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REPORT

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

Helsinki +40: Towards Human Security For All

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Democratic Control of Armed Forces and the Vienna Document

The Vienna Document is one of the most important politically binding documents of the politico-military dimension of OSCE. It encompasses the goals of the Helsinki Final Act Decalogue of 1975 and incorporates them into a politically binding document. The Helsinki Final Act principles created the initial confidence- and security-building measures that would be elaborated upon, first in the Stockholm Document (1986) and later in the first Vienna Document. The first document, Vienna Document 1990, would have successors in Vienna Documents 1992, 1994, and 1999. All of the Vienna Documents have sought to strengthen transparency and openness in the OSCE area.

The participating States exchange information annually on their military forces concerning the military organization, manpower and major weapon and equipment systems. The information is provided to all participating States by 15th of December and is valid on January 1st the next year. Apart from the exchange of various kinds of information, other obligations to the signatories include Confidence- and Security-Building Measures such as inspection and evaluations of military sites, areas, and exercises.

In the 2013 Istanbul Declaration, the OSCE PA underlined the need to proceed with the ongoing discussions and negotiations in order to update and modernize the 1999 Vienna Document. It also underlined the need for further updating the Vienna Document in order to create predictability by increasing openness and transparency. The questions remain: should the thresholds at which States are obliged to inform each other about their military exercises be lowered, should the opportunities for verification activity be increased, the exchange of military information be modernized, risk reduction mechanisms be strengthened, and the scope of confidence and security-building measures be enlarged?

The democratic control of armed forces refers to the norms and standards governing the relationship between the armed forces and society in general. This definition includes the oversight of all types of security forces in a given country. For this purpose, the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security was entered into force in January 1995. It both echoes and is in accordance with the principles and commitments of the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris. The fundamental basis for democratic control¹ over one's military is strong and effective parliamentary oversight, which should be based on principles of constitutionality, legality and accountability. The role of parliaments is to adopt an appropriate legislative basis from which to derive the necessary framework and conditions.

The next Annual Implementation Discussion will take place in July 2014, and is seen as a milestone event in light of the Code of Conduct's 20th anniversary. Highlights of the year 2013 included the translation of the Code into Arabic by Germany and Switzerland and a regional conference for the Mediterranean region held in Malta in September. It was stated that the Code of Conduct remains a

¹ This should be interpreted as democratic oversight by the parliaments, entailing shared responsibility between the legislative and the executive branches for the effectiveness of the military, police and security structures of a given state (as defined in FSC.GAL/146/02/Corr.1).

relevant and valuable document in the current political context. The League of Arab States displayed genuine interest in the document.

In order for the exchange of information to be truly open and transparent in the spirit of the Vienna Document, we must be able to count on the fact that the armed forces are truly subjected to the control of the democratic process. It is hardly possible for the armed forces to be controlled this way if the rest of the society is also lacking in freedom and democracy. Military spending must be decided solely by the national parliaments without any kind of shortcuts or work-arounds. As a community of countries committed to democracy, the OSCE places great emphasis on promoting democratic elections. The commitments agreed upon by all OSCE participating States in the 1990 Copenhagen Document emphasize fundamental principles that are central to a democratic tradition and can be summed up in seven key words: universal, equal, fair, secret, free, transparent, and accountable. After all, the people who in the end are tasked with carrying out the parliamentary control of armed forces must themselves be elected according to truly democratic processes.

On the Future of the OSCE

The most important thing is to strengthen the common political will of all 57 participating States of the OSCE. I truly hope that there is enough political will and ambition in this forum also in the future in order for us to reform previous documents and to promote openness and transparency in the politico-military dimension. The OSCE has the potential to reclaim its role as a constructive, transformative force in the field of international relations and security policy.

The nature of security threats varies widely around the world and inside the OSCE area. The situation in the Caucasus is completely different from Switzerland or Luxembourg, for example. Nevertheless, consisting of 57 countries, the OSCE is the world's largest regional security arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. It brings together 57 participating States spanning the globe from Vancouver to Vladivostok and 11 additional partner countries to discuss vital issues affecting the OSCE area. Through its partners for co-operation, the OSCE can also influence events in Asia and North Africa. Ensuring future commitment to previously agreed-upon documents continues to be a critical objective.

Updating the Vienna Document and the future of Conventional Arms Control

Developing and finding new substance to the Vienna Document is one of the most important tasks currently facing the Organization. The Document is related to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE and adapted CFE) and the Open Skies Treaty.

The CFE consists of 5 different categories of key armaments and weapon systems that can be used for large-scale offensive operations. We should in particular look back to our successes. The Code of Conduct has proved itself useful in reforming armed forces, for example with Bosnia-Herzegovina. Although there have been doubts about the future of the CFE treaties, we should not forget that since the adoption of CFE, the number of Treaty-Limited Equipment, or TLE, has been reduced by a significant number – 118,000 units. Of these, more than 40,000 have been main battle tanks. And the Open Skies has been generally seen as a success.

One particular challenge has been the way states interpret details in the treaties differently. Some military maneuvers have not been reported since they have been conducted with local forces – and

according to one interpretation, only troops transferred from other areas must be counted. In some cases, forces not belonging to the direct control of the Ministry of Defence have also been deliberately ignored. And there has not been consensus on whether all maritime and paramilitary forces, border guard units, etc., should also be included in the limits.

Some countries have suggested that training units, logistics, and repairing installations and air transport units should be included in the existing information exchange obligations. Some have also suggested that the focus should be on smaller combat units, which would reflect the growing importance of battalion-sized units in military actions.

In this regard, the Parliamentary Assembly should consider whether more statistical indicators could be gathered about the adherence to the VD and whether there is a need for a new arbitration system that could enhance co-operation and resolve situations where participating States have different interpretations of the meaning and details of the documents.

In total, there are more than twenty so-called VD Plus proposals and other suggestions. To name a few: expanding information exchange on military matters, the notification for military exercises, maritime arms control procedures, monitoring of rapid deployment forces and large force transfers and the improvement of the effectiveness of inspections and evaluation visits.

The Changing Geopolitical Situation and New Threats

We should remind ourselves about the geopolitical situation that created the need for these treaties and how the situation has changed in the last few decades. Since the end of the Cold War, new threats have emerged with new operational tactics and weapon systems. Terrorism, cyber warfare, unmanned aerial vehicles and the way they can be used to conduct more limited operations are more relevant to modern security policy, and demand new responses. The growing danger to privacy and human rights posed by potential cyber attacks must be recognized. Future efforts could be co-ordinated with the EU's cyber security strategy, and there should be regular reporting and classification of attacks, should they occur.

As threats have changed, the quantitative assessments of troop and material counts do not carry the same weight they used to. In an age when one can theoretically cripple an entire nation with a successful cyber attack, simple counts of a country's main battle tanks or other equipment are of little value. Future treaties should increasingly focus also on parameters that measure quality and potential of different elements of military force. Even small steps in this direction would be welcome.

The list of modern security issues is long and varied, and as said earlier, is not limited to what is understood as traditional military warfare in the form of large-scale operations. Some additional issues that must be addressed are: chemical and biological weapons, missile defence programs, conventional long-range precision weapons, strategic and tactical nuclear weapons and issues of proliferation. The role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and compliance for United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 should be carefully observed. New regional conflicts also pose additional challenges for the OSCE.

Last year, the United Nations adopted the first treaty regulating international arms trade, which is an important step forward and was fully supported by the OSCE PA in accordance with the Monaco Declaration. The states that have ratified the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) are prohibited from exporting arms to countries that have human rights violations and that have been placed under UN arms embargo.

Current Conflicts and the Road Ahead

The crisis in Ukraine and the unilateral annexation of Crimea by Russia has challenged the whole international order and the sovereignty of independent states. As the UN General Assembly declared in its measure adopted on the 27th of March, the referendum held in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol was not authorized by Ukraine and thus is not valid. The General Assembly also stressed that the territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders must be respected. The active role taken by the Swiss Chairmanship in pursuing a diplomatic solution to the crisis is welcomed. The OSCE can and should take a leading role as it has been considered the only international body whose mediation could be accepted by all affected parties. The recent deployment of an OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine represents a clear step forward in this regard.

Despite the challenges ahead of us, the OSCE has the potential to reclaim its role to increase security, openness and transparency. As the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act is approaching, the Organization needs to move forward in the Helsinki +40 process. This process is an opportunity to strengthen mutual trust and confidence and improve co-operation among the participating States. We hope to see substantial results over the coming year. We have a shared commitment to ensure that we will live in a secure, peaceful world. How we achieve that goal depends solely on us and our common political will. I hope that we can live up to the challenge.