

THE OSCE IN CENTRAL ASIA:

A NEW STRATEGY

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THE OSCE IN CENTRAL ASIA: A NEW STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) emerged in a wave of euphoria surrounding the events of the late 1980s in the former Soviet bloc. Building on the achievements of its predecessor, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), it has played a key role in state-building and democratisation in many areas of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

The five newly independent Central Asian states that emerged from the collapse of the USSR were original members of the organisation but movement towards democracy and open economies has been much slower than in Europe. As a result, in Central Asia the OSCE is present in five states with non-democratic systems of government that frequently flout the commitments on which the organisation is built.

Many of these states are weak and have not yet developed strong civil societies. Socio-economic disaffection is high. Political exclusion has provoked radicalisation among fringe Islamist and other groups, who have sometimes turned to violence. The consolidation of power by small elites has excluded others from the political process, thereby stirring political tensions.

Despite the region's obvious needs, Central Asia gets only a tiny fraction of OSCE attention. The organisation devotes less than 5 per cent of the total budget to its missions and programs in the five states, and the former have only about 30 international officers, out of a total OSCE field presence of nearly 3,500. This low level of staffing is partly the result of resistance on the part of Central Asian hosts reluctant to see more resources committed to monitoring their behaviour. But it also illustrates a lack of interest among other

participating States in a region that until September 2001 seemed often remote and unimportant.

Discussions and reports on the role of the organisation in Central Asia are not new. Until now little has really changed. However, the new global security environment is forcing the OSCE to think hard about its own future. As the European Union (EU) grows and takes on additional foreign policy tasks, and NATO expands and adopts more of the "soft" security issues that were once the OSCE's preserve, the OSCE is increasingly seeking a new purpose for itself.

At the same time, Central Asia is facing considerable change. The increased international presence is undermining some old certainties about the region, and there is a new opportunity for engagement. The OSCE still faces a difficult political environment, and host governments often view it with considerable suspicion. But a window has opened, at least briefly. In many ways, the OSCE, with its unique mandate and membership, is much better placed than individual states or other international organisations to take advantage of these changes and respond rapidly to events.

This report focuses on three issues:

- establishing a long-term strategic concept of what the OSCE is for and what it can accomplish in Central Asia;
- increasing OSCE influence with and importance to host governments in the region; and
- making changes to structure and staffing to enable OSCE to carry out its tasks.

Given its structural constraints – a one-year chairmanship, annual mandates for missions in some states, and short-term secondments of staff – it is not surprising that the OSCE has failed to develop a long-term strategy in Central Asia. But it is vital that it has a clearer vision of what it is for and what it wants to do. The primary strategic focus should be conflict prevention. The potential for conflict stems from a wide range of sources, but mainly from poor security policies, declining socio-economic opportunities, and authoritarian political cultures and institutions.

A new strategy would strongly emphasise efforts to develop more effective approaches to security in each state; to build up economic development potential at all levels, and to expand political pluralism. This requires activities and projects that cross the three classical OSCE dimensions: politico-security; economic and environment; and the human dimension. It will require more work on the economic dimension (and a much clearer idea of what it is), and in political and military affairs, but brought together with key elements of the human dimension to produce the comprehensive security concept on which the OSCE is based.

To have real impact, however, the OSCE needs to build up its influence with governments in the region. One way, after completing its strategy review, is to make its activities more relevant for their societies. But it also needs to link its activities to those of institutions with greater resources. There is increasing understanding in international financial institutions that government lending or international investment is worse than useless without commensurate changes in political structures and economic policy. Closer coordination with donors and lenders, such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the EU would provide real leverage for the OSCE.

Changing the focus of the OSCE in Central Asia cannot be done without changing its central structures and the way that missions work in the field. The very different demands on missions in Central Asia from those in post-conflict situations in the Balkans should be reflected in more support from central institutions. A more viable secretariat with a real core of regional expertise would enable analysis and planning to feed better into activities and programs. More coordination between disparate

institutions would produce better policy. Staff recruitment and training need to be improved.

The OSCE is an organisation whose decisions are reached by consensus among 55 participating States. Understandably, achieving change is a struggle. But if participating States are serious about the organisation making a difference in Central Asia, political will needs to be mustered for a significant shift in emphasis. The alternative is for the OSCE to fade into irrelevance, as the political paths of Central Asian states take them further away from the ideals on which the organisation was founded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the OSCE Chairman-in-Office:

1. Make Central Asia a major priority, using high-level as well as regular diplomatic missions to the region to raise the OSCE's credibility and visibility with host governments.
2. Set up an inter-institutional working group to develop priorities for Central Asia, including the Secretariat, field missions, ODIHR and HCNM, and the Conflict Prevention Centre, and where appropriate, outside experts.
3. Use this working group, in consultation with field missions, both to develop long-term strategies and coherent twelve-month work plans with prioritised and interrelated projects that cross the classical OSCE dimensions:
 - (a) the economic dimension should be expanded and its focus shifted towards political aspects of development, including rule of law, governance, and corruption;
 - (b) the politico-military dimension should increase its emphasis on policing issues (with special attention on small arms and light weapons and drugs trafficking), on border procedures and good offices to delimit borders, and on involving civil society involvement in security issues;
 - (c) the human dimension must retain its strong role in monitoring and reporting on human rights issues, while working

- more closely with the other two dimensions;
4. Focus on a few areas of real significance for conflict prevention that involve follow-up and long-term commitment, including:
 - (a) border projects promoting freedom of movement, effective security and cross-border trade;
 - (b) bringing international experience to bear on corruption as an obstacle to economic growth and political reform;
 - (c) security sector programs that direct attention to the real problems of unreformed law enforcement agencies and provide training on internationally accepted procedures and standards;
 - (d) continued emphasis on human rights and democratisation, with more effort to promote development of effective political institutions, including opposition parties, and real political dialogue;
 - (e) greater emphasis on rule of law in business through programs to support legislation and its implementation/enforcement for small and medium sized businesses, such as judicial enforcement of contracts, and, more generally, on developing the legal expertise of institutions;
 - (f) increased attention to Central Asian media in order to foster a more professional, objective and independent press; and
 5. Create additional leverage for the OSCE by developing much closer relations with donor and lender organisations, in particular with the EU and the EBRD, as well as the ADB.

To the participating States:

6. Develop a Central Asian Support Fund, administered by the Secretariat that upon application from the field missions will assist projects, in particular those in the first and second dimensions.

7. Convert the Forum for Security Cooperation into a real security body for the OSCE that groups policing issues, border issues and other first dimension areas into one coherent group.
8. Develop the economic dimension by strengthening its mandate to include rule of law and good governance issues, with commensurate staffing and regional expertise.
9. Strengthen the role of the Secretary General as probably the only way to give OSCE the visible leadership it needs.
10. Improve the quality of staff at all levels in missions through better recruitment procedures, training, and gender balance.
11. Establish a new procedure for appointing heads of missions which emphasises appropriate qualifications over political loyalties.
12. Establish an expert group via the "Moscow mechanism" to report on Turkmenistan's observance of OSCE commitments.
13. Propose a partnership agreement with Afghanistan as a means of improving cross-border cooperation.

To the High Commissioner on National Minorities

14. Adopt a more proactive stance towards Central Asia, including early visits to Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.
15. Provide legal expertise on draft laws relating to national minorities as they are raised/discussed in each country.
16. Encourage the integration of nationality issues into existing projects and activities of field missions and other OSCE institutions.

Osh/Brussels, 11 September 2002

THE OSCE IN CENTRAL ASIA: A NEW STRATEGY

I. INTRODUCTION

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has played a key role in the post-cold war transformation of Central and Eastern Europe. In particular, it has been a significant player in containing the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. But its area of operations has spread far beyond the normal definition of Europe, to the former Soviet republics of Central Asia, where the problems are very different, and it has been forced to meet a different set of challenges.

While most of the Balkan states will sooner or later be integrated within existing European political and security organisations, this is very unlikely to happen in Central Asia and the Caucasus. It is in these regions, therefore, that the OSCE has its best chance to continue to have a serious impact on future developments. But so far the OSCE has struggled to make its mark in Central Asia. It has been given very limited resources and often works in the face of the indifference or hostility of host governments.

To raise the influence and effectiveness of the OSCE in Central Asia requires a strategy for the long term that is developed with the host states; new levels of coordination with the rest of the international community; and willingness to streamline its own unwieldy structures.

Any agenda for change needs to take into account OSCE history and realities. Its origins in the deliberately unstructured, rolling conference process of the Cold War-era CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) hamper efforts to establish a viable set of central institutions with political weight. Participating states jealously guard their virtual veto rights, making any move to increase the relative influence of the Secretariat, for example, very difficult.

The OSCE's predecessor, which was established to bridge the gap between Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe and the West, played an important role in building down the Cold War, not least by introducing a broader concept of security that included elements of human rights, democratisation, and economic well-being.

The basic documents of the CSCE and later the OSCE were unique in their emphasis on more comprehensive concepts than those widely accepted in other security-oriented organisations. The founding document – the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 – included “Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” as one of the ten basic principles of the new “process”¹, which for the first time linked the justice and good health of domestic government and society with regional security. Additional conventions signed in Paris in 1990 and Moscow in 1991 and elsewhere further embedded these commitments in the OSCE.²

This comprehensive security concept remains the basis of OSCE activity. The organisation acts in what it calls three dimensions, derived from the original three “baskets” of the Helsinki Final Act. The first dimension, politico-security, deals with confidence-building, hard security issues, exchange of military information and so forth. The second dimension covers economic and environmental

¹ It was an article of faith for participating States – particularly those from the West – that the original CSCE was not to be an “organisation”, with the formal mechanisms and structures that concept entails. Likewise, the Helsinki Final Act, though signed by heads of state and government, was considered to be politically, but not legally, binding. Only the end of the Cold War, an occurrence to which the CSCE contributed considerably, modified this attitude and permitted its transformation into the much more formal and structured OSCE.

² See ODIHR, *OSCE Human Dimension Commitments: A Reference Guide* (Warsaw, 2001).

affairs, while the third, the human dimension, focuses on human rights and democratic principles of government and rule of law.

The CSCE and later the OSCE have always been political bodies, with no legal status for the commitments and agreements signed by its participating States. Its 55 participating States have equal rights within the organisation, and almost all decisions are taken on the basis of consensus. This creates serious problems in terms of decision-making, and ensures that decisions often come down to the lowest common denominator. But it is a strength in the sense that it forces all members to at least take account of each other's sensibilities.

In reality, of course, more powerful states have a much greater say in OSCE decisions. The U.S. and Russia are among the largest funders of the organisation's core budget, and have a commensurately greater informal role in setting agendas. Small states, including Central Asian states, often feel ignored in these informal decision-making procedures, and find irritating the frequent lectures to which they are subjected by Western states.

In some sense, this attitude is understandable. No Western participating state has ever accepted a field mission, although there are, arguably, areas in which the OSCE could play a useful role in Western Europe or North America.³ This contributes to the belief of Central Asian states that they are faced with double standards, and that the OSCE sometimes resembles more a Western missionary society than a multilateral organisation.

Nevertheless, Central Asian states have remained committed to membership of the OSCE largely because they see it as a significant link to other international and European structures. In some cases they also consider it a way of ensuring that they continue to receive external financial assistance from international financial institutions and other donors.⁴ In a faint echo of arguments that were common during the Cold War days of the CSCE, they have attempted to shift the balance of OSCE policy away from the human dimension towards greater emphasis on the economic dimension,

contending that human rights can only flourish on the basis of a sound economy.

There have been several reports on how the OSCE might reform itself in general, and in Central Asia in particular, and this report takes account of their findings.⁵ Individual delegations have also provided their own input on new approaches for the OSCE in the region.⁶ The incoming Chairmanship-in-Office (CiO) for 2003, the Netherlands, has indicated considerable interest in addressing the OSCE's future in Central Asia.⁷ Thus there is enough understanding of the OSCE's potential for the future of Central Asia, and the region has quickly gained a significant place in the organisation's rhetoric, especially following the 11 September 2001 attacks in the U.S. But further development of the OSCE in the region will depend on political will, both by host governments, and by the wider OSCE community.

This report concentrates on three main issues:

- ❑ strategy: how the OSCE can act as a coherent conflict-prevention organisation, with a long-term view of potential conflict and how to prevent it;
- ❑ influence: the way in which the OSCE can achieve leverage to tackle participating States that regularly break their OSCE commitments, and
- ❑ structure: how the OSCE can be streamlined to improve policy and long-term engagement.

In an organisation based on consensus among 55 nation-states, changing anything is extremely difficult. However, if the OSCE is to have a future in a fast-changing global political environment, it must seize the chance both to transform its structures and to redefine its mission.

³ Northern Ireland and the Basque region, for example, have been mentioned at times.

⁴ ICG interviews, Central Asian diplomats, Vienna, June 2002.

⁵ See, inter alia, "Report on Central Asia by Personal Representative of the CiO Ambassador Hoyneck", CIO.GAL/58/99, 14 July 1999; "The OSCE: A Forgotten Transatlantic Security Organisation?", BASIC Report, July 2002.

⁶ For example, Permanent Mission of Federal Republic of Germany to the OSCE, Non-Paper, "Enhancing OSCE activities concerning Central Asia", 20 October 2000.

⁷ The Netherlands Ministry for Foreign Affairs held a conference in The Hague in March 2002 on "The OSCE and Conflict Prevention in Central Asia".

II. BACKGROUND

The OSCE began its operations in Central Asia in 1994, when a field mission opened in Tajikistan. The OSCE was a guarantor of the General Peace Accord that settled the Tajik civil war in 1997 and has played a key role in post-conflict reconstruction and peace building. Its role in the four other Central Asian countries has been somewhat different. Initially, these were covered by a so-called Central Asian Liaison Office, set up in Tashkent in 1995. In 1998 OSCE Centres were also established in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan as a result of the 1996 Lisbon Summit, which called for the organisation to develop closer relations with Central Asia. In 2000 the Tashkent office was turned into a Centre focusing mainly on Uzbekistan's internal affairs rather than regional issues.

By 2002 the OSCE had five field operations:

- Kazakhstan: Centre in Almaty with four international staff, including the head of centre, a political officer, an economic officer and a human dimension officer, but no further offices;
- Kyrgyzstan: Centre in Bishkek, with four international staff and the same structure as in Kazakhstan, but with the addition of a field office in Osh, which has two seconded members;
- Tajikistan: Mission in Dushanbe, with five field offices, staffed by thirteen international officers and about 60 local employees;
- Uzbekistan: Centre in Tashkent, with four international staff and the same structure as the other centres;
- Turkmenistan: Centre in Ashgabad, with five international staff and the same structure as the other centres but with the addition of a seconded administrative officer.

All these missions have a mandate agreed with the host government and the OSCE Permanent Council, the primary objective of which is to further integrate the Central Asian states into the OSCE Community. Generally, the mandates focus on representation rather than state building (Tajikistan being an exception), but also on the OSCE's conflict prevention role. These mandates are so broad,

however, as to be almost useless as a guide to what each mission actually does.⁸ This is generally seen as an advantage that gives flexibility to each head of mission to respond quickly to a wide range of events and issues. However, it does make it difficult for the OSCE to define its activities in a way that is easily comprehensible to the ordinary observer.

In Uzbekistan much work is focused on the human dimension. Of the seven operational staff (four internationals, three locals), four work on these, primarily human rights, issues.⁹ The head of centre also tends to stress the human dimension as the key element of OSCE involvement.¹⁰ A highly repressive police system and constant human rights abuses have understandably focused the office on this. Not all human rights groups believe the OSCE does enough but most appreciate it, at least in comparison with the rather weaker efforts of some national embassies or the United Nations.¹¹

In Kyrgyzstan the bulk of the work has traditionally also been in the human dimension, and in strengthening civil society, through NGO training and networking. The relatively more open environment has also meant more work on election monitoring and the political process. In the South there has also been monitoring of inter-ethnic issues¹² and a relatively new emphasis on religious affairs, prompted by the rise of radical Islamist groups in the region.¹³ The new head of the Bishkek Centre has begun to shift some emphasis towards the economy and environment,¹⁴ causing concern among human rights groups that the OSCE is under-emphasising human dimension issues.¹⁵

⁸ All mandates are available on the relevant mission pages at www.osce.org.

⁹ The Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights supports two of the local program staff under a Memorandum of Understanding between the OSCE and Uzbekistan, so they are formally not part of the Centre.

¹⁰ ICG interview, Head of Centre, Ambassador Gancho Gantchev, Tashkent, March 2002.

¹¹ ICG interviews in Uzbekistan, March, April and August 2002.

¹² The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities has a monitoring network in the South.

¹³ So far this has involved a regional conference on freedom of belief and tolerance, held in Jalalabad, in February 2002 in addition to several smaller events.

¹⁴ ICG interview, Head of Centre, Ambassador Aydin Idil, Bishkek, July 2002.

¹⁵ ICG interviews with human rights activists, Bishkek, May/June 2002.

The centre in Kazakhstan covers many of the same issues, with an emphasis on NGO development and civil society. Its role in defending independent media has also been important, and it has been outspoken about political repression. This has led to conflicts with the government, which is strongly opposed to any expansion of OSCE human dimension activity. Government officials have hinted that they would support the closure of the centre.¹⁶

Turkmenistan has the most restrictive policy towards the OSCE, and there is only limited scope for the centre in Ashgabad to work on the kind of projects seen in other Central Asian states. Here most efforts seem to go into maintaining a presence and acting as an important monitoring base in a state with few diplomatic missions and no international media presence. The centre intervenes on individual human rights cases but with limited success. Running projects is extremely difficult, but some small environmental activity has been possible.¹⁷

The mission in Tajikistan is much the largest in Central Asia and has a very different history. Instead of conflict prevention, its mandate since the end of the civil war has been post-conflict state building. In practice, though, it tends to conduct similar activities, with a focus on the human dimension such as successfully convincing the authorities to drop the requirement for exit visas, seeking a moratorium on the death penalty, and transferring the penitentiary system from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Ministry of Justice. Its long-term aims are more ambitious, covering wider political developments, including strengthening the system of government, by providing assistance with legislative reform and administrative training.¹⁸

It is important to distinguish in all cases between the basic functions of each field office and the additional raft of projects it takes on. The first responsibility is representation, monitoring and political consulting, but this generally involves little more than regular reports to Vienna and some meetings with political actors. In most missions, human rights issues – intervening in individual

cases, or trial monitoring – also are judged to fall into this basic brief, although this is open to interpretation under broad mandates. On top of this there is a range of projects, from seminars and conferences to training and NGO support networks.

The basic functions of the mission are funded from the core OSCE budget, most projects by so-called voluntary contributions on a case-by-case basis from participating States. This has two drawbacks. First, it means that officers have to spend time soliciting contributions for projects. Secondly, it means that projects tend to be chosen on the basis of funding availability rather than usefulness. This gives states undue influence in choosing projects, and can skew a whole mission strategy.

The core costs of these field presences came to about U.S.\$4.5 million in 2001, about one-third of the budget for the mission to Croatia, and less than 5 per cent of the budget for the entire OSCE.¹⁹ In reality, Central Asia gets even less as a proportion of the whole, since these figures do not take into account staff salaries, which are mostly funded by the seconding governments. Staff numbers in Central Asia are very small, and it is difficult to imagine a significant rise in OSCE activity while resources are so limited.

The first challenge for the OSCE should be to shift resources quickly from the Balkans – where other institutions, including the EU and NATO, are often better equipped to deal with state-building – to Central Asia, where many of OSCE's unique advantages could be applied successfully, and few other international organisations can provide equivalent assistance and conflict prevention work.

Any shift in resources implies expanding field presences, and this immediately runs into host government objections. In Uzbekistan attempts to open a field office have been regularly stymied by the host government. Even hiring a single extra local staff person in the apparently non-controversial area of the economic dimension involved months of negotiations. However, a combination of political will from participating states to commit serious resources, intelligent diplomacy by senior figures in the organisation, and a commitment to expand the OSCE into areas that better reflect its idea of comprehensive security,

¹⁶ ICG interview, May 2002.

¹⁷ Report by Ambassador P. Badescu to the Permanent Council, 23 May 2002.

¹⁸ ICG interview, Head of Mission, Ambassador Marc Gilbert, Dushanbe, 23 February 2002.

¹⁹ OSCE. The Secretary General, "The Unified 2002 Budget Proposal, Book I – Summary", Vienna. 1 October 2001.

could cause host governments to engage more constructively.²⁰

An increase in resources thus needs a change in approach, introduction of programs and activities that work across all three dimensions, engagement of government bodies and NGOs; and working for the long term. This requires a real strategy for the OSCE in Central Asia, but such a strategy is unlikely to work unless the Central Asian states are involved in its evolution. Single states should not hold vetoes over the OSCE, but serious consultation and negotiation between governments and delegations are vital to ensure that the OSCE is not just seen as an external body acting in the interests of Western states.

III. CREATING A STRATEGY

One of the few activities that the Ashgabad Centre has been permitted to carry out has been a series of seminars entitled "What is the OSCE?". It is a very pertinent question in Central Asia, where knowledge of the organisation is limited. Not fully knowing its history, many in Central Asia question why their country is a member of a "European" security organisation. The concentration on human rights and human dimension activities in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan has meant that it is often seen as just that: a human rights organisation, much to the dismay of its Central Asian partners. Its wider security brief, from military confidence building to economics and the environment, is seldom recognised.

Yet the wider security brief of the OSCE is highly appropriate for Central Asia, where concepts of security remain the province of heavy-handed police and repressive militaries. The countries have geopolitical vulnerabilities and live in a volatile region. They have been pressing the OSCE to recognise and respond to the threat posed by Afghanistan. However, the idea that the roots of terrorism may also be found in socio-economic failure and political disenfranchisement, although part of the rhetoric of leaders, is seldom part of the policymaking process. The concept that effective policing may also involve strict observance of civil and human rights is also distant from most law enforcement officers in the region.

A. LONG-TERM PLANNING

To improve the effectiveness of the OSCE requires long-term planning that prioritises aspects considered fundamental to conflict prevention. This in turn needs staff who have the time and ability to draw up good analyses, concept papers, and scenarios. It would be much easier within this overall framework for individual chairmanships to develop a more coherent plan for each field presence. To do this properly requires resources in the Secretariat and in field presences but long-term planning is unlikely ever to be attractive for one-year chairmanships, which are always keen to produce results during their period in office.

Within such a framework, albeit a very loose one, however, the Chairmanship would be able to

²⁰ There is certainly some potential for an increase in staffing in Kyrgyzstan. Kazakhstan is strongly opposed to any increase, but in both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan increased resources might be channelled through officers working on specific projects rather than increasing core staff.

establish closer guidance for each field presence. One OSCE officer, arriving at a post for the first time, told ICG that he was surprised to find there was no strategy and no work plan for him to follow. Instead, he made up his own agenda, based almost entirely on what he had been doing in a previous post outside the OSCE.²¹ This is a fairly common complaint, made worse by the fact that the gap between one officer leaving and another arriving can often run to several months due to recruiting procedures, thus ensuring that there is little institutional memory in some field offices, and often no follow-up to projects.

Discussions between the Chairmanship and the field tend to relate to everyday guidance on political issues, and each centre admits that most of its work tends to be reactive. One former head of mission admitted that he received absolutely no guidance from the Chairmanship before taking up his post.²²

This is changing a little. In 2002 some general guidelines were issued for the first time to Central Asian field offices, although it remains very difficult for the CiO to enforce their implementation given the considerable autonomy of most heads of missions and the need to approach individual states for financial support for projects.

These guidelines²³ covered five points:

- ❑ a more equitable balance between the dimensions;
- ❑ efforts to fight terrorism as established at a conference in Bishkek in December 2001;
- ❑ institution-building, particularly in the police, judiciary, and border guards;
- ❑ regional cooperation; and
- ❑ intensified cooperation with the donor community.

²¹ ICG interview, Central Asia, February 2002. Since many of the people interviewed for this report remain in their posts, names have been withheld in order to maintain confidentiality. ICG would like to thank those OSCE officials and other diplomats and officials in Vienna, Bishkek, Dushanbe, Almaty and Tashkent who contributed to this report.

²² ICG interview, May 2002.

²³ Intervention of the Special Adviser to the CIO on Central Asia in the Permanent Council on 14 March 2002, "Cooperation with participating States in Central Asia", CIO.GAL/15/02.

In most cases, there is little evidence of implementation, and the guidelines are probably too broad to be meaningful for individual field offices and individual international officers. Not only do heads of mission have considerable scope in enforcing their own interpretation of mandates, but also participating States can modify a strategy considerably through the voluntary contributions that fund most programs.

A more comprehensive approach to planning is required that would set fairly concrete goals for at least a twelve-month period. It would clearly be a mistake to impose such a strategy on missions from the centre, but there needs to be more monitoring and benchmarking of mission accomplishments. Specific aims for each international officer should be set by the head of mission within the context of this planning process, and a more rigorous mechanism for reporting on success and failure should be introduced.

It would be unfair to suggest that none of the missions have a strategy. But in most cases, they are too frequently overtaken by events. This is not surprising given the low level of staffing and the demands of participating States for their particular projects to be adopted. But to fulfil its conflict-prevention role, the OSCE needs to develop a strategic view that informs present activities.

B. BALANCING THE DIMENSIONS

Discussion of a better balance of the three dimensions has been a recurring theme of most past reviews of the OSCE in Central Asia. It is clearly a key element of any forward-looking strategy, but there are difficulties, particularly the need to retain the important role of the OSCE in human rights work even while expanding its influence in other fields where it can provide a significant comparative advantage.

1. Politico-Security

This most basic area of OSCE activity is actually the most fragmented and confusing. A former political officer in Central Asia told ICG, "I don't have anyone to phone in Vienna".²⁴ This is perhaps an exaggeration, but activities are certainly widely dispersed among different bodies. Some fall under

²⁴ ICG interview, February 2002.

the Forum for Security and Cooperation (FSC), but very few people interviewed by ICG in Vienna or the field seem to really understand what this body actually does. It includes a program on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) proliferation, but the newly appointed senior police adviser, for example, reports directly to the Secretary General. The FSC needs to be revamped to cover all first dimension issues – including hard security and politics – either as an independent institution, or more likely within the Secretariat.

The activities of the first dimension fall broadly into three categories: straightforward military and security confidence-building measures; policing and other security affairs; and political affairs, including media issues.

The first category has only a limited Central Asian component, despite the clear need for some major initiatives. A project aimed at preventing the spread of small arms and light weapons (SALW) has been a relative success and greeted with some enthusiasm by the host states. Training programs for law enforcement officers have been run in all five states, as well as a regional seminar. Additional policing initiatives are expected from a newly appointed Senior Police Adviser, who made a first visit to the region in May 2002. There has been much more activity on political and media affairs, although often through somewhat disparate activities.

One area notably absent from the OSCE's agenda has been borders, which are highly contentious in Central Asia and a source of potential conflict.²⁵ Border issues have not only a security element, but also a major impact on the economy through trade, and involve significant human rights issues. These programs need a comprehensive and long-term approach, which involves all three dimensions. Areas of potential OSCE involvement include good offices for border delimitation,²⁶ consultation and advice on border procedures, including security aspects such as SALW; coordination of multi-

agency approaches, and in certain cases, border monitoring.

Short-term efforts with no monitoring component are unlikely to produce long-term results. A training program on human rights for border guards in Kyrgyzstan in 2001 was well received by the border guards themselves, but involved no follow-up to check impact on the ground or to ensure continued implementation. Such programs need to be linked to wider training involving security issues, drug smuggling, migration, and cross-border trade, and involve specialist agencies in each field.²⁷ A number of model border regimes might be established at key border crossings.

The other area that has been largely ignored is security sector reform. Some efforts are now being made in this direction, through a new post on policing matters in Vienna. The status of law enforcement agencies is a matter for serious concern in Central Asia and a potential factor in conflict prevention. But the willingness of governments to engage genuinely on reform is largely untested. There seems little likelihood of meaningful changes in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, but in Kyrgyzstan there has been official support for a process of law enforcement reform, which external involvement could help turn into reality. In Tajikistan, too, there may be political will for external assistance, and diplomats have suggested assignment of a police adviser to the mission. Even in Kazakhstan diplomats suggest that projects could be fruitful.²⁸

Security sector reform is controversial. Many fear that external assistance will only produce better-equipped and trained forces that remain a threat to human rights and political stability. But the OSCE is well placed to make use of growing international experience in this field. In certain instances – Turkmenistan for certain – there is no case for anything except very limited involvement with security forces, and there is always a clear human dimension element that must be included.

²⁵ On border issues, see ICG Asia Report N°33, *Central Asia: Border Tensions and Conflict Potential*, 4 April 2002.

²⁶ This is only realistic on certain borders. Uzbekistan is unlikely to welcome international involvement in border dispute resolution. An initiative to speed delimitation of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border, however, might serve as a good example for the rest of the region and a demonstration of the OSCE's ability to act as a neutral arbiter.

²⁷ An initial project in Termez (Termez-Hayraton Cross Border Training Program) is using a number of agencies – mainly UN bodies – to provide ongoing training and support for a new border crossing point. Such approaches might be usefully adapted to other border points in the region.

²⁸ ICG interviews, Tajik and Kazakh diplomats, May-June 2002.

Since September 2001 the OSCE has also begun to address terrorism, although with some misgivings from participating States. A conference in Bishkek in December 2001 set the agenda for an anti-terrorism campaign. Much of the Bishkek declaration consists of rhetorical generalities but there is scope for the OSCE to work on a more comprehensive approach to anti-terrorism, balancing the short-sighted exclusive emphasis on security approaches to the problem that has been dominant in Central Asian states.²⁹

In spite of hard lobbying by the Central Asian states, the OSCE has not been able to develop an approach to security threats from outside the region, mainly from Afghanistan, although the organisation does recognise to some extent that Afghanistan constitutes a real threat to its regional members. Central Asian states often use the external threat to diminish criticism of their own sometimes misguided internal security policies, but nevertheless it is important that their fears regarding instability spilling over from Afghanistan be taken seriously.

Three Central Asian countries – Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan – share a border with Afghanistan, and all five feel reverberations from there inside their own borders. Drug smuggling, trafficking in human beings, small arms and light weapons trade, refugees and internal displacement, border security, and the harbouring of radical and/or terrorist organisations all have a direct impact on Central Asian security.

Since Afghanistan lies outside the OSCE area, a creative approach must be found to address these issues. One option is to offer Afghanistan a partnership agreement that would provide a forum for information exchange and some confidence-building measures with Central Asian states. Other partnership agreements that the OSCE has entered into (Thailand, South Korea, Japan) have been largely meaningless,³⁰ and a way would have to be found to provide some additional substance. An

OSCE representative in Afghanistan could serve as a channel for information sharing on a number of topics, primarily drugs, border issues and the threat posed by militant groups.

While the December 2001 Bishkek conference released a declaration and program of action on combating terrorism, none of the field offices in Central Asia have really developed projects specifically oriented towards combating terrorism. The Tajikistan Mission has actively developed some projects that engage disenfranchised youth who might otherwise turn to extremist organisations, but in other cases, there has been little serious work on anti-terrorist issues.

Media, also normally included under the first dimension, is another area that involves a mix of bodies. Much of the project work is carried out by mission officers and funded by ad hoc voluntary contributions. Some missions are more active than others. In Tajikistan there has been considerable support for media activities, while in Uzbekistan it has been a low priority, partly reflecting the much stricter environment of censorship.

In addition to mission-inspired projects, there is a relatively new post of Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFM), responsible for monitoring and addressing media freedoms in the entire OSCE area. The primary focus has been interventions on behalf of persecuted journalists. Much of the RFMs's activities so far have been focused on the Balkans but in 2002-2003 it is publishing a series of useful reports on the difficult situation of the media in Central Asia. It also holds annual regional conferences on media issues in Central Asia and has assisted several field presences, including those in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, to obtain funding for projects.

Freedom of the media is an important issue for Central Asia: the region is plagued by censorship as well as state ownership of most printing presses, and many journalists have found the transition from propaganda to reporting difficult. The OSCE has an important role. First, it should provide technical assistance on draft legislation. This would require a staff person in the RFM's office familiar not just with the issues of rights and freedoms, but with drafting and/or analysing legislation. Secondly, unlike other regional organisations in Central Asia, the OSCE can engage both state and independent media, and electronic and print media in projects for

²⁹ The OSCE is setting up an anti-terrorism unit, and the Secretary General has developed a "road-map" for anti-terrorist activities, but so far this seems to have largely involved renaming existing projects as "anti-terrorist", rather than developing a wider and fresh approach.

³⁰ This argument is used by some OSCE delegations to oppose offering such a status to Afghanistan but even a symbolic step would be appreciated in Central Asia. ICG interviews, Vienna, May 2002.

professional development. Thirdly, the RFM should be more involved with other international organisations in finding donors to support independent media and journalists. It would be useful to replicate a project to support multi-ethnic media in the Balkans in Central Asia.

These rather disparate aspects of the politico-security dimension make a political officer's job challenging. It is important that officers have institutional support from Vienna and that central structures are easily able to respond quickly to requests for back-up. Additionally a political officer's key reporting and consulting responsibilities should not be ignored. Analysis of political change is an important early warning instrument, even if the nature of the OSCE sometimes makes inclusion of significant analysis in reporting sometimes problematic.³¹

2. Economic/Environmental

Confusion is reflected also in attitudes to the economic/environmental dimension. As one Vienna-based OSCE official told ICG: "Every single one of the 55 participating States has a different idea of what the economic dimension actually is".³² Yet it is frequently cited as a potential area for expansion that would provide significant assistance to the Central Asian states and help win acceptance for the OSCE missions in the region.

A short survey of the missions demonstrates a limited and diverse range of projects under way. In Uzbekistan, a series of seminars on small and medium-sized businesses has been conducted; in Tajikistan there has been very little project activity; in Kyrgyzstan an attempt has been made to assist in establishing contacts across the borders of the Ferghana Valley.³³

There has been more activity on the environment, with some success in supporting NGOs in

Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, using the Aarhus Convention as an instrument.³⁴ The field presence in Kyrgyzstan has worked on the problem of uranium mining tailings in Maili-Suu and distributed the text of the convention in Kyrgyz; while the Tashkent Centre has attempted to promote recycling programs and education in environmental affairs, and discussed assistance in nuclear waste recycling.

The problem with most of these projects, worthy as they are, is that they fall outside the core competencies of the OSCE. With an undefined mandate and only five staff members in the Office of the Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Affairs (OCEEA) in Vienna, economic officers can never get the expertise and support that human dimension officers get from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), with its 80-odd staff and generous funding.

In addition, in economic and environmental affairs, the OSCE is working in areas that other organisations often know better. The World Bank and the IMF are much better placed to advise on macroeconomics; U.S. organisations such as Pragma Corporation are far better qualified and resourced on small business development; and many, from UNDP to international NGOs such as MercyCorps, have experience and resources that the OSCE can never match on general development issues.

However, there is a potential role in this area that is largely ignored. Questions of economic justice, political economy, and good governance, covering areas such as corruption, government obstruction of business, judicial defence of contracts, and rule of law in the economic field, are poorly covered by other institutions, and would fit well with the OSCE's essentially political nature and contribute to strengthening security in each host country. Not only could the OSCE actually develop some comparative advantage in these fields, but this approach also corresponds closely to the strong work it has already done in the human dimension, while complementing its approach to comprehensive security.

³¹ There is only limited analysis in regular reporting from field offices. Some greater latitude is possible in confidential reports, but generally these concern diplomatic manoeuvres more than internal political issues. Host governments are extremely sensitive to analysis emerging from missions, but at least informal political analysis is extremely important inside each mission and should feed into short- and long-term strategies.

³² ICG interview, Vienna, May 2002.

³³ A first meeting of deputy governors from the Ferghana valley region was held in May 2002. Unfortunately, representatives from Uzbekistan did not come.

³⁴ The Aarhus convention, adopted in June 1998, mandates signatories to transparency and involvement of non-governmental bodies in environmental affairs. Many signatories do not seem to have realised its full implications in terms of democratic involvement and exposure.

In the case of a breach of rights in the economic field, a businessman or employee in Uzbekistan has almost nowhere to turn. There are few organisations that stand up for the rights of business against government interference, or the intervention of local authorities and various “inspectorates”. There is little knowledge of laws that protect business, and a common acceptance that “that is the way things are done”. Yet even the Ministry of Justice has begun to recognise that constant pressure on small and medium-sized businesses is destroying any hopes for sustainable economic growth, and has implemented travelling taskforces to cut back on local government interference. A corruption hotline is advertised on Uzbek television. Whether these attempts are of real value is hard to say, but they demonstrate that the central government understands something must be done. The international experience of the OSCE could play a key role.

Widespread corruption and the lack of judicial defence of contracts are two of the major reasons for lack of investment in Central Asia. All states in the region often state their desire to attract more investment, but little has been done to work on these obstacles. Again this area offers scope for cross-dimensional approaches. In 2001 the OSCE’s Representative on Freedom of the Media organised a conference on the media and corruption. The mission in Tajikistan has also helped to organise a conference on corruption.³⁵ Judicial reform in civil areas would complement work already done by ODIHR in the human dimension.

Other political aspects of the economic dimension have begun to be addressed by the OSCE. An attempt in May 2002 to arrange a meeting of governors of provinces from the three countries that share the Ferghana Valley failed since representatives from Uzbekistan did not come. It demonstrated, however, a possible role for the OSCE in facilitating cross-border political contacts, with the aim of freeing up economic links.

Of course, all these areas are controversial but some participating States understand the real worth of a new approach for the OSCE in the economic sphere.³⁶ It is impossible to offer anything significant to host governments with the present level of resources, however, and the OSCE will have to consider boosting its input both at the

central and mission level, as well as encourage host governments to accept increased OSCE activities.

In the environmental field, the OSCE needs to remain close to its conflict prevention mandate. Real issues that have a direct impact on security, such as assistance to clean up areas like the Maili-Suu nuclear tailing sites in Kyrgyzstan, are also key concerns of the governments involved, and are a useful way to build up confidence in the organisation. As OSCE would need to rely upon international financial institutions and technical organisations to conduct such work, it would also help it to integrate its activity more closely with that of other international agencies.

3. Human Dimension

The success story of the OSCE is in many ways the human dimension. The original Helsinki process in the 1970s and 1980s included commitments by signatories to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, as had been promised many times before in treaties and UN declarations. Also, and more innovatively, it included specific undertakings to improve performance in designated areas such as human contacts, family reunification, and the freer flow of people and ideas. Few negotiators realised at the time the strength of the currents of change they were releasing in the Eastern bloc. The Helsinki Final Act was successfully used by human rights groups to pressure their governments in Eastern Europe and the former USSR. Similarly, in Central Asia, all participating States have accepted the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent CSCE and OSCE documents that detail human rights commitments that are benchmarks against which to judge government behaviour.

The OSCE’s monitoring and reporting role on human rights abuses has essentially set the tone for much of the organisation’s activities in the region, particularly in Uzbekistan. Most missions have made interventions on particular cases of concern, although some human rights groups claim that much more could be done.³⁷ No other international organisation carries out this work, and few national embassies are sufficiently resourced or motivated to take more than a limited interest. The United

³⁵ Held in May 2002, in Dushanbe.

³⁶ ICG interviews, Vienna, June 2002.

³⁷ ICG interview in Tashkent, August 2002.

Nations is notorious in the region for its lack of involvement in human rights protection issues.³⁸

Some diplomats suggest that any attempt to adjust the balance among the OSCE's three dimensions will inevitably dilute the human rights work. This is a danger, but one that can be avoided. In fact, stronger OSCE engagement in the region, and an attempt to improve its visibility and impact, might actually improve its record in combating human rights abuses, much as the integration of human rights with other aspects of security gave the original Helsinki Final Act greater cachet in the politics of the late Cold War era.

Responsibility for the human dimension is split among a number of bodies. Each mission in Central Asia has a human dimension officer, responsible for a wide range of activities, but often concentrating largely on monitoring and human rights issues. Among central institutions, the bulk of work is primarily carried out by ODIHR, based in Warsaw.

ODIHR has essentially three functions. One is to provide monitoring missions and advice on elections. A second is to provide legal expertise on draft legislation at the request of the host country. But ODIHR's primary function is to run numerous projects related to the human dimension in missions. Its work on elections, rule of law, freedom of movement, gender issues, freedom of religion and the development of civil society has been at the forefront of OSCE activities in Central Asia.

The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), based in The Hague, works on interethnic tensions, primarily through private diplomacy and confidence-building measures. Though he has not been particularly active in Central Asia, there has been some involvement in Kazakhstan, and the office runs a monitoring program in southern Kyrgyzstan as well as training projects on interethnic issues. An initial visit by then High Commissioner Max van der Stoep to Uzbekistan, however, was never followed up, and

there is some frustration among mission officials at an apparent lack of HCNM interest in the region.³⁹

Part of this low profile is attributable to the attitudes of host governments. Uzbekistan usually ignores the HCNM's overtures, delegating low-level officials to meet him. In Turkmenistan his reception is likely to be even worse. Nevertheless, repression of minorities has reached such a peak in Turkmenistan that some kind of engagement by the HCNM seems imperative. It may be that the new HCNM, Rolf Ekeus, will need to review the traditional approach of private, high-level diplomacy, and focus more on project and monitoring work that will allow the office to act as a key early warning instrument.

Many of these activities are unpopular with national governments of course, and they would like to use a review of the OSCE's role to downgrade the attention paid to human rights.⁴⁰ It is extremely important that this attention is retained, and even strengthened, at the same time as the scope of other dimensions is broadened.

Some review of the human dimension emphasis would be useful. Much of the work was developed specifically with Central and Eastern Europe in mind, and it sometimes fails to take into account the specific nature of Central Asian societies and sensitivities. In one area in particular, the role of Islam in politics, the OSCE has yet to formulate a consistent approach. OSCE work on groups such as Hizb-ut-Tahrir, which advocates the radical, though peaceful, policy of replacing governments in the region non-violently with an Islamic law caliphate, tends to focus on individual cases and abuse of rights.⁴¹ This is important, and should be continued, but the OSCE also needs to develop a more sophisticated view of government policy towards such groups.

Aspects of this problem are faced not only by Central Asian states, but by Western Europe as well,

³⁸ The UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights deployed a human rights officer in Tajikistan as part of the UN presence, who is responsible for human rights education. In 2002 the OHCHR is planning to establishing a human rights officer post in one of the Central Asian capitals, as well as to carry out a human rights education project, but in general OHCHR has been inactive in the region outside of Tajikistan, particularly on protection issues.

³⁹ ICG interview, February 2002.

⁴⁰ Criticism of the emphasis on the human dimension is constant in negotiations with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in particular. "Report on Visit of the CIO to Central Asia 28 May-2 June 2000", 8 June 2000, CIO.GAL/33/00.

⁴¹ For more information on Hizb-ut-Tahrir and other Islamist groups in the region see ICG Asia Report No.14, *Islamist Mobilisation and Regional Security*, 1 March 2001, and ICG Central Asia Briefing, *The IMU and the Hizb-ut-Tahrir: Implications of the Afghanistan Campaign*, 30 January 2002.

and there is scope for a discussion beyond the usual confines of Central Asia that takes into account the experience of other Islamic societies.⁴² This lack of attention to the Islamic context in which the OSCE works in Central Asia runs through much of its activities and projects, and is symbolised in the focus of those structures that deal with religious issues. ODIHR's Panel on Religion, for example, is comprised mainly of representatives of Christian and Jewish faiths.

4. New approaches

In developing a new approach, the OSCE has a number of options. The main area where Central Asian states feel there could be a major expansion is the economic dimension.⁴³ The other area is "harder" security, notably assistance to reform security forces or improve border regimes. The common theme is that the dimensions should be balanced, in other words the economic/environment dimension and the political/security dimension should be expanded, while the human dimension should remain at the same level.

But in many ways this is a largely artificial approach based on the OSCE's own internal structures rather than external needs. A new strategy should where possible emphasise cross-dimensional projects and activities that bring different aspects of security into a coherent whole.

An example might be promotion of secure yet permeable border regimes, for example on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border, which has been plagued by incursions from militant groups, illegal migration, massive drugs-smuggling, and local disputes over water and other resources arising from uncertainty about where the border actually runs. Here there are valid roles to be played by each dimension:

- *Security dimension:* providing good offices for border delimitation; political and military measures for confidence-building; training in SALW for border officials; anti-narcotics work in cooperation with other agencies, such as UNODCCP;

- *Human dimension:* human rights training for border guards; migration and refugees issues; development of NGOs and advocacy groups involved in monitoring activities, such as traders groups or drivers associations;
- *Economic dimension:* political facilitation of cross-border trade, and regulation of procedures for transborder business, including monitoring of corruption and observation of regulations.

Bringing these different aspects together into a comprehensive whole is a major undertaking, but the benefits would be much greater than a number of small projects focusing on individual areas in isolation. A successful project could set the pattern for other states in the region, demonstrating to Uzbekistan, for example, that there are effective alternative approaches to border security.

Other areas in which this cross-dimensional approach might pay off include rule of law in economics and business, where the OSCE's strength in the human dimension could be brought to bear on business. Advice on legislation, and more importantly helping business tackle serious issues of government interference, corruption and bureaucratic harassment, could be added to existing programs on small and medium-sized businesses. Work on civil society in the human dimension could focus more on business actors, including helping to develop business associations and lobby groups.

5. Regional Cooperation

A mantra of all reviews of the OSCE experience in Central Asia, regional cooperation is at once vital for security and economic development, and simultaneously very unlikely to develop significantly in the near future. It remains however a key strategic goal for the OSCE.

Grandiose plans to develop projects involving all five states should largely be avoided, as most have been unsuccessful or failed to get off the ground. An exception has been the Bishkek conference on terrorism. Though there has been only limited follow-up, it was a useful effort to get all states together in one place. More ambitious programs are unlikely to succeed, however, due to the widely held zero-sum game view of Central Asian leaders on

⁴² See Arne Seifert, "The Islamic Factor and the OSCE Stabilisation Strategy in Its Euro-Asian Region", CORE, Hamburg, August 2001.

⁴³ ICG interviews, Central Asian diplomats, Vienna, May 2002.

many regional issues.⁴⁴ The failure of a regional project on water in 2000 is one example.

Instead, a local approach to regional cooperation may pay dividends. Working on a bilateral or trilateral basis offers more chance of actually implementing real projects. There is some potential for bilateral projects between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, for example, that should not be lost if Uzbekistan does not wish to participate.

These projects need careful preparation to have any chance of success. They must take into account the needs and perceptions of all parties, and strong diplomatic engagement will be necessary. But whatever the problems, regional cooperation remains vital, particularly in areas such as water and trade, and it should remain a long-term OSCE goal.

IV. BUILDING INFLUENCE

The OSCE is a remarkably powerless institution. It has few carrots and even fewer sticks. Its commitments have been flouted countless times by the participating States, yet only in one instance – Yugoslavia in 1992 – was membership ever suspended. Among the members of the “democratic family” of the OSCE is Turkmenistan, a dictatorship that has no free elections, no free press, a highly oppressive security apparatus, and very little market economy. But the most that the OSCE can do is issue rebukes at meetings of the Permanent Council.⁴⁵

Here the OSCE needs to develop in two directions. One is convincing member states that the OSCE is actually a benefit to their development; the second is to acquire more influence that will assist the OSCE in preventing the violation of international norms on human rights and democratic governance. The wider balancing of the three dimensions outlined above could be offered as a way for the OSCE to become more relevant for societies in the region. But much will still remain unpalatable for many host governments.

A sense of reality about what the present leaderships in these countries want is vital. Rhetoric aside, there is no real reason, for example, why the leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Uzbekistan should want to reform itself. Reform, in this instance, would mean a lessening of political influence and a decline in income from corruption. Reform would promote a more effective police force and higher levels of security, but this is an issue that only a political leader with a broad national vision would be willing to tackle. The OSCE must have a highly political approach to problems, and engage in alliance building within and outside the government.

A simple expansion of the economic dimension will not be enough to convince host governments that the OSCE is an organisation that is vital to their development. The OSCE also needs the power and influence to encourage host governments to make real policy changes. This can only be gained by joining with other international organisations and

⁴⁴ For examples of the failure to develop regional mechanisms to tackle problems, see ICG Asia Report N°34, *Central Asia: Water and Conflict*, 30 May 2002. This attitude varies with Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan the least willing to cooperate with their neighbours and Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan more willing.

⁴⁵ For example, Permanent Council N°395, 23 May 2002, EU Statement in response to Ambassador P. Badescu, Head of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabad. PC.DEL/369/02.

bilateral donors in a common platform. In some political affairs, the OSCE already plays an important role in developing common positions – on elections for example. A similar approach in other areas would raise its profile and influence.

On elections, of course, the OSCE's expertise is widely recognised, whereas on macroeconomic reform its voice carries much less weight. Nevertheless, in a region where economics and politics are so deeply entangled, a political approach to economic reform is in many ways more appropriate than pure economic analysis.

The World Bank and the IMF will be wary of any formal involvement with the OSCE but one institution that has already discussed political reform and democratisation is the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). It has a large investment in the region and is seeking to expand its commitments in 2002-03. The EBRD attaches political conditions to its involvement, although these are relatively flexible.

In Turkmenistan, the bank has already cut back its program, largely in response to concerns about democracy and human rights and lack of movement towards a market economy. According to one senior OSCE official, this resulted at least partly from discussions with the OSCE. At present these are informal, but there is no reason why they should not be expanded to a regular exchange and a commitment by the bank to take into account OSCE assessments when discussing further investments.

The European Union's involvement in Central Asia is largely seen as underfunded and poorly coordinated. It has little political influence, having only one delegation in the region, and many of its TACIS programs are of limited utility. Yet it could have much more influence. With four of the five countries it has Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) that cover a wide range of mutual interests, including human rights. However, these tend to be fairly toothless documents, partly because the EU does not have the political engagement on the ground to follow up on aid conditionality. Informal arrangements that involve regular OSCE briefings linked to PCA meetings or facilitate EU use of OSCE's monitoring capacity could increase the leverage of both organisations.

Additional informal arrangements could be developed with other international donors. Bilateral

donors, particularly those with no in-country presence, would find greater OSCE input useful. A stronger economic dimension in the OSCE could provide useful political commentary to organisations such as the World Bank, which is forbidden formally from making political judgements on host governments. As IFIs begin to engage in areas such as good governance and judicial reform, the OSCE could be a useful partner, contributing its strong background in rule of law issues, and connecting them with civil society actors.

For example, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is beginning to introduce new elements into its programs, such as judicial reform in Kyrgyzstan. The stimulus is a belated understanding that rule of law is critical for investment but the ADB has only limited experience in this field and has not linked up with other organisations. The OSCE should be in the forefront of attempts to coordinate agencies working in such areas. In Central Asia there is only very limited engagement between the OSCE and the IFIs, despite good contacts at headquarters level. Building up these links will only be possible, however, if the OSCE can win credibility as an institution with something useful to contribute on economic issues.

In some instances, the participation of a state actually undermines the credibility of the OSCE as an institution. Turkmenistan pays little or no attention to its OSCE commitments, and its continued participation in the structures severely undermines the organisation's overall image. There is effectively no mechanism available to the OSCE to require implementation from a participating state, except political leverage and the impact that non-compliance can have on wider political and economic relations.

In the original discussions of the OSCE in the early 1990s, provisions were made for a mechanism to allow more intrusion into internal affairs of a participating state, particularly in the human dimension. The so-called "Moscow mechanism" envisages that a minimum of nine participating States could mount a special commission of experts to investigate abuses by another participating state. This has largely fallen into abeyance for political reasons, but in the case of Turkmenistan it might be usefully resurrected, at least as a method of drawing increased international attention to the disastrous policies of that government.

In some cases, such as Kazakhstan, the OSCE is extremely public in its criticism of states' observance of their commitments. But much depends on the approach of a head of mission. Many argue that private diplomacy should be emphasised as public statements cause a government to become more defensive and less cooperative. Heads of mission have wide latitude whether to make interventions or issue statements and whether to act publicly or privately.

There is considerable scope for private diplomacy but this should be balanced more effectively by a willingness to engage in public debate on issues of vital concern to the OSCE. More consistency in guidelines to heads of mission on the extent of public statements would be useful, to avoid the situation where some missions are outspoken on internal political developments, while others remain silent even on issues falling naturally within the OSCE's competence.

The OSCE sponsored a series of training seminars for political officers and heads of missions on public relations in the Caucasus and Central Asia in 2001. Such seminars should be regularly repeated – especially due to the quick turnover of staff. The field offices should hold regular press briefings for journalists and the public at large in order to increase transparency and visibility, and thereby influence. Significant press releases should be translated into Russian and (as happens regularly in Tashkent but rarely elsewhere) the major local languages.

Engagement with wider society is particularly important in Central Asia, where strategies for change in most cases need to concentrate on long-term shifts in elites and a growth in civil society. For example, a resource centre established for students in a Tashkent university has been a useful way of introducing a new generation to the concepts on which the OSCE is based.

V. STRUCTURES AND STAFFING

Many OSCE officials pride themselves on what is called the organisation's flexibility, as they are able to quickly adjust existing structures to cope with the needs of the host country and developing events. In practice, this means that its structure is convoluted, and parallel bodies often work with little internal communication. The origins of the OSCE as a kind of rolling conference process are still evident in the impermanence of many of its structures and the nature of its staffing – most field positions are six-month secondments from other participating States.

Although this makes the OSCE a relatively “cheap” organisation, with limited core costs and a relatively small secretariat, it has serious implications for its future. Any review of its role in Central Asia cannot avoid considering fundamental structural changes.

A. CENTRAL STRUCTURES

The issues outlined above regarding strategy and influence are difficult to tackle in a system of one-year chairmanships. In theory, the troika system, in which the outgoing and incoming chairs, also participate, should overcome some of this short-termism, but in practice, much depends on individual states and their representatives. Most of the time, the impression is that the troika is not a particularly useful mechanism.

While the Chairmanship will obviously continue to be powerful, participating States will have to address whether some of its political aspects should be devolved to the Secretary General. Many states oppose any shift in power from the Permanent Council to the Secretary General, but the new challenges facing the OSCE require a visible representative with power to make some decisions for more than the year ahead. The only person who can take this role is the Secretary General, but all the most powerful participating States have opposed expansion of his powers in the past.

One way to provide some continuity, and to ensure some focus on a particular area, has been to appoint personal representatives of the CiO. At present, this role is filled for Central Asia by a special adviser to the Chairmanship, Herbert Salber, a former head of mission in Kazakhstan. Previous incumbents have included Wilhelm Hoynk, and Jan Kubis. The idea

allows a single person to concentrate more time and energy on a region than a CiO can. It does add yet another institution and figure to an already complex organisational structure, but the advantages – particularly if the incumbent is a high-profile diplomat with good knowledge of the region – probably outweigh the disadvantages.

At present the main focal point for missions are the two mission program officers for Central Asia in the Conflict Prevention Centre in the Secretariat. They deal with reporting from the field, logistical questions, everyday administrative issues, and anything else that comes up. They provide the link between the chairmanship, missions and delegations and try to act also as an institutional memory. There is little time for them to stand back and produce analyses, concept papers, or scenario planning, although in theory this is part of their job. Logistical questions should be passed on to the appropriate department, and mission program officers freed to provide stronger back up to the missions on political questions and strategy.

In the security dimension, too, there is scope for streamlining and consolidation. The FSC could be reformed to include all aspects of security, including policing, and its relationship with other bodies of the OSCE simplified. With regional desks, it would provide a key point of contact for field offices and a central institutional memory for the whole organisation in security issues.

The central institutions are much more important for small missions in Central Asia than they are for the large missions in the Balkans, which often have their own administrative support and, arguably, less need for guidance from the centre. In small missions, the requirement for political back-up and external expertise is much greater, and this should be reflected in any reform to give greater weight to Central Asian affairs in the Secretariat.

B. MISSIONS

It is difficult for the Chairmanship to push its own policies on an unwilling head of mission. Autonomy seems to be built into the system, yet it acts as a brake on reform. Some concepts developed in Vienna, such as ideas for an expanded economic dimension in Central Asia, have died a slow death as they reach missions whose heads have been unenthusiastic about their content.

This level of autonomy is no longer sustainable. Attempts to develop a new agenda for Central Asia need to include mission perspectives but any new strategy must not depend only on the personal interests of individual field officers. The CiO and the Secretariat need to monitor implementation of strategies drawn up for each field presence, while ensuring that heads of missions retain sufficient flexibility to react quickly to unexpected events. A comprehensive planning session with each mission before the start of a CiO would ensure that all parties had bought in to the new agenda. In most cases such planning sessions need to include the whole staff of a mission, not just the head of mission. One complaint from many international staff was that their ideas and concepts did not find a ready outlet in Vienna, because they could not get through the head of mission.

C. RECRUITMENT

In missions that may have as few as four international staff, the quality of employees is absolutely vital. There are many committed and talented officers working in Central Asia, but improved recruitment procedures could raise standards further. All international officers are seconded by individual governments, ensuring that some role in selection comes down to citizenship rather than qualifications. This is inevitable in a multilateral institution, but further centralisation of recruitment, or its distancing from foreign affairs ministries, would at least give a wider choice of applicants.⁴⁶

Most delegations are opposed to any dilution of the secondment system, claiming that it provides flexibility in changing mission mandates or adapting the organisation to new challenges.⁴⁷ However, the real reason why states support the secondment system is that it saves money for the larger funders of the OSCE and gives participating States their own nationals in key missions.

⁴⁶ The U.S. approach of handing over recruitment to a specialised private agency seems to have been a success and could be usefully copied by other states. ICG interview Janice Helwig, U.S. Delegation, Vienna, May 2002. However, some U.S. international officers claimed that it led to an increase in bureaucracy and a cut in pay.

⁴⁷ ICG interview, UK Delegation, Vienna, May 2002.

In fact, flexibility could easily be achieved through rolling one-year contracts with central institutions, renewable automatically unless there was a change in organisational policies. This would avoid two major problems. One is the huge difference in salaries paid by different governments to seconded personnel: while U.S. and British salaries tend to be generous, for example, France pays no salary leaving seconded personnel with only a mission allowance. The second problem is that most seconded personnel are on six-month contracts. Although in reality these are usually automatically extended, the concept does not give much security, and often the best staff leave early to posts with more career structure and job security.

It is understandable that participating States do not want to replicate a UN-style bureaucracy, with all the additional costs that that involves. But in reality, the secondment system undermines stability of recruitment in missions and tends to ensure that the least qualified staff stay for the longest time, with others moving on to long-term posts elsewhere as quickly as possible.

The secondment system is unlikely to disappear soon but amendments could cut down turnover and improve recruitment. One obvious move is to make twelve-month contracts standard. In addition, the human resource office of the Secretariat has already begun to screen applicants for small missions and then submit short-lists to the head of mission for final selection. This will remove much control from seconding states, but also speed up the process and ensure higher quality candidates reaching the final selection stages.

Local staff are crucial but their contributions are rarely rewarded sufficiently. Several complained to ICG that they are too often treated by internationals as merely administrative assistants despite years of experience and often high qualifications. There are still no national officers⁴⁸ in any Central Asian field presences, although the field office in Garm in Tajikistan, for example, has been run for three years by local staff and is widely considered successful. Some efforts have been made to improve the situation, through training in Vienna, and other opportunities, but more attention to local staff could reap considerable benefits.

⁴⁸ National officers are employees of local nationality carrying out the duties of a post normally filled by an international seconded member of staff.

Some officials suggested to ICG that promotion of local staff into substantive positions can compromise confidentiality since they are often more vulnerable to security service pressure. This is true, but can only be addressed on a case-by-case basis, as well as by OSCE willingness to protect local staff even after a mission closes.⁴⁹

International staff also need training in cultural sensitivity and management skills, something occasionally lacking in missions. Working with local staff who are often much better informed requires high personnel skills. Frequently, mission members believe they need no further training; however, someone who has worked on arms control might not have been exposed to trafficking in human beings and would benefit from additional professional development.

If the recruitment of middle-level officers is often too bureaucratic and politicised, it is nothing compared with the recruitment of heads of mission. In small missions, the head is key in setting the agenda and developing relationships with the host government and other major players.

Almost everybody interviewed by ICG stressed the problems caused by some heads of mission in failing to raise OSCE's profile, in not implementing Vienna's concepts, or in personnel management. In some cases this has led to a fast staff turnover or a poor working atmosphere. Mission heads are still too often appointed on the basis of political deals, with not always enough attention paid to qualifications, both in regional specialisation and as managers. A more open process of recruitment, with emphasis on managerial and diplomatic skills, is vital to ensure that small missions retain their impact and adequately reflect the real goals of the OSCE.

While considerable attention is given to citizenship balance, gender balance is seldom a priority. In the history of the OSCE, no more than two of the 22 heads of missions at any given time have been female. Seconded staff also generally do not reflect gender balance. Previously, in Uzbekistan, there

⁴⁹ Not much of what the OSCE does is confidential in any case. Almost all reporting goes to all delegations in Vienna, with the exception of confidential reports to the troika. Even these tend not to be very confidential. It is difficult for the OSCE to make security guarantees to local staff, if and when a mission closes, although it would clearly be a high-level political issue. This needs to be addressed in exit strategies.

was one female seconded staff member out of four, while in Kyrgyzstan, there were two of six. Today, neither field presence has a single seconded female. Gender balance among local staff members is only marginally better. Consideration must be given to ensure that hiring practices are devised to fairly represent both genders within each field presence.

D. TRAINING

The OSCE has taken steps to improve training, introducing a two-day induction course in Vienna for all seconded personnel. This has cut down on the number of those who have not even the most basic ideas about the goals of the OSCE and has produced some common understanding of how the organisation works. But the two-day course is very limited, and much time is spent on security and logistics. A longer course – perhaps five days – would at least give time to explore all aspects of the OSCE in greater detail.

The U.S. pushed for a more centralised training system, but in the face of opposition ended up introducing its own national training system online. This course gives a brief introduction to seconded personnel on the OSCE, with some mission-specific issues. But many still travel to destinations in which they have never worked and often take time to adapt to their new environment. Little training is available for officers at posts. Many economic officers, for example, have little formal training in the discipline. Some opportunity for them to continue training at post would be advantageous.

Germany has an OSCE school, which candidates must attend prior to secondment. Citizens from other countries – primarily Western European or on scholarship from Central Asia – sometimes also participate. Citizens of smaller or poorer countries often have no such opportunities. Wider training opportunities would not only contribute to OSCE effectiveness but also to the development of a corps of qualified officers in participating States who understand the organisation from within.

E. FINANCE

Most officers interviewed suggested that there was no real difficulty funding the small projects that they developed but there are two substantive financial problems. One is that any major projects

would require a large boost to funding, and a willingness of states to commit to longer-term financing. The second is that the voluntary contribution process inevitably skews the potential for missions to develop their own strategies and complementary projects.

There is a tendency for officers of certain nationalities to have a much easier time attracting funding than others. U.S. or British officers can usually count on the financial support of their own country for projects in a way that a Belarussian cannot. And pet projects of particular states will find their way into strategies if it is clear that funding is already available. Many Western participating States like this because they retain control and can use the OSCE as a relatively cheap and competent implementing agency.

However, the system should work the other way round, with the strategy and planning coming from the OSCE rather than from national governments. In ODIHR this tendency is much less apparent, partly because it has a special fund, the Grass Roots Fund for Central Asia, which it can use to finance a range of activities. One way to combat nationalisation of funding would be for a similar special fund to be established in the Secretariat primarily for other areas.

Donors give fairly willingly to the ODIHR fund because ODIHR is generally regarded as a competent organisation with good projects. There is much less faith in other areas but an effort by the OSCE to develop a coherent plan, with concrete programs, could justify such a fund in future.

VI. CONCLUSION

The OSCE's future viability and usefulness is uncertain. In many ways it is being overtaken by events and other organisations. NATO is beginning to occupy some of the "soft security" space the OSCE once claimed. Russia's closer ties to NATO could have a major impact on OSCE relevance.

Yet the OSCE is a critical organisation for Central Asia, and could play a significant role in its integration into global political and economic structures. Any body with consensus decision making by 55 participating States will be difficult to change, but the OSCE has a possibility in Central Asia that has not been present for the past several years. Changing alliances in the region, including an international military presence, is having a major impact on government attitudes, as well as attracting much more international attention.

A longer-term strategy for change needs to be developed centrally, focusing on balancing the three classical dimensions, and on issues that other institutions do not address. Before any real rebalancing of the dimensions is possible, however, it is important to address the fears that it would fundamentally weaken OSCE on human rights. An OSCE that spent its time developing economic programs, with emasculated human rights monitoring, and conducted programs on security forces without proper insistence on reform, would be a disaster for the region. It is vital that the OSCE make clear to all participating States that its basic principles remain the same, and that attempts at more cooperative engagement are not a way to dilute standards.

This focus on the human dimension, with an expanded role for the economic/environmental dimension, a renewed emphasis on security issues through a reformed FSC, and much more emphasis on activities and projects that break down the divide between the dimensions, should form the heart of a new long-term strategy for Central Asia. Less emphasis should be put on each individual dimension, with more projects and activities crossing the different areas.

Security service reform, for example, has an obvious human dimension, while creating more effective border regimes would benefit the region's economy. An annual work plan covering the three

dimensions should be developed with each mission, by an inter-institutional task force or similar informal group. Programs should fit into this rather than being based on institutional and national interests of particular member-states or heads of missions.

The economic dimension should be expanded and its focus shifted towards political aspects of economic development, including rule of law, governance, and corruption. To do this properly requires a defined mandate followed by an expansion of the Office of the Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Affairs (OCEEA) in Vienna, to give real expertise and back up to officers in the field. Greater coordination with donors and other international institutions would make the OSCE a more visible player. Back-up from Vienna should involve specialists in the economies of Central Asia, as well as staff trained in anti-corruption work and business legislation, for example.

The political/military dimension should concentrate on policing and security service reform; border delimitation and procedures; SALW and other related issues; civil society involvement in security issues; and security issues related to the principles of the Bishkek anti-terrorism conference. This is an extremely difficult area in which to work, and requires professionals on the ground if any headway is to be made. There is also a potential role for the OSCE in attempting to coordinate or at least influence bilateral aid to security forces. Such aid is increasing sharply in Central Asia, with little coordination and only a limited understanding of what it is supposed to achieve.

The strongest programs and activities will be those that cross all three dimensions and demonstrate the advantages of the OSCE's basic thinking that true security requires a comprehensive approach. Once a more focused view of the organisation's tasks is reached, the temptation to stretch the mandate has to be avoided. The OSCE has little experience of running education programs, for example, and there is doubt it would have a comparative advantage.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ A proposal by Kyrgyzstan for an OSCE university is just such an example. Kyrgyzstan already has too many universities. The real problems of education are at the more basic level. Possibly Turkmenistan is a country that could benefit from education programs – the destruction of the

The OSCE needs to build influence and become an integral part of the international community's regional policy. Partly, this would result from a new strategy, but it also needs to gain leverage by developing closer relations with donors, in particular the EU and EBRD. An annual report on each country's progress in meeting obligations in all dimensions could serve as the basis for other international organisations to adjust involvement. This may be unacceptable to the participating States, but at least more informal relations, and regular meetings with donors, on the ground and at the centre, would produce mutual benefits.

The OSCE needs to streamline its operations to ensure that it functions coherently. Issues within the first dimension are of critical importance for Central Asia and are among those which can establish the OSCE as a potential partner of its states. At present they are scattered throughout the FSC and the Secretariat. The collection of all first dimension issues within a reformed FSC, to include policing, border monitoring and other politico-security matters would simplify work for field officers and provide a focal point for new projects.

Most people have concluded that the economic dimension should be strengthened, but this is impossible while only five officers in Vienna cover the entire OSCE area and without a strong, focused and concrete mandate. The economic dimension should have a responsible body with commensurate staffing and expertise, particularly on Central Asia.

Strengthening the Secretary General is probably the only way to give the OSCE the visible and consistent leadership it needs. Other parts of the Secretariat also need review so a stronger long-term strategy can emerge. In the Conflict Prevention Centre, it would be much more efficient to introduce a proper system of desk officers focusing on particular regions. For Central Asia, such a system might involve an additional officer dealing only with logistics, freeing up existing staff to concentrate on political issues and developing long-term strategy and scenarios. It is important that they have strong background in Central Asia and can provide real input to ongoing discussions on the OSCE's future in the region.

Talks should be initiated with host governments on increasing staff in each mission, including national staff positions with higher substantive responsibilities and the appointment of project officers on issues such as policing or border controls. Quality of staff recruited at all levels in missions should be improved through better procedures and training. Ensuring continuity in mission activities and preserving institutional memory are important and should be assisted through an overlap between old and new staff and proper handover procedures.

Despite its disadvantages, secondment is unlikely to disappear soon since it gives participating States political influence and keeps the budget down. It is very unlikely to be replaced by a normal contract system, but at least secondment contracts should be for a minimum of twelve months and recruitment in small Central Asian missions should be outsourced to the Secretariat, in consultations, with the field to ensure a wider choice of candidates. Training should be upgraded, to a five-day induction program with more emphasis on particular substantive issues, and more centralisation of training from national governments. In particular, host country-specific training should be introduced and officers have access to greater possibilities at post.

All reforms require money, and changing the OSCE's role in Central Asia is no exception. At the beginning of 2002 the budgetary process of the OSCE descended into farce, as smaller countries sought to diminish their contributions, claiming they were getting little value for their money. In a sense they were right. The Central Asian states do not get their fair share of the OSCE's budget. Often it is because they do not want it, particularly in areas where they feel vulnerable, but other OSCE participating States should make clear that they are prepared to shift resources as soon as Central Asian governments agree to constructive use.

There are areas where the money can come from without expanding the core budget. The large missions in the Balkans can be cut back, with other organisations taking over some of their functions. If money is really tight, the superfluous sub-secretariat in Prague should be closed. If the OSCE is to have a future, it is not in South-eastern Europe, where other security, political and economic structures will always be more influential. It is in providing an alternative view of political and economic development in Central Asia (and the Caucasus), where few other

education system there is a serious potential cause of future conflict.

organisations have local presence or specialist knowledge. Belatedly the Western world has understood that security in Central Asia is fundamental to its own security. It now has the

chance, through the OSCE, to take serious steps to show that it believes its own rhetoric.

Osh/Brussels, 11 September 2002

APPENDIX A

MAP OF CENTRAL ASIA



Map No. 3561 Rev. 4 UNITED NATIONS
October 1998

Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section

APPENDIX B

STRUCTURES OF THE OSCE

The **basic institutions** of the OSCE are as follows.

The Permanent Council, consisting of the ambassadors to the organisation of the 55 participating States, is the real decision-maker. It is also an unwieldy body in which a single member can delay decisions almost indefinitely.

Day-to-day operations are run by the *Chairmanship-in-Office*, which is occupied for one year by one participating States. The CiO together with the incoming and outgoing CiOs form a Troika to provide some continuity in decision-making. The CiOs and the troika for the next two years are:

- 2002 Portugal (Romania, Netherlands)
- 2003 Netherlands (Portugal, Bulgaria)

Much direction and emphasis depends on the Chairmanship-in-Office. Naturally, countries with greater capabilities in international affairs tend to find it easier to run the chairmanship.

The Secretary General is head of the Secretariat in Vienna, but his role is not nearly as strong as the SG of the United Nations, for example. The Secretary General has little direct power, and most decisions still have to go to the Permanent Council.

The Secretariat is the administrative centre, containing both logistical and political back-up for missions. It includes the Conflict Prevention Centre, and the Office of the Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Affairs.

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, based in Warsaw, is the principle institution responsible for the promotion of human rights and democracy in the OSCE area.

The High Commissioner on National Minorities seeks early resolution of ethnic tensions that might endanger peace, stability or friendly relations between OSCE participating States. The High Commissioner works chiefly through private diplomacy, rather than public statements or interventions.

The Representative on Freedom of the Media observes media development in OSCE participating States and provides early warning on violations of freedom of expression.

Other negotiating and decision-making bodies

The Forum for Security Co-operation meets weekly in Vienna to discuss and make decisions regarding military aspects of security in the OSCE area, in particular confidence- and security-building measures.

The Senior Council/Economic Forum convenes once a year in Prague to focus on economic and environmental factors that affect security in the OSCE area.

Summits. OSCE Heads of State or Government meet periodically to set priorities and provide orientation at the highest political level. Each Summit is preceded by a conference at which implementation of OSCE commitments is reviewed and Summit documents are negotiated.

Ministerial Council. A meeting of OSCE Foreign Ministers is convened in those years when no Summit takes place to review OSCE activities and make appropriate decisions.

Other structures and institutions

The Parliamentary Assembly gathers over 300 parliamentarians from OSCE participating States, with the aim of promoting parliamentary involvement in the activities of the organisation.

The Court of Conciliation and Arbitration was created to settle disputes among OSCE participating States that are parties to the Convention on Conciliation and Arbitration within the OSCE. In practice, the court has never been convened.

APPENDIX C

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CiO	Chairmanship-in-office
CPC	Conflict Prevention Centre
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EU	European Union
FSC	Forum for Security Cooperation
HCNM	High Commissioner on National Minorities
IFI	International Financial Institution
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OCEEA	Office of the Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Affairs
ODIHR	Office for Democratisation and Human Rights
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PC	Permanent Council
RFM	Representative on Freedom of the Media
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SG	Secretary General
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNODCCP	United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention
UNOHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights

APPENDIX D

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP

The International Crisis Group (ICG) is a private, multinational organisation, with over 80 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict.

ICG's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts are located within or close by countries at risk of outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violent conflict. Based on information and assessments from the field, ICG produces regular analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers.

ICG's reports and briefing papers are distributed widely by email and printed copy to officials in foreign ministries and international organisations and made generally available at the same time via the organisation's Internet site, www.crisisweb.org. ICG works closely with governments and those who influence them, including the media, to highlight its crisis analyses and to generate support for its policy prescriptions.

The ICG Board – which includes prominent figures from the fields of politics, diplomacy, business and the media – is directly involved in helping to bring ICG reports and recommendations to the attention of senior policy-makers around the world. ICG is chaired by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari; and its President and Chief Executive since January 2000 has been former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans.

ICG's international headquarters are in Brussels, with advocacy offices in Washington DC, New York and Paris and a media liaison office in

London. The organisation currently operates eleven field offices with analysts working in nearly 30 crisis-affected countries and territories across four continents.

In *Africa*, those locations include Burundi, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone-Liberia-Guinea, Somalia, Sudan and Zimbabwe; in *Asia*, Indonesia, Myanmar, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Kashmir; in *Europe*, Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; in the *Middle East*, the whole region from North Africa to Iran; and in *Latin America*, Colombia.

ICG raises funds from governments, charitable foundations, companies and individual donors. The following governments currently provide funding: Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Turkey and the United Kingdom.

Foundation and private sector donors include The Atlantic Philanthropies, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Ford Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Henry Luce Foundation, Inc., John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The John Merck Fund, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Open Society Institute, Ploughshares Fund, The Ruben & Elisabeth Rausing Trust and Sasakawa Peace Foundation.

September 2002

APPENDIX E

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