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Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Secretariat

Conflict Prevention Centre

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Comparative Analysis of Crisis Response Capabilities - The OSCE Position

Background paper for distribution/discussion

THE OSCE EXPERIENCE

The OSCE, through its active political bodies, institutions, and field activities is recognised by its 55 participating States as a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management. It was the Balkans conflicts in the early 1990s that marked a turning point for the institutional development of the Organization, for during this period there was an acute need for the CSCE/OSCE to shift its emphasis from regulatory mechanisms of inter-state conflict, based on military security issues, to responding to conflicts, especially within states, much more flexibly and effectively. To this end, instruments such as missions of long duration were created. These missions were new forms of international intervention into potential conflict situations.

The Budapest Summit in 1994 cast the OSCE as “a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management” with a “flexible and dynamic” approach. New mechanisms, procedures and political instruments were established to facilitate this role. The emphasis shifted from mechanisms of early warning and prevention of inter-state conflict, mainly based on politico-military instruments, to increasing attention to the factors that generate conflicts within and between states. This shift also aimed at developing the ability to respond more flexibly and also more effectively to conflicts, and to this end “second generation” instruments, such as the HCNM and field missions of long duration were created.

In the last decade OSCE field activities have become the Organization’s principal instrument for dealing with all phases of the conflict cycle, and this essentially means the Balkans. In 1992 the then CSCE deployed its first field activity in the region, the Missions of Long Duration in Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina. Later that year, in an effort to prevent conflict from spilling over into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM), the Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje was deployed - and it has since been adapted to meet new security challenges there.

While the situation in the Balkans has stabilized significantly in the last decade, the OSCE still maintains its strongest field activities in this region. Through its missions in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia and Montenegro, it carries out a wide array of multi-faceted activities and projects, including in human rights and rule of law development, democratisation, institution building, organising and monitoring of elections, police monitoring and training, media development, small arms and light weapons (SALW) activities, and other forms of arms control.

Structurally, in addition to the network of OSCE missions and other field activities - there are an additional 12 field activities outside the Balkans - the OSCE's conflict prevention tools include regular political dialogue and exchanges of views among OSCE participating States in the Permanent Council, and permanent Institutions like the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. These tools are complemented by various ad hoc mechanisms applied on an as needed basis: Personal representatives of the Chairman-in-Office, fact-finding and rapporteur missions, steering groups and so on. Within the Secretariat, the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) provides daily substantive support to and follow-up on the operational implementation of the OSCE's decisions.

The emergence of non-traditional threats and challenges to security and stability at the end of the last century has led to the development of "third" generation instruments such as policing, anti-terrorism, anti-trafficking and last but not least border related activities.

At Istanbul 1999 the Ministers identified new global risks and challenges to security in the OSCE region, and that these new challenges – including international terrorism, violent extremism, organised crime and drug trafficking as well as the excessive and destabilising accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons – represent growing challenges to security. To this end they agreed to strengthen existing instruments and to develop new ones to provide assistance and advice. A first step in the development of "third" generation instruments is the extension of existing tools for police – related activities.

In the aftermath of the terrorist acts of 11 September 2001, it became clear that existing instruments to prevent and combat asymmetric threats bypassing traditional security and defence systems need to be further expanded. In Bucharest (2001) the Ministers identified a number of risks and challenges to security, and reaffirmed the importance of the strengthened role of the OSCE in setting up effective mechanisms of co-operation to address them. They also agreed to broaden dialogue within the OSCE, and to strengthen co-operation with other international, regional and sub-regional organisations and institutions, all on the basis of the Platform for Co-operative Security. These principles were reconfirmed and further operationalised at the Porto Ministerial Council Meeting in December 2002, with the adoption of a Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism and a Declaration on Trafficking in Human Beings. Moreover, it was also decided to develop a strategy document to address threats to stability and security in the 21st century.

At Maastricht in 2003, the participating States agreed on the "OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century" establishing the mandate to develop an OSCE border security and management concept. 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'. To this end the OSCE Chairmanship has established an informal Working Group on Borders in order to develop a OSCE border security and management concept.

The objective of an OSCE border security and management concept will certainly embrace the need to promote open and secure borders in a free and democratic OSCE region, without any dividing lines. Hence, the often stressed challenge to find ways to facilitate legitimate cross-border travel and commerce, and protect human rights, whilst enhancing border management and security operations to a level that is commensurate to dealing fully with the threats of illegal cross-border activities in all their forms, will be very much to the fore in these discussions..

The OSCE has developed its expertise and experience over several years of border-related activities in its three dimensions, and so is in a position to use this experience to formulate a coherent border management strategy. However, such a strategy will require a cross-dimensional and inter-institutional approach, for there is a clear need for co-operation and co-ordination between IOs to avoid overlap and shortfalls. Second, 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. Finally, and this is particularly applicable to the OSCE region, 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.

Activities undertaken by various OSCE bodies, institutions and field operations have, since the launching of the first OSCE missions in 1993, often focussed on a variety of aspects of border management and security. Over the years they have been expanded to a various areas of border security and management such as enforcement of sanctions, border monitoring, border police training on national and regional level, promotion of best practices in humane border management and cross –border co-operation.

And as one of its responses to new threats the OSCE will continue to refocus its activities to strengthen border security and management in order to contribute to the fight against terrorism, organised crime as well as trafficking of human beings and illicit goods. In order to assist in this and deal more efficiently with such activities another initiative has been to set up a borders sub-unit within the Conflict Prevention Centre in the OSCE Secretariat, 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.

The nature of Peace Operations in the 21st century **And the continuing need for reform**

Ankara, Turkey

18 Nov - 21 Nov 2003

I welcome this timely opportunity to address you on the nature of possible future peace operations and the continuing need for change. Events in Iraq, in Afghanistan any number of other regions in the world graphically illustrate the nature of the threats faced today by international organisations. In the search to promote peace, and to assist countries bring stability and economic and social development, international organisations have had to adapt rapidly to ensure their continuing effectiveness. I hope today to be able to address some of the most important aspects of this reform process, building on the valuable and often challenging experience of learning lessons. Let me start also by pointing to the fact that these challenges require, more than ever, a concerted effort to improve co-operation in preventing conflicts before they evolve, a philosophy much integrated in the way OSCE works.

The OSCE “philosophy” is based upon a comprehensive approach to the three dimensions of security, namely politico-military issues, the economic and environmental area and the human dimension. Furthermore, the Organization has a co-operative approach to security, based on the premise that security is indivisible, that there is equal status for all States, and decisions are made by consensus. This can sometimes be a slow process, but it underpins the concerted commitment to action by all member states.

When considering our Organisation’s role in peacekeeping we need to take into account the fact that the past ten years have seen peace operations becoming increasingly complex, involving military, police and civilian personnel addressing a wider range of tasks and responsibilities. This has dramatically broadened the very definition of peacekeeping and profoundly changed its nature.

In this broad sense, the OSCE has played a very active role in conflict prevention, peace-making, peacekeeping and post-conflict rehabilitation. Indeed, our present 18 OSCE field presences are involved in a number of activities falling into this broad category of peace operations, and these activities have contributed significantly to dealing with different levels of crisis/conflict situations in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. In fact, our Missions themselves have demonstrated to serve a much appreciated early warning/conflict prevention role.

Additionally, some of our current and ongoing operations, such as the Border Monitoring Operation in Georgia and our activities in the area of Policing (in particular, in the area of community policing, ethnic policing and Police

Training), have many elements in common with activities that, from a UN perspective, would be considered an integral part of Peace Operations.

As a relatively young organization, the OSCE is no stranger to change. Following a profound restructuring and the institutionalisation of the organisation in the nineties, the Istanbul Summit 1999, by adopting the Charter for European Security, promoted new instruments to improve the efficiency of the Organisation in recognition of lessons learnt and the new challenges ahead. The main decisions included the promotion of a more regional approach to issues, the strengthening of cooperation with other IOs and NGOs and the establishment of the Platform for Co-operative Security. The adoption of this in particular greatly improved the OSCE's capacity to co-operate with other organisations, including those involved in broader forms of peacekeeping operations.

This Platform also called for a number of further initiatives to enable the OSCE Secretariat to better facilitate such activities. Specific efforts to enhance the Organization's capability to plan, deploy and manage field operations included the setting up of a small Operations Planning Unit within the Conflict Prevention Centre, the adoption of the Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams (REACT) initiative as a means to rapidly recruit the experts needed for fast deployments to new or enhanced missions, and more recently, the commitment to adopt an Integrated Resource Management Agenda (IRMA) system. These are all signs of strong political will on the part of participating States.

Additionally, there are political discussions ongoing in OSCE bodies on possible amendments to the 1992 Helsinki Document where it sets out the framework for any future OSCE Peacekeeping operations that might be called for.

I started by saying that today's peace operations have become increasingly multi-faceted and multi-dimensional, with solutions being sought by deploying together military, police and civilian components. Current crises have illustrated clearly the need for a benign environment in order that civilian components of such operations, which in turn makes rapid security sector reform a major priority. Experiences from Afghanistan and Iraq show the need to provide a strategic plan for the co-operation and co-ordination of international organisations and other supporting institutions before deploying people and supporters to the respective theatre. This strategic planning should be tailored to the situation on the ground, and has to include the political and operational exit strategy, and further measures as basis for the whole mission circle. These well-timed activities should enable the development of the Host Nation's capabilities

to take over its own responsibility of the country supported by diminishing foreign institutions and the international organisations.

As a result of our experiences, the OSCE has activated an intensive dialogue with other international actors involved in our mission areas. This includes more and more structured exchanges at the HQ level, aimed at encouraging exchanges of visions and fine-tuning of strategies. This dialogue, however, complements - but cannot in any way replace - the vitally important mechanisms for co-ordination and co-operation on the terrain both at the political and the operational level.

In this connection, I would like to put forward some suggestions to further improve IC co-operation in the following areas, all of which are areas that will benefit from reform:

- Information sharing, especially in early warning;
 - Enhancing co-operation in fact-finding and monitoring missions, including possible set-up of joint “country co-ordination teams;”
 - Developing joint training programs for field officers prior to their deployment in the field; and
 - Harmonisation of our working procedures.
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- First, where necessary, partner organisations should introduce new modalities and establish new mechanisms for co-operation. But we also need to build more efficiently on the initiatives already launched and take more active advantage of each other’s existing tools. For example, better use could be made of cross-conditionality: non-compliance with international obligations (ICTY or OSCE or Dayton) could be linked to progress in the relations with other organisations (e.g. SAP or PfP co-operation). We must see where and how we can complement each other, using experience gained, resources and mechanisms available. And we should respect the principle of inclusiveness and involve all relevant players.
 - Secondly, despite recent progress achieved, information sharing among partner organisations, especially in early warning, definitely needs to be improved. Early warning is one of the main functions of the OSCE Institutions and field offices. Regular reports and evaluations of the situation in a variety of locations and on a variety of issues are provided to the participating States, who themselves regularly share information in the Permanent Council. Better information sharing among partner organisations can be achieved through joint working level meetings directly in the field and between headquarters. The OSCE-NATO working level consultations

between headquarters have become a good examples of such information sharing, and we are presently discussing ways to make even it more systematic and operational.

- Thirdly, there is much room for improving co-operation in fact-finding and monitoring missions. One possible solution might be to set up, when needed, joint “country co-ordination teams”, for example drawing on OSCE’s permanent field presences.
- Fourth, as we are doing today, we should as well in future continue our exchanges on lessons learned and evaluation, since this is an essential component of successful conflict prevention. Within the OSCE the Conflict Prevention Centre is, among others, responsible for developing an OSCE lessons learned process. An OSCE strategy in this area of activity, as well as a database, will be produced. It would be interesting to formulate truly inclusive common evaluations of joint operations with a view to developing common lessons learned.
- Fifth, as proved by earlier practice, very often a major obstacle to smooth co-operation between partners in the field is the lack of reciprocal knowledge of goals, mandates, procedures, etc. One way to tackle this issue would be to provide each other with training modules on respective organisations, or to develop joint training programs on relevant issues for field officers prior to their deployment in the field. Joint training should be a general aim, not least because common standards are already current practice in many areas. Joint exercises can also play a very important role in this process of getting to know each other’s procedures better – but only if partner organisations are treated as real partners, and can participate rather than observe, and have access to relevant information.

It should be added here that while OSCE Permanent Council decisions can be fast, and subsequent deployment swift, there are instances when rapid deployment is not essential. Such scenarios present opportunities to conduct thorough needs assessments in order to ensure best possible complementarity between both government agencies and other international organisations.

OSCE’s broad approach, based on the comprehensive concept of security, and of its inherent operational flexibility, has demonstrated a high degree of effectiveness in developing multidimensional activities. This has come about not least because it has built on the strengths of its “soft security approach”, embracing as it does all of its three dimensions. Thus it has proved to be, along with all else, a successful partner for other organisations involved in peacekeeping and crisis management operations. The need for a coherent action

by the IC in this respect does certainly make a difference. And OSCE stands ready to continue to play its part in the 21st century.

Background

Since the adoption of the Helsinki Document in 1992, which first set out the framework for any future OSCE led Peacekeeping Operation (PKO), a number of other important decisions have been adopted:

- Decision on the so called third party peacekeeping (Rome Ministerial Council, 1993)
- Decision on the possibility of organising an operation in Nagorno-Karabakh (Budapest Summit, 1994)
- Relevant provisions of the Charter for European Security (Istanbul Summit, 1999).

Chapter III of the Helsinki '92 Document continues to be the main regulative framework for possible OSCE activities in the field of peacekeeping. The definition of peacekeeping used in para 18 of this document ("*operations which will involve civilian and/or military personnel, may range from small scale to large scale, and may assume a variety of forms, including observer and monitor missions and larger deployments of forces....*") is both broad and flexible. In fact, many of the present OSCE field activities could be described as peacekeeping on the basis of this broad definition.

However, none of the decisions adopted fully addresses the specific capacities and capabilities that will be required of the OSCE, and in particular the C-i-O and the Secretariat, should the decision be taken to launch a peacekeeping mission, particularly if a component is to include armed forces.

Aim

The aim of this paper is to discuss both the operational capabilities and the logistical capacities within the Organization, and to identify areas of shortfall, should the OSCE be called upon to deploy an unarmed, or an armed PKO in the future.

Political framework

The modalities for the establishment of over 20 various field presences deployed in the course of the last 10 years have always been based on 'ad hoc arrangements'. As it is known, the OSCE has never deployed any operation on the basis of the modalities described in paras 17-56 of Chapter III of the

Helsinki Document, and if it were to do so there are, *inter alia*, a number of requirements foreseen under this document that have to be met, namely:

- The nomination of the Head of Mission by the C-i-O is required to be endorsed by the PC.
- The C-i-O will exercise overall operational guidance of a PKO and is required to co-operate with an ad hoc group composed of Troika members, providing operational support, established at the CPC. It is likely that such a group would consist of a large number of members, and may well duplicate much of the work of the CPC.
- The Head of Mission will be guided by this ad hoc group, rather than by the C-i-O, as it is the case with regard to the current field presences.

In addition, the mechanism foreseen in the Helsinki Document for financing PKOs could create problems, since *de facto* new negotiations on the scale of contribution will be required. Difficulties with agreeing on a scheme for financing of any PKO might also have a considerable impact on its efficiency and deployment.

Against this background, the management of the operational aspects on the basis of the Helsinki '92 Decision is likely to be significantly more difficult than under the present (precedent-based) system of mounting field operations.

It should be remembered that the Mandate of the High Level Planning Group (HLPG) required it to make recommendations to the C-i-O on developing a plan for the establishment, force structure requirements and operation of a multinational OSCE Peacekeeping Force, and *inter alia*, the size and characteristics of the force, command and control, logistics, allocation of units and resources, rules of engagement and arrangements with contributing States. As is known, this is though only for one specific area of operation.

That said, the adoption of the Platform for Co-operative Security greatly improved the OSCE's capacity to co-operate with other organisations, including those involved in broader forms of PKOs. Specific efforts to enhance the Organization's capability to plan, deploy and manage field operations have included the setting up of a small Operations Planning Unit (OPU) within the CPC, the adoption of the Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams (REACT) initiative, and the commitment to the IRMA system. These are all signs of strong political will on the part of pSs.

Types of PKOs

To cope with the tasks foreseen by the Helsinki Document different types of operations could be envisaged:

- First, there is the narrow, more traditional military ‘blue helmet’ role (Type A). This requires formed bodies and cannot be achieved through the normal secondment system. It will need dedicated operational command and logistics supply chains as well as a special personnel chain.
- Secondly, the broader definition of PKOs includes unarmed confidence building monitors, border monitors and other unarmed specialists, such as police (Type B). Such a PKO, if so considered, can be deployed, led and administered by the OSCE using existing procedures and capacities.
- Thirdly, a combination of Type A and B, both OSCE led PKOs, might be considered (Type C). This could come about because armed forces, under an OSCE command chain, might be needed in order to provide the benign environment that unarmed OSCE monitoring teams would require in order to operate.
- Fourthly, an OSCE led PKO component might co-operate closely with, or mandate, a separate, armed PKO under the command of another International Organisation, and working under a joint MoU with the hosting pS (Type D).

Whatever the type of operation, it will need to be determined by a clear and precise mandate adopted by the PC.

Requirements of the C-i-O and Troika as set by the Helsinki 1992 Decision

The Helsinki Document would require an efficient decision making structure, based in Vienna and led by the C-i-O and the Troika, in order to deal rapidly with both political problems and operational developments, as they arise. This ad hoc group, established in the CPC, will consist of members of the Troika, of pSs providing personnel for the PKO, and of other pSs making significant practical contributions, perhaps such as those providing specific logistical support systems to the operation. This Group will be required to, inter alia, prepare terms of reference (ToR) for the PKO. These ToR will define practical modalities and determine the requirements for personnel and other resources. They are required to be adopted by the PC. Furthermore, this ad hoc group is required to assist the C-i-O by providing overall operational support for the PKO. This means that it will monitor the PKO and act as a 24 hour point of contact for the Head of Mission, and will assist him/her as required.

The PC will be required to regularly review the PKO, and take the necessary decisions related to its conduct by taking into account political developments as they occur.

Current Secretariat capacities

The present composition of the OSCE Secretariat is sufficient for the planning, preparation, deployment and subsequent support of current field operations up to a significant number of unarmed civilian staff. However the capacity to deploy them is limited, so larger missions will take longer to deploy. Should the OSCE decide to establish an unarmed civilian PKO, the current structure will therefore suffice.

The Istanbul Summit 1999 and the Charter set up a number of initiatives to enable the OSCE Secretariat to better facilitate such activities. The OPU in the CPC is one area, the REACT concept in the Department of Human Resources is another. In the Department of Management and Finance a number of logistical initiatives have been taken, not least the provision of a Start-up Kit for new missions, or for the enhancement of existing ones. The ongoing Integrated Resource Management (IRMA) Project will further facilitate the planning activities and the rapid deployment of future missions.

Should the OSCE be required to deploy a PKO composed mainly of military personnel, recruited on the basis of 'national contingents' the present structure of the OSCE Secretariat will prove to be inadequate. The assets of multi national troops deployed in one mission have to be standardised, and operating procedures have to be compatible to enable successful co-operation in the field.

In the 'Planning Phase' the current limited planning capacities in the OPU (which consists of the head and one resource planner), will be assisted by other departments in the Secretariat. Additionally the capacity of this planning team can be increased by additional, temporarily employed, planners and specialists. The mandate of the operation will have a significant bearing on the operational planning work to be undertaken, which in turn will dictate the specific planning skills that will need to be employed in order to prepare for the mission.

As previously mentioned, the HLPG was established to deal with the planning of a future OSCE PKO in Nagorno Karabakh. According to its mandate the planning activities of the members are limited to the conflict in this area only. One solution to assist the OPU might be to reconsider the role of the HLPG in order to assist the Secretariat task.

Personnel management issues

Recruitment of seconded personnel. One of the OSCE's main strengths is its ability to deploy individual experts at short notice as effective teams. The establishment of the REACT programme streamlined the OSCE's systems for recruiting and seconding personnel, and it provides for the rapid identification,

selection and deployment of seconded international staff to new missions, or in surge situations in existing missions.

The concept of REACT relies on the willingness of participating States to second suitably qualified and experienced candidates within a given time-frame.

A staffing matrix sets standards to assist pS and the Organization in the efficient identification, screening and selection of qualified professionals within twelve fields of expertise and at four levels of professional competence covering the work carried out in existing OSCE field activities. Additional fields of expertise relating to the work undertaken in traditional PKOs could be added to accommodate the recruitment of seconded personnel required for these activities. The REACT/Mission Information System has already been utilised to ensure the rapid deployment of such expertise.

Training. Military PKOs will almost certainly require formed bodies of troops, trained together and prepared to deploy as one unit. The current training capabilities within the Secretariat (Training and Capacity Building Unit) are able to cope with the requirements of the current OSCE mission to provide the necessary induction programme of up to 80 staff members in two shifts within one week. It is beyond its capacity to brief hundreds of incoming troops, but these would anyway either be trained as necessary before deployment, or perhaps in theatre if circumstances permitted.

Abilities of Mission Support Services/Department of Management and Finance (MSS/DMF) to support PKOs

The current structure and personnel strength of MSS provides the capability to deal with the deployment and support of current OSCE missions. Immediate mission deployment requirements up to 50 personnel can be covered by using items of the Start-up Kit. These are either already available 'off the shelf' or can be provided by rapid procurement. In addition surplus items from other OSCE missions can be moved to any new mission area.

Multi-national troops need standardised assets, particularly the means of communication and transport. As this is not a current requirement within the Organization, and because there are no specific infrastructures or procedures in place to deal with the overall support of PKOs that comprise mainly military troops, the OSCE cannot deal, under its current configuration, with the logistic support that would be necessary.

Conclusions

- The OSCE has no experience in the conduct of armed PKOs.
- The OSCE does not currently have the resources to deploy, command and support logistically, armed PKOs. To do so would require substantial and costly enhancements to the Secretariat.
- For the deployment of more traditional military PKOs a ‘turnkey’ operation would be required. Participating States and other organisations would need to provide fully formed and trained units within the time frame decided by the PC. Such units must be interoperable, and self sustaining operationally as well as logistically.
- Within its current capacity the Secretariat does have the ability to build co-operative relationships with other international organisations. This may well enable the Organization to utilise the assets of other organisations, perhaps including both stand-by arrangements, and command and control systems.
- The enhancement of the CPC/OPU with additional planners will always be required. The OPU serves as a platform on which extra capacity can be built.
- Support to the planning process could be increased by using the HLPG to assist the OPU.
- The OSCE has considerable experience in the planning and rapid deployment of small and medium size field missions using unarmed staff. The mandate of these missions has often embraced activities that equate to a number of the broader definitions of possible peacekeeping tasks foreseen in the Helsinki 1992 Document.
- The OSCE further developed its capacity to deploy such missions under the relevant provisions of the Charter for European Security in 1999, including, inter alia, a dedicated planning unit, the REACT system for rapid recruitment, and improvements in the administrative and logistical fields. Subsequent experience has shown that the OSCE’s ability to deploy such missions has given it significant value added in a number of scenarios.

The core objective of the REACT initiative adopted by OSCE heads of State and Government at the November 1999 Istanbul summit was set out succinctly in the Charter for European Security. Above all, the Charter states, the initiative should result in:

“A capability within the participating States and the OSCE to set up Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams” that will give the States and Organisation “the ability to address problems before they become crises and to deploy quickly the civilian component of a peacekeeping operation when needed.”

Leaders at Istanbul also foresaw that REACT could be “used as a surge capacity to assist the OSCE with the rapid deployment of large-scale or specialised operations.”

To be able to recruit and select quickly qualified professionals for OSCE field activities requires applying both good management practices and modern technology. With this in mind, a REACT programme based on three pillars has been developed. These pillars are:

- Common standards for recruitment and selection of personnel;
- Efficient management of candidate information; and
- Training for operational readiness.

The REACT programme establishes minimum professional standards for twelve fields of expertise, ranging from human rights, media development to administration and support and civilian police.

The programme also includes a world wide web-based extranet, a system linking participating States, the Secretariat in Vienna and field missions for rapid, electronic exchange and management of candidate information.

Finally, the OSCE has developed generic standards which can be used by participating States to train personnel in the skills they will need to begin work immediately upon reaching the field.

LESSONS LEARNT

Despite significant progress, many parts of the Balkans continue to require the presence of substantial numbers of international military personnel and police forces to guarantee stability and future development. Many of these international responsibilities are progressively being turned over to the European Union, in the short term through the establishment of new European crisis-management tools and actual missions and in the long term through the Stabilisation and Association Process. Finding a balance between international involvement and the ongoing process towards regional and local ownership is a key question in this context. Further enhancing the normalisation of the overall security situation in the region, as well as strengthening responses to violent conflict, must also be addressed. Below are some OSCE lessons learned which we think would enhance co-operation between international actors, and as a result, which could point in the right direction to finding this important balance between international involvement and regional ownership - while enhancing overall security in the region.

Strategic lessons

Recent experiences have shown all too clearly that organisations with different mandates, resources and approaches to security have **to work together in the field** if common goals are to be achieved, for each has its own specific role to play. There remains much to be done to develop a greater understanding between the various major international organisations, and there is a need to build mutually supporting systems that will bring closer together the various players. This can be enhanced in a number of key areas through several means.

- Various international organizations (IO) working in the field should develop reciprocal

knowledge of each other's respective mandates, modus operandi, organisational structures and procedures. One way to tackle this issue would be by sharing respective training modules, or developing **joint training programmes** for field officers on relevant issues prior to their deployment in the field. Joint training should be a general aim, not least because common standards are already current practice in many areas. Joint exercises can also play a very important role in this process of getting to know each other's procedures better - but only if partner organisations are treated as real partners, and can participate rather than observe, and have access to relevant information.

- On a similar theme, it could also be useful to harmonise respective actors' working procedures, or to try to develop **compatible procedures or model agreements** to improve co-operation in conflict prevention. Where necessary, partner organisations should introduce new modalities and establish new mechanisms for co-operation. But we also need to build more efficiently on the initiatives already launched and take greater active advantage of each other's existing tools. We must see where, and how, we can complement each other, using experience gained, resources and mechanisms available. And we should respect the principle of inclusiveness - and involve all relevant players.
- Building upon existing training networks and resources, IOs should aim at strengthening the level of **harmonisation** achieved in preparing future members of field operations, particularly civilians. Experience has shown that a number of organisations have been drawing on the same pool of experts. Furthermore, it is a fact that many mission members regularly move between different missions and organisations due to the existence of common skills that are readily transferable between different field operations. Therefore, there is a need for organisations to co-operate in order to identify and prepare future mission staff.
- Since the implementation of the OSCE REACT (Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams) programme, a number of OSCE participating States have enhanced their capabilities to train and select suitable personnel for field operations. Today there are several centres in Europe organising pre-mission training around a common set of **training standards**. Participation in such courses is often open to different nationalities at reduced or even no cost. These establishments work as training/assessment centres, usually in connection with recruiting and seconding authorities who use these pools of experts to cover the needs of different organisations. The training standards applied in these programmes reflect a common ground acknowledged by other traditional major players in this field, such as the UN and the EU. This is important work in progress.
- Experience has also shown that the introduction of this approach to identifying and preparing versatile field staff has been very beneficial. However, there is still much scope for improvement, particularly in the effective use of such training establishments. For example, the ability of some of these centres to accept trainees from neighbouring countries is often under-utilised. Even if organisations agree on the level of training standards necessary, cases where these organisations have effectively co-operated to produce materials to support common curricula are in fact rare. Since the capability of the international community to respond quickly to emergencies depends on its capacity to mobilise adequate resources and deploy them where necessary, more attention should be devoted to the development of a sufficient and versatile reserve pool of suitably trained individuals - from as wide a variety of countries as possible.

- Better information sharing among partner organisations could be achieved through joint working level meetings, both directly in the field and between headquarters. The **improvement of information sharing, especially in early warning**, remains a major challenge. Early warning is one of the main functions of the OSCE Institutions and field offices. Regular reports and evaluations of situations pertaining in a variety of locations and on a variety of issues are regularly and continuously provided to the OSCE States, who themselves regularly share information in the Permanent Council. The OSCE remains ready to share its knowledge with other partner institutions, but there is a need to think about how to exchange restricted information. Being a sensitive issue a possible pragmatic solution could be to exchange staff who have access to such information.
- Another area of consideration is **better co-ordination of policies**. Partner organisations should consider better co-ordination of their policies at a country specific, and, if possible, at a regional level, including joint development and implementation of specific projects. One possible way to enhance co-operation in fact-finding and monitoring missions could be the setting up, when needed, of joint **“country co-ordination teams”** in order to conduct, for example, political and security needs assessments.
- More use of **‘lead agencies’** could also be introduced. By co-ordinating approaches and efforts better, the OSCE and its partners could contribute more effectively to, for instance, democratisation and institution building in the Balkans (and, of course, also elsewhere). This has to date been the case in a number of OSCE mission areas.
- The enhancement of **co-operation on lessons learned, evaluation and best practice** should also be considered. At present there is little co-operation on the issue of lessons learned, though this is an essential component of successful conflict prevention. Within the OSCE, the Conflict Prevention Centre is responsible for developing an OSCE lessons learned process, and to this end, a paper on the OSCE Mission in FYROM was prepared and distributed to participating States which set out lessons learned and made recommendations as to best practice. This was a valuable experience for the OSCE. It would prove of great value to formulate truly inclusive common evaluations of joint operations, with a view to developing common lessons learned and best practice.
- **Operational activities must be supported by a flexible and responsive administration that is tailored to the rapid deployment requirements of the field.** With regard to the management of resources, the OSCE learned from its Kosovo experiences 1998-1999 that its resource management structures had to be much better developed and standardised. The current development of an OSCE **Integrated Resource Management programme (IRMA)** will establish this facility. IRMA will create a common administrative system (CAS), which will be delivered through modern technological solutions. In short, **future OSCE missions will be able to deploy with all its administration systems pre-designed and in place.** This is in sharp contrast to previous Balkan deployments where OSCE Missions were hampered by having to develop systems as they went along. Greater transparency on the use of resources and, through the programme budget planning process, will create explicit links between future operational outcomes and resource allocations.
- There is more to be achieved also in the field of optimising co-ordination between peace-keeping forces and civilian actors, as well as in improving co-operation with fact-finding and monitoring missions.

Tactical lessons

In addition to the above strategic lessons, recent experiences have taught the OSCE a number of tactical lessons which, put into practice, would not only improve field operations but enhance co-operation between partners on the ground. Many of these are old lessons re-learned, others are lessons that the OSCE has failed to act on, despite knowing what best practice would have been. Some key issues are set out below.

- Civilian missions have to be launched in a benign environment in order that unarmed IOs are able to carry out their activities. In BiH, Kosovo and FYROM the necessary security requirements was met by the use of armed forces operating under robust mandates.
- There is a need for a system in place to **ensure rapid deployment**, since time always will be of essence, especially for civilian crisis management, or post-conflict rehabilitation operations. OSCE Permanent Council decisions can be quite fast, and a dedicated Secretariat Planning Unit, backed up by human resources quickly supplied through the REACT system mean that at least initial deployment can be swift – as was required, for example, in FYROM to cover the re-entry of police into former crisis areas.
- Whilst FYROM called for a rapid intervention, during the mounting of the mission to (the then) Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), the OSCE was able to conduct a ‘needs’ assessment beforehand in order to first assess where the OSCE could best help, and to avoid substantive areas already covered by other IOs. Thus, **when rapid deployment is not essential, a proper, and thorough, needs assessment is key to avoid duplication.**
- Civilian missions should have a clear mandate that is realistic and achievable. This can best be achieved by having experts in their respective fields involved early in the decision making process when discussions are underway to determine what needs to be undertaken, and what can be achieved (cf. OSCE and police issues during the Ohrid Framework Agreement negotiations). In this way unrealistic goals will not be set.
- There is a **need for versatility**. The OSCE sees itself as having a number different core activities. It can turn its hand to all of them, but the work of a mission will be dictated by the mandate. Careful appraisal of what to undertake, combined with transparent information-sharing among actors, can lead to seamless complementarity when different IOs deploy in the same theatre. If not duplication and waste will occur.
- There is also a **need for the flexibility and responsiveness to undertake new tasks**. When the OSCE Mission to FRY was established multi-ethnic police training was not initially seen as an area to be addressed by the OSCE. When subsequent unrest in southern Serbia arose the OSCE quickly adapted to this additional role following a request from the government. In the case of Albania, a border monitoring operation was rapidly launched in 1998 in order to report on a daily basis from the north-western region of the country following clashes in the western regions of Kosovo between the Yugoslav army and the KLA. (Our experiences from the Caucasus and Central Asia reinforce this.)
- Where there is an elected or appointed government in place, **IOs should ideally have the full backing of that host government**. Without this full support, co-operation at all levels will suffer. The OSCE mission in FYROM adopted a very inclusive and co-operative system, working closely with a number of ministries. **A benchmark system**

was put in place to chart the progress of re-entry into areas of former crisis and joint daily progress talks with the authorities were held to assess the situation and developments.

- The size, speed of deployment and level of expertise in any new mission is dictated by political will and subsequent financial contribution states are prepared to make. In the case of the OSCE, full commitment means that highly qualified secondees can be rapidly forthcoming, and sufficient funding will ensure maximum flexibility. Extra-budgetary project financing now complements most OSCE country operations in all regions.
- In theatre, a dedicated, **functioning operational liaison system** between all key international actors is an essential part of any response to a complex emergency situation. Regular meetings do much to ensure that complementarity takes place, and that numerous other issues of common interest, particularly those related to security, can be shared. Skopje co-ordination among IO is a good example of this.
- **Training** is an essential component in the core team of any mission. Even more so when establishing a new mission or in phases of rapid growth of existing operations. Investing some time in a thorough orientation programme to the area of operations has not only proved beneficial to shorten adaptation times and thus increase the effectiveness of new recruits; it serves also to alert field staff of potential security risks. (End)