



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

WHAT IS THE OSCE?

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is a pan-European security body whose **55 participating States** span the geographical area from Vancouver to Vladivostok. As a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE is a **primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation**. The OSCE's unique approach to security is both comprehensive and co-operative: **comprehensive** in that it deals with three

dimensions of security: the human, the politico-military and the economic/environmental. It therefore addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, preventive diplomacy, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, democratization and economic and environmental issues; and it is **co-operative** in that all the States participating in OSCE activities are equal in status and not bound by treaty, so that decisions are taken by consensus on a politically, but not legally-binding basis.

FROM CSCE TO OSCE

The OSCE traces its origins back to the *détente* phase of the early 1970s, when the **Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE)** was created to serve as a multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between East and West. Meeting over two years in Helsinki and Geneva, the CSCE reached agreement on the **Helsinki Final Act**, which was signed on 1 August, 1975. This document contained (in 'Basket III') key commitments on human rights that became the basis of the so-called "Helsinki process". It also established fundamental principles (the 'Decalogue') governing the behaviour of States towards their citizens as well as towards each other.

Until 1990, the CSCE functioned mainly as a series of meetings and conferences that built on and extended the participating States' commitments, while periodically reviewing their implementation. However, with the coming to an end of the Cold War, the **Paris Summit** of November 1990 set the CSCE on a new course. In the **Paris Charter for a New Europe**, the CSCE was called upon to play its part in managing the historic change taking place in Europe and responding to the new challenges of the post-Cold War period, acquiring permanent institutions and operational capabilities.

A major arms control agreement – the **Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE)** – was also concluded on the margins of the Paris Summit. A number of other important military security treaties, including the 1992 **Treaty on Open Skies** and the **Vienna documents** of 1990, 1992, 1994 and 1999, as well as the key **Document on**

Small Arms and Light Weapons (2000), now form part of the CSCE/OSCE politico-military dimension *acquis*.

In the early 1990s, offices and institutions were set up, meetings became more regular, missions were established and the Conference's work became more structured. Recognizing that the CSCE was no longer simply a Conference, in 1994 the **Budapest Summit** agreed to change its name to the **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe**. As well as being a reflection of its institutional development following the end of the Cold War, this also gave the Organization a new political impetus.

The **Lisbon Summit** of 1996 strengthened the key role of the OSCE in fostering security and stability in all their dimensions. It stimulated the development of an **OSCE Charter for European Security**, eventually adopted at the **Istanbul Summit**, in November 1999. This was instrumental in improving the operational capabilities of the Organization and co-operation with its partners. A revised CFE Treaty was also signed at the Istanbul Summit by 30 OSCE participating States.

Today, the OSCE occupies a unique place among European security institutions. This is attributable to several factors: its broad membership; its co-operative and comprehensive approach to security; its conflict prevention instruments; its well-established tradition of open dialogue and consensus-building; its network of field missions; and a well-developed pattern of co-operation with other international organizations. The OSCE negotiating and decision-making bodies meet regularly in Vienna's Hofburg Congress Centre.

HOW IS THE OSCE STRUCTURED?

The **Permanent Council** is the OSCE's main standing body for political consultation and decision-making. Its members are the permanent representatives of the participating States, who meet weekly in the Hofburg in Vienna to discuss all issues pertinent to the OSCE, and to take appropriate decisions. The Hofburg is also the venue of regular meetings of the **Forum for Security Co-operation**, which deals with arms control and confidence- and security-building measures, and the **Joint Consultative Group**, which oversees the implementation of the CFE Treaty (see page one).

The foreign ministers of the 55 OSCE participating States hold annual **Ministerial Council** meetings, except in years where a **Summit** of the Heads of State or Government takes place. These provide guidance and orientation to the Organization. The most recent Summit took place in Istanbul in November 1999. In addition, the Senior Council meets once a year in Prague as the **Economic Forum**.

The **Chairman-in-Office (CIO)** of the OSCE, the foreign minister of the country holding the Chairmanship, has overall responsibility for executive action. The Chairmanship, which rotates annually, passed on 1 January 2002 from Romania to Portugal. In 2003 it will be held by the Netherlands. These three countries constitute the current OSCE **Troika**, which advises the CIO. The Chairmanship has the possibility to appoint **Personal** or **Special Representatives** to deal with specific issues or situations.

Support for the Chairmanship in attaining the goals of the OSCE is provided by the **Secretariat**, headed by the Secretary General – currently Ambassador Jan Kubis of Slovakia, who began a second three-year term of office in June 2002. The **Secretary General** acts as a representative of the CIO and his tasks include the management of OSCE structures and operations. The Secretariat, located in Vienna, also provides administrative and operational support to the Organization. Besides the Office of the Secretary General, it comprises the Conflict Prevention Centre, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, the Department of Human Resources and the Department of Management and Finance. The Prague Office assists with documentation, research and other information functions.

In helping the OSCE to fulfil its mandate, the Organization has several other instruments at its disposal. The **Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)** plays an active role in monitoring elections and developing national electoral and human rights institutions, providing technical assistance to national legal institutions, promoting the development of non-governmental organizations and civil

society, training journalists and OSCE human rights and election monitors, acting as the OSCE contact point for Roma and Sinti issues, and providing support for specialized OSCE seminars. The Director and staff are based in Warsaw, Poland.

Of special importance in the field of early warning and conflict prevention is the office of the **High Commissioner on National Minorities**, based in The Hague, Netherlands. The High Commissioner, Rolf Ekeus, of Sweden, assesses situations involving national minority issues and seeks to defuse tense situations at the earliest possible stage. With advice and recommendations, he encourages the parties to pursue non-confrontational policies.

A further OSCE institution, the Office of the **Representative on Freedom of the Media**, was created in 1997 to observe developments in the media of participating States and to provide a rapid response in serious cases of non-compliance with OSCE principles and commitments relating to freedom of expression and of the media. The Office of the Representative, Freimut Duve, of Germany, is located in Vienna.

Currently, the OSCE has 19 **field missions** or other activities in the following 17 states: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan (see page four).

The OSCE also serves as a framework for conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building measures, the latter embodied in the **Vienna Document** (last amended in 1999). The participating States also adopted a politico-military **Code of Conduct** in 1994, embodying principles to guide the role of the armed forces in democratic societies. In addition, the CSCE/OSCE has developed several mechanisms for peacefully settling disputes and has established a **Court of Conciliation and Arbitration** in Geneva. In 1999, the Permanent Council decided to place the **Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe** under the auspices of the OSCE.

A distinct body, the **OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**, is made up of more than 300 parliamentarians from all the OSCE participating States. It aims to promote parliamentary involvement in the Organization's activities, debating issues and adopting resolutions and recommendations pertinent to the work of the OSCE. Its members also play an important role in election monitoring. The main annual session is held in July, and various other meetings and seminars take place throughout the year. The Assembly's Secretariat is located in Copenhagen.

THE OSCE PARTICIPATING STATES

- Albania
- Andorra
- Armenia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Canada
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Georgia
- Germany
- Greece
- Holy See
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland

- Italy
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Malta
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- San Marino
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland

- Tajikistan
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom
- United States of America
- Uzbekistan
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION

- Japan
- Republic of Korea
- Thailand

MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION

- Algeria
- Egypt
- Israel
- Jordan
- Morocco
- Tunisia

FIGURES FOR 2002

OSCE Budget: 187.3 million euros

Staff: The OSCE Secretariat and Institutions employ some 380 staff. Another 1,200 international staff, most of whom are seconded by OSCE participating States, and some 2,700 local staff work in the 19 OSCE field missions and activities.

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STRUCTURES AND INSTITUTIONS

