

OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, 23/24 June 2004
Session 3: "Comprehensive Security, a Strategic Approach"

Mr. Chairman,

as Minister Shamshur pointed out in his excellent introductory speech, politico-military aspects of security are more than ever cross-dimensional, that is intertwined and interconnected with other security-related issues, be they institutional, economic, or environmental. We very much share this perception. Politico-military threats have not diminished in significance or even ceased to exist, they only come in new guises, in a new and "untraditional" complexity. Therefore, we strongly believe that these interrelated issues have to be dealt with in the politico-military dimension of the OSCE.

Effectiveness of the politico-military toolkit

This general observation leads to the question if and to what extent existing OSCE instruments for co-operative arms control are appropriate to cope not only with well-known but also with newly emerged threats, as outlined in the OSCE "Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability" adopted in 2003.

The fate of all OSCE instruments eventually is decided by their ability to solve practical security problems. Therefore our well-established politico-military toolkit, including the CSBMs contained in the Vienna Document 1999 should be regularly scrutinized for their effectiveness and amended, as necessary, in the light of, for example, new developments in military technology and strategy. Germany is in favour of all well-founded attempts to enhance the effectiveness of the toolkit and, therefore, the security in the OSCE region. As one such effort we strongly support the proposal made recently by Turkey in the FSC aiming at all participating States to notify their largest military activity each year on a voluntary basis, taking into consideration the relevant provisions of the Vienna document 1999 without opening it for renegotiation.

There is no reason, though, for participating states to limit themselves to modifying, amending and adding in a piece-meal fashion to the existing pol-mil acquis of the OSCE. It has always been the strength of this resourceful organization to respond to emerging challenges with unconventional, innovative and sometimes ground-breaking concepts and instruments, often well ahead of other organizations. If this means reviewing whether there is a need for a "next-generation", truly 21st century approach to cooperative security, we should not hesitate to do so.

Wider sharing of OSCE norms, principles and commitments with others

another constant feature of our debate on security issues is that we are facing threats of a trans-boundary nature and threats that stem from beyond the OSCE region but have an impact on our region. Let me quote an example: The increased threat from terrorists calls for an ever-closer co-operation not only within the OSCE, but also with our co-operation partners outside the OSCE. We believe that co-operation with partners will lead to viable results if it is driven

by common interest and common threat perceptions. Successful co-operation can be expected whenever the OSCE and partner states profit in equal measure, i.e. in the fight against the illicit spread of SALW or other weapons or terrorism and in joint efforts for better border control and management. In this vein, we should strive to identify common areas of interest in the politico-military field. These joint activities could also foster regional security co-operation structures and the stabilisation of regions whose instability could undermine our security. Access to OSCE experience, working methods, techniques, values and principles is not restricted. On the other hand the OSCE might also profit from the experience gained by the partner states. We believe that PC decision 571 on "Further Dialogue and Co-Operation with the Partners for Co-Operation" is an important step into this direction, and that the politico-military dimension of the OSCE may lend itself particularly well to intensify our activities in this regard.

Politico-military components in field operations

Stability and security can only be enhanced if all commitments undertaken in the OSCE are implemented in good faith. There are however areas where instruments are available but underutilized although they can greatly contribute to solving a problem. The field operations, we believe, are one such instrument. We believe that politico-military elements of the Code of Conduct, of the OSCE document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and especially the new OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition and FSC decisions on ManPADS could, where appropriate, be integrated more fully into the programme and work of OSCE missions, centres and offices. This would enhance the specific competence of members of field missions, and in the case of the implementation of the SALW, ManPADS and stockpiles documents, provide a practical contribution in facing the risks posed by these weapons and explosive materials.

Open Skies Treaty

Allow me to briefly touch on one last issue: The Open Skies Treaty is the geographically most comprehensive conventional arms control agreement. Its possibilities for aerial surveillance have been used intensively after its coming into force. Thus it contributes considerably to openness and confidence between the states parties. Germany is looking forward to the implementation of the second application phase starting in 2006 which will provide the technical means also for new fields of application, such as employing and extending the Open Skies regime to the protection of the environment. In this respect we attach great importance to the seminar on "the environmental and ecological use of the Open Skies Treaty" which we initiated together with Hungary. From the first review conference in 2005 under German Chairmanship we await further impulse.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by saying how much Germany values the opportunity this Conference provides to exchange ideas and perspectives outside the routine of the OSCE's regular bodies. We are grateful to all speakers for enriching the debate in this working session and the profound preparatory work that went into it. With a combined effort and in due time, we trust that this debate will lead to tangible results.