Module 1

Introduction to the OSCE

This document is designed to introduce you to the Organization for Security Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Learning objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

• Summarize OSCE’s mission and history
• Describe how the OSCE operates according to its decision-making bodies, operational institutions, and field operations
• Explain how OSCE decisions are reached and which institutions are responsible for OSCE operations
• Discuss how the OSCE is viewed today by participating States, including any persistent issues
• Compare how the OSCE uniquely compares to other international organizations in Europe in terms of its purpose, functions, and cooperation

This course is designed for people who will be working for the OSCE. It will also be useful to those interested in what the organization does and its contributions to regional security.
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CHAPTER 1

History of the OSCE

The OSCE traces its origins to the early 1970s, to the Helsinki Final Act, and the creation of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). Of special importance is the way in which the OSCE has evolved from a series of conferences and multilateral agreements into a regional, multilateral organization.

It’s important to know how the OSCE started in order to understand how it is viewed today by participating States. It’s also important to understand the persistent issues among pS.

This chapter introduces you to the history of the OSCE. By the end of this chapter, you should be able to describe how the OSCE was formed.
The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe

In 1969, Finland offered to host a conference on security and co-operation that consisted of preparatory meetings, a working phase, and follow-on meetings. The three-stage conference is often referred to as the "Helsinki Process", and consists of:

- Preparatory meetings
- Working phase
- Follow-on conferences
Preparatory meetings

Helsinki 1972-1973

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) negotiations opened with 35 delegations present including: The United States, Canada, and all the states of Europe (including the USSR and Holy See), with the exception of Albania. These states tended to coalesce into three major groups, reflecting the existing political alignments at the time:

- Warsaw Pact
- NATO / European Community
- Neutral / Nonaligned

The preparatory meeting resulted in a detailed outline of the practical organizational arrangements for the conference.
The working phase of negotiations amounted to the first multilateral East-West negotiation process in Europe. During this phase, issues were grouped together into three major substantive “baskets.” The inclusion of such a wide range of issues reflected a comprehensive approach to security that remains one of the OSCE’s greatest assets.

The three baskets are also referred to as the three “dimensions” of security.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basket</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Security</td>
<td>Security and confidence building measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Co-operation</td>
<td>Co-operation in the fields of economics, science and technology, and the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Human rights</td>
<td>Human rights and the movement of peoples, ideas, and information across national boundaries.</td>
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Final Act

The result of the working phase of the conference is referred to as the Helsinki Final Act which was signed by the heads of state of all 35 countries at a summit meeting in Helsinki on August 1, 1975. The Final Act is not a treaty, but a politically binding agreement that contained recommendations in each of the Baskets, preceded by the Decalogue.

The Decalogue

The Decalogue is a declaration of ten principles guiding relations between participating states.

1. Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty
2. Refraining from the threat or use of force
3. Inviolability of frontiers
4. Territorial integrity of states
5. Peaceful settlement of disputes
6. Non-intervention in internal affairs
7. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief
8. Equal rights and self-determination of peoples
9. Co-operation among states
10. Fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law

Importance of the Decalogue

The ten principles of the Decalogue created the normative structure under which the CSCE and the OSCE have operated. Continuing elaboration of these principles created the normative core for an OSCE regional cooperative security regime.

The provision in the first principle allowing for the peaceful, negotiated change of borders, creating the possibility for a peaceful unification of Germany, was particularly important in the creation of today’s Europe.

Other principles of the Decalogue emphasized the desirability of resorting to diplomatic means rather than the use of force to settle all disputes among participating States.
益处的赫尔辛基进程

赫尔辛基进程为参与国提供了额外的沟通渠道，形成了一套规范性的行为准则（适用于国家间和国内关系）以及长期的合作愿景。因此，在冷战期间，欧安组织在欧洲维持了对东-西关系进行质变的承诺，而此时大多数联系都以交替的紧张和模糊的缓和为特征。

Benefits of the Helsinki process

The Helsinki process offered the participating states an additional channel of communication, a normative code of conduct (for inter-state and intra-state relations) as well as a long-term vision of cooperation. It thus promoted both stabilization and peaceful change in Europe. As a result, during the Cold War the CSCE maintained the promise of qualitative changes in East-West relations at a time when most contacts were characterized by alternating phases of tension and ambiguous détente.
Follow-on conferences

1977—1989

The Helsinki Final Act called for a series of follow-on conferences to review progress in the implementation of the Final Act and to consider new provisions to strengthen security in Europe. The follow-on conferences took place in Belgrade in 1977, Madrid from 1980—83, and Vienna in 1986—89.

The conferences were predominately focused on confidence building measures (Basket I) and on human rights (Basket III). Western countries regularly criticized the human rights performance of Communist Bloc countries, which responded with accusations of interference in internal affairs.

Vienna

1986—1989

The most significant accomplishments of the Vienna Review Conference were in the area of human rights. The 1975 Helsinki Act had focused primarily on its substantive provisions upon enhancing human contacts across cold war lines rather than on individual political rights.

At Vienna, the conference concluded that individual citizens have a right, “individually or in association with others,” to advocate for and openly promote the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The freedoms included the right of citizens to live where they chose within their own country and to freely leave and re-enter their own country, a right that had previously been denied to citizens of all communist bloc countries (except for Yugoslavia). In January 1989, the government of Hungary cited this principle when it opened its borders with Austria. The flood of emigration that followed was a major factor in the East German decision to open the Berlin Wall in November 1989. The Vienna Review Conference had profound historical implications that were barely recognized at the time.

Stockholm

1984—1986

In addition to the general review conferences, the Madrid follow-on conference mandated a special conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, which took place in Stockholm from 1984—86. The major focus was on strengthening the regime of military confidence-building measures contained in Basket I of the Helsinki Final Act. Importantly, for the first time in the history of modern arms control, mandatory inspections as a means of verification were agreed upon, extending as far eastward into Soviet territory as the Ural Mountains.
Impact of the CSCE

The CSCE had a direct impact on East-West relations and helped create a post-Cold War cooperative security regime that was no longer divided into three groups: West, East, and Neutral/Nonaligned.

Undermining communism

The CSCE had an impact on the security situation in Europe by undermining the legitimacy of the communist governments throughout Central and Eastern Europe, where governments signed agreements that created norms about human rights and openness, but where their actual behavior often fell far short of those principles.

Human rights

The CSCE certainly inspired and made possible the formation of a wide variety of human rights movements in Central and Eastern Europe, such as Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia and Solidarity in Poland, which lobbied their governments to observe their commitments undertaken when they signed the Helsinki Final Act.

Human rights, a long-standing taboo for the Soviet Bloc, became by virtue of the Final Act a legitimate subject of East-West dialogue. The CSCE was thus important in keeping the spotlight on human rights and linking progress in that sphere with cooperation on other more traditional security questions.

Military security

The CSCE can be credited with reducing tensions through its implementation of confidence-building measures agreed upon by participating states, which enhanced military transparency through inspections of armed forces and military activities. This significantly reduced fears that war might start through the misinterpretation of routine military activities, which might have mistakenly been perceived as the initiation of offensive action.
**Uniqueness of CSCE**

There are a number of things that mad the CSCE unique in comparison to other organizations.

**Wide participation**

In an era characterized by bloc-to-bloc confrontation, the CSCE had wide participation and all states participating in the Conference did so as “sovereign and independent states and in conditions of full equality.”

**Comprehensive view**

At a time when most negotiations and security organizations adopted a piecemeal approach to security, the CSCE endorsed a comprehensive view. The linkage between different elements of security would prove to be one of the CSCE’s greatest assets.

**Decisions by consensus**

Decisions of the Conference were taken by consensus thus often making the decision-making process as important as the decisions themselves. This way, no state had to fear that a decision to which it strongly objected would be imposed upon it.

**Flexible**

CSCE decisions were politically rather than legally binding, giving the Conference considerable flexibility. This meant that its decisions did not risk getting tied up in the sort of lengthy debates that often occur during the ratification of legal instruments, which could delay implementation of CSCE decisions by years, when action was required in weeks, days, or even hours.

**No institutional structures**

Prior to 1990, the CSCE had no institutional structures; the result being that the very impetus needed to keep the process going was an end in itself. This also added to the capacity of the CSCE to adapt rapidly and effectively to the changing international environment in which it operated.
CSCE becomes the OSCE

With the disintegration of the Warsaw Treaty Organization following the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, the CSCE began a rapid process of transformation to respond to the new post-Cold War security situation. The creation of a genuine Transatlantic system of “cooperative security” appeared possible.

The CSCE took on new responsibilities and challenges in this period of transition characterized by institutionalization, strengthening of operational capabilities, development of field activities, and further elaboration of commitments and principles.

Charter of Paris

Paris, 1990

The Charter of Paris, signed by the Heads of State from all CSCE participating states, represented the first high-level multilateral instrument to reflect the fall of the communist bloc and the end of the Cold War. In its preamble, the Paris Charter announced the opening of a new era for European security based on a reaffirmation of the Helsinki Principles.

After the Charter of Paris, the CSCE began to take on features of an established international organization, rather than consisting of a series of ad hoc meetings about security issues.

The Paris meeting established the following structures for the CSCE:

- Secretariat
- Conflict Prevention Centre
- Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (originally the Office of Free Elections)
- Parliamentary Assembly

One of OSCE’s fundamental documents, the Charter of Paris, was signed on 21 November 1990 at the Second CSCE Summit.
Formal name change
The Budapest Summit formally changed the name of the CSCE to OSCE (effective Jan. 1, 1995), in recognition of the institutionalization that had taken place.
OSCE today

Though the historical mission of the OSCE was completed, it’s work is still in progress towards the overall goal of an era and region democratic, free, at peace and unified/whole. The OSCE today occupies a unique place in international organizations in general and transatlantic security institutions in particular. It is the world’s largest and most inclusive regional security organization under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Since the early days of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), East-West relations have been reflected within the Organization. While there was a relatively calm period of cooperation during the 1990s that enabled the CSCE/OSCE to establish a plethora of structures and field operations, East-West tensions have increased again since the year 2000 and continued to hamper the OSCE’s ability to deliver.

One of the effects was a declining consensus about the normative foundations of the OSCE, especially of the human dimension documents adopted in the years immediately following the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe but also on other, hard security questions, such as the protracted conflicts or questions of arms control. This led to a period of declining relevance and to what some called a midlife crisis of the OSCE.

This changed with the further dramatic decline in East-West relations; first in 2008 when the conflict in Georgia broke out, and then in 2014, when Russia illegally annexed the Crimean Peninsula and began its support for the separatist movement in eastern Ukraine. The Ukraine crisis highlighted both, the further deterioration in relations between Russia and the West, and the renewed relevance of the OSCE.

This renewed relevance was further underlined by the establishment of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine in 2014, and the creation of the Trilateral Contact Group in 2015.

The SMM today is the OSCE’s largest field operation. The SMM today is the eyes and ears of the international community on the ground in Ukraine. Its neutral and fact-based reporting is highly appreciated by the international community. The Trilateral Contact Group is the only international negotiation format that includes not only representatives from Ukraine and Russia, but also representatives of rebel groups. The OSCE acts as mediator and facilitator.

Basic priorities

The basic priorities of the OSCE at present are:

- Democracy: to consolidate the participating States’ common values and help in building fully democratic civil societies based on the rule of law and principles of “good governance”
- Peace: to prevent local conflicts, restore stability, seek to resolve “frozen conflicts,” and bring peace to war-torn areas
- Security: to overcome real and perceived security deficits and to avoid the creation of new political, economic, or social divisions by promoting a cooperative system of security
New activities

Despite stalemate on some of the larger political issues, the OSCE continues with “business as usual” on a large number of activities that seldom grab headlines, but which make a significant cumulative contribution to improved security throughout the region. These new activities help in the following ways:

- Sixteen field missions that continue to monitor ongoing events and to assist in a wide range of conflict management tasks on the ground.
- OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine: Largest field operation with 1,322 civilian staff members, among them approx. 763 monitors.
- Establishment of an Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk in 2014 that provides reliable information on the movement of civilians, military hardware and Russian convoys across the two border crossing points.
- Establishment in 2013 of an OSCE network of think tanks that provides outside perspectives on the OSCE’s work as an autonomous OSCE-related track II initiative.
- Creation in 2012 of a series of conferences entitled “Security Days” in order to better include perspectives of think tanks, academic institutions and media into the work of the OSCE.
- Since 2014 creation of the function of the Chair-in-Office Special Representatives on Youth and Security, representing the voice of youth within the OSCE and advising the CiO on youth policy issues.
- Creation of a Transnational Threats Department in the OSCE Secretariat to assist pS to improve their capacity to address issues such as to respond to the threats of terrorism and cyber/ICT security, to manage border security, and to build the capacity of law enforcement in improved police work within a democratic context that respects human rights.
- The Forum for Security Cooperation is expanding assistance to states in monitoring and reducing the flow of small arms and light weapons across state borders and in decommissioning arms within their own territories.

OSCE institutional challenges

In recent years, the OSCE has lost momentum built up after the end of the cold war, causing it to reassess its role in regional security. There are several major causes of this crisis:

- Great power competition between the United States, Russia and China has led to a decline in the appreciation of multilateralism and cooperative solutions. The OSCE as an organization based on consensus and compromise is greatly affected by these dynamics.
- The tense relationship between Russia and the West continues to have a negative impact on the organization. For example, increased polarization between eastern and western countries has led to claims that the OSCE focuses too much on intervention in
states “east of Vienna” while ignoring problems in states “west of Vienna;” and further claims that the focus has become “unbalanced” in favor of human dimension and democratization activities to the neglect of security, economic, and environmental functions contained in the first two baskets of the Helsinki Final Act.

- Furthermore, the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis in 2014 has led to the creation of two camps among western OSCE participating States. One camp argues that Russia has to be punished for its actions and that there cannot be business as usual as long as Moscow continues to occupy Crimea and supports the separatist movement in eastern Ukrainian. Another camp believes that engaging with Russia is necessary, even if there are points of disagreement. Those states argue that it is essential to recreate trust in order to prevent a further escalation of tensions.

- Furthermore, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh plays out frequently in the OSCE. Both states want to push their national agendas within the OSCE context.

Consequences

The crisis that has affected the OSCE has had several significant consequences for the operation of the OSCE. These dynamics have a negative effect on the atmosphere at the OSCE in Vienna and often poison negotiations, leading to a paralysis in the decision-making process.

For example:

- Consensus has been increasingly difficult to achieve, and every Ministerial Meeting since 2002 failed to adopt a consensus communiqué.

- Participating States today are even more willing to block decisions and take negotiation processes in the OSCE hostage. This sometimes even leads to the procrastination in adoption of purely procedural decisions, such as conference agendas or appointments of senior positions.

- Since 2017 the appointment of senior positions in the OSCE, including the posts of Secretary General and Heads of OSCE Institutions, has been complicated by the fact that the four positions became part of a political package deal, which was not the case beforehand. This has greatly complicated the appointment procedure, because states try to push their own candidates into the various posts which has led to lengthy negotiations and to several months of leadership vacuum at the head of the OSCE in the years 2016-2017.

- In July 2020 the four senior leadership positions were up for extension for a second three-year term, which is usually a mere formality. In an unprecedented leadership crisis, the pS failed to reach a consensus decision on extending their mandates, though the CiO proposed stopgap measures to extend the posts on a technical basis, or to undo the “package” and to extend the posts individually.

- There has been significant conflict over the budget, and it is now common for budgets to be adopted well into the fiscal year.
• There is no agreement on a new set of scales of contribution that define how much each participating State pays into the OSCE budget. The last agreed scales of contribution expired in December 2017.

• Several key OSCE missions have been closed in locations such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Croatia, Chechnya, Estonia, Georgia, and Latvia; and the mandates for other missions have been reduced from monitoring and reporting on the host governments' compliance with its OSCE political commitments to managing projects. In some instances, hosting countries even ask the mission to submit every single project proposal for approval. The OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre (and other thematic offices) at the OSCE Secretariat makes some attempts to compensate for this by working on country-specific issues from Vienna.

• ODIHR (Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) has been placed under great pressure to make its work, including election monitoring, more “objective,” to expand its activities “West of Vienna,” and to avoid issuing reports that are likely to influence the outcome of domestic electoral processes in countries where it monitors, largely as a reaction to its perceived central role in the “Rose Revolution” in Georgia and the “Orange Revolution” in Ukraine that created substantial concern in Russia, Belarus, and several other former Soviet states.

• In addition, some countries, such as Tajikistan and Turkey, have made attempts in recent years at reducing the impact of the OSCE’s work in the human dimension, and boycotted the HDIM in the past years. Turkey has blocked the adoption of the agenda on the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting for several years, pushing negotiations to the brink and in some instances almost leading to the cancellation of the event. Turkey views the OSCE’s registration process for NGO representatives at those events as going against its national interest. In its view, the OSCE is lacking detailed registration criteria that would limit access of groups that in its view are “terrorist organizations”.

OSCE responses

In 2014, the OSCE Troika under the leadership of the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship, commissioned a report entitled “Back to Diplomacy”/Final Report and Recommendations of the Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security as a Common Project”. The report was aimed at understanding the root causes of the Ukraine crisis in particular, and the conflict between the East and the West and the crisis of European security more generally.

The report concluded that the situation today is the most dangerous for several decades and made recommendations on organizing a robust process of active diplomacy, in keeping with the Helsinki principles, the idea of cooperative security and the vision of a “common European home”. Though the report helped to gain a better understanding of the situation, there was no concrete follow-up, due to the lack of a consensus view between the experts (there was no common but three different narratives: the views from the West, from Moscow and from the States in-between), and as the report was not commissioned by all 57 participating States.

Since 2016, the OSCE Chair-in-Office has adopted the practice of convening an informal OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in the summer, in order to provide an opportunity for genuine
dialogue among Foreign Ministers. The informal Ministerial Meetings are meant to help iron out differences early in the year and to prepare the ground for the official Ministerial Council meeting at the end of the year in December.

The OSCE Chair-in-Office has adopted the practice of presenting documents representing the consensus of “most delegations” at annual ministerial meetings, thereby avoiding objections from Russia and a few other participating States.

ODIHR has increased its election-monitoring activities in Western Europe and North America, while resisting efforts to place political restrictions on its freedom of action in carrying out its mandate wherever it observes or assists in the elections process. This included ODIHR’s monitoring of the last few presidential elections in the United States, a process that overall was found to meet high standards for democratic elections. ODIHR has monitored numerous other elections in western states, including in Austria, Canada, Greece, Denmark, Iceland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.
The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is the world’s largest regional security organization. It is a forum for political negotiations and decision-making in the fields of:

- Early warning
- Conflict prevention
- Crisis management
- Post-conflict rehabilitation

This chapter provides a brief overview of the OSCE’s participating States and operations. For more information about the OSCE, please refer to the OSCE website.
Overview

The OSCE is the world’s largest regional security organization comprised of 57 participating States from Europe, Central Asia, and North America, working to ensure peace and stability for more than a billion people between Vancouver to Vladivostok.

The OSCE also maintains regular dialogue and cooperation with its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation.

The OSCE is cooperative, founded on the principles of consensus and equality. Thus, all OSCE participating States (pS) have equal power and status and take decisions on both hard and soft security. It is a consensus-based forum where States cooperate to prevent crises from happening and/or to prevent their escalation, and to promote post-conflict peace building. The broad membership of States is reflected in their diversity of interests, but each has a common stake in building Euro-Atlantic Eurasian security and playing to OSCE’s strength in fostering inclusive cooperation on cross-cutting aspects of security.

Political dialogue

The OSCE relies on political dialogue about shared values and develops partnerships with governments, civil society, think tanks, and the private sector in order to maintain security throughout its region. The OSCE often works away from the headlines to foster discussion to defuse tensions, to address deep-rooted challenges, and to divert potential conflict.

Comprehensive view of security

The OSCE takes a unique comprehensive and cooperative approach to security, predicated on the “inherent dignity of the human” being. The organization takes a multi-dimensional approach addressing the following three dimensions of security, which are considered by the OSCE to be equally important for maintaining peace and stability:

- Politico-military Dimension
- Economic and Environmental Dimension
- Human Dimension
The OSCE also addresses issues which are cross-dimensional.

The OSCE’s areas of work
CHAPTER 3

OSCE structure

The OSCE functions using a combination of:

- Decision-making bodies
- Operational institutions
- Field operations

This chapter introduces you to the main OSCE structures. By the end of this chapter, you should be able to describe how OSCE decisions are reached and which institutions are responsible for OSCE operations.

Through the decision-making bodies described below, the OSCE makes specific political commitments across the three security dimensions, while its institutions reflect these in their daily activities to support states in their implementation of these commitments.

For more detailed information, please refer to the OSCE website.

MODULE 1

Introduction to the OSCE
Decision-making bodies

The OSCE decision-making bodies consist of:

- Summits
- Ministerial Council
- Permanent Council
- Forum for Security Co-operation
Summits

Summits are periodic meetings of Heads of State or Government of OSCE participating States that set priorities and provide orientation at the highest political level. Summit meetings tend to be “scripted” by the professional diplomats who staff the OSCE offices. So far there have been seven OSCE/CSCE summits; the last summit was held in Astana Kazakhstan in 2010 and the one before that, in Istanbul Turkey in 1999.

Heads of State and Government pose for a family photo at the OSCE Summit in Astana, 1 December 2010. (OSCE/Vladimir Trofimchuk)
Ministerial Council

The Ministerial Council (MC) is made up of foreign ministers of the participating States (or their representatives), meets annually, except in years when summits are scheduled. The Ministerial Council meetings constitute the central decision-making and governing body of the OSCE; between summits, they are the highest-level decision-making body. The MC meetings are political consultations held to consider and take major decisions on any issues relevant to the organization. The MCs often approve documents that have been adopted by the Permanent Council or the Forum for Security Co-operation.

The Ministerial Council meetings help to maintain a link between the political decisions taken at the summits and the day-to-day functioning of the OSCE. Since a summit has not been held since 2010, the Ministerial Council meetings have become the highest political decision-making body in practice.
Activities
The Council meets in order to:

• Consider issues relevant to the OSCE
• Review and assess the activities, accomplishments, and problems of the OSCE
• Make appropriate decisions
Decisions

The Council makes all of its decisions by consensus, and while this makes decision-making processes more challenging it also lends them legitimacy. During the past years the Chair-in-Office has made summary statements reflecting views shared by the vast majority of participating States, but not universally agreed.

Plenary hall during the Opening Session of the 21st OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel, 4 December 2014. (OSCE)
Permanent Council

The Permanent Council (PC) is the main decision-making body of the OSCE for regular political consultations and for governing the day to day work of the OSCE between the MC meetings. It is composed of representatives at the level of ambassadors from all participating States to the OSCE.

The Permanent Council meets weekly throughout the year at the Hofburg’s Congress Centre in Vienna Austria to engage in the day-to-day direction of OSCE affairs. All PC decisions are made by consensus. Each Thursday the Ambassadors to the OSCE meet in the Neureraal of this former Habsburg palace and sit around a large table as equals to air concerns, to debate complex challenges and to work out differences, including through informal discussions on the margins of meetings, and in the Hofburg’s second floor cafeteria. Their work is the political heart of the organization.

The flags of the OSCE in front of the Hofburg in Vienna, May 2020. (Ruth Freedom Pojman)

Activities

Permanent Council activities include:

- Making decisions on the operation of the OSCE, its institutions and its Field Operations (FOs)
- Hearing reports from senior officials and invited guests on matters of concern to the OSCE
- Developing responses to emergency and ongoing situations
- Engaging in debate, dialogue, and discussion on issues before the OSCE
The OSCE relies on a permanent process of consultation and of dialogue between its participating States to raise and address current issues in a timely way before they escalate further.

Senior officials from capitals may reinforce the PC on special occasions, and then it is referred to as the Reinforced Permanent Council. The Permanent Council is chaired by a permanent representative of the current Chair-in-Office.

**Function**

The Permanent Council serves an important function as a catalyst for dialogue among the participating States. It provides an opportunity to exchange views and voice criticisms, serves as an instrument of early warning and allows smaller states to make their opinions known to major players. Increasingly, spontaneous dialogue tends to take place during advance informal consultations, on the “margins” of the formal meetings, or in the various subsidiary bodies that prepare plenary sessions.

The PC, the other decision-making meetings, as well as many other official events, are conducted in the six official languages of the OSCE: English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish, with simultaneous translation by professional interpreters.
The Forum for Security Co-operation was created in 1992 as an autonomous decision-making body. The FSC meets weekly throughout much of the year at the Hofburg Congress Centre in Vienna to discuss and make decisions regarding political-military aspects of security in the OSCE area. The FSC is the main OSCE platform where the pS cooperate to build security, confidence, openness and transparency for increased stability and reduced risk of armed conflicts in the region. It is chaired by an OSCE pS on a rotational basis for four-month periods. Its work is supported and operationalized by the OSCE Secretariat’s FSC Support Section and OSCE missions in the field.

The FSC provides support for: Arms Control and confidence and security-building measures (CSBMs), Transparency, sub-regional agreements and Information Management and Reporting System (IMARs) on exchanged military information from pS, supporting all pS and OSCE pol-mil structures; Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, support on the implementation of Non-Proliferation/UNSCR 1540, the Communications Network and provides practical assistance on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Conventional Ammunition upon request. There is a keen focus on gender related aspects of the pol-mil dimension, including capacity building/education (code of conduct and UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security), and on-going research on the role of women in armed forces.

The Forum consists of representatives of the OSCE participating States. Most delegations have dedicated delegates for the FSC, though some individual delegates cover both the FSC and the Security Committee.

Responsibilities

The Forum is responsible for:

- Discussing and clarifying information exchanged under CSBM agreements
- Implementation of CSBMs
- Countering illicit trafficking of weapons that may fuel organized crime and terrorism

Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation in Vienna

CHAPTER 3
OSCE structure

MODULE 1
Introduction to the OSCE
• Promoting non-proliferation of biological chemical and nuclear weapons
• Improving the security of ammunition depots
• Support to the parties of the Dayton Agreement Article IV
• Strengthening national capacities and implementation of commitments/national action plans
• Promoting women’s role in the security sector
• Annual implementation assessment meetings
Operational Structures

This section focuses on the operational institutions of the OSCE including:

- Chair
- Secretariat
- Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
- High Commissioner on National Minorities
- Representative on Freedom of the Media

Refer to the OSCE website for details about all of the OSCE operational institutions.
The Chair-in-Office (CiO) or the Chair is vested with overall responsibility for executive action and the coordination of OSCE activities. The OSCE CiO presides over the OSCE decision-making bodies: the Summit, the MC and the PC, as well as their subsidiary bodies, playing a key role in facilitating consultations among the pS.

The CiO duties include:

- Representing the Organization before other organizations and to participating States
- Coordinating the work of OSCE institutions
- Supervising activities related to conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation
- Seeking consensus as the basis for regular decision-making
- Mediation and conciliation of conflicts among participating States, either directly or through Special Representatives appointed by the Chair.

OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Ann Linde. (MFA Sweden/Kristian Pohl)

The term of a CiO is one calendar year and rotates annually. It is a significant role for States, regardless of their size, which voluntarily take the leadership of the OSCE for one year. Usually the State is designated as CiO by a decision of the MC (or Summit) two years prior to its term of office starts. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the country chairing the organization traditionally holds the position of the “Chairperson-in-Office” (CiO) for the given year.

Traditionally, the CiO has been assisted by the previous and succeeding Chairs; the three of them together constituting the Troika. Thus, the country that is elected as incoming CiO, must provide substantial personnel not only to carry out the many functions of the Chair during its term, but
also over two additional years where the States is a member of the Troika, as in-coming and out-going Chair.

Regular coordination ensured through weekly Troika meetings at the ambassadorial level. In addition, the Troika normally meets twice a year at the ministerial level.

**Envoys and Personal Representatives of the CiO**

Annually, the CiO has the power to appoint (or extend the mandates of) his/her Personal Representatives, Special Representatives and Envoys to address specific issues or geographical areas. These include:

- the Head of the High-Level Planning Group

The Personal Representatives of the CiO:

- on the Conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference
- on Combating Anti-Semitism
- on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims, and
- on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions.

The Special Representative of the CiO:

- in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group
- for the South Caucasus
- for the Transdnistrian settlement process
- on Combating Corruption
- on Gender
- on Youth and Security
- the SR/CTHB (as it is a two-hatted position, both under the CiO and the SG), and
- the Representative to the Russian-Latvian Joint Commission on Military Pensioners.

The CiO further draws upon experts, advisory, material, technical and other support of the OSCE, especially the Secretariat, including for advice, analysis, background information, drafting of decisions and statements, summary records and for archival support.

In addition to working with the SG, DCPC, the PC and FSC on the political dialogue, the CiO works with the OSCE Institutions of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Representative of Freedom of the Media, as well as the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly which is an independent institution.

The Chair hosts the annual OSCE Ball in the Hofburg, transforming the Neuersaal and second.
floor cafeteria into festive halls.
Secretariat

The Secretariat, under the direction of the Secretary General, provides operational support to the Organization.

Secretary General

The Secretary General (SG) acts as the representative of the Chair-in-Office and supports him/her in all activities aimed at attaining the goals of the OSCE. He/she is appointed for a term of three years, which may be extended for a second and final term of three years.

The Secretary General’s mandate was adopted in 2004. The SG has a strong administrative role and a slightly weaker political role. As Chief Administrative Officer, he/she is responsible for implementing the decisions adopted by participating States as well as for presenting the annual budget to the OSCE Permanent Council. The SG also oversees the management of field operations and of all OSCE executive structures.

The political role is mainly related to supporting the process of political dialogue of OSCE states. In this regard, the Secretary General is authorized, in consultation with the Chair-in-Office, to bring any matter that he/she deems relevant to the attention of the Permanent Council. The Secretary General’s political role was further expanded in a decision adopted at the 2011 Vilnius OSCE Ministerial Council meeting. In the decision, OSCE participating States authorize the Secretary General to provide early warning to the Permanent Council, in consultation with the Chairmanship, on any situation of emerging tensions or conflicts in the OSCE area and to suggest possible responses by the OSCE.

Duties

The duties of the Secretariat include:

- Managing OSCE structures and operations within the political guidelines set down by the Permanent Council and other political decision-making bodies
- Working closely with the CiO in the preparation and guidance of OSCE meetings
• Providing briefing notes, speaking points and background information to the Chairmanship for any political meetings of the CiO with interlocutors in OSCE pS
• Publicizing OSCE policies and practices. Supporting the Chairmanship in issuing press releases
• Mainstreaming gender equality across OSCE activities and providing support to states in implementing gender-related policies, including on women, peace and security
• Providing operational and administrative support to OSCE field operations via the Secretariat’s Conflict Prevention Centre
• Translating political commitments in the area of transnational threats into concrete action, for example related to cyber security, anti-terrorism activities, border security and management, and police-related activities
• Translating political commitments in the economic and environmental dimension into concrete activities, including on good governance, transboundary water management and hazardous waste management
• Assisting states in their efforts to prevent human trafficking via the Office of the Special Representative and Coordinator
• Maintaining contacts with international organizations and OSCE PfC
• Advising on budgetary proposals and financial implications of proposals
• Overseeing personnel issues and implementing transparent recruitment procedures, including gender equity within the OSCE

Structures
The Secretariat includes the following structures: is
• Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC)
• Department of Management and Finance
• External Co-operation
• Gender Section
• Human Resources Learning and Development Unit
• Office of Internal Oversight
• Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities
• Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
• Transnational Threats Department
Refer to the OSCE website for more information about the various structures in the Secretariat.

**The Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC)**

The OSCE’s comprehensive approach to security is closely tied to the four stages of conflict, which are known as the “Conflict Cycle”: 1) early warning, 2) conflict prevention, 3) crisis management, and 4) post-conflict rehabilitation.

The OSCE’s Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) was established by the “Charter of Paris for a New Europe” in 1990 to help reduce the risk of conflict and to support the OSCE and its 57 pS in addressing the Conflict Cycle. It works together with Field Operations (FO) to reduce the risk of armed conflict in the OSCE region.

The Conflict Prevention Center provides early warning of emerging crises, policy advice, analysis and support to the Secretary General, Chairmanship, pS and FOs. Since its founding, the CPC has facilitated dialogue and mediation, and developed a toolbox of skills and activities to lessen the chances of confrontation between and within OSCE States.

The CPC is composed of four primary divisions:

- The Forum for Security Co-operation Support Section (FSC)
- The Policy Support Service (PSS)
- The Programming and Evaluation Support Unit (PESU)
- The Operations Service (OS)

The Operations Service is broken out into four thematic units:

- The Planning and Analysis team
- The Mediation Support Team
- The Security Sector/Governance Reform (SSG/R)
- The Situation/Communications Room (SitCom)

Ambassador Tuula Yrjölä, Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) and Deputy Head of the OSCE
Gender Issues Programme

The Gender Issues Programme works to promote gender equality both within the OSCE and in supporting participating States in the implementation of the Gender Action Plan (at their request), as well as to mainstream gender as a cross-cutting issue across the three dimensions of the OSCE.

The OSCE 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (Gender Action Plan) provides the basis for the Organization’s activities on gender equality:

- Ensuring that all OSCE policies, programmes and activities are gender mainstreamed
- Providing staff members with tools and training on gender mainstreaming
- Developing a professional, gender-sensitive organizational culture and working environment
- Increasing the share of female managers in senior positions
- Supporting the efforts of participating States in achieving gender equality;
- Promoting the role of women in conflict prevention, crisis management and peace reconstruction processes

The implementation of the Gender Action Plan is monitored, and progress is reported on by the Secretary General in an annual presentation to the PC.

The Gender Issues Programme develops operational tools, guidelines, capacity-building, and training materials to assist staff members in mainstreaming gender in their work. It also implements thematic programmes to support pS and OSCE executive structures in integrating a gender perspective in all three dimensions, as well as addressing cross cutting issues of gender equality.

Thematic work includes:

- 1st Dimension: UN SCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda; Women in the Security Sector – border security and police; Countering violent extremism that leads to terrorism; and Cybersecurity
- 2nd Dimension: Women and water management; Women’s economic empowerment; Anti-corruption; and Social Protection
- 3rd Dimension and cross dimensional: Gender-based violence; Women in politics; and Engaging men and boys on gender equality

The Gender Section promotes an inclusive and respectful work environment free and with zero tolerance for sexual harassment. It also works to promote gender parity on panels at OSCE events and to monitor the number of women and men on panels of events in different dimensions as well as at the PC.
The Gender Focal Points Network

The OSCE has appointed gender focal points in each Field Operation and Institution, as well as in all departments of the Secretariat, who are tasked to assist and support in the implementation of the Gender Action Plan. A network of these gender focal points meets on an annual basis. Several FOs have full-time gender advisers and officers.

Office of the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA)

The Office of the Co-ordinator of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) was established in 1997. The objective of the OCEEA is to strengthen security and stability in the OSCE region by promoting co-operation on economic and environmental issues, which make up the Economic and Environmental Dimension (EED) - the so-called Second (2nd) Dimension - of OSCE’s comprehensive approach to security.

The Economic and Environmental Committee works closely with officers in OSCE FOs and assists in the identification, monitoring and working to mitigate risks to security and stability in the economic and environmental fields, as well as in facilitating the design and implementation of economic and environmental-related policies and projects. OCEEA activities include assisting in:

- Economic Activities: The OCEE supports activities in the areas of Good Governance, Migration Governance, Transport and Connectivity.
- Environmental Activities: The OCEEA advances sustainable development through dialogue, increased public awareness and policy development on environment security issues such as: Climate Change and Security; Disaster Risk Reduction; Energy Security; Good Environmental Governance; Hazardous Waste Management; Water Management, and in implementing the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative in
The OCEEA holds a series of Economic and Environmental committee preparatory meetings throughout the year. These lead up to the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting (EEDIM), and to the Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF), which is the highest-level annual meeting in September in Prague, the Czech Republic. The representatives of governments, civil society, business community and other international organizations, engage in dialogue on common economic and environmental challenges, to: identify practical solutions, to contribute to the elaboration of recommendations and follow-up activities to address these security related EED issues, providing direction for future work and political stimulus to the work of the 2nd dimension.

Transnational Threats Department (TNTD)

The Transnational Threats Department (TNTD) was established in 2012 to ensure better co-ordination, strengthened coherence and more efficient use of the OSCE’s resources in addressing transnational threats (TNT), and to optimize support provided to the SG, CiO and to pS on TNT-related matters. It is comprised of the following units:

- Action against Terrorism Unit (TNTD/ATU)
- Coordination Cell-Cyber/ICT Security
- Strategic Police Matters Unit (TNTD/SPMU)
- The Border Security and Management Unit (TNTD/BSMU)

In addition, the OSCE hosts different fora on security issues such as the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC). This forum provides a platform for enhancing security dialogue and for reviewing the security work undertaken by the OSCE and its participating States, as well as an opportunity to exchange views on issues related to arms control and confidence- and security-building measures, and to promote the exchange of information and co-operation with relevant international and regional organizations and institutions.

The OSCE Mediterranean Points of Contact discussing the engagement of women in border security during the Border
CHAPTER 3
OSCE structure

Security and Management Training for Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, Floriana, 29 June 2018. (OSCE/Eugenia Reznikowa)
Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) was created in 1991 as the main institution of the Human Dimension, and is based in Warsaw, Poland. ODIHR areas of programmatic work include:

- Democratization
- Elections
- Gender
- Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
- Roma and Sinti issues
- Tolerance and Non-discrimination

Democratic Elections

Since its establishment in 1991, ODIHR has become the international “gold standard” institution in developing a systematic methodology for assessing election standards and evaluating all stages of the electoral process, including: election law and administration, the registration of candidates, the campaign, campaign finance, media coverage, the actual voting process, and the counting of ballots and determination of outcomes.

In addition to recruiting election observers, it often works closely with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the European Parliament and NATO parliamentary assembly. ODIHR observes most major elections for parliament and heads of state in in OSCE’ 57 pS. It also engages in follow-up with states on recommendations it has made during its election observation mission.

ODIHR has observed elections in over 50 out of its 57 pS, fielding thousands of seconded observers.
Matteo Mecacci, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. (OSCE)

The Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM)

The first HDIM was held in 1993 in Warsaw, Poland where over 380 participants discussed and reviewed the then 53 participating States' implementation of the full range of OSCE Human Dimension (HD) commitments.

The Human Dimension Implementation Meetings (HDIMs) organized by ODIHR - bring together hundreds of society representatives, government officials, international experts, civil and human rights activists, and Partners for Co-operation, to take stock of how the OSCE states are implementing their HD commitments on the core values that promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They discuss current issues, challenges in implementation, share promising practices and make recommendations for further improvement.

It is notable that the representatives from civil society and governments sit side by side as equals at the HDIM, which is Europe’s largest annual human rights and democracy conference.
High Commissioner on National Minorities

The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) was established in 1992 and is situated in The Hague, in The Netherlands. Its work cuts across the three dimensions of the OSCE.

Role

The role of the HCNM is to provide early warning and early action to prevent and address potential tensions involving national minority issues that have the potential to develop into a conflict in the OSCE area – in short to prevent conflict. This work of the HCNM includes promoting adherence to international and regional minority rights standards and commitments, and in some cases facilitating dialogue between persons belonging to minority groups and governments or other institutions and organizations representing majorities. The HCNM, acting as an impartial third party, advocates and negotiates at the highest political level.

The main tool of the HCNM is “quiet” diplomacy and providing recommendations to governments in confidence; facilitating dialogue between majorities and minorities and between states; issuing a formal early warning; developing thematic recommendations and guidelines; supporting pilot projects to demonstrate how to implement his/her recommendations.

The HCNM has been helping to boost the capacity of minorities to broadcast news in their native language, one of many projects aimed at increasing the participation of national minorities in the life of wider society. (OSCE Factsheet on HCNM)

The HCNM is required to assess information on the issues affecting national minority issues, stability and conflict prevention, including through visits to gather first-hand information from all relevant stakeholders. He/she decides when and where to travel in response to incidents that might produce greater violence or an escalation of attention. This flexibility makes the HCNM a unique role pioneered by the OSCE.

The High Commissioner does not require prior approval of his/her activities from any central institution of the OSCE, and may seek to enter any pS, when she/he believes that the situation can benefit from HCNM involvement. Although she/he typically coordinates the visit with the government involved, she/he does not need their formal approval to address interethnic tensions or conflict.
The HCNM has been helping to boost the capacity of minorities to broadcast news in their native language, one of many projects aimed at increasing the participation of national minorities in the life of wider society.

Limitations
The High Commissioner’s involvement is subject to limitations. The situation must include:

- Persons belonging to national minorities
- Potential for conflict emanating from minority issues
- Potential to affect stability within a state, inter-state relations or regional security

The situation must not involve:

- Groups actively engaged in terrorist activities
- Ethnic conflicts that are engaged in open violence

Collaboration
In many cases OSCE field operations and the office of the High Commissioner have collaborated closely in their effort to resolve underlying tensions involving the rights of persons belonging to minorities.
Representative on Freedom of the Media

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media works to assist governments in the furthering of free, independent, and pluralistic media.

Role

The role of the Representative is to help OSCE pS comply with their media-freedom commitments; to provide early warning on violations of freedom of expression, and to observe relevant media development in all pS in order to advocate and promote full compliance with OSCE principles and commitments regarding freedom of expression and free media.

The 1997 PC Decision established the RFOM Independent Office with the following mandate:

- Monitoring relevant media development in all pS and advocate and promote full compliance with relevant OSCE principles and commitments.
- Assisting pS in furthering of free, independent and pluralistic media.
- Rapid response to non-compliance with OSCE principles.
- Close co-operation with OSCE structures as well as other IOs and civil society organizations.

The Office acts as a watchdog, reporting on systematic violations of media freedom in participating states; and identifying and publicizing attacks on journalists, including “disappearances” and killings in an apparent effort to silence outspoken journalists.

The RFOM also communicates directly and confidentially with pS on media-freedom violations. Another important aspect of his/her work is to help pS draft or amend proposed media-related legislation by commissioning legal reviews of the said legislation, and if need be, issue recommendations on how they can be improved to fully comply with international media-freedom standards. The office conducts seminars to inform journalists, government officials, and NGOs about international standards for protecting a free media.
Activities
RFOM activities include:
Disinformation, Propaganda, “Fake News”, and Hate Speech: to encourage media self-regulation and professional standards; to ensure free media and media plurality; invest in media literacy for citizens to make informed choices; reform state media into genuine public service broadcasting; to stop manipulating media, and psychological and information wars

New Security Challenges: national security policies may threaten freedom of expression and freedom of the media by: targeting journalists and others, legitimizing state surveillance, threatening protection of sources, weakening digital security tools, and by being so broad as to catch a host of types of information that the public should have access to

Pluralism in the Digital Age: to promote an open and free media landscape with a free market of divergent ideas and opinions, as a key element of and precondition for democratic society

Safety of Journalists: addressing attacks on journalists and media property, physical violence, arbitrary police action, fear and intimidation, psychological pressures, online harassment, including specific gender related threats to female journalists.

Limitations
The RFoM will not communicate with and will not acknowledge communications from any individual or organization carrying out or publicly condoning acts of terrorism or violence.
Other OSCE Bodies

The Parliamentary Assembly (PA) is not a part of the OSCE per se, it is an independent organization with its own budget, staffing and decision-making process located in Copenhagen Denmark, with a liaison office in Vienna, Austria. The PA facilitates inter-parliamentary dialogue to advance comprehensive security throughout the OSCE region and cooperates closely with the ODIHR in election observation.

The Open Skies Consultative Commission is the implementing body of the Open Skies Treaty, which in 2002 established a regime of unarmed aerial observation flights over the territory of its 34 signatories. The Commission regularly meets at the OSCE in Vienna and maintains several informal working groups of experts that deal with technical issues related to the Treaty.

The Joint Consultative Group, based in Vienna, deals with questions related to the compliance of states with the provisions of the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Isabel Santos with former OSCE SR/CTHB Ambassador Madina Jarbussynova, on board the Italian aircraft carrier Giuseppe Garibaldi participating in the EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia in 2016. (OSCE/Alberto Andreani)
Field operations
Most of the OSCE’s staff and resources are deployed in field operations (FOs) in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and South-eastern Europe. FOs are established at the invitation of the host countries and their mandates renewed annually.

The majority of the current OSCE FOs focus on:

- Good governance
- The promotion of democratic practices and human rights
- Free elections
- The rule of law
- Conflict monitoring through early warning and prevention

Field operations are described in more detail in Module 2: OSCE Field Operations.
CHAPTER 4

Operations

The OSCE is a political organization rather than a legally binding institution. As such it has a light and nimble structure with standing decision-making bodies, permanent headquarters and institutions, professional and seconded staff, regular financial resources, and FOs. On-going discussions and working groups focus on the issue of the legal personality of the organization.
Budget

There has been significant conflict over the organization’s annual budget, and it is now common for budgets to be adopted well into the fiscal year. This dynamic continues despite the fact that the level of the budget has remained the same for many years, due to a policy of zero nominal growth. OSCE states have resisted any budget increase over many years because for many states the OSCE is not on the very top of their national agendas. Yet, there is often an increase in tasks given to the OSCE that has to be completed “within existing resources”. This creates enormous pressure on OSCE structures and the Secretary General who is asked to do “more with less”. In some instances, states try to offset this imbalance by providing more extra-budgetary resources to specific OSCE project.

For several years the organization has operated in Zero Nominal Growth, with an overall trend in decreasing funding over the past 10 years. The OSCE’s 2019 budget was relatively modest, at 138,204.10 million Euros. The 2020 Unified Budget (UB) was adopted at 138.1 million. The total spent by the OSCE annually is 347m with in-kind - Extrabudgetary (ExB) contributions and Secondments. Note: SMM’s budget and staffing consisted of €100,8 million for the mandate period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, and 1,322 staff members, including over 760 monitors.[]
Staffing

The OSCE is a “non-career” organization and endeavors to ensure that staff joining the OSCE become operational as quickly as possible and remain skilled throughout their tenure at the OSCE. The OSCE offers a comprehensive General Orientation Programme to all new staff, as well as a range of continuous on the job training and learning opportunities on topics such as leadership, management, communication, and operational skills.

The OSCE’s staff hail from all 57 pS and work in 20 geographical locations in the OSCE area. There are professional “P” staff, seconded staff and locally recruited “G” staff, who are serving in grades according to the UN staffing table. The P staff serve in positions from 1-7 years, with a ten-year maximum period of service, while G staff can serve indefinitely. There are also ExB staff who work on projects (and occasional consultants). At the start of 2020, the OSCE employed about 590 persons in its primary institutions, as well as over 3,000 persons in its field missions, including both direct hires and seconded personnel.

Staff Code of Conduct

All OSCE officials must conduct themselves at the highest personal and professional level at all times, while on duty and off duty. Conduct includes compliance with accepted human rights standards, including OSCE officials shall adopt exemplary standards of personal behaviour to ensure the OSCE is contributing to combating trafficking in human beings, and is not exacerbating the problem.
The OSCE’s co-operation with other international and regional organizations, including the UN, was comprehensively defined in the Platform for Cooperative Security adopted at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999. The goal of the Platform is “to strengthen the mutually reinforcing nature of the relationship between those organizations and institutions concerned with the promotion of comprehensive security within the OSCE area”.

The External Cooperation section in the Office of the Secretary General is responsible for day-to-day cooperation and liaison with other international and regional organizations (as well as the PfC), but all parts of the OSCE can and do join forces and pool resources with partner organizations on practical activities in order to better achieve common objectives.
Partner organizations in the European area that the OSCE cooperates with and who are most relevant in the comprehensive security field include:

- United Nations (UN)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
- European Union (EU)
- Council of Europe (CoE)
- Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)
- Other organizations ASEAN, CSTO, Interpol, League of Arab States, CEI, OAS.

The OSCE cooperates with international organizations to advance common security goals and dialogue among States, who encourage international organizations to focus on their areas of added value, to avoid duplication and to coordinate to strengthen collective efforts. Unlike many of these organizations, the OSCE is a political rather than legally binding organization, which often allows it to be nimbler and more open in both dialogue and action, bringing multiple viewpoints to the table.

This chapter introduces you to other international and regional organizations that are partners of the OSCE. For more detailed information, please refer to the OSCE website.
United Nations

The United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945 at the end of World War II as a universal international organization, open to membership by all states within the international system. The UN is a legally binding organization—all states that sign its Charter are obligated to fulfill its commitments.

Members

The UN has 193 Member States, including all of the participating States in the OSCE except the Holy See (Vatican).

Chapter VI

Chapter VI of the UN Charter deals with the “pacific settlement of disputes,” and calls upon all states to pursue peaceful means such as negotiation and conciliation to resolve any dispute that might endanger international peace and security. Although the Charter gives primacy to the Security Council to deal with such disputes, it also acknowledges that under certain conditions conflicts may be submitted to the International Court of Justices or to the General Assembly for resolution.

Chapter VII

Chapter VII of the UN Charter on “action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression” deals with overt situations where violent conflict appears imminent or has already broken out. Responsibility for Chapter VII activities is lodged primarily with the Security Council, which may apply sanctions against violators or authorize the use of force by some or all members of the United Nations to enforce security collectively within the international system.

Chapter VIII and the OSCE
Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter explicitly recognizes the role of regional arrangements, such as the OSCE, for dealing with peace and security. In Article 52 it specifically requires member states to “make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies before referring them to the Security Council.” It also allows the Security Council to utilize such regional arrangements for enforcement action under its authority and requires that the Security Council “be kept fully informed of activities undertaken or in contemplation under regional arrangements or by regional agencies for the maintenance of international peace and security.”

The OSCE is a primary instrument for conflict prevention and resolution, crisis response and management and conflict rehabilitation. Since 1995, the OSCE has been recognized as a regional security institution under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, and thereby it has also accepted an obligation to keep the Security Council informed of activities that it undertakes or even contemplates undertaking for the maintenance of international peace and security.

UN role in security

The UN role in the security field has also grown considerably beyond the level of activity contemplated in 1945 when the Charter was adopted. Perhaps most important has been the development of UN “peacekeeping” operations, falling between pacific settlement of disputes and actual engagement of military forces in a full-scale collective security mission.

Originally these operations consisted largely of the interposition of UN “blue berets” between combatants after a cease-fire had been agreed upon, intended largely to prevent a resumption of direct hostilities. Since the end of the Cold War, however, UN operations entered into “peace-making” and “peace enforcement”, notably in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, as well as providing military assistance for complex humanitarian emergencies. These latter missions may place UN forces in situations where they may have to engage in combat operations rather than police lines of division between parties that have previously agreed to a cease-fire.

Preventive diplomacy

Preventive diplomacy has been identified as a principal area of activity for the UN Secretary General and her/his staff of special emissaries. This conflict prevention function has generally been performed by senior UN officials based in New York or Geneva, rather than by field operations as has generally been the case for OSCE conflict prevention work. Of course, a number of UN agencies such as UNHCR and the UN Development Program maintain offices in many countries throughout the world and often play an indirect, and at times even a direct role in conflict prevention. In some specific cases, the UN and the OSCE have worked together to prevent the reignition of violence in post-conflict situations.

OSCE field operations co-operate closely with UN agencies and missions, for example, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo is an integral part of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

OSCE cooperation with the UN

The UN is one of OSCE’s closest partners. Cooperation was formalized in 1993, when the UN granted the CSCE observer status, after the pS declared the OSCE to be a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII. Many of the functions that have been created in the OSCE, especially since
1990 complement the functions of the United Nations.
The UN-OSCE shared agenda includes:

- Conflict settlement and peacebuilding
- Early warning and conflict prevention
- Small arms and light weapons
- Border management
- Environmental and economic aspects of security
- Combating human trafficking
- Ratification and implementation of the 12 Universal Anti-terrorism Instruments and other initiatives to combat terrorism
- Democratization and human rights
- Freedom of the media

The OSCE CiO Lajčák, who was formerly the President of the UNGA (2017-2018), made the case to the UNGA in 2019 for closer co-operation, stressed that “In working together, we have nothing to lose – and everything to gain.”

The UN Secretary General and the OSCE CiO and the SG endorsed a “Joint Statement to Supplement the UN-OSCE Framework for Cooperation and Coordination” in 2019. The OSCE and UN committed themselves to further enhancing cooperation to maintain international peace and security and to promote respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law.

Regular high-level meetings have been held between the UN and regional organizations, to strengthen co-operation in facing challenges to international peace and security, since 1994.

The OSCE has observer status in the UN General Assembly, while the UN is invited to participate in OSCE Ministerial Council and Summit meetings. UN representatives are frequently invited to address the OSCE Permanent Council.

The CiO is invited to address the annual UN Security Council meetings with regional organizations on thematic issues related to peace and security. The SG may also participate.

The CiO usually addresses the UN Security Council at the beginning of each year to present the priorities of the OSCE CiO for the year ahead.

OSCE-UN Coordination is enhanced through:

Annual UN-OSCE staff-level meetings serve as an important venue for exchange of information and co-ordination of activities.

Representatives of relevant United Nations entities are invited to speak at and participate in the main annual OSCE events, including the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, the Economic Forum and the Annual Security Review Conference.
Other UN agencies

In addition to the UNGA and Security Council, there are a number of other UN agencies and programs that work in the peace and security field, and some of these intersect with and/or overlap with the areas covered by the OSCE, including:

- UN Secretary General’s “Good Offices”
- International Court of Justice
- UN Council on Human Rights
- Election Assistance Unit
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has a liaison office in Vienna for the OSCE. It regularly attends the PC and other meetings.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT)
- UN Women

UN Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by world leaders at a historic UN Summit in September 2015. States have committed to achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) over 2015-2030 by mobilizing efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind.

The 17 SDGs are grouped around five major pillars: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships, and form one integrated whole.

Two UN resolutions adopted in 2016 and the UNSG’s 2018 report “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace” call for better linkages between the UN’s three foundational pillars: peace and security, development, and human rights. This includes a stronger focus on prevention, in particular
through an enhanced understanding of root causes of violent conflict and the need for inclusive approaches aimed at increasing resilience.

While the activities of the OSCE as a regional security organization have a strong focus on peace, justice and stable institutions (SDG 16), they can be relevant to each of the SDGs.
The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was founded in 1949, in the early years of the Cold War, as a collective defense institution, as defined in Article 51 of the UN Charter. The essence of the NATO Treaty is found in Article 5, which declares that an attack against any member of the alliance shall be considered an attack against them all, and that they may then decide to take collective action, including the use of force, in their defense against the act of aggression.

Cold War strategy and Post-Cold War changes

NATO’s strategy and tactics were geared to the assumption that a European conflict would involve a threat, or actual military attack, by the Soviet bloc upon one or more members of the alliance. With the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, NATO remained after 1991 the only significant multilateral military organization in Europe. Since then, NATO has reconfigured itself to meet the demands of the new security situation in Europe.

NATO’s major transformation has been visible in the following areas:

- Partnership-for-peace (PfP)
- Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)
- Peacekeeping and peace enforcement
- Expansion to 28 members, including former Warsaw Pact members
- NATO – Russia Council

NATO has used PfP and the EAPC to assist transformations in the former communist states and has included contingents from them alongside NATO forces in peacekeeping and enforcement roles in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in Kosovo.

Cooperation and shared interests

NATO has 30 member states, which are also OSCE participating States. Thus, almost half of the OSCE pS NATO members, including North Macedonia, which joined NATO after a solution was found to a dispute with Greece over its name. Moreover, 50 countries, all OSCE pS, participate in NATO’s North Atlantic Partnership Council, embracing a wide range of cooperative activities.
between NATO’s full members and other states in the region. Russia is not a member, but does have a special consultative relationship with NATO, defined in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security, and further institutionalized through creation of the NATO-Russia Council.\footnote{\textit{\ldots}}

NATO and the OSCE cooperate at the operational and political levels on conflict prevention, resolution and in addressing emerging security challenges. While NATO is a defensive organization with significant military capability made available by states, it complements the OSCE’s role in fostering dialogue and acknowledges the importance of a comprehensive approach to security, which requires effective application of both civilian and military means. Practical cooperation between NATO and the OSCE illustrate the principle that peace and security can be best built when institutions specialize in doing what they can do most effectively, and include:\footnote{\textit{\ldots}}

**Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)**

A joint action programme was developed to support the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton Agreements, including on arms control, CSBMs, and providing security for conducting elections. While NATO turned its peacekeeping mission in BiH over to the EUFOR in 2004, it continues to maintain a presence through a Military Liaison and Advisory Mission (NATO HQ Sarajevo) to assist with economic development, defense sector modernization and reform, and humanitarian assistance.\footnote{\textit{\ldots}}

**Kosovo**

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo was established as a part of the UNMIK and maintained close relations with the NATO KFOR, which has a UN mandate to guarantee a safe working environment for the international community.

Thematic areas of cooperation include border security, counterterrorism and on UNSCR 1325.
Another crucial partner for European security is the European Union (EU), which was created after WWII with the goal to end war among European states and to create a common economic market. With 27 members (since the UK left the EU due to Brexit), all EU Member States are at the same time OSCE participating States. Three more pS are listed as candidates for EU membership, namely Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

The European Union agreed on a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) with the 1991 Maastricht Treaty. In 1999, the EU created a “High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy” to present itself more visibly and effectively on the world stage. Josep Borrell, a former Spanish Foreign Minister, currently holds the position.

The EU has served as a magnet to Central and Eastern Europe states, many of whom have already joined the EU. EU related financial assistance from institutions such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, has helped to alleviate some of the underlying economic and social conditions for violent conflicts.

**EU-OSCE cooperation**

The EU has played an important role in and at the OSCE since the outset. It’s delegation (that of its predecessor, the European Community) was present and a signatory of the Helsinki Final Act as well as other key OSCE documents. In 2006, the participation of the EU in the OSCE was formalized in the Organization’s Rules of Procedure, which granted it a seat next to the participating State holding the rotating EU Presidency. The EU generally makes joint statements and has adopted common positions on issues addressed by the Permanent Council as well as Ministerial and Summit Conferences. Since the EU speaks and acts together as a bloc in the OSCE, it is formidable force both in OSCE decision-making and as a major source of both UB as well as ExB funding at the organization.

Though the EU includes almost half of the OSCE pS, and is budgetarily and politically powerful, it has no formal status per se. The EU Delegation sits at an extra seat with the pS who is holding the rotating EU Presidency. Previously there was one Head of EU Delegation to cover all the international organizations based in Vienna. Around the time of the Ukraine conflict, an EU Permanent Representative to the OSCE was appointed, with a staff of 6 EU officials/seconded national staff plus interns. When the EU Ambassador would like to speak at the PC or another formal meeting, the EU Presidency state, is first recognized by the Chair, and then passes the
floor to the EU representative who delivers the EU statement, negotiated among the EU member
pS.

At both the political and working levels, relations between the OSCE and the European Union are
maintained through:

- Consultations between the OSCE Troika, including the OSCE Secretary General, and the
  EU at both the ministerial and ambassadorial/Political Security Committee levels.
- Participation and cross representation at relevant meetings.
- Contacts between the Secretary General and the High Representative of the Union for
  Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and other high-level EU officials.
- Annual staff-level talks on topical issues that are on each organization’s agenda.

EU-OSCE Thematic and Operational Cooperation

The two organizations enjoy operational and thematic cooperation on a range of issues including:

- Border management, combating human trafficking, including with CEPOL and FRONTEX.
- Democratization, institution-building and human rights.
- Elections.
- Judicial and police reform, public administration, anti-corruption measures.
- Media development.
- Small and medium-sized enterprise development.

Both organizations enhance operational collaboration through the implementation of EU-funded
projects.

EU missions have cooperated with the OSCE in:

The Balkans:

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to implement the non-military provisions of the 1995 Dayton
Agreement; The EU Monitor Missions operated alongside NATO peacekeepers and OSCE
missions with related mandates in The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), now
North Macedonia; The EU launched the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), which
cooperates with other key international actors in Kosovo, including KFOR and OSCE), and what
remains of UNMIK. EULEX also works under the authority of the International Civilian Office (ICO),
which is headed by the European Union Special Representative in Kosovo and the International
Civilian Representative. The ICO was originally intended to replace UNMIK altogether, but the
transition has not taken place, given that Serbia and others have refused to accept this change.

In Eastern Europe:
An EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) was established to assist Moldova and Ukraine in controlling their border in 2005; The EU has deployed a civilian monitoring mission (EUMM) in Georgia to monitor the implementation of the ceasefire agreements following the 2008 war. Although its EU mandate provides for it to operate throughout Georgia, Russian military forces and secessionist authorities in South Ossetia and Abkhazia have rejected their entry into these areas; The Geneva International Discussions, established following the 2008 August war in Georgia, are jointly co-chaired by the OSCE, UN and the EU. The humanitarian working group is co-moderated by the OSCE, UNHCR and the EU.

OSCE FOs may also call upon the support of the EU when dealing with candidate countries seeking EU membership, several of which have had OSCE missions stationed on their territory.

Limitations

The EU has been limited in its ability to take a leading role in providing security for Europe in the post-Cold War period as it is primarily an economic organization, and in contrast to the OSCE, neither Russia nor the U.S. are members.
The Council of Europe (CoE) has become an important actor regarding the human dimension of security. Established in 1949, the Council of Europe drafted the European Convention on Human Rights in 1950 and created the European Court of Human Rights in 1959 at Strasbourg. Its statutes require that its members “must accept the principles of the rule of law and of the enjoyment by all persons within its jurisdiction of human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

It has also taken a leading role in promoting European cooperation in culture, education, environment, parliamentary democracy, and social policy. It has thus focused almost entirely on the human dimension as an essential component of security.

Members

The Council of Europe consists of 47 states, including 22 countries from Central and Eastern Europe, all of which are also OSCE pS. Although the U.S. and Canada are ineligible for membership, they both hold observer status, and like any country, they are welcome to ratify CoE conventions without being a member.

The Council of Europe requires candidate countries to certify that they meet a strict set of criteria before they can be qualified for as a new member state. States that fail to fulfill the membership obligations may be suspended. For example, Russia’s membership was suspended in 1995 due to the behavior of its armed forces in Chechnya. However, as a general matter of practice, once accepted into membership there are no sanctions for violations of CoE principles other than suspension.

The Council of Europe fulfills its role in conflict prevention and the promotion of democracy using techniques similar to those of the OSCE, but always by sending in experts from outside the country. As requested, staff from a relevant Council section in Strasbourg may be sent in to set up seminars, to offer expert advice, and to run training courses. It is these staff members interact most frequently with OSCE mission members who are already in country. Unlike the OSCE, once a state is admitted into membership, there are no permanent missions stationed on its territory.
Therefore, CoE monitoring of its members is quite minimal.

**CoE cooperation with OSCE**

The OSCE and the Council of Europe have a long-standing partnership based on their shared values and co-operate in the four priority areas of fighting terrorism, combating human trafficking, promoting tolerance and non-discrimination as well as respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. Other fields of co-operation include election observation, legislation reform, Roma and Sinti issues, human rights, democratization and local government.

Each year, two meetings of the OSCE-CoE Co-ordination Group are held, once in Strasbourg and once in Vienna. The CoE and OSCE prepare a report on the cooperation over the past year, exchange views, and discuss priorities. At the beginning of the year, the Head of the Task Force of the CiO usually addresses the CoE on the priorities of the Chair for the coming year. The CoE also participates in the Ministerial Council meetings, and representatives are also invited to speak at each other’s events throughout the year.

By defining its primary mission as encouraging good governance as a long-term mechanism for conflict prevention, the Council of Europe has carved out for itself a role that overlaps with that of the OSCE in many important areas. CoE instruments are complemented by OSCE’s norm setting political commitments, institutions and field operations. Close coordination between OSCE and CoE missions is essential in those countries where the two operate side-by-side.

The OSCE differs from the CoE in having: a broader mandate in conflict prevention and resolution; a broader base defined by geography, not political system; a continuous, long-term and strong field presence through its missions; decisions that are politically rather than legally binding, where pS affirm their intent to live up to commitments contained in the cumulative set of OSCE documents and monitors their performance in fulfilling those commitments.

**Central Asia**

The OSCE also has a special role to play in the five Central Asian countries, that fall out of the geographical territory covered by the CoE.
Commonwealth of Independent States

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was formed by Russia, Belarus and Ukraine in 1991 following dissolution of the Soviet Union. Its membership includes nine (originally 12) of the original 15 independent states that emerged following the dissolution of the Soviet Union:

- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Moldova
- Russia
- Tajikistan
- Uzbekistan

The CIS was conceived as a successor to the USSR in coordinating foreign and economic policies of its member states. Its headquarters are located in Minsk, the capital city of Belarus, and Sergei Lebedev has been chairman of its Executive Committee since 2007.

The Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) chose not to join. Ukraine and Turkmenistan signed the CIS charter in 1991, but they did not ratify the document. While Turkmenistan is an associate state, Ukraine ended its participation in the CIS statutory bodies in 2018. Georgia withdrew from membership in 2008, following the war with Russia.

CIS flag

Tashkent Treaty

The receptivity of members to integration or even coordination with Russia has varied widely. The CIS formed a collective security treaty, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, signed in Tashkent in 1992 by Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, with Azerbaijan, Belarus, and Georgia signing the following year. However, when the treaty came up for renewal in 1999, only six states remained with Azerbaijan, Georgia, and
Uzbekistan withdrawing. Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine never signed the Tashkent Treaty and have refused to participate in its activities.

**Operations**

Some CIS forces have supplemented Russian troops along the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Elsewhere in the region CIS peacekeeping operations have been composed almost exclusively of Russian forces. The CIS also includes non-security groups, such as the Eurasian Economic Community.

The CIS created an election observation mission in 2002, which has often reached diametrically opposed conclusions to those reached by ODIHR concerning elections in post-Soviet states.
Cooperation with other regional organizations

The OSCE cooperates with the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). In the past years, the CSTO and OSCE SGs have met to discuss increased co-operation and mutual understanding between the two organizations’ priorities and structures. The CSTO has addressed the ASRC, participated in the OSCE MCs, the OSCE has participated in the CSTO Permanent Council Meeting, and at the working level, CSTO and OSCE staff have exchanged views, especially on counter-terrorism.

Relations between the OSCE and regional organizations beyond the OSCE area have gained momentum in recent years. There has been considerable interest from these organizations to learn more about the OSCE and its norms and principles.

Topics explored with regional organizations have included exchange of best practices and lessons learned on:

- Counter-terrorism efforts
- Mechanisms and institutions of conflict prevention and early warning
- Support of democratic elections
- Small arms and light weapons
- Field activities and deployment of field missions

The 2001 OSCE Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism referred to the need to broaden dialogue with regional organizations beyond the OSCE area, such as ASEAN, the Shanghai Co-operation Organization (SCO), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Arab League, the African Union and the Organization of American States.

Links with international financial institutions and economic organizations are maintained primarily by the Office of the OSCE Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities, but also others, including:

- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- International Organization for Migration
- United Nations Development Programme
- United Nations Environment Programme
- World Bank
- World Trade Organization
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
• International Monetary Fund
• Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Conclusion

The OSCE has several potential points of “comparative advantage” relative to other organizations, largely because it is the only pan-European institution dealing with comprehensive security. This provides it with certain advantages as part of a European security “architecture.”

OSCE is unique

No other institution has:

- Universal participation of all of the states in the region based on the principles of equality and consensus
- Linkages between human dimension and political-military foundations of security
- Broad and extensive mandate to work in conflict management at the regional level
- Capacity to engage in these activities on a scope comparable to that of the OSCE

Multiple organizations for security

The thick web of security organizations that has evolved since 1990 has not resulted in reliance on a single, dominant institution in Europe. What has emerged is a network of overlapping institutions and a political process in which states rely on different organizations for different purposes, as each seeks to build its vision of a more solid structure for security within the broad Euro Atlantic Eurasian area.

Important functions

The interconnected areas of preventive diplomacy, conflict mediation, and post-conflict reconstruction, resolution, and reconciliation constitute the important functions that the OSCE can handle effectively. All require efforts to redress grievances that have given rise to violence, as well as to alleviate the structural conditions that make it more likely that conflicts of interest will assume violent forms.

Vital role

Peace and security conditions cannot be fulfilled by any organization working alone, in isolation from other international institutions and non-governmental organizations working on the scene. The OSCE has a key role to play in these areas and has the capability to do so, especially in cooperation with other relevant international organizations and partners.