



Module 2

OSCE Field Operations

This module will introduce you to the OSCE's field operations and address the following questions:

- What are field operations?
- How do field operations come about?
- What do field operations focus on?
- How are field missions run and managed?
- Where are the current field missions?
- What techniques are used in the field?

Table of Contents

Overview	3
Field operations	4
Current operations	11
Conflict prevention	12
Local contact	13
Government contact	14
Information, education, and training	16
Economic and environmental governance	18
Election monitoring	20
Rule-of-law	22
Early warning	23
Preventing renewed violence and conflict resolution	24
Good offices and mediation	26
Formal groups of states	28
Overseeing implementation of agreements	29
Peacekeeping	30
Post-conflict security-building	31
Promote reconciliation	32
Build democracy	34
Strengthen security	35
Develop civil society	36





CHAPTER 1

Overview

An OSCE mission of long duration is a deployment of OSCE personnel to a participating state. These field operations developed out of the need to address intra-state and inter-state conflicts that have occurred since the 1990s. Most of the OSCE's staff and resources are deployed in its current 15 field operations in Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the South Caucasus. Their mandates, sizes, and activities vary, illustrating the flexibility of this tool.



L-r: Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova Jan Plešinger opens an international conference on political-party financing, alongside Dr. Iurie Ciocan, Chair of the Central Electoral Commission, and Steven Gray, Country Director of the Moldova office of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, Chisinau, 30 October 2012. (OSCE/Igor Schimbator)



Field operations

Field operations enable the Organization to address crises as and when they develop, and can play a critical post-conflict role, helping to reinforce confidence and security-building measures. They foster the administrative capacity of the host countries through concrete projects that respond to people and their needs. These include initiatives to support community policing, minority rights, legislative reform, rule of law, press freedom, and border management. Increasingly, the OSCE is also building networks of professionals to work more efficiently against terrorism, smuggling of small arms and light weapons, and trafficking in human beings.

Mission mandates are determined by the Permanent Council and negotiated with the host government. They may be withdrawn or closed by the host government.

History

The first two CSCE field missions were the CSCE Missions of Long Duration in Kosovo, Sandjak, and Vojvodina and the CSCE Spillover Mission to Skopje, which were deployed in September 1992. Both missions were tasked with preventing the escalation or outbreak of violent conflicts.



Graduation of multi-ethnic police cadets from the Macedonian police school in Idrizovo, 29 July 2002. (OSCE)

Focus

The vast majority of OSCE field operations now focus on:

- good governance
- the promotion of democratic practices
- free elections
- the rule of law

The OSCE view is that security is a necessary condition for good governance; just as improved government performance enhances both the security of the state and its people. The primary problems facing OSCE missions in recent years have focused less on conflict prevention and more often on implementing the human dimension's principles.

Globalization has increased world-wide economic interaction and greater cultural contact, but it has also facilitated crime, corruption, and environmental degradation on a global scale. Thus, another goal of OSCE missions has been to promote globalization in activities such as commerce and tourism, while providing protection against its undesirable “underside.”

Issues like terrorism, the illegal arms trade, and human trafficking have become high priorities for OSCE field activities alongside traditional measures of confidence-building and conflict prevention.



Participants at a regional conference supported by the OSCE Mission to Montenegro on good governance, transparency and ethics at the municipal level, Budva, 3-4 June 2010. (OSCE/ Aleksandar Mrdak)

Creation

The creation of a new field operation requires:

- A mandate and budget adopted in consensus from the Permanent Council
- Agreement from the state concerned
- Field operation mandates usually are set for six or twelve months. Extension of a field operation requires a consensus decision by the Permanent Council.

Size

The smallest missions consist of only three or four international staff, with individuals assuming responsibility for multiple aspects of the mission's mandate.

The largest mission is in Kosovo, with a current staffing ceiling of 199 international and 499 national (local) personnel.



OSCE Mission in Pristina, 2010 (USIP/Ted Feifer)

Management

A Head of Mission (HoM) serves as the chief officer of each operation, a position normally held by a senior diplomat seconded by a participating state. HoMs are appointed by the Chairperson-in-Office, and must report to the CiO and the Permanent Council. HoMs have considerable freedom of action in managing the day-to-day work of OSCE field operations, which allows them to act flexibly and to adapt to changing conditions.

Larger missions like Kosovo have a Deputy HoM as well as a Chief of Staff. Missions also have political, administrative and public affairs officers, as well as a staff of interpreters/translators. The specialized functional staff varies in size and the roles performed according to the mandate of each particular mission.

Missions also report to the Permanent Council about their activities. Mission activity is supervised and coordinated by the Conflict Prevention Centre, which is part of the OSCE Secretariat located in Vienna. The Conflict Prevention Centre maintains an Operations Centre open 24 hours every day of the year to maintain continuous contact with field missions and to respond to any emergency situation that might arise.



Ambassador Jean-Claude Schlumberger at the OSCE Mission in Kosovo headquarters, Prishtinë/Priština, 14 September 2012. (OSCE)

Role

The role of the OSCE mission is not to become an advocate either for the participating state or for organizations engaged in advocacy on behalf of human and minority rights issues. Rather its role is to serve as an ombudsman, as a go-between, assisting these different groups to reconcile their differences peacefully. In performing this function, it must constantly remind governments of their responsibilities undertaken when they signed the various OSCE human dimension documents and, as appropriate, carrying out their own laws to protect human rights. At the same time, it must remind government critics of the necessity of pursuing their grievances through domestic legal channels, and seeking legislative changes when they appear to be necessary.

Delicate position

An OSCE field mission must always be mindful of its position, situated between a host government, non-governmental organizations, and civil society, and the governments of participating states represented in the Permanent Council. Host governments often become irritated with the involvement of OSCE missions into what they consider to be the internal affairs of their own country. Human rights and other activist groups and NGOs may complain that the OSCE is not being sufficiently forceful in representing their grievances and pressing their demands. Participating states hold different positions on these issues, and reflect them vocally in and outside of the PC.

In the final analysis, OSCE officials and personnel, who must support OSCE norms to the fullest extent possible while respecting the sovereign rights of the host government, must carefully

balance all of these demands. The failure to do so may cause the state hosting the mission to deny the OSCE access or may cause other participating states to oppose renewal of their mandates. Since the renewal of mandates requires a consensus decision by all participating states, the failure to renew means that a mission must be closed down, even if its continued existence is supported by an overwhelming majority of participating states. This is precisely what happened with the OSCE Mission to Georgia, which had to shut down in 2009 due to objections from Russia



OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier (I) speaking with the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Ambassador Jennifer Brush, on the bridge over Dniester/Nistru River connecting the towns of Tiraspol and Bender, 18 July 2012. (OSCE/Igor Schimbător)

Analysis

The function and focus of OSCE's field missions has changed over time. The breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia was accompanied by violent conflicts in the 1990s. As the units within these structures—the 15 union republics of the USSR and the 6 states that composed federal Yugoslavia—broke apart, some formerly autonomous regions within these new states resisted integration with the central governments, typically because a majority of the people living in these regions did not share markers of identity with the nationality of the new state in which they found themselves.

A series of secessionist struggles broke out: in Chechnya in the Russian Federation, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, Transdniestria in Moldova, Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan, and Kosovo in Serbia. Violence also erupted in other new states with mixed ethnicities: particularly in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Other states tottered on the brink of collapse, torn by internal conflict, including Tajikistan and Albania. Many other situations also approached violence, but successful preventive action averted large-scale violence: such as in Crimea in Ukraine, and Macedonia in the former Yugoslavia. These potential or actual conflicts were the primary focus of most OSCE field missions between 1992 and 1999. Since then, every Chair-in-Office has sought to address the most pressing issues from these "frozen conflicts."

Between 2001 and 2007, overt violence in the region seemed to have subsided, but this was broken by a short but intense war between Georgia and Russia in 2008. The OSCE's failure to prevent this conflict, return the situation to the way it was before the conflict, or even maintain its mission in Georgia has raised questions about the relevance of the organization and its norms when a major participating state such as Russia is prepared to use force to advance its interests.

The primary focus of OSCE missions in recent years has focused less on conflict prevention and more on implementing the human dimension of OSCE principles. Of course, the OSCE comprehensive approach to security emphasizes the essential role of human dimension activities in the long-term prevention of violent conflict. The OSCE has operated on the assumption that good governance is not only a value in itself, but is a major contributing factor to peace between states and within states.

The vast majority of OSCE missions now focus on good governance, the promotion of democratic practices, free elections, and the rule of law. Missions must take into consideration that many OSCE participating states are only starting down the road toward democratic governance, as well as the reality that democracy cannot be imposed from outside on countries that have no prior history or experience with democratic practices. Therefore, the OSCE has often taken a gradual approach to socializing political elites and publics to the better practices of good governance.

OSCE missions know that security is a necessary condition for good governance; just as improved government performance enhances both the security of the state and its people. The newer threats to security come from non-state actors involved in terrorism, smuggling drugs and human beings, money laundering, and other criminal activities that cross state borders.

Globalization has brought increases in world economic interaction and greater cultural contact, but it has also facilitated crime, corruption, and environmental degradation on a global scale. Thus another goal of OSCE missions has been to promote globalization in activities such as commerce and tourism, while providing protection against its undesirable "underside." This does not mean that the threat of mass violence has been eliminated, but does underline that issues like the illegal arms trade, especially the spread of small arms and light weapons - which kill more people every year than weapons of mass destruction - have become a high priority for OSCE field activities alongside traditional measures of confidence-building and conflict prevention.



OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Finnish Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb, during a visit to Tbilisi, 21 August 2008. (OSCE/David Khizanishvili)

Current operations

Current OSCE field operations, divided by region.

Southeastern Europe

- OSCE Presence in Albania
- OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
- OSCE Mission in Kosovo
- OSCE Mission to Montenegro
- OSCE Mission to Serbia
- OSCE Mission to Skopje

Eastern Europe

- OSCE Mission to Moldova
- OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine

South Caucasus

- OSCE Office in Baku
- OSCE Office in Yerevan

Central Asia

- OSCE Centre in Ashgabat
- OSCE Centre in Astana
- OSCE Centre in Bishkek
- OSCE Office in Tajikistan
- OSCE Project Coordinator in Uzbekistan

Field Activities

- Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference
- OSCE Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint Commission on Military Pensioners



CHAPTER 2

Conflict prevention

From its very beginning, the CSCE linked the human dimension of security with the effort to avert the outbreak of violent conflict. The OSCE is not only interested in the human dimension for its intrinsic value, but also for its role in addressing many of the underlying issues that might give rise to violent conflict.

OSCE field missions carry out their mandates in a wide variety of ways. This section describes the various techniques that the OSCE uses to address long-term conflict prevention.



Local contact

A key technique in long-term conflict prevention is the “open door” that OSCE field missions provide:

- a place for individuals and groups to inform the OSCE staff of their grievances
- a place for regular contact with local NGOs

OSCE contact with individuals, human rights activists, and NGOs helps to build up civil society—a necessary component of a democratic society. Local contact also helps to spread democratic values and information on human rights to governments and individuals.

Government contact

OSCE missions also work with local governments to improve their protection of human rights and human dimension activities. When problems are uncovered, the OSCE mission will alert the relevant governmental unit about the problem and seek immediate relief at that level.

While performing their human dimension role, mission members must be able to distinguish between:

- intentional violations of human rights perpetrated by governmental authorities
- frequent neglect or abuse of human rights due to bureaucratic ineptitude or indifference

While both may represent some degree of a human rights violation, the methods to solve the problems may be different, i.e., political dialogue for the former case or training for the latter case.

Example

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo, the largest of the OSCE's field missions, has municipal teams working in Kosovo's 33 municipalities. The municipalities are primary point of contact residents have with their governmental institutions. The municipalities provide residents with the largest portion of governmental services and through them residents exercise their civic rights and participate in the municipal decision making processes.

These teams monitor the work of municipalities to help them provide good governance and uphold human rights principles. Special attention is paid to the needs of non-majority communities and the return process. Municipal monitors also assist municipal legislators with drafting statutes and regulations.

The OSCE teams maintain daily contact with municipal institutions and the population. They observe the daily work of municipalities, including the sessions of the municipal assemblies and their committees, and the work of the executive, and provide on-site advice and mentoring on how to improve operations. Municipal monitoring includes analyzing, reporting and when recommending remedial action for observed shortcomings in the work of authorities. In some cases it can also include the implementation of small scale projects.

Municipal monitors observe how municipalities follow hiring procedures, properly use official languages, protect property rights and cultural heritages, ensure freedom of movement, and provide access to public services by all residents. The Mission also provides advice on how to better plan municipal budgets, increase transparency and include the public in decision-making, to help improve the quality of services and the responsiveness of municipalities to their inhabitants.



Members of the OSCE municipal team covering Prishtine/Pristina receive a certificate of appreciation for financing the renovation of the Centre for Co-operation and Integration 'Fidan Lahu', Fushe, Kosove/Kosovo Polje, 11 June 2008. (OSCE/Hasan Sopa)

Information, education, and training

Another major activity of an OSCE mission is to provide information, education, and training to government officials and NGOs. This is often achieved in the form of seminars on:

- human rights
- rule of law
- democratic process
- freedom of the media
- other aspects of international norms and codes about humanitarian issues
- police practices in a democratic society
- civilian control of the military

In most societies where OSCE missions are stationed, there may be little or no historical experience with democratic process among government officials or individual citizens. Therefore, there is an immense need in these societies for basic education about the fundamental principles of modern democratic processes and values. OSCE missions can be very effective in introducing such information at the local level.

Example

One method used in the OSCE region is training police enforcement in the procedures for enforcing human rights principles. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo, together with the Kosovo police and ministries of labor and social welfare, internal affairs and of justice, is conducting a series of 11 training sessions for 330 border police and 33 customs officers. The sessions focus on how to effectively identify and refer foreign and local victims of trafficking to relevant institutions such as the anti- trafficking section of the Kosovo Police Service, social workers, and victim advocates from the ministry of justice. This initiative, which began in May 2010, was based on an analysis by the OSCE Mission to Kosovo that found that the Kosovo Police needed a better understanding of the differences between trafficking in human beings, prostitution, and smuggling, in addition to the relevant laws and proper procedures in Kosovo.



The OSCE-founded Kosovo Police Service School in Vustrri/Vucitrn provides democratically oriented police training for locally recruited cadets. Officer Agim Melenica, a KPS officer, teaches a class. (OSCE/Lubomir Kotek)



Economic and environmental governance

Many missions have economic and/or environmental officers assigned to their professional staff. The Economic and Environmental Dimension of the OSCE, which works in partnership with the Office of the Coordinator for Economic & Environmental Activities is active in most field missions and plays an important role in mission mandates.

The OSCE can provide assistance on:

- Economic reform
- The legislative basis for regulation of economic and environmental activity
- Threats to the physical environment
- Good governance and anti-corruption activities

Poverty, desperation, and environmental degradation are often associated with violence, so efforts to deal with these social ills may reduce the propensity for violence in many of the societies where the OSCE works.

Due to its limited resources in these fields, however, the OSCE cannot tackle these problems alone. Its role has generally been to bring these problems to the attention of other organizations and governments in the hope that they will identify resources that can help alleviate them. For example in Kyrgyzstan the OSCE Mission played a key role in raising awareness about need to fund the rehabilitation of uranium tailing sites, whose radioactivity, if disturbed by landslide or earthquake can pollute downstream drinking and irrigation water sources that feed all of Central Asia. The Mission's activities lead to the UN sponsoring a major international donor conference in 2010.

The Economic and Environmental Dimension of the OSCE has fulfilled its early warning mandate by supporting cross-border environmental impact studies on improperly stored pesticides that also pose a risk to cross-border water sources. The studies were used to apply for clean-up funding under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).

Example

Another example is a 2009 OSCE community outreach project to help farmers displaced by the Chernobyl nuclear reactor disaster to find outside resources to assist them in returning to their farms. Soil and water in the region needed years of special treatment. The OSCE Office in Minsk assisted farmers in adapting new technologies for the greenhouse cultivation of popular vegetables like strawberries and cucumbers in the southern Belarus town of Stolin. One farmer reported that the implementation of the new technologies resulted in a 150 percent year-on-year increase in the cucumber yield, a one third drop in consumption of solid fuel, and a reduction by a half in the work to maintain the temperature in a greenhouse.



Head of the OSCE Office in Minsk, Amb. Benedikt Haller (2nd r), Economic and Environmental Programme Manager Francois-Vadim de Hartingh (r) and Core-Agri Programme Co-ordinator S. Tarasiuk (l) visit a farm in Belarus' Chernobyl-affected area, 3 June 2010. (OSCE)

Election monitoring

Whenever OSCE monitors an election, the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) creates an Election Observation Mission. An Election Observation Mission head is appointed by ODIHR and sent with a core team to prepare for the arrival of long term and short-term observers.

Election Observation Missions are entirely separate from OSCE field operations (if present in the country), but they cooperate as part of the OSCE family. Election Observation Missions report to ODIHR in Warsaw, whereas field operations report to the Conflict Prevention Center in the Vienna secretariat. OSCE/ODIHR often takes part in International Election Observation Missions together with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and the European Parliament.

Observers

There are two types of OSCE election observers: Long term and short term.

Long-term observers monitor the:

- Run-up to elections
- Use of media during campaigns
- Access of candidates to the electorate

Short-term observers are generally sent in for the period immediately prior to and during an election to monitor:

- Access to polling places
- Integrity of ballots
- Secrecy of the voting process
- Tabulation process
- The methodology in which outcomes are determined and certified



The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje's Situation Centre was the core of its monitoring activity during election day on 22 March 2009. (OSCE/Eberhard Laue)

Example

The following is an example of how election-monitoring missions are implemented in the field.

On February 18, 2013 Armenia will hold a presidential. After the Armenian government formally invites the OSCE to observe the elections, a Long Term Election Observer (LTO) Mission will be deployed approximately one month prior to the election date. The LTO Mission is headed by an OSCE Ambassador and consists of approximately 12-15 international election experts who are based in the capital, and approximately 25 long-term observers to be deployed throughout the country, depending on the size of the country.

Observers will assess the presidential election for its compliance with OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections, as well as with domestic legislation. Observers will closely monitor campaign activities, the work of the election administration and relevant governmental bodies, election-related legislation and its implementation, the media environment and the resolution of election-related disputes. The Mission will meet with election candidates and representatives from relevant authorities and political parties, as well as with representatives from the judiciary, civil society and the media.

ODIHR requests short-term observers to monitor the election-day proceedings and counting process throughout the country. Again, the number of STOs deployed depends on the size of the country, number of polling stations, and the willingness of the host country to have a large number of observers deployed. In the case of the Armenian presidential elections 250 short-term observers will be deployed four days prior to the election date. Short-term observers arriving for election day will be deployed in teams of two throughout the country to monitor the opening of polling stations, voting, the counting of ballots and the tabulation of results.

One day after the election a statement of preliminary findings and conclusions will be made public. ODIHR will issue a final report about two months after the end of the electoral process.

Rule-of-law

ODIHR's section on the rule of law has also assisted states in developing legal principles to strengthen democratic processes; i.e., the rule of law ought to prevail over the will of individuals, including high-level political officials.

Examples

Prior to the fall 2010 parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan, the OSCE Office in Baku took an initiative to find solutions to the shortcomings addressed in reports from previous OSCE election observation missions in Azerbaijan. Roundtable meetings with representatives from government, political parties, civil society and international organizations were held to address freedom of assembly and illegal interference in the election process, election administration, and the role and function of the media in elections. Furthermore, seminars were held to educate voters on political pluralism, dialogue, and opportunities for domestic election observation.

Another effort to strengthen democratic processes has been the OSCE Mission to Serbia's support for the Prosecutors' Association of Serbia. The Association, which focuses on maintaining the independence of Serbian prosecutors from the executive and legislative branches through judicial reform, is supported by the OSCE through training courses and workshops in international best practices regarding the independence and accountability of prosecutors.



“Criteria for Evaluation and Promotion of the Work of Prosecutors”, a set of guidelines drafted by national experts with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia and the Prosecutors’ Association of Serbia, 2008 (OSCE)

Early warning

When long-term preventive measures are not sufficient, and events on the ground appear to be heating up, the OSCE field mission may serve as a source of early warning and even as a “first responder” when violent events appear to be imminent. The first requisite for effective preventive diplomacy is “early warning” to detect situations that might lead to violent conflict. Violent incidents involving governments or their opponents, or conflict between different domestic factions, could provide indications of future, more widespread violence.

There is often a very narrow window of opportunity during which a third party may intervene to prevent violence. The signals of a developing confrontation may be so unclear that the seriousness of the situation may not be recognized. Premature intervention may create a “self-fulfilling prophecy” by spurring some parties on the ground to escalate violence to bring about outside involvement. Waiting too long may allow the threshold of violence to be crossed. The timing of preventive diplomacy is critical, but often hard to gauge accurately.

Identifying potential trouble spots is a first step, but effective analysis of early warning indicators is necessary to separate the real dangers from false alarms. States and multilateral organizations that “cry wolf” about violence that might, but does not actually occur, can lose their credibility and ability to focus attention in a timely way. They also alienate parties if they try to intervene in situations that do not require a drastic response; and they can exhaust both international willpower and limited resources by trying to intervene in too many conflicts.

OSCE responses to impending violence can take the form of quiet diplomacy, verbal protests, sanctions, creation or revision of the mandate for a mission of long duration, mediation to assist in finding a peaceful solution, deployment of a monitoring team, or activation of any other means at the disposal of the organization. But the primary function that the OSCE can perform better than most other organizations, due to its sustained presence on the ground in many societies living in conditions of unstable peace, is to see the early signs of potential violence and to recommend action before it is too late.

Example

In 2011, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek's Field Office in Osh organized early warning meetings in border areas of Osh and Jalal-Abad Provinces. These meetings brought together representatives of the Governor's Office, Border Guard Service, area residents and selected non-governmental organizations to focus on security trends and ways to establish and improve coordination between border management agencies, law enforcement bodies, government authorities and border area residents.



CHAPTER 3

Preventing renewed violence and conflict resolution

One of the challenges facing the OSCE for the past twenty years has been preventing renewed violence in the so-called “frozen conflicts,” and finding peaceful solutions to them. These conflicts broke out as the former Soviet Union was falling apart during 1989-1992, before the CSCE had an effective conflict prevention mechanism in place.

No long-term solutions have been found since 1992 for the conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, two regions of Georgia (Abkhazia and South Ossetia), and the Transdniestria region of Moldova—all of which exist at present as international “black holes.” This permits illegal activity to take place in and across these regions, with outsiders unable to exert any influence.

The secessionist regions have achieved varying degrees of de facto independence; although



formal independence has not been recognized by most other states in the international community—at least until Russia recognized Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent in late 2008 after its war with Georgia.

OSCE missions were established in these countries, although the mandate for the OSCE Mission in Georgia was terminated at the end of 2008, when Russia opposed the annual renewal of the mission, and the mission was closed down by the end of June 2009. Primary responsibility of these OSCE missions has been to try to negotiate a resolution to these conflicts through some kind of political settlement of the status of these regions within the sovereign territory of the country in which they are located. None of these efforts has been successful. At the same time, large scale violence has not resumed in these areas, with the exception of the outbreak of fighting in Georgia in August 2008.

This section describes some techniques used to prevent renewed violence and to try to find a lasting resolution of these conflicts, and provides some examples of operations that focus on these areas.



Ambassadors Bernard Fassier of France (left), Matthew Bryza of the United States (centre) and Yury Merzlyakov of Russia, the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group, before presenting a statement on Nagorno-Karabakh to the Permanent Council, 6 November 2008.(OSCE)

Good offices and mediation

The most frequent approach utilized by OSCE field missions has been to provide “good offices” and other forms of third party intervention to assist parties to a dispute in reaching agreement. OSCE mission staff often serve as go-betweens or mediators between disputing parties.

Example

OSCE mission staff have served as mediators between the government of Moldova and the breakaway region of Transdniestria.



Examples of the Mission's mediation work include brokering a deal in 2003 for the full withdrawal by the Moldovan and Transdniestrian military of armoured vehicles held by their peacekeeping forces inside the Security Zone. OSCE Mission members observed and verified the withdrawal. The Mission also helped forge agreement in 2006 on allowing Moldovan farmers free access to their land on the Transdniestrian-controlled side. (OSCE)

OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya

Although the OSCE Assistance Group in Chechnya was closed in 2003, it is worth reviewing because it was the only case in which the OSCE played an active role to broker a ceasefire during an ongoing war between Chechnya and the Russian Federation in 1994-1996.

Its mandate was to “promote the peaceful resolution of the crisis and the stabilization of the situation in the Chechen Republic in conformity with the principle of the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation and in accordance with OSCE principles.”

In January 1996, the HoM of the OSCE Assistance Group in Chechnya, Ambassador Tim Guldemann of Switzerland, assumed an activist role as a mediator between the parties to the conflict. He engaged in “shuttle diplomacy” and mediated a ceasefire in 1996 that brought the first war there to an end. After successfully organizing elections in Chechnya and assisting a new regional government as it took office, the OSCE was unable to take the steps necessary to prevent a second attack on Chechnya in 1999 by Russian forces, resulting in a renewed war that

has continued in Chechnya to this day, though the level of fighting has diminished substantially in recent years and is mostly confined to remote areas. The Russian Federation refused to support the extension of the mission beyond 2003, when it was completely closed down.



Ambassador Tim Guldemann, 1 October 2007. (OSCE)

Formal groups of states

Another approach to conflict resolution has involved the establishment of formal groups of states operating under OSCE auspices to try to assist disputing parties to resolve their differences peacefully. These may take the form of:

- Contact groups
- “Friends” of a particular country
- A formal group such as the “Minsk Group” which was established to prepare for an eventual peace conference to resolve the dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh

The OSCE Minsk Group

A mix of ethnic Armenians and Azeris originally populated Nagorno-Karabakh, formerly an autonomous region within the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan (SSR). The conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh began even before the breakup of the Soviet Union. In 1988 the Regional Council of Nagorno-Karabakh petitioned the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR and that of the Armenian SSR to transfer sovereignty over the region from the former to the latter. This was followed by sporadic violence between Armenians and Azeris both within Nagorno-Karabakh and along their common border.

When the Soviet Union collapsed and both republics became independent, the fighting became more intense as the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh drove virtually all ethnic Azeris out of the territory and began to fight in earnest to separate from Azerbaijan and to unite with the newly independent Armenian state.

When both Armenia and Azerbaijan joined the CSCE in January 1992, the organization immediately addressed the conflict. In March 1992 the CSCE created a group of eleven member states to prepare a peace conference in Minsk. (Since 1996 this group has been led by a “troika” of “co-chairmen”—special envoys representing France, Russia, and the United States.)



L-r: The Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, Ambassadors Jacques Faure of France, Robert Bradtke of the United States, and Igor Popov of the Russian Federation, after their address to the OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna, 22 March 2012. (OSCE/ David Challenger)

Overseeing implementation of agreements

Where agreements have been reached, the OSCE may play a role in overseeing their implementation. For example, the OSCE set up special missions to assist in the implementation of bilateral agreements between Russia and Latvia concerning the withdrawal of Russian troops stationed there during the Soviet period, decommissioning of a Russian radar station at Skrunda, and monitoring agreements between Russia and both Latvia and Estonia on the operation of a joint commission on military pensioners who decided to remain in these two countries after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Similarly, the OSCE mission in Moldova mandate includes monitoring the 1994 treaty between Russia and Moldova on the withdrawal of the Russian 14th army and associated equipment stored on the left bank of the Dniester River



The OSCE regularly inspected the dismantling process of the Skrunda Radar Station in Latvia. Here, the front of an antenna building is removed of most technical equipment and weather protection in July 1998. The dismantling was completed in October 1999. (OSCE)

Peacekeeping

In principle, but thus far not in practice, the OSCE may undertake a peacekeeping operation, perhaps with assistance from NATO, other military alliances, “coalitions of the willing,” or individual participating states, to oversee political agreements between disputing parties.

The OSCE anticipated establishing a peacekeeping operation as part of a political settlement between the parties to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh at the 1992 Helsinki Summit.

At the 1994 Budapest Summit it created a High Level Planning Group to prepare for such an operation. However, a political settlement remained elusive. More recently, the OSCE has envisaged a possible peacekeeping role for itself as part of a political settlement in Moldova.



The Budapest Summit changed the name of the CSCE to OSCE, reflecting the fact that the CSCE was no longer simply a Conference, December 1994. (OSCE)



CHAPTER 4

Post-conflict security-building

The OSCE has frequently promoted long-term peace and security in regions where conflicts have occurred and where a political settlement has been achieved, but where war and violence have left a legacy of hatred and bitterness, so that peace remains conditional. In a number of these cases, the OSCE mission entered after a long period of widespread violence, death, and destruction, and thus had to deal with the distrust and hatred that still existed among different ethno-national groups within the population.

The most important of these missions have been the ones in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia that were established following the 1995 Dayton Accords bringing an end to those violent conflicts, as well as the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, which also entered following the war in the spring of 1999 in which Kosovo came under exclusive international administration. The OSCE also played a role in post-conflict security building in Albania, following a collapse of the government in 1997 that led to a brief period of anarchy in what essentially became a failed state.

This section describes some techniques used by field operations in post-conflict security building, and provides some examples of field operations that focus on these areas.



Promote reconciliation

Creating a more stable peace may involve OSCE efforts to promote reconciliation that goes beyond a formal settlement of the dispute and moves the parties towards a deeper resolution of their differences.

Most recently, the OSCE hosted a December 2012 event in Vienna on best practices in and challenges to reconciliation practices, drawing from past and present experiences.



OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier, speaking at an OSCE event on reconciliation after conflict, Vienna, 18 December 2012. (OSCE/Jonathan Perfect)

Example

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo's Youth Reconciliation Initiative summer camp in Ohrid is a reconciliation effort that it helped organize for youth in the post-conflict societies of the Balkans. The camp focused on building relationships to decrease tension and promote tolerance and ethnic diversity between communities. The nine-day camp included courses in conflict management and analysis, intercultural and religious diversity, team-building and communication skills. The camp in Ohrid has been followed by other youth camps throughout the region, a documentary film, and a regular newsletter for participants.



The OSCE Mission in Kosovo supported a cross-border Balkan youth camp to encourage young people's involvement in the reconciliation process, 8 August 2003. (OSCE)



Build democracy

Post-conflict security-building may also involve assistance with building democracy to establish non-violent means to resolve differences that were previously settled by violence or the threat of force.

Example

The OSCE Mission to Montenegro has strengthened the country's efforts to provide greater access to information, including Montenegrin civil society in the process. Following legislative reform, the OSCE Mission organized training programs to ensure that the 2005 Law on Free Access to Information was properly implemented. The initial law was followed by complementary legislation protecting personal data and classified information, which members of Montenegrin civil society have been active in testing and utilizing.



L-r: Mirjana Rackovic, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management; Milena Deletic from NGO MANS; and Vesna Milic, Real Estate Directorate of Montenegro train civil servants on the Law on Free Access to Information, 2 October 2008. (OSCE)

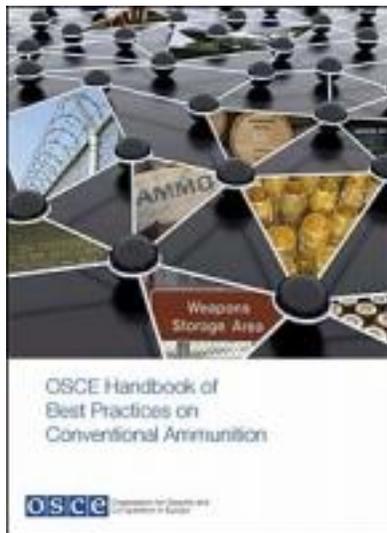
Strengthen security

Strengthening security can involve assisting in verifying disarmament agreements; or arranging and providing training for institutions required to maintain law and order, such as civilian police.

Example

Many member states have stockpiles of armaments left over from the Cold War era. The OSCE has undertaken numerous projects guiding participating states on the ways to ensure destruction of these stockpiles. In 2008 the [OSCE Handbook of Best Practices on Conventional Ammunition](#) was published in an effort to provide member states with a guide to best practices in national policymaking regarding the techniques and procedures for the destruction of conventional ammunition, explosive material, and detonation devices, as well as for the management and control of stockpiles of ammunition.

Earlier, the OSCE's 2003 publication of the [Handbook of Best Practices on Small Arms and Light Weapons](#), offered guidelines to help reduce the amount of illegally-held weaponry in circulation by comprehensively outlining all stages of a gun's life from manufacture to destruction.



OSCE Handbook of Best Practices on Conventional Ammunition (OSCE)

Develop civil society

Support for the development of civil society, holding elections that meet international standards, assistance in the creation of new constitutions and power-sharing arrangements, promotion of the rule of law, and other human dimension activities constitute other possible OSCE interventions.

Example

In an effort to promote local NGOs and civil society, the OSCE Presence in Albania, together with the European Commission, began a project in 2006 to strengthen local organization's ties to each another. The three-part project included an assessment, followed by a public awareness campaign and training sessions. Training focused on management skills, public participation and cooperation with local government, gender mainstreaming, advocacy,



People reading information about their rights posted on the wall of the Lushnja municipality building, September 2006. The Know Your Rights project was initiated by the OSCE Presence in Albania and the People's Advocate (OSCE/Fejzon Numan)