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Interviews with the Foreign Ministers of Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco and San Marino

Modernizing military confidence- and security-building measures: Vienna Document 2011

OSCE-Mediterranean Civil Society Conference

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OSCE Chairmanship 2012: Ireland

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A postcard with the Irish OSCE Chairmanship's commemorative stamp depicting the three-leaved Irish shamrock.

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On the cover: Participants at a working session on raising political participation during the OSCE-Mediterranean Partner Countries' Conference for Civil Society, Vilnius, Lithuania, 4 December 2011. (OSCE/Velimir Alic)

FRANE MAROEVIC

The Year of the Shamrock

The main priorities of the Irish OSCE Chairmanship are three: conflict resolution, good governance and freedom of the digital media.

Work on each priority will be highlighted through a high-profile event. At the end of April, the Chairmanship will invite OSCE participating States and experts in conflict resolution to Dublin to examine the Northern Ireland peace process as a case study for resolving seemingly intractable conflicts. Good governance is this year's theme of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum that will take place in Prague in September. A preparatory meeting in Vienna in February that focussed on combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism will be followed by a meeting on combating corruption in Dublin in April. Digital media freedom will be discussed among government representatives, media experts, civil society and IT businesses in June in Dublin.

Together with its priorities, the Irish Chairmanship has proposed a multi-year programme dubbed Helsinki+40 for developing an action plan for the OSCE, a task that was set for future chairmanships at the 2010 Summit in Astana. This will be developed in close co-operation with Troika partners and future OSCE Chairs. The participating States adopted a decision on 10 February 2012 that Switzerland and Serbia will Chair the OSCE in 2014 and 2015, respectively.

Clearly defined short-term goals, a long-term plan: those are two leaves of the shamrock the Irish Chairmanship is bringing to the OSCE. And the third? The third is the Irish love of conversation which the Chairmanship is bringing into play in encouraging dialogue among the participating States and supporting efforts to resolve the protracted conflicts besetting the OSCE region. The Chairperson-in-Office has appointed two Special Representatives, Pádraig Murphy and Erwan Fouéré, who have begun working to find ways forward in the Transdniestrian Settlement Process, the Geneva Discussions and in addressing the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. An official 5+2 meeting (including mediators, observers and the parties) on settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict will be held in Dublin on 28 and 29 February, the second since official talks were re-established in Vilnius on 30 November after a hiatus of almost 6 years. May the road rise up to meet them and the wind be at their back.

Irish Ambassador Eoin O'Leary, Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council (centre) speaks with OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier (left) and Brian Hayes, Minister of State at the Department of Finance of Ireland during the first preparatory meeting of this year's Economic and Environmental Forum, which is focusing on good economic governance, Vienna, 6 February 2012.

Small States and the OSCE

San Marino, Monaco, Andorra and Liechtenstein have more in common than their extremely small geographical size. Each of them looks back on a centuries-old tradition of peaceful conflict prevention, human rights protection and democracy. The four participating States are currently collaborating on an OSCE project to help children in Moldova who are vulnerable to human trafficking. Their Foreign Ministers agreed to answer questions on their country's relationship with the OSCE and how they view the Organization's strengths and weaknesses.

Antonella Mularoni
Minister for Foreign Affairs of San Marino

SAN MARINO MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

What does the OSCE mean to San Marino?

We have been a participating State since the beginning, and we believe very much in this process of peaceful co-operation among countries as the only way to reach well-being and prosperity for all. We have always believed in co-operation and in peace to solve any controversies with our neighbours. The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in 1975 was a brilliant idea that provided a forum for dialogue for many decades before eventually developing into an organization. The OSCE has some shortcomings, of course, but it is an important forum for discussion and debate. Many problems have been tackled; many issues have been resolved; negotiations are going on in many respects. Of course, for a small country like San Marino it is important to know that there is a space of security and peace, or at least a space in which states are trying to guarantee peace or solve problems. The OSCE is a guarantee for us.

> "The OSCE is a guarantee for us."

How has San Marino contributed to the OSCE?

We co-finance a project concerning Moldovan children at risk of being trafficked that is being carried out in co-operation with the office of Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The project helps teenage children who have lived in an orphanage to enter society. It is a small contribution, but we have to start from the beginning, working with those that are most in need of help. The project just started recently, we hope it can go on for the next few years. Right now, there are about 100 children that have been involved in the programme.

Also, we can say that San Marino is an example of democracy and peaceful co-existence. Of course we know that we are a state of very limited dimension. Still, our history probably can offer something to the international community. We have always been able to live in peace with our neighbours without any problems or, when there were problems, we were able to solve them peacefully. Throughout more than 17 centuries, San Marino has been founded on a legal tradition that allowed our people to enjoy fundamental freedoms and human rights. Our constitution is the oldest of any sovereign state in the world. Respect for human rights, freedom, this is something that is a keystone of our history. It's an integral part of us.

Do you think the OSCE could assist the North African countries in the transition they are undergoing now?

The OSCE has developed into a community of countries that are more and more democratic. This transition period will be difficult for the Mediterranean states; learning to really be a democratic state takes decades. I would say that if the OSCE's Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation request a contribution by this Organization, we should give it. There are other international organizations that can provide help, but still, the OSCE has a role to play. It is an organization for co-operation, for peace, and it is based on respect for human rights and freedom. Of course, we know that in some OSCE countries there are still problems, but history is made of small steps and we must believe in improvement and the possibility to reach major goals. It could take a decade, but still, the path must be very clear. If the OSCE and other international organizations or major democratic European countries support this process, it can be quicker and probably more stable.

Is there something the OSCE should do differently?

I would say that sometimes I am a bit disappointed by these long negotiations lasting almost a year and then often leading to nothing, as we witnessed at the Vilnius Ministerial Council. But then maybe next year they will lead to something. It is true that we are 56 participating States, each one has its own interests and approaches and it's not easy. I understand that, internationally, we must be happy with small steps. But personally, my hope would be that the OSCE could be a little more productive and have more results. Still, we have to remain optimistic and be content with the work that is being done year after year by this Organization.

José Badia
Government Counsellor for External Relations of the Principality of Monaco

MONACO DEPARTMENT FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS

What is the significance of the OSCE for Monaco?

The OSCE has two important assets that no other international organization possesses. First of all, its geo-political format, gathering 56 participating States (possibly 57 soon with the entry of Mongolia) across the northern hemisphere, creates interconnections and exchanges between the United States, Europe and Russia, and also including East European, Central Asian, South Caucasian and Balkan states.

With respect to the geographical location of Monaco, the OSCE enables our country to maintain regular contacts with our Mediterranean and European partners. Furthermore, the OSCE constitutes a unique forum for dialogue, exchange and mutual understanding, offering a structure that depends not only on the political will of a few states, but that is based on flexibility and trust among its members.

> "Activities in the human dimension are of crucial importance."

How does Monaco contribute to the OSCE?

The Permanent Mission of Monaco to the OSCE, represented by Ambassador Claude Giordan, actively participates in the OSCE's regular meetings and its work in the field.

The Principality of Monaco's priority within the OSCE is the protection of human beings and their fundamental rights, in order to preserve peace, international political stability, good governance and the rule of law.

Monaco is particularly involved in the protection of children and the fight against human trafficking. Since 2010, Monaco has been supporting, in partnership with Liechtenstein, Andorra and San Marino, the implementation of a project called "Preventing human trafficking in children without parental care in the Republic of Moldova". As the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, said during her visit to Moldova last November, protecting children is top priority. In order to pursue and intensify our co-operation with the OSCE in that field, we shall proudly welcome Ms. Giammarinaro in Monaco on 20 March 2012.

Sustainable development is also a constant concern for Monaco. As is well known, H.S.H. Prince Albert II is firmly committed to protecting the environment and biodiversity. That is the reason why our Prime Minister, during the Astana Summit in December 2010, pledged to consider with the greatest attention possibilities for co-operation between Monaco and the OSCE in the economic and environmental dimension.

What areas of the OSCE's work do you consider most important?

Considering the current international context, especially regarding the politico-military dimension of security, the OSCE activities in the human dimension are of crucial importance and absolutely necessary. In particular, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is a very valuable tool: its mission and added value are fully recognized by the international community and its expertise in elections monitoring is absolutely indisputable.

Field operations are also an important part of the activities carried out by the OSCE. Outstanding work in all three security dimensions is done on the ground. Those missions directly support the people and political decision makers step-by-step, to more democracy, an increased participation of the civil society and better governance.

Monaco is hosting the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) Annual Meeting in July. What do you expect from this meeting?

Monaco, thanks to its neutral situation, represents an ideal international meeting platform for all international organizations. Hosting the PA Annual Meeting in Monaco in July 2012 is an initiative of the National Council (the Monegasque Parliament), supported and co-organized by the Government of Monaco. The fact that Monaco is hosting this high-level event is a sign that its role within the international community is recognized and proof that the PA sees us as trustworthy and reliable. It will be a real honour for us to welcome in Monaco the Members of Parliament of OSCE participating States. We hope that this meeting will facilitate and strengthen inter-parliamentary dialogue, thus contributing to the overall effort to meet the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE area.

Should the OSCE continue to exist and why?

The question is not whether the Organization should continue to exist but how it should position itself in the future. As we stressed in our statement at the last Ministerial Conference in Vilnius in December 2011, Monaco strongly upholds the OSCE's efforts to concentrate its resources in areas where it brings an unchallenged added value, such as field missions and the human dimension. We also support the efforts of the OSCE to co-operate closely with other international organizations.

The CSCE and then, from 1995, the OSCE, is the result of an ambition shared by all European states, that has existed for 35 years. The OSCE is a unique forum for dialogue and co-operation and it must continue to exist despite the difficulties currently faced by the Organization. The ODIHR is one of the most important assets of this Organization. That is why it must keep its place and role among the other international structures, such as NATO, the European Union and the Council of Europe.

Thanks to its history and its experience on the ground through its field operations, the OSCE is a source of knowledge that we have the duty to protect in order to build a Eurasian and Euro-Atlantic Security Community sharing the same core values.

Gilbert Saboya Sunyé
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Andorra

SERVEI FOTOGRÀFIC GOVERN D'ANDORRA

Andorra joined the OSCE in 1996. What prompted the decision?

Andorra is a very old nation but a very young state. We went through the process of becoming an internationally recognized state in 1993, and once we had international status, we began joining international organizations. The United Nations was a first step in 1993, then came the Council of Europe and then came the OSCE in 1996. The OSCE —with its co-operative, comprehensive and inclusive approach to security— is very much aligned with our perception of security; it was an obvious choice for us. Being a part of this multilateral forum allows us to interact with other participating States as equals, in spite of our micro size.

> "Human rights and rule of law are part of our DNA."

What benefits does the OSCE bring to Andorran citizens?

Citizens are very much caught up in everyday concerns, but we need to be aware of what is happening around us. In Andorra, we are now conducting a deep domestic reform to open up our country, our economy. And it is very important for us to align our domestic reforms with a longer term view of foreign affairs. So for us it is very important to be in multilateral forums like the OSCE, where we can have a view of global threats and opportunities. Sometimes the two are very closely linked.

One issue the OSCE has dealt with recently that has a direct impact on Andorran citizens is security in tourism. We are a tourism-based economy — around 70 percent of our GDP comes from tourism and related activities — so for us it is very important to see where the threats lie and in what direction security in tourism is evolving. Last September, we funded a two-day workshop in Vienna on public-private partnerships for tourism security, together with the United States and Spain, to identify the possible role of the OSCE in this field.

How does Andorra contribute to the OSCE?

Andorra was first established as the result of a choice to prevent conflict. The Andorran people made a choice to prevent a dispute from breaking out between our neighbouring sovereigns by telling them: don't fight over us, become our co-heads of state. That was in the thirteenth century. We made that choice again in 1993, when we voted for the constitution and decided to establish a parliamentary co-principality, with the President of France and the Bishop of Urgell in Seu d'Urgell (Spain) as co-princes. Such a choice, by the people, not imposed by any sovereign and not imposed by any powerful neighbour, is quite unique, I think. Human rights and the rule of law are very rooted in the Andorran reality; they are part of our DNA. This is something we have to offer the OSCE community.

In the area of co-operation, we are very much focused on protecting vulnerable persons. We have financed OSCE projects on human trafficking, on the empowerment of women's entrepreneurship and on promoting tolerance in schools as a tool for preventing conflicts. Of course, core activities of the OSCE are also important: we have been involved in border control training in Afghanistan and in the Community Security Initiative in Kyrgyzstan.

You invited elections observers this spring. Was it a useful exercise?

It is a long-lasting tradition for us to invite ODHIR and OSCE Parliamentary Assembly observers — we have been inviting them since 1996, in compliance with our commitments. This is the first time they came, within the framework of a needs assessment mission, and we are glad they did.

Our parliament has a long tradition: it was established in the fifteenth century. But democracy is something you have to work on every day. Although we have a very high rate of participation in elections, between 70 and 80 per cent, the numbers are going down a bit among the young generation. We take the recommendations made as an important tool for further promoting a freer, more democratic and open society. Assessment by foreign of observers is healthy, because it gives you a different perspective.

In our changing security landscape, how important is the OSCE?

It is true that as the OSCE expands, for instance towards the possibility of including countries such as Mongolia, it is going beyond its natural frontiers as they were originally conceived. It is also true that organizations like NATO are evolving and are also embracing a comprehensive approach to security. I must say, however, that the OSCE has a rather unique approach. We in Andorra really believe that ensuring security through multilateral efforts is not only a military question, not only question of hard security. It is also a question of the capacity for growth and prosperity, of an inclusive development of society. For a country like ours, in which half of the population comes from abroad, it is important to recognize diversity. We have a multi-lingual education system combining Andorran, French and Spanish public systems. All of these issues are directly linked to security. We are one of the most secure countries in the world. But that has very much more to do with prosperity, with social cohesion, with education than with efforts in the military sphere — although obviously military aspects have their strategic importance. Currently, we are indeed seeing that everyone is going in somewhat the same direction as the OSCE, which is in the end a good conclusion: the OSCE was perhaps right before the others.

Aurelia Frick
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liechtenstein

LIECHTENSTEIN FOREIGN MINISTRY

As one of the original participating States, Liechtenstein has a long experience with the OSCE. What have been the benefits?

Liechtenstein has a limited diplomatic network and does not belong to any security arrangement. The OSCE allows my country to interact and co-operate with a large group of countries in the broader field of security. Like all other participating States, we have received valuable advice from the OSCE on how to modernize our institutions and on how to invigorate our democracy.

"Our job is not yet done."

What special assets does a small state like Liechtenstein bring to the OSCE family?

The assets a participating State brings to the OSCE are not determined by its size. The questions I would raise are: Does a country adhere to the principles of the Organization? Are its OSCE commitments implemented? Does it contribute ideas to the Organization's work? Has it assumed chairmanships or contributed to the funding of projects? I am proud to say that Liechtenstein can respond positively to all of these questions.

Let me give you some examples. In the last five years, Liechtenstein has contributed about €1 million to extra-budgetary projects in all areas of the OSCE's work, above all to projects of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. We always try to match our own priorities with the OSCE's funding requests, for engagement with Afghanistan in 2009, for example, or for post-crisis support to Kyrgyzstan in 2010 and 2011.

Besides making financial contributions, Liechtenstein has seconded staff to the OSCE Secretariat and to the Law Enforcement Department of the OSCE Mission to Serbia.

Our diplomats have taken over chairmanships in the OSCE. It was under Liechtenstein's chairmanship that the important introduction to the Bonn Document on Economic Co-operation was drafted in 1990. Between 2000 and 2002, our Ambassador chaired the Gender Working Group and oversaw the OSCE's adoption of its first Gender Action Plan.

In 2005, Liechtenstein, together with Iceland and Armenia, made suggestions for improving the efficiency of the Organization's work, helping to pave the way for the committee structure still in place at the OSCE headquarters in Vienna.

In 2013, Liechtenstein will take its turn for the second time in chairing the Forum for Security Co-operation.

Which areas of OSCE work do you find especially important and worthy of support?

I find it difficult to single out particular parts of the Organization's work. Its uniqueness is certainly its broad membership and the comprehensiveness of its security concept. We have been able to contribute mostly to the human dimension.

Liechtenstein has great respect for the important work of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), Knut Vollebaeck. The HCNM has issued valuable recommendations on minority rights. His Bolzano Recommendations on National Minorities in Inter-State Relations are groundbreaking in highlighting the responsibilities of so-called "kin states", states that have national minorities living in another country. A great number of tensions between and within states have their origin in minority issues and their links across borders. The Bolzano Recommendations recognize this and show how these tensions can be prevented and dissipated.

Why is it important that the OSCE exists in today's world?

Our job is not yet done. There are still unresolved conflicts in the OSCE area. New threats and challenges to our security have emerged. In some areas our toolkit needs to be adapted and commitments modernized, particularly in the politico-military and the human dimensions of security. The incoming Irish OSCE chairmanship has proposed a work plan that we support.

Dean of the Permanent Council

As the longest-serving Ambassador to the OSCE, H.S.H. Maria-Pia Kothbauer, Ambassador of Liechtenstein, has been Dean of the Permanent Council since 2004. The Permanent Council is the OSCE's main decision-making body that meets weekly in Vienna. Over and above her ceremonial functions, which include receiving new Ambassadors and holding a farewell speech for them when they leave, Ambassador Kothbauer's expert advice as an experienced diplomat is often sought by her colleagues and she is regularly asked to participate in advisory councils and selection committees.

OSCE/ALBERTO ANDREANI

A self-evaluation exercise during the life skills and career orientation training for boarding school children, Chisinau, October 2011.

Empowering Moldovan children at risk

"Have a happy family, a good career, become a basketball star." These ambitions expressed by the ninth-graders participating in an OSCE project launched in September 2011 for children in institutional care in Moldova display the same naïve optimism as those of any other children their age. But the reality is that when these children graduate at the end of this year, they will enter the adult game of life with the odds stacked severely against them.

The 94 children, from three state-run boarding schools, in Orthei, Leova and Bender, have been selected as being particularly vulnerable to trafficking in human beings. Some of them are orphans, but many of them have been left behind by migrant parents who have gone to work, often illegally, in Russia, Turkey or Italy.

The children's lives in the boarding schools are strictly regulated, giving them little opportunity to learn to act autonomously or manage time and money responsibly. When they are released from institutional care, they will be ill equipped for setting and pursuing their own goals. Social marginalization and financial pressure will make them open to deceptive promises, by peers or even family members, of an easy life in another country far away.

Monaco initiated this project in close co-operation with Andorra, Liechtenstein and San Marino to give children that are released from institutional care a fighting chance. In planning the endeavour, which they jointly fund, the four participating States worked closely with the OSCE Mission in Moldova and the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Trafficking in Human Beings, Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, and already received excellent support from the Moldovan authorities. The implementing partner is the Child Rights Information Centre (CRIC), a Moldovan NGO whose social workers have many years' experience in working with children from state institutions.

An important component of the programme are life skills seminars lasting several days, in which the children practise building self-esteem and explore career plans. Perhaps even more important for the children is the individual mentoring. It provides these boys and girls with what they need most, an adult whom they can trust and who can help them with very practical matters such as getting their personal files in order, a prerequisite for enrolling in any school of further education.

The children acquire realistic information about illegal migration and human trafficking. The social workers clarify misconceptions about the dangers involved and provide the children with the number of the anti-trafficking hotline in Moldova, which they can call if they feel that they are being tricked or might become victims of trafficking.

The project has a second group of beneficiaries: 30 teenagers who have already graduated from state boarding schools and are enrolled in a vocational school, trade school or college. The project pays for their school supplies (tuition is paid by the government), lodging and living requirements. Even with the financial support, the students have difficulty coping with the demands of their programmes and discrimination from peers and educators. Again, it is the individual attention from the social workers that allows them to persevere and makes for the project's success. Fortunately, the generous funding will allow for supporting the students in their development for three years.

"This project is absolutely necessary," says Aurica Nucă, the social worker who mentors the students in Leova. "When there is a problem, we solve it together, but if these children had no resource person, many would already have abandoned their schools."

When the project's first outcomes were presented in Chisinau on 16 December 2011, educators from the students' educational institutions and representatives of government ministries were also invited, in order to sensitize them to the plight of post-institutionalized children. CRIC encourages vocational training institutions to introduce its support model for life skills into their curriculum, to allow other students to benefit from it as well.

One of the most effective ways to multiply the benefits of the project will be through the young beneficiaries themselves. "They are advised to invest in their personal development, to set goals and attain them, to decide for themselves and make their voices heard," says Alberto Andreani, who manages the project from the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. "They will be the ones that will replicate this learned behaviour among peers, relatives and families."

MAJOR STEPHAN KLOSSNER, SWISS VERIFICATION UNIT

A Swiss – Finnish evaluation visit in Romania in 2007 under the Vienna Document 1999, which preceded the Vienna Document 2011

Vienna Document 2011

Achievements and prospects for further updates

by Pierre vonArx

The Vienna Document 2011, a new version of the OSCE's primary military confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) that replaces the Vienna Document 1999,* was adopted by the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) on 20 November 2011 and entered into force on 1 December. Its adoption sends a strong political signal denoting progress in the politico-military dimension of the OSCE. It puts an end to an 11-year deadlock in the work of the FSC to modernize CSBMs and constitutes a positive example of the ability of the participating States to negotiate and adapt important politically binding commitments without linking them to other contested political issues, such as protracted conflicts or the stalemate of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). It could be the start of a comprehensive process of adapting the OSCE's existing politico-military arrangements to today's and tomorrow's politico-military realities.

More than a technical update, the Vienna Document 2011 includes elements that have serious political implications, notably the politically binding provision for a regular assessment of the Document, including its reissuing at intervals of five years or less. In a new introduction, the 56 participating States explicitly reaffirm the political heritage of the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe that was held from 1984 to 1986, as well as all subsequent relevant CSCE/OSCE concluding documents.

FROM THE 2010 OSCE SUMMIT TO THE 2011 MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

The work of the FSC to update the Vienna Document received an important impetus at the 2010 Astana OSCE Summit. The Heads of State or Government of the OSCE participating States expressed their political will to restore trust and confidence in the politico-military dimension

* For a general account of the Vienna Document, see "A new start for the Vienna Document" by Colonel Wolfgang Richter in the OSCE Magazine Issue 4/2010.

and called on participating States to work in a spirit of openness and to foster co-operation by building mutual understanding. The final document of the Summit, entitled "Astana Commemorative Declaration – Towards a Security Community", contains several elements concerning the politico-military dimension. Paragraph 8 addresses arms control and CSBMs as follows: "Conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building regimes remain major instruments for ensuring military stability, predictability and transparency, and should be revitalized, updated and modernized. We value the work of the Forum for Security Co-operation, and look forward to the updating of the Vienna Document 1999."

During the course of 2010 and 2011, the FSC adopted nine decisions concerning the Vienna Document. These were incorporated into the Vienna Document 2011. The negotiations demonstrated the ability of the Forum to avoid being hijacked by political divergences and gave proof to the capacity of each of the 56 participating States to do its utmost to reach consensus in the politico-military dimension.

This was reflected at the 2011 Vilnius Ministerial Council, at which the participating States adopted all three of the decisions that issued from the FSC, whereas in other dimensions of the OSCE's work they were less successful in reaching consensus. The Ministerial Council Decision on Issues Relevant to the FSC (MC.DEC/7/11) welcomes "intensified negotiations to update and modernize the Vienna Document and the decision to reissue the Vienna Document, adopted at the special FSC meeting in 2011". The preamble reaffirms, *inter alia*, that "the participating States will ensure that the efforts they make in the Forum to advance arms control, disarmament, confidence- and security-building, security co-operation and conflict prevention are coherent, interrelated and complementary." The operational part of the decision tasks the FSC to "give further impetus to negotiations on updating and modernizing the Vienna Document on confidence- and security-building measures with the aim of increasing military stability, transparency and predictability for all participating States."

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE VIENNA DOCUMENT 2011

As mentioned, the Vienna Document 2011 includes a provision requiring that it be subjected to regular assessment and reissued at intervals of five years or less. It also contains a new introduction. It is important to note that any decisions taken to amend the document will enter into force on the date of adoption — unless otherwise specified — and will supersede any equivalent existing provision.

Among other improvements, the Vienna Document 2011 facilitates and ameliorates certain procedures for inspections, evaluation visits and contacts. A list of topics and information that may be included in the presentations by commanders or acting commanders during evaluation visits and inspection activities serves to enhance the quality of their briefings. The modalities of visits to military air bases operating multipurpose attack or specialized attack helicopters have been updated. Organizing demonstrations of new types of major weapon and equipment systems is now permitted before their formal deployment, making it possible to combine them with other events and thus to save costs. The accuracy of co-ordinates of formations at the normal peacetime location has also been standardized. Finally, the participating States are requested to take into account the official national and religious holidays of the receiving State when requesting and conducting inspection activities and evaluation visits.

KEY ELEMENTS FOR FURTHER MODERNIZATION

Updating the Vienna Document is an ongoing process which started at the end of 2010 and will continue with the consideration of more substantive elements in the coming years. As the issues taken up become more strategic, even greater efforts, careful approaches, enhanced imagination, in-depth discussions and comprehensive negotiations will be required.

For some participating States, the uncertainty with regard to the CFE Treaty seems to be influencing their approach to negotiations on further updating the Vienna Document. For others, particular national interests play an important role. Priorities, security environments and strategic needs doubtlessly differ from one participating State to another. These realities will influence the modernization of the Vienna Document. The call for a spirit of openness and co-operation made by the Heads of State or Government at the Astana Summit will become increasingly relevant. It will be important for each participating State to try to understand the particularities of the others. The best proposal can be adopted only when it is shared by all participating States, creating a 56 win-win situation.

About eighteen proposals for further updating the Vienna Document have been published and are currently under the consideration of the FSC. Two main trends can be observed.

Most of the proposals under consideration aim at improving the current implementation of the Vienna Document. Their purpose is to increase the Vienna Document's effectiveness in reducing the risk of large-scale military offensives, focusing on the more static aspects of force preparation.

For example, proposals are on the table for augmenting inspection quotas, internationalizing

inspection teams or lowering the thresholds for prior notification and observation of military exercises and unusual activities. The current thresholds still reflect the realities of 1992, when the numbers were last updated, and do not take account of the decrease of troops and major weapon systems in Europe. Adapting the thresholds will greatly enhance the effective functioning of the Vienna Document as a strategic early warning tool.

A second group of proposals envisages expanding the scope of the Vienna Document to include new CSBMs that would focus on the more dynamic aspects of force preparation. Taking into account the increasing strategic importance of military mobility, these new provisions would lower the risk of the misinterpretation of the use of military capabilities.

The Vienna Document already contains several elements that target the dynamics of force preparation. For instance, participating States are required to give notification of the use of military capabilities outside their peacetime location, and such activities can be subject to observations if they are undertaken while troops or main weapons systems are exceeded. Chapter IX, which provides for the possibility of conducting inspections, is also an important tool for verifying dynamic military activities.

The new dynamic elements being proposed include the notification of large-scale military transit, notification of the military activities of multinational rapid reaction forces and exchange of information on naval forces.

The improvement of current implementation and the introduction of new CSBMs are complementary and both will be required for the Vienna Document's modernization. As participating States consider the various proposals, it will be important to take into account the evolution in military doctrines, the technological modernization of military equipment and the downsizing of most armed forces and to conduct an assessment of military capabilities.

Several delegations have expressed the view that increasing constraints regarding financial and human resources will affect the modernization of the Vienna Document. These factors ought therefore to be carefully and comprehensively considered. However, most participating States have also highlighted the political importance of fully implementing in good faith the commitments already undertaken in the field of CSBMs, since the lack of effective confidence and verification mechanisms and their substitution would be much more expensive. Simple cost-saving measures undertaken by participating States could also help to reduce the burden of implementing the Vienna Document 2011.

A special interest remains the improvement of the use of the Vienna Document in crisis situations and its relevant provisions for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management. Two proposals for special OSCE inspections are currently under consideration and important questions with regard to the mandate and decision-making process remain to be considered carefully. It is necessary to continue the exchange of views and the substantive discussions on this topic, a key political issue concerning the Vienna Document's modernization.

CONCLUSION

The Vienna Document has the comparative advantage over other conventional arms control regimes that it politically binds all of the 56 participating States of the OSCE. Since its first version was adopted in 1990, the Vienna Document has proven to be a well-balanced instrument with a high implementation level. It can be considered a success. During the past year, the participating States have created a good climate for negotiation, avoiding artificial linkages to other political divergences and taking into account that in the OSCE security community, priorities, security environments and strategic needs may differ from one participating State to another.

The Vienna Document 2011 represents the first concrete achievement in the process now underway to review, reconfirm and reinvigorate the CSBMs of the OSCE. The process will continue in the following years with more substantive issues, concerning both the improvement of current implementation modalities and the development of new CSBMs. Comprehensive discussions and wise negotiations aimed at increasing the significance of CSBMs will lead to a substantial updating of the Vienna Document by augmenting transparency, predictability and prospects for early warning — making the Vienna Document a modern strategic tool and a substantial contribution to our common and indivisible security.

Pierre vonArx, Diplomatic Counsellor and Deputy Head of Delegation for Security Policy in the Swiss delegation to the OSCE, is the FSC Chair's Co-ordinator for the Vienna Document. Switzerland has provided the FSC Chairmanship with a Co-ordinator for the Vienna Document since 2010.

Democratic transition in North Africa

OSCE-Mediterranean civil society conference in Vilnius

by Ruben Diaz-Plaja

"We live in different countries but we are facing the same problems," declared Achraf Aouadi from Tunisia, speaking at the opening of an OSCE conference on democratic transition in North Africa in Vilnius on 4 December 2011, just ahead of the 2011 OSCE Ministerial Council. Aouadi is the leader of the Tunisian anti-corruption and election monitoring group I Watch, one of the many civil society organizations that have been the driving force behind the momentous social changes in the Mediterranean region since last year. "Our mistakes could have been disastrous if we had not found others to share with us their previous experience," he said.

The Lithuanian Chairmanship and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) organized the conference to give activists from the OSCE's Mediterranean Partner countries the opportunity to interact with similar groups from the OSCE region, where the Organization has considerable experience in supporting democratic transition. "Our objective was to encourage new links and partnerships among civil society representatives from both sides of the Mediterranean," said ODIHR's Deputy Director Douglas Wake.

❮ Outside the OSCE-Mediterranean Partner Countries' Conference for Civil Society, Vilnius, Lithuania, 4 December 2011. OSCE/Velimir Alic

The sense of urgency with which the more than 80 participants shared their experiences and concerns during the two-day conference was an indicator of the intensity of the transition the Mediterranean societies are undergoing. Formal discussions — three working groups, on electoral good governance, political participation and judicial and legal reform, respectively, and a side event on tolerance and non-discrimination — spilled over seamlessly into informal exchanges at the civil society fair, in which the individual groups presented their projects.

The participants deplored the harassment and other obstacles often encountered by civil society election observers. As they agreed that domestic non-partisan scrutiny has a crucial role to play in ensuring the integrity of electoral processes, they appealed to the OSCE to develop training programmes for civil election observers in the Mediterranean Partner countries to help them professionalize and deal with some of the obstacles.

Often at the forefront of social change are women, youth and disadvantaged members of society, yet they are typically sidelined when it comes to political participation. "Women from former socialist countries took for granted that the transition to democracy will automatically lead to their equal chances in political decision-making, but this was not the case," warned Sonja Lokar from Slovenia. In order to increase citizens' involvement in governance, the conference participants recommended making innovative use of women's platforms and social media and keeping the young engaged in political life through youth parliaments, international exchange programmes or leadership training.

Deep-rooted democratic changes require legal and judicial reforms. These should be based on a "participatory, inclusive and transparent approach", the civil society activists concluded. They stressed the importance of an independent judiciary and encouraged ODIHR to organize training in human rights standards and trial monitoring, which they identified as a key tool for assessing justice sector reforms in countries undergoing the transition to democracy.

After a passionate farewell speech at the closing plenary by Aouadi, the recommendations elaborated by the conference participants were presented to the OSCE's 2011 Chairperson-in-Office, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Audronius Ažubalis for consideration by the OSCE Foreign Ministers at their annual meeting on 6 and 7 December. The OSCE Ministerial Council adopted a decision to broaden dialogue, intensify political consultations, strengthen practical co-operation and further share best practices and experience with the OSCE's Partners for Co-operation.

Ruben Diaz-Plaja is a Democratic Governance Officer at the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

A report summarizing the discussions and recommendations agreed at the OSCE - Mediterranean Partner Countries' Civil Society Conference in Vilnius released by ODIHR on 26 January 2012 is available on the OSCE's public website.

Decisions on OSCE Partners for Co-operation

OSCE participating States decided to enhance their engagement with the OSCE Partners for Co-operation at the 2011 Ministerial Council in Vilnius. The Decision on Partners for Co-operation (MC.DEC/5/11) encourages OSCE executive structures to engage in action-oriented co-operation with the Partners and invites the Partners to increase the level of their participation in the OSCE activities. It tasks the Secretary General with exploring options and presenting the Permanent Council with proposals for further co-operation.

The OSCE has six Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, and six Asian Partners for Co-operation, Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea and Thailand.

Mongolia applies to join the OSCE

Mongolia, an Asian Partner for Co-operation since 2004, has applied to become a participating State. The Decision on the Application of Mongolia to become a participating State (MC.DEC/12/11), also taken at the Vilnius Ministerial Council, welcomes Mongolia's request and tasks the incoming Chairmanship to take it forward at the earliest opportunity. "Mongolia is interested in integrating in the OSCE family of nations that aims to build a common security community in the vast Eurasian area and promote co-operation in all the three areas of its activities," said the Mongolian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Gombojav Zandanshatar, in his address to the Ministerial Council. Mongolia's contribution to the work of the OSCE has included hosting two conferences in Ulaanbaatar, in June 2007 and May 2011, on mutual co-operation between the OSCE and its Asian Partners. It is currently preparing to assist the OSCE in its engagement with Afghanistan, another Asian Partner for Co-operation, by offering training to mid-level Afghanistan diplomats beginning in April 2012.

Conference participants share their views

NGO representatives from OSCE Mediterranean Partner countries took time out from the discussions at the OSCE-Mediterranean Partner Countries' Conference for Civil Society in Vilnius to speak about their work and their views on the potential for OSCE engagement in their region.

Hany Ibrahim, Director of the Resources for Development Centre, Egypt

"My group, Resources for Development Centre, is an independent regional think tank, now active in Egypt, Libya and Morocco, dedicated to advancing sustainable human development. We started in 2009 as a group of around 50 university students and graduates working to combat corruption. At the beginning we looked at the availability of reliable data, a very important issue when you are trying research something. Now we have a well-functioning anti-corruption Internet portal where anyone can report corrupt practices. We have also moved to other issues. Currently we are connected to almost 300 NGOs in Egypt alone and have a big programme for youth engagement.

"For me, this conference is interesting because of its special focus on minority rights and citizenship. A citizen for me is a person who enjoys all rights and is accountable to the whole community, regardless of his or her affiliation to a political group or religious group. I am Christian and there are almost 8 or 9 million of us in Egypt, over ten per cent of the population. The important thing for me is that we are all citizens. When I act as a citizen, I act as an Egyptian. I can dream of becoming president or taking any position in the hierarchy of the state, but at the same time I am aware of my full responsibility for the safety and welfare of the whole community, of all Egyptians on an equal footing.

"In the past, we always had one ruling party, and the fact that we had only one choice negatively affected also our daily life. This is the first time in the history of Egypt that we have diversity and the opportunity to compete. In the elections the Islamists received the majority of votes. We should not prejudge their performance. We have to observe, reach out to communities about their rights and how they can monitor the performance of the new ruling groups. The Islamists have to show society that they will act on everyone's behalf without discrimination, and I do believe that if they do not succeed, the voters will not vote for them again."

OSCE/SHIV SHARMA

Marwa Mohamed Issa Mohamed, Chairperson of the Board of the Ambition Association for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Sustainable Development and Training, Egypt

"Our organization is very new, it was founded this year. We work for equal opportunities and rights for persons with disabilities in four cities in Upper Egypt: Sud, Sohag — my city — Qena and Aswan. Upper Egypt has strong traditions and customs regarding women: they generally do not go out and do not travel alone. I am quite unusual; my family gave me a lot of freedom. I live alone, my aunts and cousins encouraged me to travel abroad and talk about persons with disabilities.

"When I come back to Egypt, I will hold training sessions for disabled persons, especially women, and tell them about what I have learned at this conference, tell them that they must participate in the elections. Everyone, especially disabled persons, must participate. We are equal to non-disabled persons, and we have the right to participate.

"In Egypt, there is no law protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. We have drafted a law and we will wait for the new parliament to approve it. It will allow disabled persons to assume their rights: the right to work anywhere, the right to marry, to own homes, the right to accessible means of transport. There are 15 million disabled persons in Egypt. It is a large number."

Cherifa Kheddar, President of the Djazairouna Association of Families of Victims of Terrorism, Algeria

"I founded the organization Djazairouna, which means "My Algeria", in response to the terrorism that claimed over 100,000 lived in Algeria in the 1990s, including my brother, sister, uncle and husband. I am also the President of the International Federation of the Associations of Victims of Terrorism and the Spokesperson of the Observatory on Violence against Women.

"Our mission is to give victims a voice. We campaign to raise awareness of victims' rights and provide practical and psychological support, especially to women and children.

"This is the second time I am participating in an OSCE conference. I was at the 2008 OSCE Mediterranean Conference in Amman, Jordan, where I was asked to present our conclusions on transitional justice and the equality of women to the representatives of the OSCE participating States.

"For me it is absolutely important that the OSCE and our partner civil society groups understand that democracy is not just elections. Elections are the crowning tip of democracy. But democracy itself, the basis of democracy, is freedom of association, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly — above all, freedom of expression against those who exploit a religion such as Islam for political ends, who politicize Islam. If the fundamental elements of democracy are missing, if I am insulted in the name of God and I do not have the right to respond, then how can I have a voice?

"The Arab Spring was above all a movement of young people and women. But who is reaping the harvest? Who reaped the harvest in our country? This is what I am asking the OSCE and our civil society partners to consider."

OSCE/SHIV SHARMA

Abdelah Benhssi, President of the Centre of the South for the Development of Dialogue and Citizenship, Morocco

"Our organization works in three main areas, local development, dialogue and citizenship, with the aim of promoting tolerance. We work with civil society and the state, but the most important for us is our work with young people in high schools and universities, because that is where extremism tends to grow. Recently we organized a small conference, with experts, educators and journalists, on introducing the topic of the Holocaust into the Moroccan school curriculum. It was viewed unkindly by some, but we were very satisfied with the results.

"We speak about citizenship to show people that being a Moroccan citizen can mean being a Jew, a Berber, an Arab, a Muslim, a Christian. That is to say, the term "Moroccan citizen" encompasses all the components of Moroccan society. There will always be someone who is quite different from me but who is also a Moroccan citizen, and whom I should regard as a Moroccan citizen and nothing else.

"I believe that the OSCE has a great opportunity now to contribute to the changes taking place in the Mediterranean countries. Citizens have risen up for freedom and democracy, and I personally believe that the future will bring many positive developments, above all in Tunisia and Morocco. But what we are seeing now is a large influx of discourses of ethnic and religious hatred in these countries. I would simply like to ask: would it be possible for the OSCE to increase its engagement in the process of democratization south of the Mediterranean? This is something we are asking not just the OSCE but other European organizations as well. Co-operation would not have to be just with the states, it could also be with civil society directly, to help move the process along a little. Because the big challenges today are being tackled by civil society, not by the former dictators."

Mohammed Hussainy, Director of the Identity Centre, Jordan

"The Identity Centre is an independent civil society organization based in Amman that works towards a world where people are empowered to shape and control their identities and destinies. We believe in transparency, collaboration, free flow of ideas and information, learning from other cultures, gender equality, improved accountability and social justice. We conduct outreach, advocacy, training, monitoring and research to enable people to fully participate in political, economic and social development. The Centre implements projects in Jordan and the Middle East and North Africa, alone and in partnership with local, regional and international organizations.

"It was very useful for our Executive Director and myself to participate in this OSCE conference. We took part in two working groups directly related to our work, on political participation and on electoral good practice, and the experiences that were shared have inspired us to develop the work of the Centre.

"Jordan will witness important electoral events in 2012. For the first time in our history, we will have an independent electoral committee, which was made mandatory by the amendments to our constitution earlier this year. In addition, we will have new parliamentary and municipal elections laws. As members of Jordanian civil society, we are fighting for democratic laws and also for the full right to observe all electoral events.

"In this regard, I believe that the experience and the network of the OSCE is very important. The OSCE could help us by providing electoral assistance to our new electoral committee and also by training Jordanian election observers. I am sure this would contribute to the efforts of Jordanian civil society aimed at organizing transparent elections, at least technically."

OSCE/VELIMIR ALIC

Achraf Aouadi, Founder of I Watch, Tunisia

"We founded I Watch after the revolution in Tunisia to work for transparency and to fight corruption. During the elections, we worked a lot on voter education. One of the things we did was to use rap music. It was one of the means we used to reach people with our message, which was "Go vote!" We went to public squares, to rural area where people are not that informed, to explain the procedure, the use of ink, for example. Some people thought that the ink is useless; others thought that when I put my finger in ink it means you do not trust me. So we explained that it's not personal and really not a problem.

"At first it was just the revolution in Tunisia, and then when things started happening in Egypt we felt the responsibility to set an example, so we sent some people to Egypt to share our experiences, especially our mistakes. And now we are also brainstorming with people in Libya, mainly through Skype.

"I started my speech today by saying 'I have a dream: to see you at the next conference in one of the Mediterranean Partner countries, in Tahrir Square or in Tunisia.' If you hold a training course here in Vilnius or in Vienna, you will reach three or four representatives, but if you go beyond, to civil society there, there will be a bigger impact. So my recommendation to the OSCE is: you should probably cross the Mediterranean Sea.

"The OSCE is different from other organizations because it has an incredible mix of countries: the Western European countries, with their democracies that have been established for centuries; the countries in Eastern Europe, Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine, whose recent transitions to democracy can inspire us. All this experience and expertise in one organization, in one body — it's a great pool of knowledge to learn from!

"The Arab spring did not stop with the Arab world. What I would recommend is for the OSCE to be up to people's expectations, to really assist people in building democracy, not just in the Partner countries but within the OSCE region itself. The whole world is changing, so the OSCE should change. Go beyond!"

Observations from Libya

Amal Obeidi, a political scientist at the University of Benghazi, Libya, and Lamia Abusedra, a professor of systems engineering and co-founder of the Forum for Democratic Libya, attended the OSCE-Mediterranean Partner Countries' Civil Society Conference in Vilnius as observers. (Libya is not an OSCE Partner for Co-operation.) They spoke about their work in support of the political transition in Libya.

Amal Obeidi (left) and Lamia Abusedra at a working session on raising political participation, including the engagement of women and youth, during the OSCE-Mediterranean civil society conference in Vilnius, 4 December 2011. (OSCE/Shiv Sharma)

Amal Obeidi: At the very beginning, even before the National Transitional Council was formed, I established a group that provided professional academic advice on issues such as transitional justice and how to deal with the political vacuum. We travelled in the Eastern part of the country, giving lectures and meeting with the new civil society groups.

"Civil society", "democratization", "freedom of expression", "political parties" — these are words and terms that were forbidden before. The concept of citizenship and of being a Libyan never existed, not even before Ghadafi. People tended to look at themselves as part of the Arab nation, part of Africa, they never looked at themselves as Libyans. In a study on political culture in Libya I published in 2001, I asked 500 university students: "What is the most important source of identification for you?" Being a Muslim came first, belonging to a tribe second, and being Libyan came last. Now, there is a great enthusiasm for our Libyan identity. But maybe it is a temporary feeling. For a few months, everyone was united by one goal: getting rid of Ghadafi. But the great challenge is: what will happen next? We need other, positive goals, a road map for democracy and democratization.

Lamia Abusedra: I began to work with a group of women in Benghazi in February 2011 to help alleviate the rising poverty. My role was to design a computerized system that would ensure food distribution to the poor. We got the co-operation of the boy scouts and the mosques to distribute the food, we were thinking of perhaps a few hundred families, and ended up distributing to 77,000 families! When the international aid came, they found a well-functioning network already in place.

In April, we founded the Libyan coalition of NGOs and I became the board member responsible for international affairs. In May, I joined the National Transitional Council's office for culture and civil society, where I also manage international affairs. And in June, I co-founded the Forum for Democratic Libya (FDL), an NGO specifically focused on promoting democratic values. In Benghazi alone there are more than 400 registered NGOs. People are excited about the idea of forming groups, of getting together to do good work, which was illegal before. Not all of these groups will survive, but we hope the FDL is here to stay.

Libyan women in general are very well educated. But the role of Libyan women in society is not yet clear, not even for women themselves. Libyan women are very strong traditionally; they are the rulers in their houses, behind the scenes. The fabric of our society is quite unique, and I think we need to build on what we have and go gradually.

Ghadafi brought women into public positions. But this was one of his power plays, actually based on his belief that women are the lower beings. The empowerment of women was a tool he used to undermine men, to shake the social fabric of our society.

Amal Obeidi: I am worried that not just in Libya, in all Arab countries, the achievements of women will be linked to the dictatorship era. Women gained the right to education in the 1950s and 1960s, and we had the first women judges in the 1980s. Now, some people, some women, are saying, "We don't want women judges, because that was one of the achievements of Ghadafi." This is a serious question for us women activists, what are we going to do about this? Maybe I am being too pessimistic, but I believe we have great challenges ahead regarding the role of women.

Lamia Abusedra: I think Libyan participation in conferences such as this one is very important, especially at this time in history. Things on the ground are shifting and changing day by day, almost like a living organism. There are a lot of ideas and models out there, we need time to decide what works for Libya and what doesn't.

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The Special Avionics Mission Strap-on-Now (SAMSON) observation pod, shared by Belgium, Canada, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain.

Open Skies: successes and uncertainties of an iconic post-Cold War instrument

by Loïc Simonet

The Treaty on Open Skies was signed on 24 March 1992 in Helsinki within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) by 26 member States of the Atlantic Alliance (NATO) and the former Warsaw Pact. Following a long period of negotiations, the Treaty entered into force on 1 January 2002. The year 2012 marks the 20th anniversary of the conclusion of this instrument and the tenth anniversary of its entry into force.

The genesis of Open Skies goes back to the year 1955 when Dwight Eisenhower, the then President of the United States, proposed to the Soviet Union the principle of free mutual over-flights accompanied by an exchange of photographs. In 1989, at the end of the Cold War, President George Bush revived the idea put forward by his predecessor, adopting the proposal by the Canadian Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, to extend it to include the members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

An innovative and unprecedented instrument intimately linked to the OSCE, Open Skies has successfully contributed to building confidence between former adversaries. Its future, however, could well be clouded by the evolution of the security situation in Europe and the priorities of individual States Parties.

THE FIRST MULTILATERAL AERIAL OBSERVATION REGIME

The Open Skies Treaty is not a classic arms control instrument, unlike, for example, its contemporary, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). Its purpose is neither to provide a framework for the reduction of existing arsenals nor to limit the activities or military capabilities of the States Parties. It is simply, according to the terms of the preamble, to "promote greater openness and transparency in their military activities". Its aim is also to "facilitate the monitoring of compliance with existing and future arms control agreements", among them the CFE Treaty, which it was not possible to supplement with an aerial inspection regime.

The Treaty authorizes the conduct of observation flights using unarmed aircraft equipped with agreed imaging devices, "sensors" according to the terminology of the Treaty. To this end, each State Party is assigned active and passive quotas. The first refer to the number of overflights that the State in question is authorized to conduct, the second to the number of overflights over its territory that it is required to accept. These quotas are calculated according to such parameters as the country's geographical area, population and also its military, strategic and economic importance. The allocation of these quotas is the subject of negotiations every autumn, with the results confirmed by a decision of the Open Skies Consultative Commission (OSCC), the body responsible for the management and evaluation of the Treaty's implementation.

The vast majority of the States Parties do not possess equipment of their own suitable for Open Skies purposes, but rather avail themselves of a clause in the Treaty that permits each to use the facilities of another, under the terms of a mutually agreed arrangement. In actual practice, States Parties frequently join together to carry out joint observation flights for the purpose of making optimum use of their resources. Only Belarus and the Russian Federation, on the one hand, and Benelux (Belgium, Netherlands and Luxemburg), on the other, have availed themselves of the opportunity provided by Article III, Section II for two or more States Parties to form a group for the purpose of co-operation. Without actually constituting a group within the terms of the Treaty, Belgium, Canada, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain co-operate technically within the so-called Pod Group, sharing a unique modular surveillance system, the SAMSON (Special Avionics Mission Strap-On-Now) observation pod equipped with five imaging devices, which they rotate among their national aircraft.

An Open Skies mission is preceded by a notification given three days (72 hours) in advance. The country whose territory is to be overflown must acknowledge receipt of the notification within 24 hours. The notification includes the designation of the "point of entry", i.e., one of the locations specified by the observed Party for the arrival of the personnel of the observing Party on its territory and, where appropriate, the "Open Skies airfield" designated by the observed Party as the point where the observation flight is to commence and terminate. All the other States Parties are also notified for purposes of information.

The route is freely chosen by the observing Party. The entire territory of a State Party may be overflown with the exception of a ten-kilometre zone bordering on a country that is not a party to the Treaty. The maximum duration of a mission is 96 hours. The mission report, drawn up by the observing Party, is signed by the observing and observed Parties and is communicated within seven days to all the other States Parties.

The facilities observed may include, among other things, military bases, training sites, industrial centres, roads, rail and communication infrastructures, airports and port terminals as well as any heavy equipment (tanks, aircraft and missile-launching sites). The photographs taken during each mission are distributed among the observing and the observed Parties, after which they are made available against payment to any State Party that so requests.

HISTORIC TIES TO THE OSCE

The negotiations that preceded the signing of the Treaty on Open Skies began in Ottawa in February 1990, outside the CSCE. Nevertheless, after a second session in Budapest in September 1991, the CSCE/OSCE headquarters in Vienna became the fixed place for discussions, leading to the establishment of a practically indissoluble link between the Organization and the Treaty.

The Open Skies Treaty's area of application corresponds, by and large, to the area of the OSCE. Its provisions, like those of the OSCE's Vienna Document, are what are referred to in the latter as confidence- and security-building measures. There are many references to the CSCE in the text of the Treaty. It is one of the cornerstones of the "new Europe" established by the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and the 1990 Charter of Paris.

The OSCC meets every month in plenary session in Vienna, using the facilities and drawing on the administrative support of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, as provided for in Article X of the Treaty. Two Open Skies Treaty Review Conferences have been held in Vienna, the first from 14 to 16 February 2005, the second from 7 to 9 June 2010.

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The SAMSON observation pod

A team working in the observation console

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AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Twenty years after its signing, the Treaty on Open Skies has lived up to its intended purpose. It has been a significant source of military and strategic information and has promoted a culture of co-operation between what used to be rival armed forces and their personnel. As of December 2011, a total of 836 flights had been carried out. Beyond this undeniably positive record, however, does the Treaty on Open Skies still have a *raison d'être* in the twenty-first century?

The Open Skies regime is a product of the final years of the Cold War. It was conceived and put into practice during a period of considerable change in the security environment of the Euro-Atlantic region. It is interesting to note that the symptoms that are affecting the Treaty today — the evolution of the geostrategic context, the lessening of the threat of a large-scale conventional attack and a significant reduction in the size of armed forces since 1990 — are the same as those undermining the CFE Treaty, the latter being subject to more serious political antagonisms. States are according priority to combating transnational threats such as terrorism or cybercrime, which are the work of non-State actors and therefore beyond the reach of legal instruments, of which the Open Skies Treaty is one. Ever more severe financial constraints are making the investment that is necessary for the application of the Treaty difficult to justify in the eyes of governments. A number of States Parties no longer make use of their active quotas and limit their engagement to allowing other States to overfly their territory if they so wish.

From a technical point of view, the rapid advances achieved in satellite imagery are making the Open Skies regime less and less viable, even if it continues to offer a considerable degree of flexibility in comparison with satellite observation (in particular by making it possible to record images beneath a cloud cover) and is less costly than satellite technology.

NEW APPLICATIONS?

In view of this situation, several possibilities have been considered in recent years for the "reconversion" of a regime that could be headed for stagnation.

The strengthening of the "dual purpose" aspect of Open Skies and the expansion of its missions outside the area of military observation have long been seen as the principal option. The preamble of the Treaty envisages "the possible extension of the Open Skies regime into additional fields, such as the protection of the environment". The regime is in fact well suited to the evaluation of trans-border environmental damage. As early as 2004, an OSCC seminar was held in Vienna on the environmental applications of the Treaty.

During the initial negotiations of the Treaty in Ottawa and Budapest, the future States Parties decided to include in its preamble a reference to the possibility of using a regime of its kind for conflict prevention and crisis management, albeit only after lengthy discussions about the appropriateness of applying an instrument designed essentially to strengthen confidence and transparency between East and West to the management of regional crises. Annex L to the Treaty (Section III) stipulates that the OSCC shall consider requests from the CSCE/OSCE and other relevant international bodies for facilitating extraordinary observation flights over the territory of a

State Party with its consent for purposes of conflict prevention and crisis management. During the first Treaty Review Conference in 2005, three States Parties proposed that these provisions could be used as an instrument of preventive diplomacy for the resolution of protracted conflicts. However, in view of the vulnerability of observation aircraft, unarmed and flying at a low altitude (less than 5,000 metres) and at a fairly low speed (around 450 km/h), they recommended that the Open Skies regime not be used for these purposes except in a stable security environment.

The use of Open Skies to combat trafficking in human beings, arms and drugs, to observe the movement of refugees, to combat clandestine immigration or to monitor border regions has been proposed from time to time. Its potential regarding transnational or "new" threats would warrant study. It has also been suggested that this instrument be used for the detection of illicit activities aimed at obtaining nuclear weapons (stockpiling of fissile material and enrichment of uranium). For the time being, these ideas have evoked only limited interest. They seem too much like attempts to ensure the "viability" of Open Skies at the price of sacrificing its identity as a regime designed above all for a politico-military framework. Furthermore, any application of these ideas would have to overcome the problem of increasingly severe financial restrictions.

Expanding the Open Skies regime to include more States Parties, possibly also in other parts of the world, is also seen as a way of reviving it. Several countries have indeed acceded to the Treaty since its entry into force in 2002. But this expansion has been marking time since the middle of the last decade, and to this day the idea of merging the map of the Open Skies regime with that of the OSCE remains wishful thinking. Nevertheless, the extension of this arrangement to the entire OSCE area would open up new prospects for co-operation. Some of the participating States that might accede to the Treaty are the theatre of "protracted" conflicts or latent tensions, which would provide the observation capabilities of the Open Skies regime with a new potential area of application, as mentioned above.

The co-operation between the States Parties to the Treaty on Open Skies and other international organizations, also suggested in the preamble of the Treaty, has never been truly put into practice. Organizations such as the United Nations, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization or the International Atomic Energy Agency could benefit from Open Skies, for example by addressing a request to a member State for the conduct of an observation flight or by requesting it to transmit certain images. The OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, in managing the Organization's field missions, would undoubtedly benefit from aerial images provided by observation flights.

In light of the "Arab Spring", the question arises: could the Open Skies regime be applied in other regional contexts?

During the first Treaty Review Conference in 2005, the States Parties declared themselves ready to engage in dialogue with other interested countries, to share their experiences and general information on the Treaty and its advantages and also to provide support and advice for co-operative aerial observations. It has thus been mentioned that Open Skies could be of interest to India and Pakistan, for example, to help them to resolve their dispute over Kashmir, or to the two Koreas, who might find in aerial observations of the demilitarized zone separating them a useful tool facilitating dialogue. The relatively gloomy context that currently surrounds Open Skies would not seem to encourage its extension beyond the OSCE area for the time being, however.

The States Parties' unanimous support for the Open Skies Treaty during the two Treaty Review Conferences, in 2005 and 2010, cannot hide the reality that because of the new security situation in Europe, the regime could be threatened with marginalization. Although so far left intact, despite the political tensions that have affected, for example, the CFE Treaty, the Open Skies regime is not totally immune to those tensions, as demonstrated by the discussions within the OSCC on the accession of one participating State of the OSCE.

Nevertheless, more than any other arms control regime developed since the end of the Cold War, the Treaty on Open Skies embodies not only the concept of co-operative security established by the OSCE, but also the "magical moment" — to use the words of Brian Mulroney — of the opening of the Iron Curtain, a moment that is already beginning to fade in our collective memory. It is not at all certain that the time has arrived to close this book, in which other chapters may remain to be written, in a Europe that is not yet completely shielded from the shocks of history.

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The views expressed in this article are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the OSCE and its participating States.

"Whoever saves a life,
it is considered as if he saved
an entire world."

— Talmud, Sanhedrin 4:1, 22a
and Quran Al-Maida 5:32

Visa for Life

by Ahmet Çınar

Commemorating the Holocaust Remembrance Day, an exhibition called "Visa for Life" opened at the OSCE headquarters in the Vienna Hofburg on 26 January 2012. Organized by Israel, an OSCE Partner for Co-operation, it commemorates diplomats who were awarded the title "Righteous Among the Nations" by the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) for saving Jews from being exterminated by the Nazi regime.

"We dedicate this exhibition today to the outstanding Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, who saved many thousands of Jews in Hungary during Nazi occupation. This year, we are commemorating the centenary of his birth," said the Israeli Ambassador Aviv Shir-On, opening the exhibition. Wallenberg served in Budapest in the summer of 1944, where he worked tirelessly to save Jewish lives, often risking his own. One day, he climbed on top of a train loaded with Jews destined for Auschwitz and, ignoring the shouts and fired shots from German soldiers and Hungarian officers, handed protective passports through the doors and then proceeded to order all pass-holders to leave the train to safety.

Ambassador Shir-On presented the OSCE Irish Chairmanship with a plaque depicting the story of the Irish Roman Catholic Priest and senior official of the Curia in Rome, Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty, nicknamed "the Scarlet Pimpernel of the Vatican" for saving the lives of over 6,000 Jews and Allied soldiers during the German occupation. "The tragedy of the Holocaust was that too little was done to protect those who were persecuted and targeted for extermination by the Nazi regime," said Irish Ambassador Eoin O'Leary, accepting the gift.

At the exhibition we also learned about heroism by the diplomats from the United States, Turkey, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Holy See, Great Britain, China, Portugal, Japan and even Germany who saved Jews from the Holocaust's clutches. The sacrifices many of them made were high. To name just one example: Selahattin Ülkümen, the Turkish Consul-General in Rhodes, was imprisoned by the Nazis for saving the lives of Turkish Jews on the island. His consulate was bombed and his pregnant wife killed by the Germans.

Unfortunately, almost 70 years after the Holocaust, it is obvious that the evil of anti-Semitism is still present in the world, also within the OSCE region. The sociologist Ernst Simmel first defined "anti-Semitism" in 1946 as follows: "the anti-Semite hates the Jew because he believes the Jew is the cause of his own misfortune. He persecutes the Jew, because he believes that the Jew persecutes him."

If we look at the topic from a broader angle, the scourge is called "xenophobia", which we should all combat; regardless of whether it is directed against Muslims, Jews or Christians. The rise of right-wing extremism in several European countries, the recurring desecration of Jewish schools and cemeteries, attacks against Muslim communities, the Al-Qaida attacks aimed at Christians, hate speech on the Internet and racist taunts at sports events are all sobering.

In light of the persistence of religious hatred, it may seem that nothing has changed, no lessons learned from the history. That is why it is extremely important that international organizations do something about it.

One of the priorities of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is to combat anti-Semitism through education. Drawing on the ideas of 25 anti-Semitism experts from 12 countries who gathered in Berlin in May 2010 to exchange experiences, ODIHR has developed teaching materials to combat anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, as well as a guide that provides educators with facts, background information and good practices regarding how to address anti-Semitism in the classroom.

The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office has three Personal Representatives who work to promote tolerance within the OSCE region: Rabbi Andrew Baker, on Combating Anti-Semitism, Senator Adil Akhmetov, on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims, and Justice Catherine McGuinness, on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions. The Representatives work in co-operation with ODIHR, other international organizations, governments and NGOs to develop recommendations on protecting various religious communities.

Their work seems like that of the boy in the famous story 'The Star Thrower' by L. Eiseley: "A man was walking along the beach one morning and he came upon a boy who was throwing starfish back into the ocean. The man asked the boy, "What are you doing?" The boy replied, "I'm trying to save all these sea stars from dying." The man looked up from his spot and scanned the beach. The man saw thousands upon thousands of starfish scattered along the shore. The man then said, "You cannot save them all; there are too many, you cannot make a difference!" The boy, not bothered by the man's remarks, picked up another sea star, threw it back into the ocean, and said to the man, "It made a difference to that one!" That evening the man couldn't sleep. In the morning, he returned to the beach, searched for the young man, joined him and, together, they started throwing sea stars back to the ocean."

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AHMET ÇINAR

Opening of the Visa for Life exhibition at the Vienna Hofburg, 26 January 2012. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Yad Vashem created the Visas for Life Project which has travelled and still travels to various exhibition halls and foreign ministry venues around the world.

OSCE Appointments

OSCE/JONATHAN PERFECT

Andrey Sorokin from the Russian Federation took up his post as Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan on 10 January 2012. Ambassador Sorokin has held a number of diplomatic posts in India, serving most recently as Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of the Russian Federation in India, from 2005-2011. He was Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department for Cultural Relations and UNESCO from 2003 to 2005. He graduated from the Moscow State Institute of Foreign Languages in 1976.

OSCE/MIKHAIL ASSAFOV

Natalia Zarudna from Ukraine assumed the post of Head of the OSCE Centre in Astana on 17 January 2011. A career diplomat, she served as Ambassador to Germany from 2008 to 2011, Ambassador to Denmark from 2004 to 2008 and Ambassador-at-Large for environmental issues and humanitarian and cultural co-operation from 2003 to 2004. She was a Deputy State Secretary for Foreign Affairs from 2002 to 2003, in charge of humanitarian, social and cultural affairs, national minorities and anti-Semitism issues and information and communications policy. Ambassador Zarudna has represented Ukraine at international conferences of the UN, UNESCO, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, NATO and the EU.

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György Szabó from Hungary was appointed Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan on 23 January 2012. A career diplomat, Ambassador Szabó was Deputy Head of the European Union Presidency Logistics and Organization Department in 2011. Prior to that, he was Chief of Protocol of the President of Hungary from 2005 to 2010, Ambassador of Hungary to Nigeria and Benin from 2001 to 2005 and Deputy Chief of State Protocol from 2000 to 2001. He has served as Senior Desk Officer for a wide range of countries in the Baltic, Mediterranean and Asian regions and in postings abroad in Namibia and Mongolia. He was an OSCE election observer in Kyrgyzstan in 2011 and an OSCE election supervisor in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2000.

OSCE/JONATHAN PERFECT

Miroslava Beham from Serbia took up the post of Senior Gender Advisor on 15 December 2011. Ambassador Beham served in the Serbian diplomatic service from 2005 to 2011, most recently in Vienna as Head of the Delegation of Serbia to the OSCE. Prior to her work as a diplomat, she worked as a freelance journalist for newpaper, radio and television, with gender issues as one of her fields of expertise. Born in Munich, Germany, Beham studied English, Slavic and German Literature and Philology.

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Paul Manning from the United Kingdom took up the position of Director of Internal Oversight on 9 January 2012. Immediately prior to joining the OSCE, he was a senior civil servant at the Department for International Development in London, and served as the United Kingdom Government's counter-fraud champion for international development. Manning has worked with international NGOs and in private sector auditing, risk management and consulting. Until recently, he sat on the Audit Panel of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy. A chartered accountant, he has degrees in international development and criminal justice.

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