ecological aspects as well as on counter-terrorism and arms control, the issue merits a cross-dimensional response.

Responding to requests for assistance, when the OSCE chooses to do so, requires targeted interaction and co-operation between the three dimensions of the OSCE and its various fora, processes and institutions. In order to address the issue as effectively as possible and avoid duplication, it is important to link up with other organizations also active in this field. Such co-operation could include information exchange and co-ordination of efforts. Active co-operation with other organizations could be envisaged as a further option. Finally, other national and international platforms, for example, national parliaments, the United Nations system, or the media, could be used to raise awareness, foster partnership, and mobilize additional, more broad-based support at the national, regional and global levels.

OSCE response

Since the adoption of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (hereafter called: "Stockpiles document"), the FSC has attached great importance to helping participating States find the best way to address the issue, including raising awareness, both within the OSCE sphere and beyond it. While the benefits gained from a cross-dimensional approach within the OSCE are evident in some of the activities already underway, efforts to create additional momentum and co-operation, within and beyond the OSCE, should be considered and might be reinforced in the future (see Section IV, "Lessons learned").

Before the adoption of the Stockpiles document, OSCE missions, especially in Moldova and Georgia, had already engaged in the preparation and execution of projects as later referred to in the Stockpiles document.

The OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation was tasked to submit to the Thirteenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council a progress report on the further implementation of the

OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (FSC.DOC/1/03)¹. The present report covers both past and ongoing efforts to address the challenges posed by stockpiles of ammunition (Sections I to III), as well as options and lessons learned for future implementation efforts (Section IV). It is sub-divided into the following sections:

- Section I of this report provides information on national efforts to address the risks posed by the presence of stockpiles of conventional ammunition, explosive material and detonating devices in surplus and/or awaiting destruction and the development of OSCE Best Practice Guides to improve national control of stockpiles;
- Section II of this report provides information on the current status of requests for assistance submitted by participating States to the OSCE since the adoption of the Document;
- Section III of this report provides information on activities to foster combined effort, both within the OSCE and with other international organizations;
- Section IV of this report provides a number of lessons learned.

As will be made clear in the report, the OSCE has responded to requests for assistance from participating States to help strengthen their national capacities. The OSCE has provided expertise, mobilized resources and co-ordinated activities with other international organizations. Important lessons were learned in terms of how to further enhance our response to such requests.

Section I: National efforts to address the risks and dangers of stockpiles of ammunition, as well as the development of OSCE Best Practice Guides to improve national control of stockpiles

In the Stockpiles document (paragraph 14), OSCE participating States recognized their national responsibility for their own stockpiles of conventional ammunition, explosive material and detonating devices, as well as for the identification and reduction of corresponding surpluses. Several requesting States have shared their own experiences as part of the submission of their requests for assistance, both as general background and as a national, in-kind, contribution to their request.

Several States evaluated the excess stockpiles situation on their national territories, recognised that they currently lacked sufficient capacity to address the risks themselves and requested assistance from other OSCE participating States. Some requesting States approached OSCE field presences to involve the local OSCE representatives in the process and to ensure that their requests for assistance included sufficient information for initial evaluation.

Participating States shared national experiences and lessons learned with each other, and participated in the development of Best Practice Guides.

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MC.DEC/5/04

Development of Best Practice Guides

At the initiative of several delegations, the FSC began to share national experiences in dealing with stockpiles of conventional ammunition through the development of Best Practice Guides, as contemplated in FSC.DOC/1/03. An FSC Editorial Review Board was established to review national contributions to this effort. The first Best Practice Guide, on Stockpile Management, has been finalized by the Editorial Review Board and distributed to all FSC delegations for final review. Three other guides, covering transportation; project management; and marking, registration and record-keeping, are also in preparation.

The Editorial Review Board has discussed subject areas for additional guides. These include physical security; methods of demilitarization and destruction; and indicators of surplus and risk. Participating States could work together in order to co-author and co-ordinate guides on a particular topic or subject area. The Editorial Review Board facilitates development of the Guides, but delegations are responsible for identifying suitable topics or subject areas, and then preparing drafts (individually or in co-operation with others).

The Editorial Review Board co-ordinates review of the drafts in order to prepare a final document in each case that can be presented to the Forum for Security Co-operation. Once agreed, the guides can be shared with Partners for Co-operation and a wider audience. The Editorial Review Board will continue its work in 2006.

Section II: Requests for assistance submitted by participating States to the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation pursuant to the Stockpiles document

To date, five requests have been submitted to the OSCE for assistance solely with the disposal of conventional ammunition (Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Ukraine) and a further five for assistance with the elimination of liquid rocket fuel component mélange (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan).

Requesting State	Scope of the problem
Ukraine	Initial request submitted to the OSCE in December 2003 concerned 122,000 tons of stockpiles of conventional ammunition . This largely duplicates a request to NATO/EAPC, for which the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency introduced a project plan in 2004. In addition, Ukraine submitted four new projects in February 2005: 1. New destruction capacities for hexogen and part-hexogen charges in Western Ukraine; 2. Improvement of security system for ammunition stockpiles; 3. Disposal of 16.5 tons of liquid rocket fuel component (mélange); 4. Action to remedy the consequences of the Novobohdanivka storage site disaster (destruction of remaining ammunition, area clean-up).
Belarus	1. Disposal of 97,000 tons of surplus conventional ammunition, growing by 4,000–7,000 tons annually, including missiles and hexogen ammunition, through development of national capacity or transportation for disposal in a third country;

Requesting State	Scope of the problem
	2. Potential need for improvement of stockpile security in the future; 3. There is a State programme (€ 2.5 million) for disposal; however, Belarus lacks specific technology and industrial capacity.
Russian Federation	1. Disposal of surplus conventional ammunition in Kaliningrad Oblast (100,000 tons, including 20,000 tons in a dangerous condition). Further development of existing national technology — mobile disposal stations is suggested; 2. Improvement of stockpile security and management.
Tajikistan	Destruction of stockpiles largely collected from the battlefield; a modest quantity not very large (65.000 SALW ammunitions, 3.900 artillery shells, APL and rockets), but condition of ammunition and storage sites poses a particular risk since stockpiles are often stored in public suburban buildings which are insufficiently guarded.
Kazakhstan	1. Assistance in disposal of transportable conventional ammunition using industrial facilities in Arys and Kapshagai; 2. Assistance in disposal of non-transportable conventional ammunition on site (Ayaguz, Uch-Aral, Semipalatinsk and Ust-Kamenogorsk); 3. Re-establishment of stockpiles of conventional ammunition test laboratory to carry out regular examinations of conventional ammunition; 4. Establishment of conventional ammunition management system as an integral part a common armed forces procurement and management system.
Armenia	Elimination of 862 tons of rocket fuel component (mélange) stocks.
Uzbekistan	Elimination of over 1,000 tons rocket fuel component (mélange) stocks.
Azerbaijan	Elimination of 1,200 tons of rocket fuel component (mélange) stock.
Kazakhstan	Elimination of 1550 tons rocket fuel component (mélange) stock.

In addition Georgia and Moldova requested help with the elimination of rocket fuel component (mélange) and conventional ammunition in 2000–2002 through the OSCE missions.

1. Requests for assistance in the disposal of conventional ammunition

The SALW and conventional ammunition programme for Tajikistan is being implemented in partnership by the Tajik authorities and the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe, assisted by the Chief Technical Adviser from Norway. The programme is divided into four tasks, two of which are dedicated to disposal of conventional ammunition (Task 1) and to building up an ammunition storage facility (Task 4). On 19 October 2005, the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe provided the FSC with a progress report (FSC.FR/2/05) on the implementation of Tasks 1 and 4.

On 14 September, the French team started explosive ordnance disposal training in the engineer battalion and the first demolition took place on 6 October. The aim is to complete the destruction process by the end of the current year, except for ammunition to be used for further training. Within Task 1 the following projects are complete: reconstruction of Lohur Military Training Camp; construction of the intermediate ammunition storage facility; and

establishment of the demolition ground including demolition pits, fire points, and a road to them. The opening of the demolition ground and military training institute will take place on 4 November 2005.

The necessary agreements with the respective State agencies on the implementation of Task 3 have been signed. Donations and contributions for all four currently total €685,960.

In the case of Kazakhstan, the OSCE Seminar on Destruction Techniques and Security of Stockpiles of SALW and Conventional Ammunition was held in Almaty, on 2 and 3 June 2005. It was followed by an initial assessment visit on conventional ammunition from 3 to 9 June. The assessment team included experts from Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, the USA and the Conflict Prevention Centre. The report on the visit was submitted to the FSC on 30 June (FSC.GAL/69/05). Following this visit Kazakhstan provided additional information, as requested, that made it possible to prioritize the areas in which OSCE assistance was requested. These are: re-establishment of the stockpiles for conventional ammunition test laboratory; disposal of ammunition in surplus (792,622 artillery shells, 7,579 antitank guided missiles, 17,168 rockets, 109,591 mortars, 121,943 items of aviation ammunition and 1.1 million landmines); establishment of a computer-based stocks management system for conventional ammunition and SALW.

As regards the Russian Federation's request, consultations and meetings were held between a Group of Friends of Kaliningrad and the Russian Federation in order to clarify the organizational modalities of the initial assessment visit. Agreement was reached and the assessment team led by Denmark and composed of experts drawn from Finland, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, the USA and the Conflict Prevention Centre visited the Kaliningrad region from 15 to 22 November 2005.

Ukraine submitted its initial request for assistance in late 2003 and presented four additional project proposals to the FSC in February 2005. Some States have expressed interest regarding the proposal which addresses the devastating consequences of the technological disaster in Novobohdanivka (Zaporizzhya region). The FSC Chair visited Kiev in June 2005 to discuss further development of the project proposal for Novobohdanivka. Discussion is underway to identify what kind of support Ukraine might request from the OSCE to help in implementing its national Action Plan to overcome the consequences of the disaster. Officials from the Ministry of Emergency visited Vienna on 20 and 21 October 2005 to discuss possible OSCE involvement in the Novobohdanivka project.

2. Requests for assistance on elimination of liquid rocket fuel component melange

In Armenia, Phases I and II of the project on elimination of liquid rocket fuel mélange were completed through the OSCE Centre in Yerevan. In November 2005 the Office and the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia signed an agreement for the implementation of Phase III – “Implementation”, of the project based on the terms and conditions set out by the respective Memorandum of Understanding signed earlier in September. Donors approved project proposals for the final Phase and implementation will start in spring 2006. The duration of the project depends on the climatic conditions but shall not exceed 21 months.

In Ukraine the Mélange Scoping Study Project (Phase I) has been completed; the report was distributed to all delegations on 5 October 2005. The Office of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine is prepared to manage related projects in the future.

On 26 July 2005 Azerbaijan submitted a request for assistance to the OSCE on elimination of mélange. An initial assessment visit was conducted from 24 to 27 October 2005, in co-ordination with NATO experts. The report of this visit will follow.

Kazakhstan submitted its request for assistance on elimination of mélange in October 2005. The initial assessment visit to mélange storage sites in Kazakhstan was held between 31 October and 3 November 2005.

Uzbekistan submitted a similar request through the OSCE Centre in Tashkent in March 2005. However, due to the situation in the country, no further activities have taken place since that time.

3. Donors

The following participating States donated or pledged funds in response to requests for assistance related to stockpiles of conventional ammunition, explosive material and detonating devices and rocket fuel mélange: Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden and the United States. In several FSC meetings other delegations have been encouraged to express their possible interest in assisting requesting participating States in this area. The FSC welcomed the interest expressed by the OSCE Partners for Co-operation and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation for a possible involvement in these and future projects.

Donors, donations and assisted countries up to December 2005

Donor	Funds pledged (EUR)	Country assisted
Finland	266,408	Armenia (mélange)
Finland	9,033	Kazakhstan
France	In kind (explosive ordinance disposal training programme — 120,000)	Tajikistan
Canada	12,500	Armenia (mélange)
Canada	12,500	Kazakhstan (mélange)
Germany	65,000	Armenia (mélange)
Germany	5,000	Kazakhstan
Luxembourg	20,000	Ukraine
Netherlands	266,812	Tajikistan
Norway	30,000	Tajikistan
Norway	In kind (secondment of chief technical adviser)	Tajikistan
Norway	7,500	Kazakhstan
Slovenia	35,000	Azerbaijan (mélange)
Slovenia	25,000	Ukraine
Sweden	3,826	Kazakhstan
USA	903,454	Armenia (mélange)

Donor	Funds pledged (EUR)	Country assisted
USA	In kind (stockpile management course)	Tajikistan
Total	1,662,033	

In addition Finland, Germany UK, Switzerland, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Turkey and the United States financed the OSCE-projects in Georgia for eliminating mélange and conventional ammunition in 2002-2005.

4. Workshops

In 2005, the OSCE conducted two large technical workshops on the territory of the OSCE participating States, both sponsored through extra-budgetary contributions and Unified Budget resources of the OSCE Secretariat and field presences.

Kazakhstan: An OSCE Seminar on Destruction Techniques and Stockpiles Security on SALW and Conventional Ammunition was held in Almaty, on 2 and 3 June 2005. The report was circulated on 30 June 2005 as FSC.GAL/69/05.

Ukraine: The first Joint OSCE-NATO Technical Workshop on Rocket Fuel Component (Mélange) Disposal was organized in Kiev from 6 to 8 July 2005. The report was circulated on 5 October 2005, under the reference FSC.GAL/101/05.

Section III: Creating synergies: Co-operation within the OSCE and with other international organizations, awareness-raising and agenda-building in other fora

1. Co-operation within the OSCE

Interaction between various OSCE decision-making bodies, along with its operational institutions and structures has an important impact on the overall OSCE response. The FSC, with CPC assistance, is the leading OSCE body for implementation of the Stockpiles document. OSCE field operations, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Press and Public Information Service have also been engaged in the process.

During the 24th joint FSC-PC meeting held on 6 July 2005, the Chairperson of the Permanent Council identified a need to improve co-ordination with other organizations involved in ammunition destruction. Furthermore, to streamline internal procedures within the OSCE, and to further discuss the involvement of the OSCE field presences with a view to possibly enhancing their role (FSC.PC/7/05).

Against the backdrop of the situation in their host States, representatives of OSCE field presences have on several occasions briefed the FSC and the Permanent Council on relevant activities carried out by their staffs (Moldova, Armenia, Tajikistan), or in the participating States in which they are located. In turn, both the PC and the FSC have actively involved the field presences in ammunition or mélange-related activities.

The FSC has also heard from the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA), most recently on 12 October 2005. They provided a perspective from the second dimension, which highlighted environmental and economic hazards stemming from the insecure storage of mélange. Additionally, the Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Combating Terrorism contributed from a counter-terrorism viewpoint.

Involvement of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly: Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly can play an important role in raising awareness. Specifically, awareness-raising is necessary on the risks some participating States have identified with regard to certain stockpiles of conventional ammunition, explosive material and detonating devices, including mélange. On 24 February 2005, the Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation addressed the Assembly on the occasion of its Fourth Winter Meeting (PA.DEL/1/05).

2. Co-operation with other international organizations

Information exchange with NATO: In the past, efforts to secure and/or destroy surplus stockpiles of ammunition and mélange have been undertaken mostly on a national or bilateral basis, rather than through international or regional organizations². NATO, however, through its Partnership for Peace and Security through Science Programs, and in the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), has gained significant experience and developed a sizeable record of projects in the SALW, mine action and, more recently, conventional ammunition and mélange .

On the occasion of the special FSC meeting held on 29 September 2004, the NATO representative proposed concrete co-operation between NATO and the OSCE regarding an ammunition destruction project in Ukraine. She also suggested possible further options for co-operation.

Interaction with the United Nations: Unlike SALW, anti-personnel mines and other conventional or unconventional types of weaponry and equipment, the issue of dangerous stockpiles of ammunition and obsolete stocks of mélange has not been high on the United Nations' agenda. Therefore, a more acute awareness of the risks associated with stockpiles of ammunition, not only confined to the OSCE area, can be created at the international level. Following United Nations General Assembly decision 59/515 of 3 December 2004, two OSCE participating States tabled a draft resolution at the 60th session of the General Assembly entitled "Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus". The resolution, which included a reference to relevant measures taken in the OSCE context, was approved by consensus by the UNGA First Committee on 31 October 2005 [UNGA draft resolution A/60/L.40] and is now awaiting adoption by the GA Plenary³.

² A notable exception is the OSCE project in Moldova, where a voluntary fund was established in to assist in the removal and subsequent destruction of conventional ammunition.

³ Similar to the Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition, the UNGA resolution calls upon States to assess whether, in conformity with their legitimate security needs, parts of their stockpiles should be considered to be in surplus and whether they represent a security risk. It underlines the importance of the security and safety of stockpiles and encourages States in a position to do so to assist

In addition, contacts have been established between the OSCE and relevant parts of the United Nations system, such as the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs, the UN Institute for Disarmament Research and the UN Development Programme.

3. Awareness-raising

Press and public information activities: While related areas such as small arms and light weapons and action on mines have received extensive coverage from the media, unsecured stocks of mélange and ammunition have attracted little media interest. In June 2005, an in-depth article appeared in the *New York Times* on this topic, confirming that there is room for more publicity on this issue.

The Press and Public Information Section in the OSCE Secretariat has followed the stockpiles issue from its inception as an OSCE process, providing, both in print and in website publications, press releases, photos, articles, event and other information on this topic. The June 2005 edition of the *OSCE Magazine* featured a four-page article from the perspective of the FSC Chairmanship. It focused on practical projects, OSCE assistance in the proper storage and destruction of stockpiles of surplus small arms and light weapons in several countries, and as the OSCE's growing programme of mélange disposal.

The Stockpiles document is one of the most downloaded documents on the OSCE Website (e.g., in the period from 1 September to 15 October 2005, it was downloaded a total of 773 times). Next to other relevant items, the Website also carries a special feature on the topic ("New OSCE document tackles risks from ammunition") which has been echoed in other media too.

The FSC Chairman is working with the Chairman-in-Office to include in the *OSCE Annual Report 2005* a special feature story on OSCE activities in this field, which will be included as part of the section on the CiO's activities, in the first 25 pages of the Report.

Section IV: Lessons learned

The implementation of the Stockpiles document started immediately after its adoption in November 2003. Lessons learned since that time are predominantly about the process for requesting assistance. For example, presentation and consideration of the assistance request; whether to carry out an assessment visit; how to prepare for the assessment visit; preparation of a project proposal; and co-ordination with potential donors for assistance.

The Stockpiles document has certainly raised the profile of this issue, and has created a mechanism for participating States to request assistance. It is important to note, however, that the fact that a participating State makes such a request does not entail an OSCE commitment to address that request. The number of requests put to the OSCE for consideration (10 to date), as well as the fact that the majority of them are seeking destruction of unstable stockpiles (a high cost proposition), means that most of the requests were not been addressed immediately.

the States concerned in eliminating surplus stockpiles and improving stockpile management. The resolution also encourages States to examine the possibility of developing and implementing, within a national, regional or subregional framework, measures to combat illicit trafficking in ammunition.

Even so, all OSCE States are now aware of the need for assistance in this area. We hope that awareness of this need will increase the capacity of donor States to address this serious problem. Thus, there may be some benefit in considering a more systematic approach to submitting, processing and prioritizing requests.

Requesting States

The large size and all-inclusive nature of most of the requests for assistance received to date has contributed to the time needed to analyze each request. Small requests are easier to process; donor States are better able to quickly consider small projects and are more likely to identify funds for such proposals. Participating States (pS) have therefore been encouraged to divide problems into separable issues, maximizing the possibility that donor States may be able to fund a portion of their request, and helping donors to quickly identify areas where their particular expertise might be of use. All requests for assistance should be sent to the FSC in accordance with Stockpiles document.

It is helpful when pS can prioritize their requests (or elements thereof). Donors may have different priorities, but knowing the priorities of the requesting State may impact a donor State's prioritization.

The model questionnaire for requesting States contained in the Stockpiles document (Annex I) may not provide enough information for potential donors to make a decision on whether to provide assistance to the proposed project. Therefore, requesting States are encouraged to provide additional, more detailed information as part of the process.

Considering the cross-dimensional risks often associated with these stockpiles, requesting States would do well to identify the humanitarian and/or environmental impact that could result if the identified problem was not addressed. It is very important to the process that requesting States present, as part of their request, information on their own national efforts to solve the problem, for example, funding provided or actions taken. Preliminary information on projects could be an option for donors to consider.

Donor States (Co-ordination of assistance)

There may be problems relating to combined assistance requests for help with conventional ammunition and SALW problems (e.g., Tajikistan, Kazakhstan). The lesson learned so far is, that joint co-ordination and transparency throughout the process are essential.

There is no "library" of assistance to draw from since no donors have provided responses to the model questionnaire for donors offered in the Stockpiles document (Annex II). This appears to be because most funding is not part of standing available funds, but rather, is provided in response to specific requests. If potential donor States would respond to the model questionnaire, at least listing past projects accomplished or areas of expertise, this information would help the Chair's consultations.

The step from identifying a problem to defining a technically and financially viable solution is, of course, the most difficult part of project development. The "Procedure for dealing with a request for assistance" as specified in the Document (Section VI and Annex III) allow a large degree of flexibility in the way requests for assistance are processed.

It is important to find suitable answers to the individual, and often very different, problems that participating States requesting assistance face.

Joint assessment visits by personnel from interested States have been the norm in the first phases of dealing with requests for assistance. In some cases, however, it has proven to be of advantage to commission expert consultancy services from the private sector to develop pre-feasibility or “scoping” studies. Given that project development implies developing a “package” comprising not only technical, but also managerial and financial aspects, this approach has proven to be both efficient and cost-effective.

The volume of the request for assistance sometimes indicates a need for contributions that may be beyond what a donor can commit to in the short term. This may cause a gap in the assistance in future. There are national restrictions on some types of assistance that only become evident in the planning process (e.g., paying of local taxes from donated financial contributions).

FSC Chairperson

The FSC Chair plays an important role in the initial stages of the processing of requests. In accordance with the Stockpiles document, the FSC has the lead role in initiating an OSCE response to the request.

The FSC Chair may request assistance from the CPC’s FSC Support Unit, as necessary to allow it to undertake these tasks more efficiently. Active involvement by the Chair allows the OSCE to fulfil better its clearinghouse function of bringing donors and requesters together, and avoiding duplication of effort in this arena. This ground-work is essential. Excessive emphasis on moving forward immediately in response to requests can be counter-productive and limit the Chair’s ability to conduct consultations, which are necessary in order to determine whether there will be direct OSCE involvement in addressing the request for assistance.

The time required to process a request may exceed the mandate of one FSC Chairperson. It is recommended that the FSC Chairperson involve the FSC Troika in the process as well as the FSC co-ordinator for the implementation of the Stockpiles document.

The FSC Chair should send a letter to delegations of requesting States, to confirm reception of a request for assistance. The letter shall state that a substantive answer (either positive or negative) shall follow in due course, after initial consultations.

The annual appointment of a co-ordinator has had a positive impact to the consultation process. The co-ordinator, a member of one of the FSC delegations, works on behalf of, and in close consultation with, the Chair. To ensure a transparent information flow to participating States, regular reports to the FSC, in Working Group A, are advised. Well formulated and complete briefings at several stages during the implementation of projects will help to reassure other participating States that project funds are being used well, and may encourage further donations in the future.

The Conflict Prevention Centre

The CPC has played a very important role in helping to implement the Stockpiles document. The CPC engaged proactively in responding to requests for assistance.

The CPC has an active role in assisting the FSC Chair. For example, initial consultations with a host State usually need to be completed before any assessment visits are made. The CPC has been able to facilitate such consultations.

The CPC role includes: assisting in liaison with other international organizations; technical assistance to the FSC Chair and CiO (which currently includes tracking the status of requests); preparations for and participation in assessment visits following the Chair's initial consultations; and co-ordination of the production of detailed project plans.

Experts with skills specific to the assistance request should be included in the assessment team.

OSCE field missions

OSCE field missions, in accordance with their mandates, have a role to play in the processing of requests and implementation of the project, but their roles may vary. OSCE missions with a role in project implementation represent a comparative advantage and a valuable asset.

The OSCE mission may provide local knowledge in support of the evaluation and oversight of projects. The mission members often have good contacts with governmental bodies and could react quickly if additional information or explanations were necessary. Such contacts may be critical in obtaining donor funds or successful project implementation. Furthermore, the field presence itself may play a supportive role, or could be directly involved in assisting with project implementation, depending on the mandate and resources and how the donor/recipient view the project

One of the problems identified is that the missions may not have the personnel with the required technical expertise. Donors or interested participating States that have the expertise needed might consider seconding an expert at no cost to the OSCE Unified Budget (as part of the donation). The source of expertise may be participating States willing to second additional personnel. A good example is a chief technical adviser in Tajikistan to support the OSCE field operation.

International organizations

Interaction with other organizations is slowly improving. However, it may not always be obvious with which organizations the OSCE needs to co-ordinate. As in the case of the mélange project in Azerbaijan, interaction may develop on a case-by-case basis. A more systematic approach in co-ordinating efforts could be of added value. An ongoing exchange of information between the OSCE and NATO, the UN, and SEESAC, among others, in the year 2005 has already significantly improved co-ordination.

Raising awareness

As described above, the Stockpiles document has elevated awareness of the security risks arising from improperly secured or uncontrolled stockpiles of conventional ammunition, explosive material, and detonating devices in surplus and/or awaiting destruction in some States in the OSCE area. The many requests for assistance made to date provide evidence of the range of humanitarian, environmental, and economic security problems associated with this issue, which has resulted in press reporting and attention beyond the OSCE itself. Examples of successful projects co-ordinated through the OSCE, coupled with increased awareness of the problem, may encourage more States to allocate additional resources toward eliminating improperly secured, uncontrolled or otherwise dangerous stockpiles of conventional ammunition, explosive material, and detonating devices.