

OSCE 40 YEARS

– COOPERATING WITH CIVIL SOCIETY FOR PEACE

WISE REPORT 1/2016



In light of the upcoming 40th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe – OSCE launched, in 2012, an extensive reform process entitled the “Helsinki + 40 –process” . Notwithstanding its ambition, the endeavour encountered unforeseen obstacles, primarily posed by the crisis in Ukraine and the resulting deepening lack of trust and confidence and overall political will between the OSCE participating States. Conversely, the response of the Organization to the crisis in Ukraine also demonstrated the uniqueness, resilience, flexibility and rapid reaction capacities of the OSCE, which has been able to effectively act to provide stability inside the OSCE area.

The conference “OSCE 40 YEARS – cooperating with civil society for peace” aimed at assessing the outcomes of the work within the Helsinki +40 -process, the remaining challenges as well as other major events of 2015, including the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s Annual Session in July in Helsinki, and the 22nd OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Belgrade in December.

The expert speakers shared their vision of the Organization’s role vis-à-vis major global challenges and threats to security and social stability in the region, as well as regarding the future of the OSCE.

Wider Security Network - WISE organised on 10 December 2015 at the Europe Hall in Helsinki a civil society conference to honour the OSCE’s 40th anniversary as well as the culmination of the Helsinki +40 process, “an inclusive effort by all participating States to provide strong and continuous political impetus to advancing work towards a security community, and further strengthening co-operation in the OSCE on the way towards 2015”.¹



1) In 2013, the OSCE Ambassadors met regularly in Vienna and defined the following eight thematic areas for discussion within the Helsinki +40 -process, covering all three OSCE dimensions and cross-dimensional issues:

1. Fostering military transparency by revitalizing and modernizing conventional arms control and confidence and security building regimes;
2. Further enhancing OSCE capacities in addressing transnational threats;
3. Further strengthening OSCE capacities across the conflict cycle;
4. Striving for tangible progress towards the settlement of protracted conflicts in a peaceful and negotiated manner;
5. Enhancing the strategic orientation of the economic and environmental dimension;
6. Strengthening the human dimension;
7. Enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the OSCE;
8. Increasing interaction with the Partners for Co-operation and with international and regional organizations.

Eight Helsinki +40 Co-ordinators, appointed from among the OSCE Ambassadors for each of the thematic areas, would identify and promote areas of agreement on concrete proposals raised during the thematic debates within the informal Working group.

The conference was organised together with the Peace Union of Finland and the Finnish 1 325 Network and it was supported by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The event focused on the OSCE's conflict prevention, peacebuilding and mediation work and the importance of engaging women and civil society actors in a meaningful cooperation for achieving these goals.

The first session of the conference concentrated on the role of the OSCE and civil society actors in peacebuilding in the Balkan area, and aimed at advancing prospects for more extensive collaboration. The second session looked at the OSCE's challenges in conflict prevention and peace-building.

The conference was opened by the Chairperson of WISE, Tarja Kantola and moderated by Terhi Nieminen-Mäkynen, former Chief of Gender and Human Rights Department at EUPOL Afghanistan. The following experts gave their presentations and took part in the discussions: Nina Suomalainen, Head of the OSCE Mission to Skopje; Tatjana Popovic, Director of Nansen Dialogue Center in Serbia; Paul Picard, Deputy Director for Operations Service of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre; Timo Kantola, Deputy Director General of the Political Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland; Maria Chepurina, Programme Officer and Project Coordinator of the Helsinki + 40 Project at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly; Konsta Heikkilä, Special Adviser to the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly; and Sinikukka Saari, Senior Research Fellow, Finnish Institute for International Affairs. The closing words were given by Member of Parliament and Vice-Chairperson of WISE Eva Biaudet.

The Chairperson of WISE Tarja **KANTOLA** opened the seminar. She told the audience about the background of the newly-founded organisation, Wider Security Network, explaining how the Civil Society Conflict Prevention Network KATU and the Finnish Committee for European Security, STETE, a few years back started closer cooperation that culminated in October 2015 with the merger of the two, bringing all the main political party groups of the Finnish Parliament together with several Finnish NGOs working with broad security and security/development themes.

Kantola pinpointed that the focus of the new organisation is on security sector activities, and WISE envisages it from a wider security viewpoint. In addition to its NGO and MP members and broader networks, WISE will also continue close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense. The network plans to organise discussions and events in Helsinki and hopes to expand activities to other parts of Finland as well. We follow closely what the government is doing on security policy and provide input as requested, including the upcoming strategies on foreign and security policy, defence policy, and possible increase in the NATO-debate. We organise expert meetings on diverse security



political topics. We acknowledge also that we must observe and report on the work of the OSCE more thoroughly, especially because of Finland's special history with the organisation and the relevance of the Organization especially now. The network continues and deepens cooperation also at EU level through the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office EPLO.

"There is a deeper need for cooperation between NGOs and authorities in today's world", stated Kantola in the end of her presentation. A good example of a success in this cooperation was the UN meeting, organized the day before.



The Moderator of the seminar, Terhi **NIEMINEN-MÄKYNEN**, took over after Kantola, mentioning the date of this seminar celebrating the OSCE's 40th anniversary falls well on the international human rights day, and following the grand 60-year anniversary celebrations of the UN in Finland of the day before.

She then went on to the roots of the CSCE process and explained the starting point of the process, including the Helsinki and Geneva meetings, was at the time of detente, when the world climate was even worse than today, in the midst of the Cold War. But the key event bringing the Summit to Helsinki was the European Youth Security Conference of 1972, welcoming 26 Participating states in Helsinki. The youth meeting acted as a booster for the planned governmental security conference and after that started the Helsinki process.

The 1990 Paris summit then decided on the change of name from conference to Organization for European Security, as we now know it.

Nieminen-Mäkynen has herself participated in both the youth meeting and the Helsinki Summit. She has extensive working experience from the OSCE as well. Her work history includes acting as election observer in various observation missions; acting as Mayor in Prizren, Kosovo; as mentor working against trafficking in human beings in Kosovo, Macedonia and in Moldova.

Head of Mission at the OSCE's Mission to Skopje, Nina **SUOMALAINEN** began her address by viewing the current challenges of the Organization. She inferred that the Helsinki +40-process, which is to culminate by the end of 2015, is a highly political, diplomatic concept, many parts of which are still negotiated at the OSCE. However, the relevance

of the Organization has risen especially due to the activities in Ukraine, where the OSCE has established the Special Monitoring Mission SMM and monitored and facilitated dialogue on the ground.

Suomalainen has built a long career at the OSCE, having worked in Warsaw, the Hague and Sarajevo. In 1996 was established the mission that she currently heads in Skopje, Macedonia. The size of the Mission was first increased in early 2000s after it monitored developments during the 2001 conflict. In the recent years the Mission size has been reduced so that it in 2015 had 148 Mission members. Challenging developments are taking place in the Mission's host country, including a difficult political crisis, a wiretapping scandal and a security incident where eight policemen lost their lives. Suomalainen went on to explain, what is the added value of the Mission and why are they there. Regarding the difficult refugee situation today, the Mission has e.g. monitored the influx of refugees to Macedonia, monitored the security situation, monitored the country's Southern border towards Greece and Northern border to Serbia as well as visited reception centers.



As former Chairperson of the Finnish Helsinki Committee Suomalainen has always emphasized the importance of civil society cooperation. However, she wanted to highlight some challenges that officials face when establishing such cooperation on the ground. How to determine who are the representatives of civil society there? Should the "usual suspects" be approached or someone else? Should officials work also with women's and youth groups, human rights NGOs, media representatives, political parties, churches, religious communities, trade unions, employer's organisations, and non-organised NGOs, i.e. people from the countryside?

How should they relate to GONGOs (governmental NGOs)? Suomalainen also pinpointed that NGOs are not democratically elected organisms and they also do have interests. And if they become bigger, they tend to claim to represent all people of a certain group. How can officials reach for instance peasants in a remote part of a country? Another phenomenon to take note of is the decline in numbers of NGOs, since their financing has become difficult these days. Suomalainen highly recommended thinking outside the box, and going to speak to those who are not necessarily represented by NGOs.

She also gave the Finnish example of consultation procedure, according to which the NGOs are required not only to be heard by officials but get their clear message through as well as their concerns heard. As the OSCE is a diplomatic organism, it is not always easy to involve civil society in its work, as modalities thereto might be lacking. Then again, the OSCE institutions such as the Representative of the Freedom of the Media (RFoM) and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), have good modalities to meet with NGOs, but the Missions also try to have regular, larger scale meetings with civil society. And for example, the OSCE Secretary General, Lamberto Zannier had a meeting recently in Skopje, in which ten NGOs assisted.

How to work with NGOs then? Suomalainen noted that she does not anymore believe in the usefulness of a specific unit for civil society cooperation in a Mission, except when going into a new country where there is a very weak civil society. Maybe a grant system could be established to help the development of the civil society sphere. According to Suomalainen, civil society work should be mainstreamed into whatever they do, in the main work of the Mission. Regular meetings strengthen civil society trust in the authority and make the Organization approachable.

Suomalainen highlighted that no NGO can nevertheless have all the information, and they do have their own interest as well. However, NGOs have done valuable work in the Balkans, for instance, having worked to bring forward transitional justice, indictment for war crimes and facilitation of dialogue, as an example of which can be mentioned Birn Balkan, a successful investigative reporting network. The International Federation of

the Helsinki Committee also produced a report on the Human rights in the OSCE region and did important work in the 1990s. It stood up against the dictatorships in the OSCE region, working at great personal risk.

The Civil society forum of the Western Balkans region also works in Vienna for topics such as jobs and prosperity, freedom of expression, regional cooperation, freedom of speech, freedom of the media, ending irregular detention, rule of law, fairness and election fairness. It is noteworthy that jobs, ending poverty, and enhancing prosperity are not very familiar ground for NGOs' work. However, these are often found among the root causes creating radicalization etc. Suomalainen felt that NGOs should definitely work more on these issues and also on combatting radicalization. Why are there hundreds of combatants that have left for Syria and coming back? Can civil society work to prevent the radicalization of the youth? CSOs have alternative viewpoints from the field, and knowledge or experience of effects of legislative decisions. Inclusiveness benefits all.



Director Tatjana **POPOVIC** from Nansen Dialogue Center titled her presentation “How to be wise on security questions around the globe”. Firstly she explained that the main aim of Fridtjoff Nansen was to work for the needs of the local population, which her organization also holds as a guiding principle.

Popovic recounted that right after the Helsinki Summit in 1975 there was a meeting in 1977 in Belgrade. The topics handled in the meeting were sovereignty and territorial integrity, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as economics, science, and technological cooperation.



Subsequently, the OSCE has acted as an important facilitator of these processes in the Balkans. Following important meetings have been the 2008 meeting in Belgrade and, most recently, the 22nd OSCE Ministerial Council of 2015. In the Council's agenda dialogue, peaceful resolution of disputes, and rebuilding consensus on European security were of most importance. And what is happening in Middle East was strongly reflected in the meeting, as it is in the whole world currently.

Popovic explained that the link to the political level is important to Nansen, first of all so that politicians understand what their work is about. According to Popovic, dialogue is a tool and a social process. The aim of dialogue is to listen to one another deeply enough to be changed by what they learn, and understanding others have same grievances as oneself. Nansen's method of action starts with working at the local community level and aims to stay on the ground for a longer period of time. A good example is Nansen's work on education on peace implementation. Nansen has worked on this in Macedonia, for example, for 20 years. Nansen's target groups include municipalities, education sector (introducing curriculums in schools), decision-makers etc. For example, Nansen established in Montenegro mediators' groups in primary schools. In Serbia, Vojvodina Nansen worked for violence prevention in multiethnic communities; in South Serbia, Bujanovac Nansen worked from 2007 to 2013 facilitating multiethnic children going to the same school. In this case radical groups stopped busses with multiethnic children going to the same school, but Nansen succeeded with the help of the children's parents. Nansen has also arranged several capacity-building trainings, supported Serbian returnee processes to Albanian villages in Kosovo, established Nansen schools in Macedonia and Vukovar, Croatia. Nansen has also introduced

education on peace integration in school curricula across the Montenegro-Serbia border.

Nansen has also held a fruitful relationship with the OSCE. Nansen received the OSCE's Max van den Stoel award for the School of democratic dialogue project in Montenegro. Nansen has also organized trainings together with other actors, such as mediation training together with the Folke Bernadotte Academy in 2012.

Nansen has a specific approach they use in facilitating dialogue, and the different stages are:

- Providing a safe space for dialogue;
- Having established trust, moving to design the media strategy and producing joint statements;
- Striving for raising awareness;
- Aiming at long-term presence;
- Building lasting relationships.

Ultimately, Popovic introduced Nansen's project on inter-ethnic dialogue in South Serbia. The process entailed talking to community elders, organizing seminars for political representatives, and two years later education processes. The modus operandi was step-by-step reconciliation. Firstly, the objective was to let people talk first as much as they need. Secondly, striving to let go of the past and history to concentrate on the present and a joint future for all counterparts. A Programme was established for local self-government as well as an Educational programme including school mediation and building social competence skills.

After the first part of the seminar Elisabeth **REHN** presented her comments on the discussion. She spoke about her Eastern European experiences and provided suggestions for strengthening commitment there.

Rehn found important that we call on all partners, find religious leaders as interlocutors, which is very important since they are closely attached to political proceedings. Also, we should see sports as a unifying activity. On one hand, we cannot play football forever, but on the other with the refugee crisis deepening currently, these activities are needed again. Rehn also provided a good example of the unifying force of sports from the Presevo triangle bordering Serbia, Macedonia/Fyrom, and Kosovo. A children's football tournament was arranged there together with UEFA. Rehn also mentioned that she is still getting reports from the Helsinki Committee in Serbia. The reports are tough and contain a lot of criticism. However, what we do need is people opening their mouths.

During the Q&A-session, one of the participants enquired how it would be best to work on education, and whether it is important to start preparing for education when the war is still ongoing, having been involved in a civil society strengthening project in Syria. Popovic emphasized that women are a connecting factor in the society, since they move across the different society lines, so the best strategy would be to try to establish connections with local women, medical doctors, and the youth. It is also important to help them cope with what is happening and to learn from others.

Suomalainen explained that they have mediation clubs in Macedonia as well, providing small activities including mediation, sports, art events and so on. Nevertheless, Suomalainen pointed out that it may not be possible to change the school systems or curricula. Therefore it would be smart to start by getting the children together. Curricula and teaching material can be produced by organizations having more expertise such as Nansen.

Another question from the audience pointed out that there are parties to a conflict, but there are also winners and losers, referring to Popovic's presentation on her organisation's support for Serbs in Vukovar and Kosovo, and asked whether she can see a change in concept on the international view of different groups in Kosovo. Popovic replied that the wars in the 1990s pushed minority groups to the side. Small changes have been seen since, but the minorities in Kosovo are still living in enclaves. Media has played a crucial role in these issues. Lobbyist groups and incapable politicians on the Serbian side have made progress difficult.

Nevertheless, the Serbian government is trying to mend this situation. Academics are also important in bringing these issues forward, but unfortunately they are not quoted enough or presented in the media headlines.

One of the participants mentioned that the leaders in the Balkan region are all male and wanted to know how the situation of women is today regarding Balkan civil society? Popovic said that there indeed are more women working in the civil society sector. Also, in Parliament the promotion of women raised their participation towards the minimum of 30 %. Popovic also pinpointed that women have not been in a subdued position in the society, but women in leading roles need to be more numerous.

Suomalainen referred to Bosnia that achieved a quota on political party lists for women to be elected in the Parliament. In some countries there has been a slowdown since, when many have gone back to traditional values. Suomalainen herself has experienced belittling treatment and these attitudes are still predominant. Women going into politics have often quite nasty media experiences.



Nieminen-Mäkynen added that it is often expected that after the conflict everything changes. However, the old traditions still prevail. With moderate islamism in Kosovo in the background, it has taken a longer time for women to get engaged in society over the barrier men have created.

Paul **PICARD** from the OSCE Conflict Prevention Center started with some of the main issues and outcomes that were at stake in the recent Belgrade Ministerial Council (3-4 December 2015). The Council was well attended, gathering over 40 Foreign Affairs Ministers and hundreds of high-level diplomats from the 57 OSCE participating States,

11 Partners for Co-operation and representatives of international organizations. The context was tense with the downing of a Russian fighter by the Turkish Air Force a few days before the meeting. The Ministerial provided the framework for the first direct meeting between Russian Federation and Turkish high-level diplomats fulfilling the OSCE's most important mission: providing a platform for dialogue. Back to its inception, the Organization, which was at the time a Conference (namely the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe) was designed to provide East and West a platform to talk to each other. Another important aspect of the OSCE was highlighted by the principle of equality, which puts all OSCE participating States on equal ground with regards to decision-making in the Organization. For instance, during the Ministerial Council, it happened that one of the smallest participating States could not agree on some language in an important decision and, hence, the issue was not adopted.

The Declaration on principles guiding relations between participating States that is also called the "Decalogue" enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act (signed in this very city 40 years ago in 1975) relies heavily on the peaceful settlement of disputes. Picard mentioned that civil society had become increasingly important and active in conflict resolution.

The OSCE is a norm-based organization and the decisions made are politically, rather than legally binding. Its institutions, including the High

Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the Representative on the Freedom of the Media (RFoM), and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) provide a solid foundation and are completed with sixteen field operations established in four regions (Eastern Europe, South Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia), allowing the OSCE to have an extensive footprint in areas that need it most.

Talking about an office presence in one of the OSCE regions, Picard was once questioned on the effectiveness of the OSCE's field operation since some of the elections held could not be considered democratic according to ODIHR standards. Picard said that despite political difficulties in some regions of the OSCE, the Organization's presence was essential. Even if there were no immediate and visible results in some OSCE participating States, the OSCE's presence and footprint through numerous activities in the three dimensions (political/military; economic/environment; human rights) provided a way to reach out to all levels of society, including civil society and especially the youth. Therefore, an OSCE presence can have much positive externalities and outreach and inspire people and especially future decision-makers. An example of such a successful OSCE activity is the OSCE Academy in Bishkek established in 2002. For the past 13 years, more than 200 master's degrees have been awarded and many OSCE Academy graduates are now working in government.



PHOTO: OSCE / BÉATRICE DEVÈNES



Having been actively involved in the resolution of the conflict in and around Ukraine, Picard went into details explaining the Special Monitoring Mission's (SMM) establishment and activities. He recounted about the rough beginning of the SMM with the events post-Maidan, unrest in the country, the beginning of combats in Eastern Ukraine, the hostage-taking of eight SMM monitors in Eastern Ukraine, the shooting down of MH17 and the intensification of combats in the east into what was comparable to a war (with the use of heavy weapons on both sides). All these events made the activities of the SMM extremely challenging. As the events unfolded, there was a constant challenge of how to address the situation on the ground and still fulfill the Mission mandate. With the September 2014 ceasefire of Minsk, the SMM was tasked to monitor the implementation of the ceasefire in Eastern Ukraine, which was not something that was envisioned when the mandate was adopted by the OSCE Permanent Council in March 2014.

Picard also mentioned his deployment as Chief Observer to lead the OSCE Observer Mission on the Russian-Ukrainian border, stationed at two Russian border-crossing points with an initial group of half a dozen persons. His group monitored the movements on two border-crossing points in Gukovo and Donetsk. The mission was deployed with a very limited mandate. During his mission work, Picard discovered firsthand the power of civil society cooperation. While at a crossing-point, where fighting was taking place a few hundred meters away, the mothers of Ukrainian servicemen

found out that the OSCE had deployed a mission at that very border-crossing point, where combats were taking place. The association of mothers of Ukrainian servicemen obtained the phone numbers of the Mission and reached out to explain the critical situation of hundreds of Ukrainian servicemen surrounded by rebel forces in the vicinity of one of the border-crossing points. Thanks to the association of mothers, Picard and his team were able to reach out to Ukrainian officers and liaise with the Russian Federation to negotiate the opening of a safe corridor for the Ukrainian servicemen and secure their return to Ukraine through a safe border-crossing point under the control of the Ukrainian government. Picard outlined how the engagement of civil society made a decisive difference in saving the lives of 437 Ukrainian servicemen that were stranded for several weeks and left without food, fuel and ammunitions.

In addition, Picard noted that the presence of women observers and monitors made also a difference allowing better access and outreach to civilian populations. Ensuring a gender balance inside the missions is a strong confidence-building measure.

The experience gained from Ukraine has shown that the OSCE has had to adapt and extensively use new technologies such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs or drones), satellite imagery and analysis, and remote cameras to monitor the ceasefire implementation and answer the needs

on the ground in a complex and unstable security environment.

Picard also mentioned mediation, which has gained a significant importance in the Organization's work. It is seen as part of the larger picture of the conflict cycle and is basically based on bringing people together. An example of the OSCE's mediation work is the Trilateral Contact Group and its four working groups, which meet almost on a weekly basis in Minsk to facilitate a diplomatic resolution to the conflict in and around Ukraine. Under the guidance of Ambassador Martin Sajdik, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group, Ukrainian government officials and representatives of the self-proclaimed republics of Donetsk and Luhansk meet very regularly to work on the implementation of the Minsk agreement to address all the points outlined in the Minsk package of measures. In this context, the OSCE provides all the support and necessary conditions for proper negotiations. However, in the end it is up to politics and to the counterparts to show willingness and push for a solution.



Desired qualifications of an employee of the OSCE taking part in such processes are the ability to show empathy, and the capability to make sure he/she does not make the situation even worse. The added value of the OSCE on the ground is that it is the only international organisation with a widespread presence on both sides of the line of contact and involving both sides of the conflict. Despite the repeated stalling and difficult processes, the OSCE works to increase confidence in the security zone and to re-establish contact through specific and mutually beneficial projects, such as facilitating (not undertaking) the demining and clearing of access roads to allow the population to safely cross the

line of contact, and the reconstruction of damaged water pipes and high-voltage electric lines serving both sides. The SMM has also facilitated numerous exchanges of prisoners between the two sides and also, more sadly, the retrieval of bodies of people killed in the grey zone. All these examples require an extensive use of mediation and dialogue facilitation skills.

In the Ministerial Council of 2011 in Vilnius, the OSCE's capability in addressing the conflict cycle was further strengthened, including in supporting mediation and dialogue facilitation. Currently, the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre has three Mediation Support Officers supporting current mediation processes such as the ones briefly described above, and also supporting OSCE Special Representatives and field missions in enhancing their capabilities with the various mediation tasks throughout the OSCE area. Another landmark in the OSCE's mediation work is the establishment and strong support of the OSCE Group of Friends in Mediation, which is linked with the United Nations' Group of Friends of Mediation. The OSCE has recently organised ceasefire mediation trainings for the SMM and also held an OSCE Mediation Course open to all OSCE staff linked to mediation. In both examples, the UN and the EU have been involved through the participation of members of the UN Mediation Standby Team and also mediation experts of the European Union.

Picard concluded on the Organization's wish to increase its inclusion of civil society in mediation. As different tracks in mediation are concerned, the focus of the OSCE has traditionally been on Track 1, i.e. high-level negotiations, but current efforts by the Chairmanship and participating States push for more activities in Track 2, which foresee a better inclusion of civil society in mediation processes.

Timo **KANTOLA**, Deputy Director General of the Political Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, explained that his colleague, Ambassador Katja Pehrman, has, within the Helsinki +40- process, been chairing the work related to protracted conflicts. The task of producing enthusiasm to tackle them is very difficult. There are different efforts done to try to handle them, including the Geneva talks on Georgia, which just finished one round before the conference at hand. The former Finland's Ambassador to the OSCE, Antti Turunen is representing the UN in these talks.

There is also the Minsk platform, as well as the 5+2 talks on Transnistria. There is some criticism over these formats, e.g. Azerbaijan is critical about the Minsk setting – the Minsk Group and Minsk Co-Chairmen in particular. However, these formats should not be shaken up, since we might just end up complicating the formats and only producing a worse situation. Thus, it is of utmost importance to maintain respect for the formats. The OSCE is seeking small steps forward that could help build confidence and thereby provide support for the peace processes.

As to the reform of the OSCE, Kantola concluded that the Helsinki + 40 –process has been slow due to the events in Ukraine. Unfortunately in the Ministerial Council meeting in Belgrade, it was not possible to register substantive progress and no consensus was found on continuing the process in the next chairmanship. The self-examination of the Organization started 12 years ago and is likely to be continued in one way or another. Earlier it was carried out with the Corfu process started in 2009, then the 2010 Astana Summit, the V to V dialogues (Vancouver to Vladivostok via Vienna and Vilnius), and more recently the Helsinki +40 process aimed at producing results by 2015, the 40th Anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act. Looking ahead, the proceeding of the OSCE's reform process much depends on what happens with Ukraine.

Kantola also went through the OSCE's earlier experiences related to military peacekeeping. There is one plan that was drawn about 20 years ago for Nagorno-Karabakh. That plan remains on hold, but it would be available if peace negotiations would come to a successful outcome. The plan thus exists and will hopefully one day turn into reality. There is also one case where the OSCE has been involved with military observation engagement. Regarding Georgia the OSCE took a decision on sending 100 military observers to the country as part of the OSCE mission. One may recall that Ambassador Terhi Hakala headed the OSCE mission and Finns were involved among the first ten observers sent there. However, as it is known the OSCE mission in Georgia was not able to continue its activities and was closed down in 2009.

Regarding Ukraine, there has been some talk about international peacekeeping support, and Ukrainian representatives have raised this on several occasions. The President of the OSCE Parliamentary

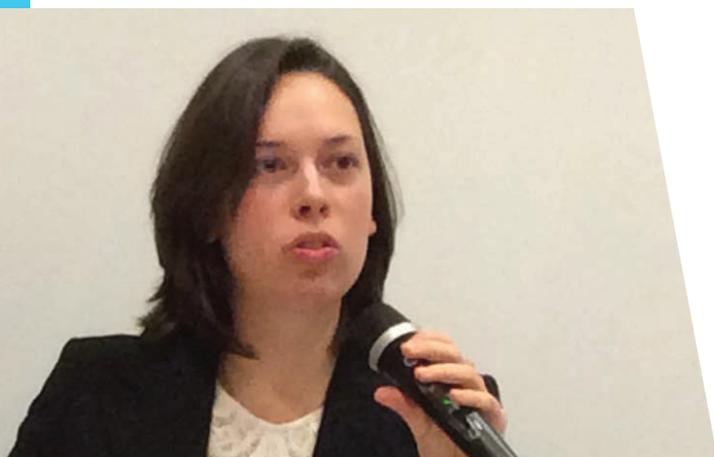
Assembly, Ilkka Kanerva has commented on this issue some time ago. At the moment, the key issue is to move forward in the implementation of the Minsk agreement. The Minsk agreement does not foresee international peacekeeping support. Instead, it underlines the role of the OSCE and the OSCE monitoring mission in Ukraine, and that is the way forward now. The Minsk agreement also contains commitments regarding the border control in Ukraine next to Russian border. In this context Kantola highlighted the importance of the OSCE border monitoring which currently is very modest – almost symbolic.

Kantola also recalled that there have been some conceptual efforts in the OSCE to develop military peacekeeping capacity, for instance, in the early years of last decade. Finland was actively involved in these talks. It is understandable that it would be very difficult to make headway on such discussion in the current situation.

There are also other examples where Finland has been particularly active in promoting OSCE capacity building in the area of the conflict cycle – such as gender mainstreaming and the OSCE's mediation support capacity. Finland also underlines the importance of civil society in the context of the conflict cycle. As one example, in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Organization has made efforts to promote people-to-people contacts.

Kantola also raised the question of risk reduction. This is an important issue and merits attention in the OSCE context - although the origins of that discussion may be found in the Middle East and the need to avoid unintentional incidents there. The OSCE Vienna Document on confidence and security building measures already includes measures for risk reduction, in Chapter 3 of the Vienna Document. However, the use of these measures has been extremely limited. Kantola referred to the times when these measures were negotiated in the early 1990's. At that time the intentions of the negotiators regarding these measures were different from what they turned out to be in practice. There would be a case to revisit these measures. However, the review of the Vienna Document has been in the agenda for several years now and in the current situation the expectations on new substantive measures are modest.

Maria **CHEPURINA**, Coordinator of the Helsinki + 40 Programme of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, provided concrete data examples show-casing the importance of mediation efforts in today's conflicts, since they usually no longer end with a clear victory of one side. Unfortunately, modern societies produce countless strategies for war, but there are hardly ever strategies for peace. Today's wars tend to be intra-state, causing enormous suffering for civilian populations. This is also one of the reasons why inclusion of the civil society in mediation and post-conflict settlement processes is crucial. As Kissinger once put it, "Diplomacy is too important to be left only to diplomats."



The presentation focused primarily on Central Asia, an area extensively covered by the OSCE through its field missions' work and programmatic activities. During the last ten years, there has been a shift in the OSCE's priority area from the Balkans to Central Asia. This has been produced due to alarming events having taken place there, such as the Osh ethnic clashes in 2010 in Kyrgyzstan. Tensions also remain at the Uzbek – Kyrgyz and Kyrgyz-Tajik borders. The key reason of these low-burning but persistent conflicts are lacking communication and trust both between the neighbouring countries and communities on the ground. To counter this trend, the OSCE launched a community security initiative that created multi-ethnic community policing resulting in higher levels of confidence towards police among the locals. A yearly public survey of

public confidence in the police forces has also been produced, pinpointing areas requiring additional focus and adjustment. Another confidence-building project designed to counter tensions in the border areas of Central Asian states has been the OSCE border management college, established to bring together border management officials throughout the region for intensive joint trainings.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has also been actively involved in strengthening dialogue and fact-finding in the region, notably in Kyrgyzstan. Following the tragic events in Osh in 2010, Kimmo Kiljunen, OSCE PA Special Representative on Central Asia, was tasked by the Kyrgyz President to conduct an inquiry into the events in Osh, so as to ensure that no such events reproduce in the future. Despite hardships experienced during the inquiry, his report is an important point of reference for the OSCE and the wider international community.

Chepurina also spoke about the challenges and suggested possible ways forward for the OSCE within the conflict sphere. According to her, the fundamental contradiction the OSCE is faced with is: "If the Organization is indeed equipped and has a capacity to act, why is it not possible to act before the conflict actually breaks out, as in Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine? Why is the Organization unable or unwilling to act in a timely manner?" The reason, she explained, is clear: "the Organization can only be as strong as its participating States want it to be. Therefore, a solution lies in gradually enforcing the tools available to OSCE institutions and enlarging the scope of action the Organization can undertake without having to go through a lengthy process of finding a consensus agreement. There is also the question of lack of legal personality of the Organization. Because of that the OSCE has at times been slower to act. The OSCE needs a full-fledged status of an international organisation to be fully operational on the ground. Finally, a modern organisation can only gain from Track2 initiatives. The bottom-up approach is the best way of connecting it with the people of the OSCE

We asked Maria Chepurina, what, in her opinion, has been the most important outcome of the Helsinki + 40 –project for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Chepurina mentioned the report produced, a "Resolution on HELSINKI +40: BUILDING THE OSCE OF THE FUTURE", adopted at the Annual Session in Helsinki, as well as a forward-looking work plan currently being developed by the assembly based on the outcomes of the Project. More details here: <http://www.oscepa.org/parliamentary-diplomacy/helsinki40>

area it has been created to serve. The overall way forward for the OSCE would be to strive for greater flexibility of action of its institutions, better coordination of inter-institutional efforts as well as full usage of the tools it has due to the multi-dimensionality of its mandate, which covers all three dimensions of its activity. Thus, an excellent example of the potential of the second dimension in conflict prevention and confidence-building is the work done in the Fergana valley to resolve water-related disputed in the border regions“.

On a positive note, the Organization has lately taken up new initiatives, showing itself eager to embrace ideas coming from others and opening up to the society. OSCE cafés have encountered strong success, while the OSCE Security Days, which serve as a forum for discussion on the most burning issues within the OSCE area, have attracted strong interest from the expert community, national officials and civil society. A good guideline for professionals and civil society eager to engage in helping build peaceful and prosperous communities comes from Mother Theresa: “What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight. Build anyway.”

The Q&A-session was opened by a participant referring to the recent events in Nagorno-Karabakh. Another audience member continued by pointing out that heavy weapons were used recently in Nagorno-Karabakh, and that a side event also concentrated on this topic at the OSCE Ministerial Council. The speaker gathered that there is a push for peace negotiations, and that the Minsk group is very active but not showing it to the larger public. Kantola concluded that the domestic politics are of course always included in peace negotiations and have had an effect there as well. The debate continued on the topic of election observation. Elections involve at least 40-60% of the people, thus people’s participation is ensured. What is then the impact of election observation?

Kantola pointed out that the aim of election observation is not to gain visibility, but to ensure elections go right. It is most important to ensure that accurate reporting is done on elections and to aim to improve the procedures. Chepurina added that over the years OSCE election monitoring has become a “brand” in itself, to an extent that the mere fact that the OSCE deploys such a mission is considered as the legitimization of elections in itself.

What influence has the Organization had on democracy and peacebuilding? Eva Biaudet brought forward the existing divide between the Parliamentary Assembly (representing the civil society) and the Ministerial Council, and enquired what the speakers felt would facilitate dialogue between the two institutions. Kantola said the difference in the cultures and procedures of the two on how to do things broadens the divide. The Council sees parliamentary accountability happening through the delegations. However, trying to establish parliamentary accountability through the Parliamentary Assembly is often discussed. But for instance, discussing budgets is not really possible other than through the delegations.



In the following panel discussion Konsta **HEIKKILÄ**, Adviser to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) President followed up on Mrs. Biaudet’s question. He said the PA has put a lot of effort to improving relations with different institutions. PA President Ilkka Kanerva has also succeeded in his main goal of making better cooperation happen vis-à-vis the Council. There are also improvements in relations between the PA and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights ODIHR, for example demonstrated in the unified front between the PA and ODIHR in observing Azerbaijan’s elections. Kanerva has put a lot of effort as well into bringing Ukrainian and Russian parliamentarians together, but the main obstacle in reaching the desired level of cooperation is overall mistrust. According to Heikkilä, the Dialogue group has not worked the way it was supposed to . All in all, the PA is the only platform available for this kind of inclusive dialogue. Heikkilä then continued on the National dialogue in Ukraine that he took part in. The problem with it was that it was geared towards specific political aims. On the Ukrainian side, for instance, proceeding on the talks was narrowly



The Executive Director of WISE, Anne **PALM** asked the panelists where they see the Organization will be in 2025.

politically motivated. When foreseeing upcoming elections and aiming to get someone elected, the dialogue was easily abandoned as unwanted.

Sinikukka **SAARI**, Senior Research fellow at the Finnish Institute for International Affairs referred to the Report produced by the Panel of Eminent Persons as an important step in developing the Organization. She then highlighted the “elephant in the room”, that is, the political process that is causing most of the trouble for the OSCE. A primary necessity would be to restore faith between Russia and Western states of the Organization. There are examples of building bridges in a difficult and tense situation in history. In the 1970’s superpower rivalry and ideological hostility were the norm. Then in the 1990’s a feeling of “everything is possible” prevailed, and there was huge potential for cooperative security and the development of common norms. Now we need to learn lessons from the Cold War period, but we should not go back to the Cold War framework. Nowadays we have much more in common than we had during Cold War. There are no huge ideological differences and we are much more interdependent, and in a different way. There is no iron curtain dividing us, so we are in a much better position today for finding solutions. There is no more an existential fear of World War III, but due to this, there is no push for finding common solutions either, so the process is also more difficult. In the 1990’s we acted naively living in peace in our common European home, but it is equally naive to think that we are going back to the Cold War arrangement.

The sooner we start the highly political process and see the things we still have in common, the better - and this will decide the future of the OSCE.

Picard pondered over the expansion of the Organization as the question has been raised how far the Organization can expand – already involving 11 Partners in Cooperation of which six are Mediterranean and 5 Asian countries. As conflicts in the region are concerned, the activities of the OSCE in Ukraine have demonstrated the Organization’s quick deployment capability. It can be speculated that further escalation of the conflict would be prevented. It is often asked whether this will also become a frozen conflict. In response, one must take into account that the conflict in Transnistria is very small, and the one in Nagorno-Karabakh is small and quite unknown. The conflict in Ukraine however impacts and affects all of Europe. It creates an imbalance at a systemic level, that is, Europe and security as such have been shaken. The above-mentioned conflicts as well as the Ossetian conflict have never had such effects.

Whereas the operations are concerned, the OSCE is constantly making plans on whether they should be deployed or not, since getting involved in conflict areas requires huge resources. The officials have been pushing for a conflict management fund to be included in the budget, which would enable the PC to deploy a small rapid group when required, but this proposition has not gone through year after year. Picard sees the future of mediation as huge and taking place on all tracks, and especially Track2, involving civil society. The aim is to engage resources and get from civil society the push for the political processes to go ahead. The challenge lies in resource provision: currently three people are providing mediation support to all missions and institutions. The partner states also support these processes, which is a positive factor.

Suomalainen referred back to the CSCE process, where diplomats were discussing highly political issues for months and then produced commitments. The participating States have then pushed each other to fulfill these commitments. The golden era of missions went on with the organization of elections in Kosovo and human rights monitoring in the Balkans. Are projects indeed the core added value the OSCE can provide?

The Ministerial Council decided on strengthening early warning and conflict prevention. We see now that that is what the OSCE should be doing. The Skopje mission established in 1992 is the oldest in the OSCE structure. In the future early warning, education, local level activities, election work, media and legislation, and smaller missions are likely to be the norm. Local presence and impartiality are the main objectives of OSCE missions. OSCE personnel are all mediating and conducting personal discussions, helping to strengthen dialogue, for example in Mongolia.

Heikkilä hoped to see in 2025 the sanctions period to be over. He found big OSCE field operations unlikely in the future. The OSCE should do less and more. He added that more confidence-building, mediation and field operations are key. The OSCE of the high level does not reflect on the ground what the PA wants to do in terms of the Helsinki principles as expressed in the Decalogue.

Saari painted the OSCE of 2025 as having more participating States, being more inclusive, and spanning more fields of activity. The activities would be more conflict-related and include less institution-building. The high level activities would be revived, to build trust between the states. The future should be based on consensus, as we have seen the positive side of that. As the Eminent Persons' Panel forecasted in its report title, it will be "Back to diplomacy".

The moderator, Terhi Nieminen-Mäkynen enquired what the speakers felt would be the future in relation to the daily situation of migration and human rights?

Suomalainen admitted the migration issue is huge in Macedonia, with 6000-8000 people coming to the country every day. She has been monitoring possible security issues and implications of the migration flow.

The mandate of her office on handling these kind of issues has been questioned, but it is evident the mandate holds, since it involves trafficking in human beings.

Heikkilä explained Ilkka Kanerva had made a proposal in the Ministerial Council, on creating a Special Representative (SR) post in the OSCE on migration. Missions would get more guidance from the SR on handling the migration issues.

According to Chepurina the topic of migration is directly related to the multi-faceted mandate of the OSCE as the reactions of some OSCE participating States to the migratory flows have raised underlying, historic tensions. One of the best ways for the OSCE to work on the issue is through the creation of an OSCE Thematic Mission on Migration. The example of Council of Europe thematic missions can be used when developing it. The main objective of OSCE engagement on the issue would be to create open channels for dialogue on governmental and civil society levels, provide additional training on migration management and integration and legislative support to states mostly affected by migration flows ensuring the legislation properly reflects the needs of both the hosting societies and the incoming refugees.

The troubles related to migration are, according to Picard, destabilizing participating States. Early warning methodology and mandate should be strengthened to tackle the destabilizing factors that could be causing a conflict. Illegal documents are often used on border areas. In one case a country sent their police into another country to check documents, which created an enflamed political issue. In this case the OSCE brought the policemen of the two sides together. Human trafficking is also happening related to migration. A way forward would be to strive to increase confidence and friendship among the peoples.

A conference participant called for the establishment of a Special Representative for Mediation. Then he raised the question of Crimean annexation, maintaining that 40 years ago it was decided that the borders of the OSCE participating States be left as they were, and asking what use is the OSCE then, if we cannot protect our borders. The norm has been that one day a week, one standing item of OSCE principals has been violated by one participating State in relation to another. According to the speaker, the Organization should make sure the issue of Crimea will not be left out of the way of other urgent issues. The Eminent Persons' Panel has also shown these three existing narratives prevailing without consensus, ie. the Western, Russian, and that of the states in between. Heikkilä responded to these comments by highlighting that the PA will not forget Crimea, but the current situation only offers polarized discussion. Saari concluded that this question has remained open for at least more than a decade. Russia has broken rules but is neither

challenging having done it. The commitments should be strengthened in the future via protecting the viability of borders and sovereignty.

Vice-Chairperson of WISE, Eva **BIAUDET**, gave the closing statement in the seminar. Biaudet has a background in missions, election observation, and acting as the Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. Biaudet noted that the participating States do not tackle enough the human rights aspects of the migration phenomenon, but rather the security side. For this reason Biaudet would not be fond of an idea of establishing a post of Special Representative on migration. As an example, people remain in their “potholes”: border guards don’t feel they should be protecting people or monitoring human rights etc.



When Biaudet served as OSCE Special Representative, she felt she had a lot of freedom and space to act since her mandate came from the OSCE’s Chairman-in-Office Karel de Gucht, as well as the Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut. The SR on Combating trafficking of human beings chairs an expert team of international NGOs and the experts of the UN, the EU, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) etc. The agenda the SR pushes forward is very much linked to the grassroots level. The office of the SR is certainly a center of excellence in this. As to the competences of the office, there is always the dichotomy between recommendations versus legal norms. The Council of Europe, for instance, has had a hard time trying to push for implementation. All in all, the two organisations don’t really overlap in these areas. As a way forward Biaudet called for that we should “walk the talk” and “live as we preach” more. There is no excuse for the OSCE lagging behind on gender issues. There are not that many women working in delegations. Whereas human rights activities are very useful in connecting the interests of the East and West, the OSCE and Finland should get much better in supporting them.

Biaudet also felt that Finland should make the SR an institution. Furthermore, human rights are best supported by following three principles; prevention, protection, and prosecution. In this work education of diplomats and the engagement of civil society are key.



OSCE 40 YEARS

– COOPERATING WITH CIVIL SOCIETY FOR PEACE

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WISE REPORT 1/2016

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