



## **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe**

**Keynote speech of the OSCE Secretary General  
Marc Perrin de Brichambaut  
at the Symposium  
“OSCE NATO and EU, and the Role of Armed Forces  
in a Changing Security Environment”  
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Major General, Federal Counsellor Haering,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to take part in this Symposium. I am pleased to contribute to the discussion on the role of international security organizations and the military in a changing security environment and that the OSCE should have been considered worthy to be there along with EU and NATO.

This year, we mark the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe. I do not need to remind you of the relevance of these documents for the course of European history. Since their adoption, they have guided us in our efforts to build a Europe whole and free.

These documents are best known for their human dimension aspects and their impact on civil society. But the CSCE and OSCE have their roots in the political-military aspects of security be arms control, confidence and security building measures, which were central to the initial projects. Today the involvement of OSCE in security matters can be perceived as complex almost bewildering to outsiders. But each set of commitments has its origins in given political circumstances. Together they form a strong normative and political framework that remains active and relevant.

Major General Schärli is one of the wise men of this process having been directly involved in the OSCE's pol-mil activities for many years and having played a key role in all the negotiations he attended.

I can bear witness to this since I was Ambassador of France to the CSCE in the early 1990s. These were exciting times when Europe was in flux, and required new institutions and structures to tackle new challenges. One of those innovations was the creation of the OSCE's Forum for Security Co-operation.

Today, as Secretary General, I would like to look forward drawing on the lessons learnt from 30 years of experience, and to put the political military dimension into a broader context.

## **Building Confidence**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The OSCE was created as Europe's biggest confidence and security building measure and retains this role. The *raison d'être* of the OSCE – as the name implies – is to build security through co-operation. The CSCE was successful in that regard. In the 1970s and 80s it encouraged *détente* and contributed to the end of a divided Europe. Now the challenge is to prevent the opening of new dividing lines within Europe, within states and among religions and cultures.

This requires dialogue, transparency, and peer review of the implementation of shared commitments. This can take many forms including high level political dialogue, open skies, or reciprocal military inspections allowed by the successive Vienna Document. The implementation of the CFE for those concerned, the practical work that continuously takes place in the FSC.

One of the basic principles of the OSCE is that States are obliged to refrain from the threat or use of force in their relations. The OSCE has developed sophisticated ways of putting this into practice particularly through confidence and security building measures or CSBMs.

A series of Vienna Documents – the latest dating from 1999 – include a variety of different, tailor-made instruments containing transparency measures, verification regimes, mechanisms for consultation, military contacts and, finally, military co-operation.

This is a living document since inspections are carried out every year that put these commitments into practice. In this way, the OSCE has played a key role in building and maintaining trust and good contacts among militaries in the OSCE region. Other channels now play a more important role but the core remains in the OSCE and is practically unique among the world regions.

For a brief moment in the early 1990s it seemed the OSCE could develop into a more operational type of Organization. This was an exceptional moment of convergence among participating States. Chapter III of the Helsinki document envisages peacekeeping operations organized by the OSCE on its mandate or on a UN mandate. This option did not materialize and it was the UN, then NATO and now the EU which took responsibility for the management of the Balkan crisis.

The OSCE chose to continue its security work in the normative direction and in the field of assistance. The Forum for Security Cooperation also created in Helsinki serves as the framework for continued debate and negotiations.

### **A Code of Conduct**

Another landmark instrument developed in the OSCE is the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, adopted in 1994. The Code is a comprehensive document which provides a framework for the military and defence policies of States both in peacetime and in the case of armed conflict.

The political significance of the Code lies in the fact that it is the first time that OSCE participating States decided to base internal regulations for their armed forces on agreed international guidelines. The Code advises on civilian parliamentary control over the armed forces and respect of human rights within the armed forces.

The key new development of the code lies in the democratic control of armed forces. The OSCE's Code sets commonly agreed standards and offers a means for holding States accountable in what was once considered an untouchable internal domain.

The OSCE contributes to the proper implementation of the Code of Conduct by facilitating the exchange of information among participating States. The OSCE Questionnaire on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct and assistance provided to individual States is the normal tool for this.

I would like to recognize the important contribution of the Swiss General Staff to the dissemination of the principles set out in the Code. For example, since 1997 Switzerland has hosted six workshops for members of the Partnership for Peace Programme to encourage the implementation of the Code. I take this opportunity to thank Switzerland for its active role in the OSCE's Forum for Security Cooperation and for all the good initiatives that have helped to develop our organization further.

I would like to mention one area where OSCE has played a pioneering role in forging a tool that is relevant to stability and security over the medium and long term. This is field missions. There are presently 18 of them. Each one has its own combination of activities: rights and minorities monitoring, mediation on areas of tension and support for peacekeeping commission, institution building and all aspects of building democracy. They rely largely on seconded personnel and extra-budgetary funding. They have accumulated a solid record of slow, methodical work in peace building and creating trust. In Kosovo the OSCE employs 1200 persons and has the key role of democracy and rights building.

### **New Challenges, New Approaches**

The work of the OSCE on the politico-military dimension has been therefore gradually shifting from the military balances and strategic priorities of the 1980s and early 1990s, which has meant taking into account contemporary challenges.

And yet, the OSCE area continue to be faced with threats posed by intra-state conflicts and their regional consequences, the danger of terrorism, and the role of non-state actors that forced us to rethink our priorities, capabilities and responses.

In 2003, at Maastricht, OSCE Foreign Ministers agreed to a Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century. It highlights some of the new threats, their increasingly cross-dimensional nature, and how the OSCE could re-tool itself to contribute to the international effort to tackle these global threats and challenges.

This is not only a statement of good intent. The OSCE has quickly developed a range of new instruments to tackle contemporary threats and challenges. It has assembled expertise in counter terrorism, anti trafficking, policing, the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons, border management, and the disposal of surplus ammunition. In each of these areas there is a constant flow of exchanges and small dedicated teams that try to act as catalysts more than as permanent managers.

To illustrate I would like to focus in particular on small arms and light weapons.

Small arms and light weapons are a menace to international security. They are relatively easy to traffic, they can turn minor political differences into violent conflicts, and, when they get into the wrong hands they can empower terrorists and criminals.

Since November 2000 the OSCE has had a Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons. This comprehensive document has caught the attention of our peers who are also trying to cope with this threat, including other regional organizations and the United Nations.

Since the main producers and exporters of these weapons are mainly the OSCE participating States themselves, this Document has created a politically binding agreement which contains norms, principles and measures covering each stage in the life of a weapon: production, transfer, storage, collection or seizure and destruction.

In 2003 the OSCE issued a Handbook of Best Practices on SALW to assist States in applying the norms and standards indicated in the SALW document.

In addition, participating States committed themselves to exchange annually data on exports to and imports from other OSCE participating States, as well as on surplus small arms.

Lately, further steps have been taken to look at the issue in the context of the fight against terrorism and illegal trafficking. Special attention has been put on tightening up export controls. This applies to Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS) as much as to End-User Certificates and Verification Procedures. The OSCE is also helping to improve stockpile security and destroy surplus weapons.

### **Changes in Doctrine and the Military Balance**

Let me mention another dimension of the effort to address new challenges. Changes in the strategic balance of Europe are progressively having an impact on national security concepts and military doctrines. That is why the FSC will convene the third OSCE Military Doctrine Seminar early next year to encourage Chiefs of Staffs to exchange views on evolving responses to security. This is a timely and important endeavour and a strong Swiss contribution is expected.

The OSCE is also, in a way, affected by discussions about adapting the CFE Treaty.

At the Istanbul Summit of 1999, references were made in the Declaration to the withdrawal of Russian forces from the territory of Moldova by the end of 2002. In Istanbul there was also a joint statement by Georgia and the Russian

Federation on the withdrawal of Treaty Limited Equipment from Georgia no later than 31 December 2000.

This is a highly sensitive issue and politically loaded to the extent that arguments over the so-called Istanbul commitments have overshadowed the last few Ministerial Council meetings, and are a bone of contention in the build up the next meeting of OSCE Foreign Ministers which will take place in Ljubljana on 5 and 6 December.

It is, indeed, ironic that an Organization considered to be dealing almost exclusively with “soft” security is very much influenced by a hard security issue.

### **Common ground for co-operation**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The OSCE is well aware that it is not the only organization addressing security issues in Europe. Co-ordination is therefore important, for example among the OSCE, NATO and the EU and potentially CIS, CSTO, SCO.

Contacts occur with increased frequency at a political level, exchanging views on current crises and there is a good history of co-operation in the field, for example in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia where the EU, NATO and OSCE worked together to diffuse tensions and conclude the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

Recent strategy documents of the UN, the EU, NATO and the OSCE highlight similar threats. As these organizations simultaneously try to address these threats, we are strongly encouraging to review the way in which we co-operate.

The areas for interest between the three increasingly converge around the question of peace building reflecting recent experiences like in Irak. Paradoxically because its means are quite limited OSCE is in a strong position in this field because of its long standing focus on values and the pioneering work it has achieved.

We have to ensure that this new convergence does not lead to duplication, and that our efforts add value to the States that they are designed to serve.

### **Added Value**

The OSCE's strengths remain its inclusive membership, its comprehensive and holistic view of security, its field operations, institutions, and specialized units. Its operational flexibility on the one hand and bedrock of commitments on the other allow it to respond quickly but consensually while remaining a lean and mean outfit.

The OSCE's highest relevance is in States that are not part of NATO or the EU and not as advanced as your country. It offers such States an equal voice at the table, and co-operative multi-lateral means of addressing their security concerns.

The OSCE is best suited to assist States that are still in the process of transition and require the support of their peers in a mutually acceptable way. This has been demonstrated recently in Kyrgyzstan around an outstanding Swiss HoM, or through capacity building programmes like border training in Georgia or police training in Kosovo.

The OSCE is involved in trying to resolve some of Europe's long-festering conflicts. It has a lead role in seeking settlement of conflicts in the Transdnestrian region of Moldova, in South Ossetia, Georgia and in Nagorno-Karabakh.

At the same time, the OSCE has the means to address issues that affect the Western half of the OSCE. We are all seeking advice on how to integrate diversity in our multi-cultural societies. We all need advice on creative solutions for addressing issues of self-government and national minorities. We all need objective monitors to ensure the integrity of our elections, or an independent ombudsman to highlight violations of freedom of the media. The OSCE has these tools, and they can be applied across the whole OSCE area.

I believe that the OSCE has responded in a creative way to the challenges of dialogue and co-operation, which allow it to remain a relevant organization. It also remains a vital means of binding together all States in the northern hemisphere, and encouraging the evolution of open societies within an undivided security space united by common values.

Almost exactly fifteen years ago, at the Summit of Paris in November 1990, OSCE Heads of State and Government articulated a dream of a Europe whole and free. This was not achieved as soon as it was then envisaged. The OSCE remains a key vehicle to help States achieve that goal. At the same time, we have to be realistic and appreciate that this process will take time and include setbacks. Minimizing the instability of change and reducing the risk of backsliding should be two of the OSCE's highest priorities.

## **Reflecting Switzerland's Security Priorities**

In order to do so the OSCE needs continuous Swiss support. Switzerland's Chairmanship of the OSCE in 1996 demonstrated its commitment to the OSCE. People still recall that Chairmanship as one of the most efficient and effective in the history of the Organization.

Since then, Switzerland has joined the United Nations. I hope that this has not drawn Switzerland's attention away from the OSCE.

Switzerland has expertise in areas like security sector reform that are in high demand, and your military has contributed with distinction in the past to OSCE field operations. One can not rule out the possibility of peacekeeping operations involving the OSCE in the future, and here Switzerland's support would be sought.

Institutes based in Switzerland – like DCAF, GCSP and the Graduate Institute of International Studies – have resources, both analytical and in terms of capacity building, that have been of great benefit to the OSCE. I would like to build even closer co-operation in areas like training, planning and analysis. This will help the OSCE to be better equipped and prepared to deal with a changing security environment.

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE has always been a laboratory of ideas. In the pol-mil dimension Switzerland has provided us with some fine scientists. I encourage you to continue your fine tradition of contributing fresh ideas that can improve security in Europe through the OSCE. In a world of complex threats, we need to remain innovative.

Thank you, and I look forward to the discussion.