OSCE SECURITYDAYS

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

T h e   S e c r e t a r i a t

OSCE SECURITY DAYS 2013

- Concept Note -

WHAT: *OSCE Security Days 2013*, hosted by the Secretary General and supported through an extra-budgetary project.

WHEN: 17-18 June 2013, immediately ahead of the 2013 Annual Security Review Conference (tentatively scheduled for 19-20 June 2013).

WHERE: Hofburg (*Neuer Saal)*, Heldenplatz, Vienna, Austria.

OBJECTIVE:
- Strengthening OSCE's interaction with relevant Track II initiatives and linking the contributions that traditional diplomacy and civil society can make to the establishment of a security community;
- Provide a platform for the discussion of fresh ideas and approaches to the security challenges on the Helsinki + 40 agenda;
- Bring visibility to the OSCE and raise the awareness on its work.

KEY FEATURES:
- Active engagement of academia, civil society, the media and youth to foster an interactive discussion;
- Transparency of the debates;
- Informality of discussions.

PARTICIPANTS:
- OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation;
- OSCE Institutions and Field Operations;
- Interested Annual Security Review Conference participants;
- Academia, think-tanks, NGOs, youth representatives and the media.

BACKGROUND: Launched for the first time in 2012, at the initiative of the Secretary General, Lamberto Zannier, to broaden the debate on the role and the agenda of the OSCE as a security organization, the *OSCE Security Days* has proven to be a valuable forum for dialogue between the OSCE and relevant Track II initiatives on Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security. In particular, the format allowed a prominent group of experts, think-tanks, representatives of civil society and delegates to engage with panellists in a free-flowing discussion on the challenges

the OSCE faces in addressing current security threats and on the role of civil society in shaping a security community, hence complementing the OSCE's intergovernmental dialogue.

During the 2012 conference, the lack of trust – as opposed to lack of security - was identified as a key challenge in the OSCE area. Participants also agreed that a security community should not be established "artificially", but rather grow progressively through a network of converging interstate, business, cultural and civil society relations. It was concluded that one of the OSCE's main functions remains managing and bridging diverging perceptions of security through its cooperative approach.

Building on the success of this initiative, three follow-up Security Days events have been organized, focussing on reconciliation processes, the future of conventional arms control in Europe and the international efforts in addressing security threats stemming from Afghanistan, respectively. With the launch of the Helsinki+40 process in Dublin, the *OSCE Security Days* initiative constitutes an important hub for an exchange of views on the way forward, enabling Track II contributions to be channelled into the Helsinki+40 dialogue. Moreover, it offers a valuable platform to engage interested youth and academia networks in the work of the OSCE, ultimately rising the public profile of the organization.

FOCUS: After discussing the foundations of a security community in 2012, the *Security Days 2013* will focus on the "OSCE in the 21st Century". The following themes will be addressed:
1. Diverging perceptions of existing security threats;
2. The need to build trust in the OSCE region by promoting joint security responses.

MODALITIES: The conference will consist of eight panel debates, including one night owl session looking at social media and its security implications. Each panel will comprise 3-4 speakers and a moderator who will introduce and manage the sessions, fostering a lively and interactive debate. All interventions should be short and focussed. The subsequent discussions will engage the audience and stimulate interaction among representatives of delegations, academic institutions and civil society. The event will be web-streamed live and interaction via social media will be promoted. A final session will look into the possibilities of launching an OSCE network of think tanks. Efforts will be made to promote gender balance and geographic diversity among the panellists.

LOGISTICS: The *Neuer Saal* will be set up in theatre style to facilitate an informal discussion. The conference will be held in English language (no interpretation envisaged).

Buffet lunches and coffee breaks will be arranged on both days of the conference. A reception and night owl session will be organized on the evening of 17 June 2013.