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## **REPORT**

**FOR THE GENERAL COMMITTEE ON  
POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND SECURITY**

### ***The OSCE: Region of Change***

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## DRAFT REPORT FOR THE GENERAL COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND SECURITY

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The theme we have picked, *Region of Change*, embodies the very essence of the OSCE. Since the launching of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the security environment in the region has changed radically. The OSCE PA itself was established in the era of positive changes when Eastern and Central Europe decisively refused dependency and totalitarianism.

At that time, change meant hope and progress.

In recent years a number of new security challenges have emerged. As a unique security organization, the OSCE should continue creating a common security community through dialogue based on the concept of comprehensive and indivisible security. The Organization must continue developing its identity at the political level by linking its activities with new multidimensional threats to security, both in the OSCE region and neighbouring areas. Moreover, while strengthening our activities and focusing on the security field, human rights and democracy cannot be compromised. It is very regrettable that a number of participating States retreated from this fundamental principle of comprehensive security during the Vilnius OSCE Ministerial meeting last December.

Over the last decade the notion of “change” has not always had a positive connotation. When we speak about regions of tension and conflict, it often requires enormous effort by our Organization and the international community to prevent bad situations from becoming even worse. We should welcome the positive fact that in 2011 no new conflicts emerged in the OSCE area.

**The unresolved or protracted conflicts**, which still exist in the OSCE region, remain one of the greatest threats to security and stability. These conflicts have, for too long, cost human lives, forced large population groups to live as refugees or IDPs, and at the same time, taken up a large portion of a country’s human and financial resources. All these facts hamper economic growth, social development, and regional stability. It is my pleasure to note that in 2011, notable progress was made with the formal resumption of the 5+2 talks in the Transnistrian settlement process in Vilnius. It is now of paramount importance that the parties involved continue the work and negotiations in earnest. I am glad that the second (since the resumption) official 5+2 meeting in Dublin on 28 February was a success, and I hope that each future meeting will mark a step towards resolution of this conflict. I join in welcoming the recent agreement allowing the resumption of full rail traffic through the region, which will benefit people and local businesses on both sides of the river.

Deplorably, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict continues to cost lives along the line of contact, and tensions in this region are still extremely high. The Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, together with the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan, are working on developing a plan for peace, and it is now mainly up to these parties to work to resolve the conflict and reach an agreement. An important first step is to ensure that the ceasefire agreement is being respected and that snipers are withdrawn. It is also vital that full investigations are conducted when conflict-related incidents occur. The joint statement by the Minsk Group Co-Chair

countries and the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan, issued in Vilnius on 7 December 2011, reaffirmed the importance of reaching a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Regarding Georgia, the Geneva International Discussions continue to serve as a valuable contribution, although any movement towards a solution will be difficult. However, it is encouraging that in 2011 a number of OSCE-sponsored confidence-building projects were approved and implemented. The parties should continue to move forward and seek confidence-building measures to overcome not only the security related challenges, but also the acute humanitarian consequences of the 2008 war. In this respect, the OSCE PA encourages the relevant parties to positively consider the year-end proposals by the 2011 Lithuanian OSCE Chairmanship, which called for the restoration of an OSCE presence based on a status-neutral agreement. This would enable the OSCE to re-open a meaningful presence in Georgia, to cover all three dimensions of the OSCE's work.

The Decision on Elements of the Conflict Cycle was one of the most important outcomes from the Vilnius Ministerial Council. This decision strengthens the ability of our Organization to respond comprehensively and effectively to emerging risks and existing challenges across the entire conflict cycle, and at the same time, sets out clear and concrete tasks to the OSCE executive structures as well as to participating States themselves. As it also provides clear guidance for future work, the process of implementation of this important decision should remain the focus of our attention.

Last year, the OSCE continued to prove its value in assisting states that experienced ethnic violence. Though belatedly, the OSCE participating States deployed the Community Security Initiative in Kyrgyzstan. The project is aimed at assisting Kyrgyz law enforcement agencies in addressing security challenges and restoring confidence in the rule of law after the outbreak of interethnic violence in the south of the country in June 2010. Considerable progress in reaching out to the local communities must be noted, yet improvements in human rights records and anchoring stability, particularly in the south of the country, remain to be achieved. The OSCE PA will continue to lobby for the success of the OSCE and Chairmanship activities in Kyrgyzstan.

As stated in the Astana Commemorative Declaration, *“conventional arms control and confidence and security building regimes remain major instruments for ensuring military stability, predictability and transparency, and should be revitalized, updated and modernized.”* In our Belgrade Declaration the Assembly also adopted a recommendation stemming from this Committee, urging for an **updated Vienna Document**, a further elaboration on the **Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security**, and an increased effort to start negotiations on the strengthening and modernizing of **conventional arms control in Europe**. Some progress was made with the adoption of nine so-called **“Vienna Plus” decisions taken during the Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius**, which led to a reissue of the Vienna Document in 2011. From now on the Vienna Document will be updated every five years to better reflect the constantly changing politico-military realities. However, the merely technical and procedural decisions made in November fall far short of the expectations we had for a general strategic update of the Vienna Document. It is clearly less ambitious than expected. There is a strong need for participating States to make use of the Forum for Security Co-operation to achieve concrete results in areas such as **lowering the thresholds** at which participating States are obliged to inform each other of military exercises, increasing the opportunities for verification activity, modernizing and updating the

exchange of military information, strengthening risk reduction mechanisms and enlarging the scope of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs). Now, more than ever, it is of crucial importance to modernize the Vienna Document in a more strategic, forward-looking way as the worrying stalemate of the CFE regime continues due to the unilateral decision of one country to suspend the implementation of its obligations under the treaty. Since the outcome of the negotiation process in the so-called format of 36 was frozen due to disagreements on fundamental issues such as host nation consent within internationally recognised borders and interim transparency measures, there is a need for more common efforts aimed at revitalizing, updating and modernizing the arms control regime in Europe based on key principles. We should be able to set aside our national agendas to engage in the work that would benefit us all.

I cannot avoid mentioning that the year 2012 started on an unfortunate note. The Russian Federation's refusal of Spanish and Swedish Vienna Document evaluation visits on the grounds of *force majeure* based on a lack of internal regulations is unacceptable and undermines the object and purpose of the document. It is believed that this is merely a technical issue which Russia will resolve as soon as possible with the aim of ensuring an unimpeded application of the Vienna Document 2011.

The Open Skies Treaty is an important foundation and one of the main pillars of confidence-building all across Europe and North America. In March 2012 the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty celebrated that over 840 observation flights had been performed. However, there is a need in these complex economic times to strive towards enhancement of the treaty by further achieving more with less financial resources. In this regard more efforts should be put towards modernizing the treaty to allow for the use of new technologies (digital sensors).

The OSCE, due to its broad composition and comprehensive approach to security, offers a unique platform to discuss, share expertise, implement good practices and raise awareness of cyber threats. In particular the OSCE's expertise regarding CBMs could be usefully applied in cyberspace to enhance transparency, predictability, stability and reduce the risks of misperception, escalation and conflict. Such CBM's would also allow for an exchange of national views on the norms of behaviour within politico-military contexts, thus building on existing international law. The OSCE should complement existing efforts and actively co-operate with other regional and international entities active in this thematic area. Much work has been done during the year 2011 to explore the future role of the OSCE in this context, and this work should continue.

With the beginning of the "Arab Spring" in 2011, we expected that several of the OSCE's Mediterranean Partners would further approach the core values of the OSCE, opening new opportunities for development in the region. At the same time, the uprising and war in Libya, as well as increasing violence in Syria and related international diplomatic confrontation, challenged the perception of security in the OSCE region. It has also confirmed that security in the OSCE area is indivisibly linked to the stability and security in the neighbouring regions: the Middle East, the Southern Mediterranean, Afghanistan and Asia. The discussion at the Assembly's Mediterranean Forum highlighted the need and willingness to broaden dialogue and co-operation beyond the current OSCE region. The forum has also underlined that in order to meet common challenges, the current co-operation structures should be improved and strengthened. The Southern Mediterranean region, as well as Afghanistan, could benefit significantly from the OSCE projecting its core values, principles and experience beyond the borders of its current participating States to neighbouring areas,

particularly those that influence security in the OSCE area the most. In the wake of events in the Southern Mediterranean, the OSCE Institutions and the Chairmanship have been actively involved in a dialogue with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, offering concrete proposals in the areas of democratic practices, media freedom, rule of law and police reform. **A decision on strengthening co-operation with the OSCE Partners for Co-operation was adopted at the Vilnius Ministerial Council.** It should now be consistently implemented.

The OSCE can and should play a more active role in facilitating co-operation between Afghanistan and the OSCE participating States, including those from Central Asia, in addressing the security challenges the region is facing, also in light of the planned withdrawal of the International Security Forces (ISAF) from Afghanistan. The Vilnius MC decision on Strengthening OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan, supported by a new package of second-generation OSCE-Afghanistan projects across all three dimensions of security, serves this purpose. Thirty-two projects ranging from capacity-building of Afghan officials in border management and security to water management and electoral support are designed to be implemented during 2012-2014. Lithuania, in its capacity as the 2012 Chair of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation, is monitoring the process.

At the same time, in order to obtain better results and avoid duplication, the OSCE should seek to reinforce its strategic co-operation with the EU, NATO, and the UN.

The OSCE should further its efforts to consolidate its work in the fight against existing and emerging transnational threats (TNT) and challenges as well as in strengthen the promotion of its unique concept of comprehensive security and increase the level of co-operation with neighbouring regions. The OSCE's efforts in promoting border security and management as well as norms and practices of democratic policing are very important in this regard.

Within the comprehensive understanding of security, the fight against terrorism cannot be dealt with only from a hard security standpoint. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law, as well as an effective and accountable system of democratic governance, are essential to a well-functioning modern democracy. The promotion of these core values should, therefore, remain the foundation of the OSCE activities. These values shall be conveyed continually within the process of OSCE work in the area of transnational threats and, in particular, the fight against terrorism.

To stay relevant and effective, the OSCE must respond to new and emerging security challenges. Most importantly, the OSCE needs to *take forward and complete the work of the 2011 Vilnius Ministerial* on Transnational Threats.

We are particularly committed to support *further development and consolidation of OSCE's mandates as well the OSCE's significant contribution of cyber security* to international endeavours in countering transnational threats and challenges.

It is safe to say that a solid agreement exists that the OSCE has a role to play in comprehensively enhancing cyber security. Much work was done in 2011. OSCE expertise regarding CBMs could be usefully applied in cyberspace to enhance transparency, predictability, stability and reduce the risks of misperception, escalation and conflict. Such CBMs would also allow for an exchange of national views on the norms of behaviour within politico-military contexts, thus building on existing international law.

Taking into account increasing involvement of the OSCE in police-related activities, the OSCE needs a clear strategic framework for police-related activities to successfully meet arising challenges. The promotion of democratic policing principles in all OSCE participating States is our core objective.

In areas such as trafficking in human beings or illegal trafficking of drugs, and other forms of organized crime, capacity-building for modern and democratic police forces and promotion of border security and management, the OSCE assists, complements, amplifies and promotes efforts by participating States and international actors, in particular the United Nations, at regional and sub-regional levels like in Central Asia or the Western Balkans. The OSCE's work on TNT must play to the OSCE's strengths, add value and complement efforts by other players in this field.

We are now better equipped to tackle the above-mentioned challenges following the adoption of the Ministerial Council Decision on Strengthening Co-ordination and Coherence in the OSCE's Efforts to Address Transnational Threats. In this regard, steps have been taken to enable the *new TNT Department* to begin its important work by giving direction for programmatic activities and events related to TNT.

The main security concerns that our countries are facing today are of a transnational character, and ways of addressing them must be *multi-dimensional*. Therefore, all our activities should be guided by the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security having at its core human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy, and the rule of law.

The global political community nowadays has to operate in a fast-changing environment and to fend off new arising challenges.

The current global **financial crisis** has not only hit the financial and business sectors, but has also affected most OSCE participating States and their populations. This has led to social and political uncertainty, unrest and a growing concern over a lack of security. In this context, despite the urge of some countries to close their borders and look inwards, there is a greater need to increase co-operation across borders and strengthen international and regional institutions. New security challenges relating to stability, democracy and rule of law are interlinked, and the OSCE is in a unique position to help overcome some of these. However, without political will and engagement from capitals by ministers and Members of Parliament, this cannot happen.

From an institutional perspective, the cuts in national budgets have had direct consequences for the OSCE. Frankly speaking, we must learn to do more with less. Maximum efficiency must be our goal. A good example of such ability is the creation of the TNT Department by reallocating the existing staff positions within the OSCE Secretariat. This body will provide for more strategic and higher-profile engagement of the OSCE on TNT issues.

However, we must admit that cuts of national budgets make the activities of the OSCE more difficult when it comes to extra-budgetary contributions, secondment of personnel and national contributions to the ODIHR's election observation. More than ever, the economic crisis forces the OSCE to look at its own performance, to implement reforms to ensure that it remains politically relevant, and to operate in the most transparent, accountable and cost-effective way possible.

Appropriate funding is crucial for OSCE field operations in order to ensure effective implementation of activities under their respective mandates. The field is where the bulk of the project work is carried out and also where the OSCE makes a real difference. Of course, the OSCE needs to refrain from duplicating the efforts of other international organizations.

I believe that our Organization will remain viable and proactive notwithstanding the global economic crisis. This is proven by the fact that irrespective of all the difficulties, for three consecutive years the OSCE budget was approved on time.

The broad and complex concept of security that we apply in our Organization reminds us of everyday survival hardships that people in many regions incur due to the economic crisis. As parliamentarians, we know that budget shortfalls, the necessity to apply austerity measures aimed at consolidating public finances, unemployment and similar problems create tension within societies. Therefore, we must be prudent to keep the tendencies of radicalism from gaining force and to commit ourselves even stronger to promote and defend democratic values.