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OSCE ROLE IN SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

- THE REGION OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

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Security Sector Reform and the Media

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Introduction

Security sector reform has been one of the crucial elements of democratic transition in post-Communist societies. One could safely say that the reform of the armed forces and security services has been one of the pre-conditions of a successful and genuine transition in general. At the same time, the opposite is also true - without or in the absence of wider and encompassing transition processes there can be no meaningful security sector reform.

The role of armed forces in European Communist-ruled societies has been specific. Generally, there was no direct military rule (except, for a limited time, and for particular reasons in Poland in 1981) or military dictatorships, as in Latin America or some others parts of the world, but close and symbiotic relationship between the party, state and armed and security forces existed, in different degrees, everywhere and served to perpetuate authoritarian one-party systems. A sort of quasi-civilian control was in place, or better to say manipulation or use of armed and security forces by the ruling communist parties. This made the necessity for thorough security sector reform one of the priorities for democratic change in the aftermath of the breakdown of such societies.

While each country pursued their democratic transition and security sector reform independently and at different pace, nevertheless there were lots of similarities, since the models that were pursued were those that were drawn upon the tradition of mature democracies of the West. Therefore, three main, or minimal conditions of security sector reform were doing away with the privileged and isolated position of the armed forces, reducing the size of armed and security forces and limiting their competences, in particular vis-a -vis citizens and civil society and, above all, introducing effective democratic control of the armed forces, through appointing civilian minister of defense, strengthening the civilian component in the MOD and, most importantly, strengthening parliamentary oversight.

In Euro-Atlantic region, national military organizations are under parliamentary control. Their primary task is to protect the territorial integrity of their country and respond to national security threats. The end of the Cold War, the adoption of the Helsinki Final Act 1975 and the OSCE Paris Charter for New Europe in 1990, and the process of expansion of the European Union and NATO served to create a genuine security community among the states in this region. Within Europe, the use of force has ceased to be an acceptable means for countries to settle disputes - respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and common economic interests have been key preconditions to this development. There is no other alternative also for the new democracies in South Eastern Europe.

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

1. International standards for security sector reform - norm setting role of the OSCE

While there is no single model of security sector reform or for democratic control of the defense organizations, there is a whole body of generally accepted and tested norms and standards that guide this process. In this context, the OSCE also plays an important role, particularly through its Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, adopted in 1994.

Actually the OSCE has been dealing from its early Helsinki days with the military aspects of security, developing the confidence and security -building measures (CSBMs), which evolved over the years into a comprehensive system. However, while these provisions and related mechanisms were aimed primarily at creating the system of information and control over the size, deployment and activities of the armed forces of the participating States, the Code of Conduct codified the basic norms regulating the status and role of the armed forces in a democratic society. This makes the Code a unique document in international relations. The Code can be seen as the first document reflecting the comprehensive concept of force control.

The idea of a code of conduct on politico-military issues was first put forward in the Helsinki Document 1992 as part of the "Programme for Immediate Action" for the Forum for Security Co-operation, while the text was negotiated and elaborated for the adoption on the eve of the OSCE Summit in Budapest in 1994.

Obviously, it was not by accident that the Code of Conduct was conceived and developed in the mid-nineties. The need for such an OSCE document arose from the conflicts that emerged in early nineties in different sub-regions of the OSCE area - first of all in the South Eastern Europe (break-up of former Yugoslavia) as well as in post-Soviet states, such as Moldova (Transnistria), and in the Caucasus. In most of these conflicts, the armed forces, both military and paramilitary, behaved in a uncontrollable way and committed acts that were gross violations of internationally accepted standards and legal obligations of the warfare, resulting in human losses and sufferings, especially among the civilian population. While these acts and their perpetrators bore responsibility and faced punishment under the existing international norms, the need arose to adopt a document which would prevent the occurrence of situations in which the armed forces escape the control of legitimate political authority and act on their own or under the guidance of undemocratic and irresponsible leaders. Hence, the main thrust of the Code was to introduce political commitments for the participating states to keep their armed forces under democratic control and restraint, both in the peacetime and times of war, and both in internal and international relations.

The paragraphs of the Code specifically devoted to the democratic control of armed forces concern all elements of the armed forces, such as military, paramilitary and internal security

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

forces, as well as intelligence services and police, are under the democratic political control (par. 20) and "politically neutral" (par.23), and under effective guidance and control by constitutionally established authorities vested with democratic legitimacy, with clearly defined roles and missions within the constitutional framework (par.21). If these principles are observed, the probability of arising crisis situations, especially internally in the participating States, is greatly reduced. Of additional importance in this respect, especially having in mind the experiences of conflicts in former Yugoslavia and other areas, is the commitment of the participating states (in par. 25) not to "tolerate or support forces that are not accountable to or controlled by their constitutionally established authorities."

The Code also deals with force control in international relations. Already at the beginning of the document, in par. 5, there is a call for the participating States to "act in solidarity if CSCE norms and commitments are violated and to facilitate concerted responses to security challenges that they may face consult promptly.... consider jointly the nature of the threat and actions that may be required in defense of their common values." The phrasing of this paragraph, although not made as an obligatory norm, indicates that there is an understanding that a common and shared approach is regarded as an appropriate way to deal with crisis situation in the OSCE area.

Since tension and the crisis situations may also emerge as the result of military build-up by individual states or by their hegemonistic policies, it is important that the Code allows the participating States to maintain only such military capabilities that are commensurate with individual or collective legitimate security needs and obliges them not to impose military domination over any other participating States. Although these obligations are general in character and contain no criteria or mechanisms for their operationalization, they represent innovative elements of a conflict and crisis-prevention strategy. This is highly relevant for the elaboration of national security and defense strategies.

Finally, the authors of the Code, undoubtedly motivated to prevent situations where force has been used indiscriminately against the civilians and their property, have found it necessary to commit each participating States "to ensure that any decision to assign its armed forces to internal security missions is arrived at in conformity with constitutional procedures ". In addition, "if recourse to force cannot be avoided.... its use must be commensurate with the needs of the enforcement and ... [with] due care to avoid injury to civilians or their property (par. 36). Having in mind that the post-Cold War conflicts have had in many cases "an ethnic dimension", it is of particular importance that the Code requires the participating States not to "use armed forces to limit the peaceful and lawful exercise of their human and civil rights by persons as individuals or

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

as representatives of groups nor to deprive them of their national, religious, cultural, linguistic or ethnic identity". (Par.37)

This brief review of selected Code of Conduct provisions testifies to the fact that this document has indeed a significant norm setting and crisis prevention and management potential. Still, a word of caution is needed here - the Code is not a legally binding instrument and each participating state is responsible for its implementation. There are no mechanisms for the control or supervision of its application by individual participating states. In spite of these limitations, it would seem that the existence of such a document, unique not only in the OSCE context, but also compared to other international organizations, gives an important comparative advantage to the OSCE community of states to deal in a more effective way with crisis situations, even in the in the preventive stage.

Since the Code represents a normative document, without mechanisms for its direct implementation in specific cases, it is difficult to establish whether its norms or standards were directly applied or used as a normative frame for initiating or pursuing defence reforms since its adoption in 1994. However, there is ground to claim that, at least to the knowledge of this author, the Code served as the point of reference, both in providing guidelines for development of security sector reform strategies, and dealing with some conflict and crisis situations.

This was the case, for example, with the situation in South Serbia, when the Serbian authorities and international community, represented by the OSCE and KFOR, acted in co-operative way. It could be said that it was the spirit of the Code that permeated the strategy of dealing with the crisis. One of the most important results of the co-operation was the training and establishment of the multiethnic police and media, both very important for long term stability in post-crisis rehabilitation and for the prevention of the re-emergence of the crisis. In these police and media oriented reform projects, the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro has been the institution directly involved.

Another example of testing the relevance of the Code was the Albanian insurgency in northern part of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In the crucial stages of the crisis, especially in its political resolution phase, the spirit of the Code, such as the civilian political control and political negotiations with the mediatory and guiding role of the international community lead to concrete results.

Of course, the implementation of the Code in the region of the SEE should not be viewed only through its crisis-management potential, but also in view of its most important function - raising the level of democratic control of the defense and security sectors.

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

In addition to the OSCE, another organization which has an important role in setting the normative and institutional framework for security sector reforms is NATO, or more specifically, especially in South East European context, its program Partnership for Peace.

The relationship between the OSCE and the NATO has fundamentally changed after the end of the Cold War. While at the early stages of the CSCE, in preparation of and following the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, the official contacts between the CSCE and political-military alliances were practically non-existent, today's relations between the OSCE and NATO can be categorized as co-operative and complementary.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and the collapse of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, NATO remained the only military-political alliance in the OSCE region. The launching of the PFP and the NATO expansion resulted in the growing overlapping membership between the OSCE and the NATO. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the OSCE documents of the nineties, after the Paris Summit of 1990, NATO is mentioned as a partner organization, sharing the same aims and "security philosophy" as the OSCE. On its part, the NATO Rome Summit in 1991 confirmed Alliance's commitment to the CSCE process and defined the roles of the NATO and the CSCE as complementary.

The PFP Framework Document from 1994 contains a number of references to the OSCE principles and practically makes the PFP program open only to the OSCE participating states. Since the democratic control of the armed forces is one of the principles that both of the PFP and of the OSCE share (Code of Conduct), co-operation in promoting this concept is particularly relevant and promising for further NATO-OSCE co-operation. It is not accidental that the OSCE Code of Conduct and the PFP framework Document were developed at the same time, since they have complementary aims and share the same philosophy.

In this context, the membership in "Partnership for Peace" has a particular importance for the security of all states in the region of South Eastern Europe, and for the establishment of durable stability in the region. Although some analysts tend to consider this initiative mainly as a first step or a "waiting room" for the membership in NATO, the PFP by itself contains important elements, such as joint military exercises, assistance in military training, and, in particular, promotion of democratic control over the army, which is of a special importance for until recently warring parties in the conflicts in the Balkans. Stability presupposes predictability, and belonging to the same military organization or program introduces a certainty that possible disputes among its members would not escalate into an open rift or military confrontation. Belonging to the same framework is also an additional guarantee for the territorial integrity of member states. For stability in South East Europe, it is of vital importance that all the countries of the region belong

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

to the same military organization, since it would dispel any possible doubts among the neighboring states about their long-term military-political orientation.

While noting that the PFP is not a military alliance, but a program of concrete projects of political-military co-operation, the participation in this multilateral endeavor is conducive not only to the gradual adjustment to NATO military standards, but also to its political philosophy. Political principles that constitute the normative foundation for the Partnership for Peace refer both to internal aspects in the member states and to their international relations. On the internal level, there is an insistence on protection and promotion of fundamental human rights and freedoms, justice and peace, based on democracy, while on the international level, the commitments that are underlined refer to respect for the principles of international law, fulfillment of obligations stemming from the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, refraining from the threat or use of force against territorial integrity or political independence of states, respect for international frontiers, peaceful settlement of disputes and commitment to the implementation of Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE Documents, as well as obligations stemming from arms control and disarmament agreements. This clearly shows that there is a close link between the OSCE commitments and principles upon which the PFP membership is based.

Since 1996, the OSCE and NATO have been engaged in expanding process of interaction and co-operation, both institutionally and in the field. Regular contacts take place between the OSCE Chairman in Office and the NATO Council. OSCE officials participate in certain NATO Meetings, while the NATO Secretary General, or his representative, attend appropriate OSCE meetings. There is also a regular exchange of information on the implementation of the CSBMs between the OSCE Secretariat and the Verification and Implementation Co-ordination Section of the NATO Secretariat.

Close practical co-operation between the two organizations was particularly noticeable during the efforts to bring peace in former Yugoslavia, such as the co-operation between the OSCE and the NATO-led SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, between the OSCE and KFOR in Kosovo, and in Macedonia (Amber Fox operation).

Throughout the region of South-Eastern Europe, in particular the Western Balkans, the OSCE liaised with NATO in activities and projects related to issues such as promoting cross-border cooperation and border management.

In this respect, the most recent example of the close OSCE-NATO co-operation, which also include the EU and Stability Pact partnership, was the Ohrid Regional Conference on Border Security and Management, convened in May 2003, whose first review conference was recently held in Belgrade. .

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

Regional Conference on defence and the freedom of information - Belgrade, November 14/15, 2003

The Ohrid Conference is based on a initiative of NATO, joined by the EU, the OSCE and the Stability Pact, aimed at developing a coherent and concerted approach to the border security and management issue in the region of Western Balkans, especially in the parts of the region where military units are still involved in border control (i.e. before full army withdrawal from the borders is accomplished in the framework of the security sector reforms, and until border control is put entirely under the responsibility of specialised professional police services, in accordance with European standards).

Key political goals that are formulated as instrumental to achieve effective border security and management refer to the establishment of open but controlled and secure borders in the entire region, in accordance with European standards, and to promoting further stabilisation, which will pave the way for a closer relationship of the countries of the region with Europe and for their perspective membership in the European Union, by strengthening the application of the rule of law, institutional capacity and by regional co-operation.

The OSCE practical contribution in this area is focused on civilian aspects, such as training of and advice to border police, assistance to and facilitation of institution building, in particular of national and regional co-ordinating bodies; promotion of regional co-operation, in particular cross-border bilateral co-operation.

On general level, the future NATO-OSCE cooperation in the region of South East Europe, would benefit from NATO enlargement and accession to the PFP by Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The fact that in that case the whole region would be covered by the OSCE and NATO "umbrella" could add a new dimension for NATO-OSCE co-operation in the region, including on issues like bringing the regional military balances to lower levels and firmly establishing democratic civilian control over the military.

It should be noted that the other international organizations engaged in the region, such as the European Union, Stability Pact, UNDP, Council of Europe etc, are also involved in projects promoting security sector reforms. However, since their activities are the subject of other presentations, they are not going to be dealt with in this paper.

2. Contribution to security sector reforms in South East Europe by the OSCE institutions and field missions

a) Conflict Prevention Centre

Conflict Prevention Centre, one of the first OSCE permanent bodies, established in the early nineties, has played an important role in promoting and harmonising the implementation of confidence and security measures and other OSCE commitments in politico-military sphere, including the Code of Conduct. In this, the CPC has been operating following the political

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

guidelines provided by the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation, where all the 55 participating States are represented.

One of the main forms of activities of the CPC in promoting the democratic control of the armed forces and security sector were the seminars on these issues, mainly focused on the regions of South East Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

In this context, one should mention the seminar on Democratic Control of Armed Forces and the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, organised in Belgrade in November 2002 by the Conflict Prevention Centre and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. The parliamentarians and representatives from defence and foreign ministries of Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Romania, Slovenia, the FYROM, Ukraine and Serbia and Montenegro took part in this meeting.

The goals of the seminar were, inter alia, to promote awareness of the parliamentary responsibilities outlined in the Code of Conduct, to share experiences obtained by the OSCE participating States in the area of civil democratic control of armed forces and to foster dialogue between parliaments involved in the oversight of the armed forces and ministries concerned.

The discussions at the seminar lead to a number of conclusions, relevant for security sector reform in South East Europe. It was noted that democratic control of armed forces as well as police and security services should be considered as an integral part of the security policy-making process and that both governments and parliaments should play equally important roles in this process.

The role of parliaments lies in adopting an appropriate legislative basis, which would provide the necessary framework and fulfil conditions for transparency and accountability of the armed, police and security forces. Parliamentary oversight should be based on the principles of constitutionality, legality and accountability.

The importance of the parliamentary oversight of military budgets, and importance of integrating armed forces into civil society was highlighted. In this respect the creation of a “civil culture” was discussed. It was stressed that armed forces should be de-politicised and politically neutral. The training of armed forces, police and security forces personnel in international humanitarian law should be regarded as a crucial element in promoting the principles set out in the Code of Conduct.

It was also stressed that parliaments ought to play a crucial role in the development of good governance of law enforcement and intelligence services. They should do this through providing the executive and security sectors with clear goals and clear responsibility, and thus accountability.

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

In addition to activities aimed at democratic control of armed forces, the OSCE has recently, especially after the Istanbul OSCE Summit in 1999, concentrated also on police reform, creating for that purpose a unit in the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna. This new OSCE priority shows that international security, at least in Europe, has stabilised, and that efforts could be also focused at internal security enhancement and standardisation.

Among the activities of in this field, one should note the efforts of the OSCE Senior Police Adviser to facilitate meetings of senior police officials from South East Europe, senior police Mission experts, and experienced national OSCE staff members. There are several successful models of police reform and assistance programs being conducted by the OSCE Missions in this region. It should be expected that by more clearly defined programme of implementing police reforms and assistance for requesting countries, the role of the OSCE could become even productive in the future.

b) Contribution of the OSCE Missions to security sector reform in South East Europe

Although they operate under different mandates and were founded in different periods and political circumstances, practically all OSCE Missions in South East Europe are actively involved in promoting and assisting security sector reforms in the countries where they operate.

Since its establishment in early 2001, the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro recognised the importance of the support for the national efforts to reform the defence and security sector. Already at the first joint seminar organised by the CPC, OSCE Mission and the host government (MFA), in March 2001, the issues of implementation of the Code of Conduct and the DCAF figured prominently in the deliberations. In its further joint activities with the Yugoslav partners, both from the government and NGO sectors, the Mission continued with its contribution to the enhancement of the democratic civilian control of the military.

While the security sector reform is a complex issue, it became clear that one of the priorities in which the OSCE is well set to assist relates to the parliamentary role in the process of reform. In this respect, at one of the Mission sponsored seminars the participants from the parliamentary committees in Serbia and Montenegro observed that they were not able, at least in the past, to perform an adequate role in the civilian control of the Army. They remarked that the Ministers of Defense did not appear on their hearings, and that the budget proposals submitted to the Federal Parliament, were brief and non-itemized. Formally, the members of the parliament could, using the mechanism of “deputies questions”, ask for clarifications and explanations on the work of the Defense Ministry, but this has been rarely used, even in the newly elected parliaments after the democratic changes in year 2000. On their part, the representatives of the

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

Ministry of Defense reciprocated that they have never received the formal invitation to the sessions of the Committees.

Consequently, as a contribution to improve the interaction between the legislature and the military, which is recognized by both sides, the Mission has put a strong emphasis, within its parliamentary support program, on ways and means to raise the parliamentary capacity in the oversight of the defense and security sectors. A number of seminars, workshops and study visits have been organized to this effect in the past two and the half years.

Having in mind that parliamentary control over the armed forces is directly related to the declared aim of the state union integration into Euro-Atlantic structures, in particular the Partnership for Peace Program, the Mission agreed in 2003 with the Assembly of the Union and the Assemblies of the two Republics on an assistance program for improving parliamentary oversight on Security and Defense. This program is drawing upon the support of the UK Government, whose Embassy in Belgrade is the focal point for the NATO and PFP.

Program is directed, among others, at the institutional development of parliamentary bodies (including capacity building for members of parliament and staff), improving the role of parliament in democratic oversight of the armed forces and security services and raising the awareness of Parliament in terms of its role in the process of European integration, especially toward the PFP membership, and on its responsibilities on the SaM potential participation in international peacekeeping operations.

So far, in the course of 2003, first two seminars in the series were organised by the Mission - one on the principles of parliamentary control and security sector reform and another one on parliamentary oversight of the defence and security sectors, which resulted in a number of concrete recommendations for improving the work of the Parliamentary Committees for Defence and Security and better oversight of the armed forces and security services.

Another important aspect of enhancing the principle of democratic control, stemming from the Code of Conduct, has to deal with changes in the legislation. In this respect, the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro contribution to the new law on military and civilian security services, which was adopted in the FRY Parliament in the summer of 2002.

The new legislation introduced much stricter control of security and intelligence services. Their activities, which involve intelligence gathering affecting civil liberties, have to be approved by the court. Military intelligence services were put under the competence of the Federal Government and the MOD. The law envisaged the formation of a special committee of the Federal Assembly for the control and supervision of the security services, which supervises the constitutional and legal aspect of their work, their expenditures and their respect of human rights. This

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

Regional Conference on defence and the freedom of information - Belgrade, November 14/15, 2003

parliamentary committee has the right to examine all relevant documents. Individual citizens have the right to appeal to the committee in cases where their rights are affected.

The Mission, together with two other international partners - East West Institute and the Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, made a contribution in the final stages of the drafting of the law.

Since the basis for a new state arrangement between Serbia and Montenegro has been agreed upon and adopted, providing that the defense matters remain the area of competence of the state union authorities, the conditions have been created to embark on elaborating new defence strategy and adoption of new laws on defense and on the army. It is important and positive that the new Constitutional Charter explicitly proclaims that the armed forces will be under democratic control. This is the principle, directly derived from the Code of Conduct, which should serve as a guiding norm in the future legislative changes in the SaM.

Third aspect of the Mission activities that relates to security sector reform has to do with assisting reorganization and reform in the police service. From the very beginning of its work, the Mission has been involved in the process of the reform in the police, proposing a set of recommendations to this respect ("Monk Report").

Six priority areas considered essential to police reform and development in Serbia were identified as a result of an OSCE analysis - police education and development, accountability and internal control, organised crime, forensics, border policing and community policing.

Without entering into details, it should be noted that the development and modernisation of police education is aimed at creating a police service that functions in a manner compatible with international standards.

One of the key aims in the overall reform of police in SaM is the development of better accountability and internal police control, a mechanism that provides independent oversight of police investigations and complaints.

Another priority - development of community policing - is a response to traditional concerns over the public's perception of the role of the police. These problems relate to the past practice of the lack of transparency and openness on the part of the police towards the public and a lack of consultation by the police concerning policing of a given community. Building trust between the public and the Police Service is an important part of both improving security and overcoming past misperceptions. In addition to a series of seminars on community policing, the project includes conflict prevention strategies, the development of community policing initiatives through consultation, community based problem solving principles and the development of media workshops for senior officers in partnership with local journalists.

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

In the context of police reform, probably best known OSCE contribution relates to the establishment of a multi-ethnic police service in South Serbia. In order to contribute to the stability and security in the area, it was decided that multi-ethnic police officers, upon completion of joint training, would be deployed to the existing police force in southern Serbia, with the aim of re-balancing the ethnic Albanian presence in the police structures in Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. Already by mid-2002, 400 police officers have been trained of which more than half were of Albanian ethnicity. Building upon this experience, Mission has launched in October 2003 a multi-year community-policing project for southern Serbia. The first step in this process deals with the need to develop trust and co-operation between police and citizens, while the second step will focus on community police training.

OSCE Mission in Kosovo has made the establishment of credible Kosovo police service is a major challenge in its security sector reform efforts. The OSCE and the United Nations are working together to recruit and train police officers for the new Kosovo Police Service. The OSCE is responsible for providing the initial training for police officers. It has established and operates the Kosovo Police Service School. Programs include crime investigation; defense tactics; democratic policing, in which loyalty towards the democratic legal order is the focus; legal affairs; police patrol duties; use of firearms; police skills, including first-aid, conflict intervention and handling of refugees; forensics and evidence and traffic control. The school opened in September 1999 and so far over 6,000 police cadets were trained by the OSCE in Kosovo

Similarly, police reform is a priority of the activities of the **OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje**, which are relevant for security sector reform in Macedonia. In co-operation with the national authorities, NATO, the EU, and other partner organizations, the OSCE initiatives strive to increase citizens' trust and confidence in law enforcement, and to develop the institutional foundation upon which a community-based multi-ethnic police service can be built. In the training of new generation of police officers, the cadets are recruited with an effort to ensure that the police service properly reflects the composition and distribution of the state population. The training is focused on democratic principles, rule of law, European policing and international human rights standards. By the end of July 2003, the number of new police officers trained by the Ministry of Interior and the OSCE reached over 1200. Of this total, over 1000 are from minority groups and nearly 15 per cent are female. Multi-ethnic police presence was deployed in all former crisis regions as the first important step in a process towards stabilization and re-establishment of the rule of law.

The Mission in Skopje has been assisting the Ministry of Interior with the implementation of community-based policing and with strengthening citizen confidence in police services

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

throughout the country. The long-term goal to improve security is achieved not only through preventive policing, but also through development of local partnerships between police, citizens and municipal structures. In this new approach, the objective is to break down the barriers between the police and communities, and to encourage co-operative relationships through Citizen Advisory Groups. Judged by the marked increase in communication between those who previously treated each other with mistrust, and the development of a visible, accessible and active police force, these initiatives proved as one of the most important achievements so far in police reform in Macedonia.

In **Croatia**, the **OSCE Mission's** contribution in the framework of the security sector reform is also mainly related to assisting change in the character and organization of the police force. Main objectives of the OSCE police assistance in Croatia are following - diversity management, aimed at creating institutionalized equal opportunity, regardless of ethnicity, gender, race, religion, or political affiliation; eliminating political influence from police activities; trial protection program; development of legal and sub-legal acts to more adequately diagnose and respond to victims of ethnically motivated crime; cross border policing to better cope with organized crime and terrorism; community policing with an emphasis on the role of police in proactive conflict resolution; local police-media relations assistance, in order to jointly develop the police and media role in building civil society and promoting peaceful reintegration.

Similar to the programs of the other Missions in the region, security sector reform oriented activities **of the OSCE Presence in Albania** have also dealt with the bringing of the police service to the European standards.

On the other hand, the role of the **OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina** reflects its unique position, since this Mission has the mandate to deal extensively with defense reform. Its work is also closely connected to preparing Bosnia and Herzegovina for the integration in into Euro-Atlantic security structures.

The Defence Reforms Section is at the heart of OSCE's activity in the area of political military change, essential for the future security of the country. The section works closely with BiH authorities to establish the foundations of democratic control of the military at the State-level. The OSCE has very close links with the Standing Committee on Military Matters (SCMM), BiH's State-level defense institution. Recently adopted Defense Reform Commission Report (25 September 2003) has been made possible due to the OSCE engagement.

The SCMM is being strengthened so it will have the capacity to conduct the full range of defense related matters. The OSCE has provided guidance in drafting the SCMM's Terms of Reference, and in establishing working procedures and mandates. The Mission worked with the SCMM Secretariat to prepare State-level strategic documents. These include BiH's Defence Targets

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

and Pledges, which outline the State's commitments to radical defense reform, and the BiH Security and Defence Policy documents. These activities are closely co-ordinated with the BiH Parliamentary system. OSCE experts provide guidance and training to parliamentarians so that they better understand their role in overseeing the Armed Forces in BiH. The next step is the creation of a Security Policy Committee in the BiH Parliamentary Assembly, which will set the conditions for proper democratic oversight of the Armed Forces.

In this context, it is worthwhile quoting the "BiH Defense Reform Pledges", since they reflect the close link between the OSCE principles and the goal of Euro-Atlantic integration. Pledge one relates to implementing defense reforms that will hasten BiH's integration into the European family, and make the country and the wider region more stable in the long term; pledge two should strengthen those State-level institutions which exercise civilian command and control over the Armed Forces in BiH, in accordance with the highest international standards; pledge three commits to provide comprehensive, effective and transparent parliamentary oversight over State-level defense institutions; pledge four should ensure that BiH has professional, modern and affordable Armed Forces; pledge five aims at restructuring the Armed Forces to enable them to participate in the Partnership for Peace, integrate into wider Euro-Atlantic structures, and engage in peace support operations and other humanitarian tasks around the world.

Summing-up the OSCE activities in the region related to security sector reform, one can conclude that they were directed both at the army and police sectors, although not everywhere, but that the common element has been the OSCE emphasis on parliamentary oversight. This stems, first of all, from the importance of this aspect of democratic control, but also from the recognition of the need to build-up parliamentary role in general in the region and make this institution fully relevant in political life. Furthermore, the OSCE focus on parliamentary dimension has resulted from a division of labor with other international organizations, such as the PfP, which are dealing directly with defense establishments as their partners, while the OSCE is considered to have a comparative advantage and experience in democracy-building, thus making parliaments the prime target of its efforts. In any case, there is a room and role to play here by all interested international organization, since the security sector reform process is a complex and multi-dimensional one.

3. Potential new priorities in security sector reform in South East Europe

Stemming from the past experiences and from the need to promote parliamentarianism in the region, it would seem natural that parliamentary capacity building, and other projects, such as police reform, remain the priorities of the OSCE activities in the security sector reform processes in the region of South East Europe. However, one could also imagine other contribution from the OSCE in that respect in the foreseeable future.

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

For example, the decision to establish Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC), as a new OSCE forum, taken at the last Ministerial OSCE Conference in Porto in December 2002, and the orientation of the OSCE to identify main threats to security at the beginning of the new century and develop a strategy to deal with them could be also instrumental for regional efforts in this respect, including the region of South East Europe.

The decision to initiate this endeavour was declared in the Charter for European Security adopted at the Istanbul Summit (1999), which identified risks and challenges to security, and affirmed the commitment of the participating States to co-operate in a spirit of solidarity in countering them, furthering the concept of the common comprehensive and indivisible security.

Following this, the basis for an annual security conference was drawn upon in the Bucharest Ministerial Declaration (2001) and, in particular, in paragraph 8, where the OSCE states affirmed their determination to address the threats to security and stability in the 21st century and to develop a strategy for the OSCE to do its part to counter these threats.

As a concrete step, the Porto Ministerial tasked the OSCE Permanent Council to elaborate, during the year of 2003, a comprehensive OSCE Strategy to address threats to security and stability in the twenty-first century. and requested the Forum for Security Co-operation to make its own contribution to this work.

The main aims of the strategy that were listed include the following: identifying threats to common security and stability in the OSCE region and analysing their changing nature and main causes; addressing the role of the OSCE bodies, institutions and field operations in countering threats to security and stability; envisaging how the OSCE can prevent or counter threats to security and stability and contribute to relevant international efforts; enhancing forms of co-operation with other organisations and institutions in this area; improving the OSCE response to participating States' needs in capacity building relevant to countering threats to security and stability.

In the discussions on potential security threats in the OSCE region, a number of them were identified, mainly as an illustrative list, but also as an indication of possible risk and dangers that the OSCE community of nations could be faced with in the future. Such threats to security and stability, from the political-military perspective, could stem from military imbalances, inter-State tensions and conflicts, violations of the OSCE norms and principles that can result in conflicts both within states and between them, lack of effective democratic control of the armed and security forces, ethnic problems, of intra- or inter-State character, the existence of armed insurgent, extremist or paramilitary groups beyond the control of the established state authorities, international and domestic terrorism (including state-sponsored terrorism), in conjunction with organised crime and corruption, uncontrolled transfers of small arms and light

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

weapons and major conventional armaments, cross-border illegal trafficking, existence of surpluses of ammunition, especially of unstable stockpiles, and existence of minefields in some participating States laid in relation to previous wars and armed conflicts. In addition, other types of threats, such as social, economic, ecological etc, were also mentioned.

While this enumeration is only an illustrative one, its relevance for the region of South East Europe, which was burdened by recent conflicts, is obvious and this could very well serve as a guideline for developing or revising security strategies of the individual countries, especially having in mind that this an ongoing and constant process in the rapidly changing world.

Regarding the new opportunities or requirement in the security sector reform field, which calls for long term and sustained efforts aimed at reform and reorganization of the army, and towards increased democratic control over the military and greater transparency in military matters in general, one could imagine some regional or national initiatives inspired, for example, by the relatively recent OSCE Concluding Document of Negotiations on Article V of Dayton Peace Agreement, aimed at strengthening security and stability “in and around the former Yugoslavia”. Although the measures proposed are voluntary and represent the variations of those contained in Vienna Document 1999, they are designed for the specific situation of post-conflict rehabilitation in the region and the represent a set of recommendations and guidelines which the participating States can implement in accordance with their security requirements and with a view to contribute to regional stability.

Some of these measures could include, for example, increased defense budget transparency, and exchange of information on actual yearly expenditures of the countries in the region, as well on financial contribution or donations of armaments and equipment, received from any other State. (Par. 10 of the Concluding Document).

Another measure could be an exchange of information, on a bilateral basis, with regard to the national holdings of conventional armaments, among the countries of the region and with those in its proximity. (Par. 11)

Confidence-building process in the region would be reinforced also by the establishment of joint training for peacekeeping, search and rescue or disaster relief, by the establishment of hotlines between regional military commanders and by the development of consultative mechanism in case of unusual military activities. (Par. 12.2)

Further steps to be taken in the military field could also refer to the adjustments in military doctrines, which could emphasize their non-offensive postures, in order to reassure the neighbors in their defensive character.

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

It would also seem that the potential of the OSCE Code of Conduct could be more used in the context of South East Europe, thus serving even more as an instrument of crisis prevention and stabilization.

Increased public awareness about the Code, both within the armed forces, and in the public in general, would also be of a direct relevance for exercising effective oversight over the security sector as a whole, thus assuring that it does not get out of the civilian control. In this context, relevant NGOs, both national and international, should be encouraged to refer to the Code in their activities and campaigns.

Some of the regional seminars and round tables on democratic control of armed forces and security sector reform, which gather representatives of the defence sector and the executive and legislative branches, could focus on specific issues, such as the comparing national security policies and military doctrines, making them more transparent and better known to neighbouring countries.

An explicit commitment of the participating States to use Code of Conduct as a guiding document in crisis-prevention and conflict resolution procedures could also be a helpful step towards more effective implementation of the Code.

On sub-regional level, especially in conflict and crisis affected parts of the OSCE area, the inclusion or reflection of the relevant Code of Conduct provisions in sub-regional international agreements, possibly in a legally binding form, would be a stabilizing measure in itself.

Similar step would also be a wider and more detailed exchange of information on the implementation of the Code among the SEE countries. This could be done first as a voluntary confidence and security-building measure at a sub-regional level, and later, on the basis of experience gained, could become a standard for all the OSCE participating States.

Finally, the newly emerging concept of human security, which has been recognized by the OSCE in the Declaration of the Istanbul Summit 1999, with its emphasis on the safety of the individual from violence, armed conflicts and terrorism, or gross violation of human rights, and other security threats, particularly those aimed at civilians, should be taken into account in developing new concepts and practical arrangements in framework of the security sector reform process in South East Europe. Since the individual citizens have been the main victims of past conflicts in the region, they should now become a main beneficiary and a focus of the new security environment, which is nowadays emerging in the region.

In conclusion, it should be reminded once again that the actions of the international community and the national efforts of the South-East European countries in the field of security sector reforms should be pursued within the larger process of the building of stable democratic

Security Sector Reform and the Media.

structures in the region, promotion of common European democratic standards and of the rule of law. Reforms in only one sector, no matter how meaningful, can not become a lasting feature without fundamental and irreversible change in the societies and their main institutions.

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Security Sector Reform and the Media.

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