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**"The Role of Multilateral Organizations in Conflict Resolution: The Case of the  
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe"**

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## I. Multilateral Institutions and the Resolution of International Conflict

A substantial debate has appeared among international relations theorists about the potential role of international institutions in the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts, especially the myriad of violence which has appeared on the territory of the former Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia in the decade since the end of the Cold War.

Theorists in the realist tradition have generally interpreted these events as vindication of their predictions, which stressed the high probability of violent conflict in an anarchic international system at a time when the sources of stability in the bipolar structure of international relations were undermined. John Mersheimer has presented the neo-realist argument most starkly in an essay written in 1990 in which he argued that the end of the Cold War would mean "that the prospects for major crises and war in Europe are likely to increase markedly...." The absence of war in Europe during the Cold War, he asserted, was a consequence of three factors: "the bipolar distribution of military power on the Continent; the rough military equality between the two states comprising the two poles in Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union; and the fact that each superpower was armed with a large nuclear arsenal."<sup>1</sup> The frequent outbreaks of fighting throughout Eurasia since 1989 are thus believed by realists to confirm their predictions that a bipolar international system is more conducive to peace than the more ambiguous system that has emerged, which combines simultaneously features of multipolarity and unipolarity. Furthermore, the fact that these conflicts have surfaced and diffused in spite of the presence of a "thick" network of international institutions that cut across Eurasia has been taken as evidence for the proposition that these institutions are incapable of preventing violence in an anarchic international system.

By contrast, liberals, especially of the institutionalist school, saw in the end of the Cold War an opportunity to create a new international order based on principles of collective security. They saw the spread of liberal democracies as potentially ushering in a new era of peace in the European region. They also believed that the new international system provided opportunities for the thick web of institutions that tie much of Europe together to function effectively for the first time in the domain of security, in addition to the traditional realms such as the economy or the environment. Typical of this argument is the position taken by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, who argue that cooperation

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<sup>1</sup>John J. Mersheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," reprinted in Sean M. Lynn-Jones, *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace*(Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1991), pp. 142-43.

even on issues of security is possible in situations where mutual interests can be identified and reciprocal patterns of interaction can be established. With regard to the post-Cold War situation in Europe, they contend:

Since west Europe was densely institutionalized when the Cold War came to an end, institutionalists anticipate more cooperation in Europe than would be expected if international institutions were insignificant, or merely reflected structural forces in world politics. Institutionalists agree with liberals that common or complementary interests can support cooperation, and that international institutions depend for their success on such patterns of complementary interests.<sup>2</sup>

The institutionalists have further argued that international institutions are capable of responding to the outbreak of violence because they can enter these conflicts as third parties and bring with them an array of new conflict resolution tools to prevent violence wherever possible; and, in instances where violence has already occurred, they can engage actively in conflict resolution. In general, the emphasis is placed on the intervention of outside parties in early stages of conflict, before positions have become hardened and a spiral of escalation has become locked in. As Michael Lund notes, "the longer that crises are allowed to fester, the harder they are to resolve. As the spiral of violence and destruction intensifies, polarization deepens, the number of divisive issues increases, societal institutions crumble, the prospects for settlement decrease, and the risks of conflict spreading increase."<sup>3</sup>

However, when conflicts have broken down confidence, direct negotiated settlement between the parties becomes more difficult than ever. In instances such as this, the intervention of an outside party who is respected by the disputants, is generally viewed as neutral, but who also has resources to bring to bear to assist in conflict settlement, is especially important. When multilateral institutions do enter into conflicts of this sort, however, they must do more than get the parties to the negotiating table. They must find ways of promoting negotiations that will assist them in uncovering and resolving the fundamental issues of identity that typically underlie such conflicts. As Zartman points out, this depends fundamentally upon designing a process that will promote the discovery of identity formulas: "The best answer to the problem is not a pat

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<sup>2</sup>Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, "Introduction: The End of the Cold War in Europe," in Robert O. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye, and Stanley Hoffmann, *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 5-6.

<sup>3</sup>Michael Lund, *Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996), p. 14.

formula but rather a process, a negotiation among the parties that not only translates their power in the conflict into positions in the new system, but that also provides both protection to the parties whatever their position, and trade-offs and incentives for all to preserve the regime."<sup>4</sup>

The arguments of realists and liberals alike assume that international relations exists as an objective reality to be observed and explained by the theorist; they both overlook the possibility that our theories themselves interact with the phenomena about which we are theorizing. Therefore, international relations theorists, and policy-makers who hold to one or another theory whether explicitly or implicitly, may behave at least to some degree on the global stage according to their own models or images about how the world works. If one accepts conflict as inevitable on the basis of a realist argument, then one may not have confidence that institutions can in fact promote cooperation where common interests exist; therefore, policy-makers may not utilize institutional resources that are available, so that the results in fact match the expectations of realism. Conversely if policy-makers are confident in the ability of institutions to manage conflict and thus utilize their potential fully, they may succeed in creating institutions that are in fact able to play an important role in preventing and resolving conflicts, thereby reinforcing the claims of the liberal institutionalists. In short, what is at work here is a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy, in which the beliefs and expectations of the analysts and policy-makers literally help to create the outcomes that they predict.

If this assertion is valid, then the choice between realist and liberal models of international institutions is not solely a choice between two empirical models of the external world. Rather it also represents a choice between alternative normative models of what the analyst would prefer the world to be like. Of course, no one believes that cooperation can be achieved in international politics merely by wishing that it were so and acting accordingly. Indeed, most liberals would acknowledge that such behavior leaves those who practice it open to easy exploitation by others taking a more Machiavellian approach. Nonetheless, there is little doubt that multilateral institutions can create positive shared outcomes best when the states that participate in them believe in their capacity to serve their own interests as well as the interests of others. Furthermore, the expectation that shared norms have been internalized by others makes it easier for any single actor to behave in accordance with those norms, knowing that its expectations are likely to be fulfilled.

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<sup>4</sup>I. William Zartman, "Putting Humpty-Dumpty Together Again," in David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild (eds.), *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 329.

Insofar as multilateral institutions strengthen norms about international cooperation and reward cooperative behavior, then states can have greater confidence in utilizing those institutions to protect their vital interests. At the outset, however, this may require a normative “leap of faith,” based on the assumption that confidence in the power of institutionalized cooperation can be contagious and thereby contribute to the eventual strengthening of those institutions. In effect, we construct the kind of international system we prefer, and that is a normative as well as an empirical choice.

This approach to international relations, sometimes referred to as constructivist or more generally as a knowledge-based orientation, thus stresses the impact that ideas about international relations have in not only describing, explaining and predicting, but also in actually creating the phenomena that scholars purport to analyze. Andreas Hasenclever, Peter Mayer, and Volker Rittberger summarize this argument as follows: "Cognitivists argue that these processes are shaped by the normative and causal beliefs that decisionmakers hold and that, consequently, changes in belief systems can trigger changes in policy."<sup>5</sup>

In examining the development of European security institutions since the end of the Cold War, I hope to evaluate these competing claims. My central thesis is that the potential that exists in the present institutional structure in Europe, especially in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, has not been sufficiently recognized by policy-makers or scholars of international security. As a consequence, these institutions have not been utilized as fully or effectively as they might have been, so that they have not been able to prevent the outbreak of violence, which has been neither necessary nor inevitable. I want to argue further that these institutions have demonstrated their potential to provide a number of security functions that respond directly to the challenges presented by the outbreak and spread of ethnonational violence throughout Eurasia over the past decade. Therefore, I conclude that these institutions can and should be strengthened to enhance their capacity to prevent, manage, and resolve the kind of conflicts that have appeared in Europe since 1989.

Unfortunately, most of the security institutions that existed in Europe when the communist regimes collapsed were largely unprepared to deal with the new security situation. Many of the surviving institutions such as NATO and the European Union had focused during the Cold War period only on issues in Western Europe, whereas their counterpart institutions in the East, the Warsaw Treaty Organization and COMECON,

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<sup>5</sup>Andreas Hasenclever, Peter Mayer, and Volker Rittberger, *Theories of International Regimes* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 136.

collapsed altogether. The only surviving pan-European institution dealing with issues of security was the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

A debate has since arisen about how best to create a security "architecture" for Eurasia after the end of the Cold War. As Europe has groped to respond to the new security situation, several alternative approaches have been suggested. Some analysts have argued that no previously existing institution could provide adequate assurances of security in response to the new issues facing Eurasia. They thus argue for the creation of a new pan-Eurasian security organization with a mandate drawn up specifically to deal with the challenges of the post-Cold War security *problematique*. A second set of specialists have suggested that existing institutions can be modified and pieced together like a gigantic puzzle, each performing its own special functions as part of some organic, if informal whole. They argue that each of the surviving institutions has certain specialized functions that it performs best, so that the only satisfactory overall arrangement would be one in which these institutions form a patchwork arrangement of reinforcing competencies. Finally, some analysts and policy-makers have argued that eventually one of the existing organizations will win out in some kind of Darwinian competition, proving that it has adapted better to the new situation and is better prepared than its rivals to deal with the security challenges of the 21st century.

I argue here that the future of Eurasian security is unlikely to be filled by any single institution. On the contrary, the "thick" web of institutions that existed at the end of the Cold War is likely to grow into an increasingly inter-related multilateral suprastructure in which different institutions increasingly take on functionally specific tasks coordinated with the work of other institutions performing different roles in the evolving division of labor. Together these inter-connected institutionalized arrangements may be viewed as constituting a cooperative security regime in Europe, a regime that may eventually evolve into a regional pluralistic security community as defined almost a half-century ago by Karl Deutsch and his associates.<sup>6</sup>

In this cooperative security regime, NATO, and to a lesser degree the Western European Union (WEU) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), are increasingly taking on the functions of peacekeeping and peace maintenance operations throughout the region, where armed force is required due to recent large-scale violence. Since deteriorating economic conditions in the post-communist regions of Europe

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<sup>6</sup> Karl Deutsch *et al.*, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957).

constitute a major contributing cause of violence, it is likely to fall to western economic institutions, especially the European Union, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to play an important role in providing economic and technical assistance for those countries and regions undergoing difficult and often uncertain transitions away from centrally planned economies.

However, when it comes to the primary role for providing a framework for preventive diplomacy, facilitating negotiations, and furthering processes of conflict resolution, primary responsibility has fallen to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Begun in 1973 as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), this organization has evolved into a comprehensive, European-wide security organization. From the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975 which served as its "charter," the CSCE continued to hold a series of conferences, reminiscent of the Concert of Europe from 1815-1822, that negotiated on European security issues in the fluid environment of the last decade and a half of the Cold War. Its unique feature was that it consisted of a series of ten normative principles governing security often known as the "Helsinki Decalogue;" confidence-building measures in the realm of military security; provisions calling for cooperation in economic, scientific, cultural, and educational fields; and it linked these with a unique focus on common values, especially human rights, as the foundation for common security in Europe.

The end of the Cold War also brought some fundamental changes to the CSCE, which was formally institutionalized beginning in 1995 as the OSCE, but it undoubtedly also maintained greater continuity with its activities during the Cold War than did most other European institutions. Indeed, it was easier for the CSCE to cast off its image as a Cold War institution than most others in large part because many of its participating states, especially those in Central and Eastern Europe, credited it with playing a significant role in bringing an end to the Cold War. To a far greater degree than is generally recognized in the United States and Western Europe, post-communist leaders in Central and Eastern Europe credit the CSCE principles, especially the Helsinki Decalogue, with playing a major role in discrediting the communist regimes, whose hypocrisy was clearly demonstrated by signing and giving lip service to a series of principles that they regularly defied in practice. Dissidents in these countries thus rallied behind the Helsinki principles in criticizing their own governments and in undermining their legitimacy in the eyes of their citizens.

At the same time, the CSCE's unique strength endured, namely the linkage between military/political aspects of security and the "human dimension." It readily

transformed itself from an organization created to serve as a bridge between east and west in Europe into one that readily embraced all of the new states of Eurasia as participants. It is thus the one pan-European security organization with universal participation including the United States and Canada and all former Soviet states, extending in the common parlance from "Vancouver to Vladivostok the long way around." It created new institutions and structures to respond to the specific threats that were arising throughout the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union, especially a Conflict Prevention Center that was set up in 1991, an Office on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights also established in 1991, and a High Commissioner on National Minorities created in 1992. It has undertaken the broadest range of security tasks, including military confidence and security-building measures, third party intervention into disputes within and between participating states, assistance with economic reform and reconstruction, extensive concern for individual human rights, the rights of persons belonging to minorities, the rule of law, media freedom, and the organization and supervision of democratic elections.

The OSCE thus evolved by responding more directly than any other institution to the new security challenges of post-Cold War Europe: the rise in intolerance, ethnic conflict, and violence as new states broke up along ethnic lines. Since these new security threats include the denial of human and minority group rights, economic chaos accompanying the transition from communism to free market societies, and armed violence among competing factions in a highly fluid political environment, only the OSCE has been well positioned to deal with all elements that constitute the European security *problematique* at once. The success or failure of the OSCE in grappling with this complex environment thus may have a great impact on European security in the years ahead.

As the security "architecture" in Europe has come to take shape over the first decade since the end of the Cold War, it has become evident that no single institution is likely to emerge at the top of the pyramid of European security organizations. What is evolving, by contrast, is a "variable geometry" in which different institutions have each developed special competencies in particular security activities. Nonetheless, as noted previously, key parties involved in the new security regime have their own special, and frequently divergent preferences with regard to the eventual hierarchy that they would prefer to see emerge in Europe in the early 21st century.

The main argument of this paper is that the OSCE has greater potential in the security realm than it has been given credit for in the West. It is often undervalued both because it is viewed frequently as a potential competitor with other preferred institutions

- NATO or the EU; because it is so highly valued by the former communist states, especially by the Russians; and because it is often thought to lack the political will to take firm decisions and the muscle to implement whatever decisions it makes. Its "comparative advantages" relative to other institutions have too often gone unnoticed. The result, as noted above, has been a "self-fulfilling prophecy:" since the OSCE is thought to be too weak and ineffective by those countries with the capacity to make it stronger and more effective, they have not provided it with the resources and political support to develop fully its potential. Furthermore, even its limited but important successes have largely gone unnoticed by policy-makers and publics in the West. The result is that the OSCE has seldom received the credit that it deserves for what it has accomplished, nor has it enjoyed the resources to make it more effective in playing a central role in post-Cold War European security. This paper attempts to present a balance sheet of OSCE accomplishments and limitations and to suggest ways in which the organization can be strengthened in order to realize its inherent potential as a central, if by no means exclusive instrument of cooperative security in post-Cold War Europe.

## **II. CSCE/OSCE Activities in the Field of Conflict Prevention Since 1992**

The activities of the CSCE/OSCE since 1992 in the field of security have tended to cohere around six major functions: 1) strengthening the normative framework for Eurasian security; 2) promoting democracy-building as a long-term means for conflict prevention; 3) engaging in conflict prevention activities in regions where violence threatens to break out; 4) brokering cease-fires in ongoing conflicts; 5) promoting the resolution of underlying conflicts in the aftermath of conflict; and 6) building security in post-conflict situations. Several examples will illustrate how the CSCE/OSCE has performed each of these six broad functions since 1992.

1) ***Setting and monitoring compliance with the fundamental norms underlying European security:*** This process began with the principles set forth in the Helsinki Decalogue in 1975 and has been expanded to a wide-ranging set of documents and declarations that cumulatively define a broad normative structure governing European security. For example, at the Budapest Summit in 1994, the OSCE adopted a Code of Conduct on Political-Military Activities that both codified principles for the use of military force in combat situations (essentially codifying the norms of classic "just war" theory with regard to *jus in bello*) and established democratic norms for civilian control of the military. Several seminars and conferences have been held to discuss and evaluate progress in implementing these norms and principles. Furthermore, the mandates of

many OSCE missions of long-duration and other field activities include assisting participating states in the fulfillment of their normative obligations under the broad set of principles that have evolved within the OSCE since 1975. The Court of Conciliation and Arbitration is available, if unused so far, to resolve disputes between participating states over the interpretation of these norms. Viewed in its entirety, the *acquis* of OSCE norms and principles constitutes an impressive set of normative guidelines for the domestic and international behavior of all participating states, and almost all discussions regarding decisions and recommendations of the OSCE make direct and explicit reference to this body of principles.

2) ***Promoting the process of democracy-building as a foundation for peace and security:*** The "democratic peace hypothesis" has been widely accepted by OSCE participating states, namely the belief that democratic states seldom or never engage in violent conflict with other democratic states.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, it is assumed that the long-term foundations for peace may be constructed through encouraging the widespread development of democratic regimes throughout Eurasia. Following in the tradition of Immanuel Kant and Woodrow Wilson, this hypothesis then predicts that the universal development of liberal democracy throughout the region will make inter-state war extremely unlikely. Therefore, the OSCE has devoted considerable effort to the promotion of democratization. This has included the work of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, which assists all transitional democracies with establishing procedures for holding democratic elections, supervises the conduct of those elections to assure that democratic procedures are followed, and then certifies the outcomes of elections. OSCE missions and the High Commissioner on National Minorities have worked to increase the capacity of minorities, often disenfranchised or in other ways hindered from participating fully in the political process, to achieve equal rights not only on paper but in practice. ODIHR's section on the rule of law has also assisted states to develop legal principles to undergird democratic processes and to strengthen the norm that democracy implies that the rule of law ought to prevail over the will of individuals. The Representative on Freedom of the Media, established at the Copenhagen Ministerial Conference in 1997, also supports the principle of an independent media as a foundation for civil society.

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<sup>7</sup>See Michael Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs," in *Philosophy and Public Affairs* Vol. 12, No. 3 (Summer 1983), pp. 205-235; Bruce M. Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for the Post-Cold War World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); and Michael W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997).

Numerous OSCE missions such as those in Latvia, Estonia, Belarus, and Central Asia<sup>8</sup> have had among the central elements of their mandates a charge to assist the governments of transitional states in the process of complying with democratic norms. In Latvia and Estonia the primary OSCE focus has been on attempting to assure that the new governments do not deprive the large Russian minorities living in these two countries of their citizenship and other democratic rights out of revenge for the perceived injustices suffered by Latvians and Estonians at the hands of the Russian-dominated Soviet regime. In both of these countries the HCNM and the missions have worked closely together to advance democratic opportunities for disenfranchised minorities. In Belarus, the OSCE has focused on strengthening civil society and the rule of law in a country where democratic practices have suffered substantial setbacks under the government of President Alexander Lukashenko. And in Central Asia, specifically Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan, the OSCE has assisted the governments in the promotion of democracy and the peaceful resolution of disputes in a region where democratic traditions and practices are historically nonexistent. Although most of these activities have little direct influence on the occurrence or avoidance of violent conflict, they are assumed to create the necessary long-term conditions for eliminating violence as a means for resolving conflicts of interest and substituting in place of coercion and the use of force a democratic process of give-and-take, compromise, and bargaining as a way of overcoming differences.

3) ***Conflict prevention:*** The principal focus of these activities is to identify and respond to brewing conflicts in order to prevent the outbreak of violence. This requires attention to "early warning" in order to detect situations that might lead to violent conflict. Parties to disputes may come directly to OSCE missions and field offices to report threats to the peace that they have witnessed or experienced. These warnings usually appear in the midst of conflicts among nationalities, ethnic, linguistic, or religious groups, or in situations where socio-economic classes have been severely disadvantaged. Warning may include many kinds of incipient conflicts, but among those that have been most prominent include nationalist claims to establish separatist regimes, irredentist claims of secession and unification with another state, concerns about the possible

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<sup>8</sup>The liaison office in Central Asia, located in Tashkent, formally reports to the Secretary-General rather than to the Conflict Prevention Center, although in actual practice this distinction has little significance; the OSCE Centers in Almaty, Bishkek, and Ashgabat, however, report to the CPC. The "advisory and monitoring group" in Belarus functions more or less like other missions of long-term duration, although the government of Belarus refused to accept an OSCE presence, established in early 1998, if it were called a "mission," leading the OSCE member states to find another appropriate euphemism to describe its resident activity based in Minsk.

"spillover" of an ongoing conflict across international borders into neighboring states, and warning about potential unauthorized external intervention in ongoing internal conflicts within participating states.

Early warning is not enough to trigger an appropriate response, however.<sup>9</sup> Once OSCE officials in Vienna, the Hague, or Warsaw receive warnings of impending violence, they must create sufficient consensus among diverse participating governments to respond in a timely fashion. They must also decide upon the appropriate mode to respond, whether it will take the form of verbal protest or denunciation, imposition of sanctions, creation of a mission of long-term duration, intervention by a third party to provide good offices or to assist in mediation, or any other means at the disposal of the OSCE.

The principal organs of the OSCE available to perform this conflict prevention function include the Chairperson-in-Office who may decide to call the OSCE into action or who may intervene directly herself or through her special representatives; the Conflict Prevention Center, which generally receives warnings from the OSCE missions and field offices about brewing conflicts and may offer suggestions or instructions to those field offices about how to respond; the High Commissioner on National Minorities, who may travel to areas of potential conflict involving national minority issues on a moment's notice and who may issue warnings to the Permanent Council or, in cases of great urgency, who may intervene himself as a third party to try to assist the disputants to resolve their conflicts; and the Permanent Council, which generally receives reports from the CPC, the HCNM, and the field missions, and which has the authority to authorize special mission activities, to dispatch a special representative, to impose sanctions on disputing parties, and even to call for the creation of a peacekeeping force (although the OSCE has not actually established a peacekeeping force as of 2001). In the first decade since the end of the Cold War, the major OSCE conflict prevention activities have taken place in Ukraine (especially regarding separatist claims in Crimea and concerns about potential Russian intervention), in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (especially the prevention of the "spillover" of conflicts originating in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in Albania), and in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (regarding separatist claims in Kosovo, Sandjak, and Vojvodina).

In the case of Ukraine, the High Commissioner organized a series of workshops in which political elites from Ukraine and from the ethnic Russian and Tatar communities in

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<sup>9</sup>Alexander L. George and Jane E. Holl, "The Warning-Response Problem and Missed Opportunities in Preventive Diplomacy," in Bruce Jentleson (ed.), *Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World* (Landham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), p. 27.

Crimea were brought together in an effort to reconcile the constitutions of Crimea and Ukraine so as to assure a high degree of autonomy for Crimea while preserving the formal integrity of the Ukrainian state. An OSCE mission in Ukraine with offices in both Kiev and Simferopol watched over this process on a continuing basis; indeed, this is one case where the outcome was sufficiently positive that the OSCE mission was reduced to a project officer in 1999, and the results of intervention by the OSCE seem unambiguously to have been successful in assisting the parties to resolve their differences nonviolently.

The OSCE Spillover Mission to Skopje was created in September 1992 primarily to prevent the overflow of violence from other regions of the former Yugoslavia into the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). In addition, both the HCNM and the mission became actively engaged in responding to serious internal tensions in the FYROM, especially those surrounding the role of a large ethnic Albanian minority as well as other smaller minorities, including Serbs. UN peacekeeping forces were also deployed in the FYROM until early 1999 to observe activity on its border with Serbia (including Kosovo). Certainly the FYROM has been one of the most threatened and potentially unstable countries in the Balkans. Not only has it been threatened by the fighting to its north, and especially by the extensive flow of ethnic Albanian refugees in the spring of 1999, but it has endured serious tensions on the west with Albania, as the collapse of the Albanian government in 1997 produced a large flow of refugees and arms into the FYROM; an economic and political boycott by Greece, its southern neighbor, over its name; and tensions with its eastern neighbor, Bulgaria. This was followed by growing conflict between an increasingly militant and well-armed minority community of ethnic Albanians and an ever more nationalistic central government in Skopje, that led to several significant outbreaks of violence in 2001. In response, the OSCE Spillover Monitoring Mission to Skopje increased from a staff of eight persons at the beginning of the year to some 210 personnel by September 2001. This extensive effort has so far prevented Macedonia from falling into the same vortex of widespread violence that has afflicted most of its neighbors in the former Yugoslav republics.

The first CSCE mission in Kosovo, Sandjak, and Vojvodina, was expelled by the Yugoslav government in 1993, following the FRY's loss of its voting rights in the CSCE. Yet the CSCE was aware for some time of the threat of violence in all three regions, but especially in Kosovo, proclaimed as the cradle of Serbia by Slobodan Milosevic, which he and his fellow Serbs would defend at all cost even though approximately 90% of the region's population were ethnic Albanians. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office also appointed Ambassador van der Stoep as the Special Representative to Kosovo, but until early 1999 he was denied a visa to enter the region by the government in Belgrade. By

this time, tensions between an increasingly radicalized ethnic Albanian population, now dominated by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), and the Serbian authorities were mounting almost daily. In spite of numerous "early warnings" of an impending disaster by both Ambassador van der Stoep and by the OSCE Heads of Mission in Skopje and in Albania, the major states participating in the OSCE failed to take action beyond an occasional verbal denunciation of Milosevic until the situation escalated substantially in the fall of 1998.

At that time, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke of the United States, architect of the Dayton Accords on Bosnia-Herzegovina, undertook his own mediation between the authorities in Belgrade and the Kosovar Albanians. This resulted in an agreement on a cease-fire in October 1998, and the OSCE was asked to provide some 2000 unarmed monitors to verify compliance with the agreement. Thus, the OSCE's Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) became by far the largest operation launched to date and represented a significant challenge for a relatively small organization with a very limited capacity to carry out missions of such magnitude. Tragically, however, this mission never reached full size, and, in spite of numerous successes in preventing conflicts at the grassroots level, it had to be withdrawn as the situation at the higher political level continued to deteriorate and as NATO opened a campaign of aerial bombardment not only in Kosovo, but throughout the entire FRY, in March of 1999. Although the OSCE was probably not well equipped to serve this kind of function and the mission ultimately failed to prevent the outbreak of large-scale violence, the sequence of events that led to the onset of the violence was clearly beyond the capacity of the OSCE to control, especially given the unwillingness of the United States and its NATO allies to use the OSCE (or the United Nations) as a venue for seeking a political solution to the crisis before embarking upon military action. Kosovo perhaps represents the clearest example of the failure of the international community to prevent a deadly conflict that all could foresee, but where no one was willing to take the steps necessary to prevent an impending tragedy from occurring.

4) **Brokering cease-fires:** In most cases, the CSCE/OSCE has not intervened directly during an on-going violent conflict; therefore, most of its work has either been preventive before violence breaks out or restorative in the aftermath of violence. One notable exception, however, occurred in the case of the Russian-Chechen war of 1994-96. After approximately 40,000 Russian troops entered Chechnya in December 1994, concern immediately developed within the OSCE. Russia resisted any involvement of the OSCE in this conflict, contending that the situation constituted an internal affair of the Russian Federation, reciting the Helsinki principle opposing intervention into the

internal affairs of states. However, OSCE participating states cited several reasons for their concern. One was a potential violation by Russian troops of the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty which limited the amount of heavy equipment that could be stationed in the southern flank regions including the northern Caucasus. Second was the apparent violation by Russian troops of numerous provisions of the Code of Political-Military Conduct signed in Budapest just weeks before Russian troops entered Chechnya. As a result, an "Assistance Group to Chechnya" was created by the OSCE in April 1995 to "promote the peaceful resolution of the crisis" within OSCE principles, including the recognition of the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. The mandate also called on the Assistance Group to monitor compliance by the parties with the "human dimension" norms of the OSCE.

On the basis of this mandate, the Head of the OSCE Assistance Group, Ambassador Tim Guldemann of Switzerland, embarked in 1996 on "shuttle diplomacy" between Grozny and Moscow in an effort to establish negotiations between parties on both sides of the conflict. Following several failed attempts to set up negotiations and several abortive cease-fires, Guldemann was eventually able to mediate a cease-fire agreement between the Chechen Chief of Staff Aslan Maskhadov and Boris Yeltsin's newly appointed security advisor, General Alexander Lebed. This was followed by another negotiation brokered by Guldemann between Lebed and the Chechen "President" Zelimkhan Yanderbiev at Khasavyurt in neighboring Dagestan in August 1996. The agreement called for the withdrawal of all Russian forces, the holding of democratic elections in Chechnya supervised by the OSCE, with a permanent resolution of the political status of Chechnya postponed to negotiations to be held five years later. Thus, the OSCE was able to assist the parties to find a face saving, compromise solution that brought an end to the large-scale fighting between Russians and Chechens, at least for three years. However, the failure to achieve a more basic political solution to the conflict undoubtedly enabled the situation to smolder until it broke out into overt violence again in the summer of 1999.

5) ***Conflict management and resolution:*** In those regions where violent conflict has ceased but where tensions and mutual hostility persist, the focus of OSCE activities has been on averting the reappearance of violence and trying to resolve the underlying issues to remove the conditions that led to conflict in the first place. The OSCE has engaged in a number of third party roles since 1992 to try to manage and promote the resolution of conflicts within and among its participating states.

In the vast majority of cases where the CSCE/OSCE has become involved, with the exception of Chechnya as noted above, fighting ceased either because one party

achieved its immediate objective and the other was unable to resist by force, because the parties became exhausted and turned to other means to pursue their conflict, or because an outside party, such as Russia or the United States, intervened to help bring an end to the fighting.<sup>10</sup> Once a cease-fire is in place, typically some kind of peacekeeping arrangement has been set up, usually under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), though occasionally under United Nations auspices in the former Yugoslav states. In many of these cases, the OSCE has been mandated to observe the activities of the peacekeepers, to assure their neutrality, and to verify that they do not themselves instigate incidents that might lead to a renewal of violence. These activities have been most prominent in the South Ossetia region of Georgia, the Transdnistria region of Moldova, and in Tajikistan, especially near the frontier with Afghanistan.

Once a cease-fire is in place, the primary attention of the OSCE has turned toward promoting a resolution of the underlying conflict that led to the violence, in the hope of establishing a more stable solution that does not depend primarily on the observance of an often precarious cease-fire. A number of techniques have been utilized. The High Commissioner on National Minorities has often played a significant role in trying to move parties to a dispute along the path of resolution. In addition to organizing problem-solving seminars of the kind held in response to the Crimean conflict mentioned previously, the High Commissioner has sometimes undertaken "shuttle diplomacy," traveling between disputing parties and listening to their grievances and suggestions, and then following this up with a set of specific recommendations directed to the parties involved.

A second approach often utilized by the OSCE, especially by the missions of long duration, has been to provide "good offices" and other fairly passive forms of mediation to assist parties to a dispute to reach agreement. The OSCE mission head can frequently serve as a go-between or may mediate directly between disputing parties. For example, the OSCE missions have frequently served explicitly as mediators between the government of Moldova and the breakaway region of Transdnistria and between the government of Georgia and the separatist regime in South Ossetia. In Moldova, the OSCE Head of Mission serves as a third party, along with representatives of the Russian Federation and Ukraine, at regular meetings seeking to achieve an agreement to resolve the status of Transdnistria within the Republic of Moldova and to prevent a renewed

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<sup>10</sup>In a number of cases, some analysts would argue that in fact Russia ceased its support for one or both of the belligerent parties, so that the end of Russian active intervention was a major factor contributing to a cease-fire. This view is especially widespread among analysts in the newly independent states in Russia's "near abroad," who tend to interpret both the onset and cessation of fighting as being decided in Moscow, though not necessarily by the central government.

outbreak of fighting. Although progress has been slow in resolving the basic political conflict, some confidence-building measures have been undertaken by the parties. By early 2000 they had also reached agreement in principle upon the creation of a "common state" that would be comprised of two entities, but the details of competencies to be assigned to the common state and to each of the entities, as well as those shared between them, have not yet been agreed upon.

In Georgia, the OSCE has been assigned primary responsibility for mediating between the government in Tbilisi and leaders of the breakaway region of South Ossetia based in the regional capital of Tskhinvali, whereas the United Nations has assumed the primary role of mediator in the conflict involving the secessionist region of Abkhazia. After more than seven years of involvement in the conflict, the OSCE mediation efforts have improved confidence between ethnic Ossets and the Georgian government in Tbilisi and have laid the foundation for an eventual resolution of the conflict, although a definitive agreement has not been reached at the time of this writing.

In Tajikistan, the mission in Dushanbe has also mediated between the government of Tajikistan and the opposition, composed of rival clans, which have used violent means in an effort to bring down the central government. Once a power sharing agreement was achieved between the parties in June 1997, the OSCE mission advised the Commission of National Reconciliation set up under this agreement in its efforts to integrate the former opposition into a new government in Tajikistan.

A third approach at mediation has been to establish formal groups of states operating under the auspices of the OSCE to try to assist disputing parties to resolve their differences peacefully. These may take the form of "contact groups," "friends" of a particular country, or a formal group such as the "Minsk Group" which was established in 1992 to try to mediate the conflict over Nagorno Karabakh. The Minsk Group is currently co-chaired by the United States, France, and the Russian Federation, and it frequently operates at senior diplomatic levels, including the foreign ministers of its participating countries, to try to hammer out a political solution to what has been one of the most intractable and deadly conflicts in post-Cold War Eurasia. There were high hopes that the Minsk Group would broker a political settlement in time for the 1999 OSCE Summit in Istanbul, but last minute political obstacles, arising mostly from the domestic situations in both Azerbaijan and Armenia, prevented final consummation of an agreement. A similar "contact group" was established to serve as a go-between in the conflict between the Albanian population of Kosovo and the Serbian government in Belgrade, and it was responsible for organizing the abortive negotiations at Rambouillet

in February 1999 that failed to reach a political settlement under threat of imminent NATO military action against the FRY.

Finally, where agreements have been reached, the OSCE may play a role in overseeing their implementation. For example, the OSCE has set up special missions to assist in carrying out bilateral agreements between Russia and Latvia concerning a Russian radar station at Skrunda and agreements between Russia and both Latvia and Estonia to set up a joint commission on military pensioners. Its field missions may also be mandated to supervise specific agreements. For instance, the mission in Moldova is charged with monitoring the 1994 treaty between Russia and Moldova (not yet ratified by the Russian Duma) on the withdrawal of the Russian 14th army and associated equipment and supplies stored in the region of Moldova on the left bank of the Dniester River. And, as noted previously, the Kosovo Verification Mission consisted of a large group of unarmed monitors of a cease-fire agreement in the Kosovo region of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, backed by a NATO force "over the horizon" which stood ready to rescue the observers if they fell into serious danger. In principle, but thus far not in reality, the OSCE may undertake a full-scale peacekeeping operation under its auspices, perhaps with assistance from NATO, other military alliances, or individual participating states, to oversee political agreements between disputing parties. Such a possibility has been anticipated since the 1992 Helsinki Summit as part of a political settlement in Nagorno Karabakh, and at the 1994 Budapest Summit the OSCE created a High Level Planning Group to prepare for such an operation. However, by early 2000 a political settlement remained elusive, so there was no agreed mandate under which an OSCE peacekeeping force might function.

6) ***Post-Conflict Security-Building:*** The OSCE has also frequently been engaged in promoting long-term peace and security in regions where conflicts have occurred and where a political settlement has been formally achieved, but where the bitterness and destruction of war have left a legacy of hatred and animosity that must be overcome. This has often involved efforts to promote reconciliation between the parties to the conflict that goes beyond a formal settlement of the dispute and that moves toward a deeper resolution. It may also involve assistance with building democracy, in this case not only as a prophylactic against violence but in order to create non-violent means to resolve differences that were previously handled with coercion and violence. The construction of civil society, holding of elections, assistance in the creation of new constitutions and the promotion of the rule of law, and all other aspects of the OSCE human dimension activities may be stressed in these situations.

In addition, the OSCE may assist in the verification of disarmament agreements between disputing parties. It may arrange and provide training for civilian police and other institutions required to maintain law and order. Since economic distress is frequently a major obstacle to post-conflict rehabilitation, the OSCE may assist the parties in identifying donors to obtain external economic relief or in helping humanitarian organizations become established in zones where violence has created severe social needs. In short, it provides assistance to help relieve the conditions that breed conflict and make reconciliation difficult to realize. Finally, in a number of cases the OSCE has assisted with the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their pre-war homes, by advising governments on the legal provisions regarding property rights, for example, that may be necessary for such a process to work fairly and effectively. In some cases, such as the Eastern Slavonia region of Croatia, the OSCE has worked directly with returning refugees to facilitate their return.

The most dramatic illustration of this OSCE role is in the implementation of the Dayton Accords on Bosnia-Herzegovina. In this case, the OSCE was charged specifically with preparing and supervising all national, republic-level, and municipal elections, and with implementing the results of those elections including, after the municipal elections in the autumn of 1997, assisting the return of elected officials to those communities from which they had been forcibly evicted during the fighting. It was charged with implementing the regional stabilization and arms control measures under Articles II and IV of the Dayton accords, including supervising the disarmament of combatant forces, the surrender of weapons by individuals, and aerial surveillance to verify compliance with the arms control provisions and to enhance confidence among the parties to the conflict. Finally, the OSCE has played a leading role in promoting the development of pluralistic and independent media and the use of fair techniques in connection with elections and other political activities. In short, with the exception of the direct military enforcement role under the leadership of IFOR and SFOR, the OSCE has played the leading role in the implementation of the Dayton Accords, especially involving political dimensions of the security-building process.

The OSCE mission in Croatia has played a key role in the post-conflict process in that country. In January 1998, approximately 250 persons under the OSCE arrived following the departure of the UN Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES). A principle responsibility for mission officials has been to assist the Croatian government's implementation of agreements concerning the two-way return of refugees in an effort to undo the ethnic cleansing that took place in the course of the fighting in that region of Croatia. The OSCE presence consists entirely of civilians,

although its functions include training cadets for the Croatian Police Force that took over from a UN Civilian Police force in 1999.

Similarly, the OSCE played a major role not only in resolving the conflict that broke out in Albania in early 1997, but also in the process of rebuilding political and social order in Albania after the fighting was brought to an end. In this case, Albania teetered on the verge of becoming a collapsed state. Initially order was established by a multinational force named Operation Alba, led by the Italians, and authorized by both the UN and the OSCE. Subsequently, the OSCE, led by Austria's former chancellor Franz Vranitzky, established a "presence" in Albania that successfully ran and monitored elections that eventually led to the establishment of a new government. Since that time, most OSCE efforts have been devoted to preserving the stability of the fragile political order, assisting the economic recovery of the country, and taking measures to insure that the conflict in Kosovo does not spill over to involve Albania directly. The collapse of the government of Albania and the fundamental anarchy which resulted throughout the country created a grave crisis where no other institution could react as rapidly and as flexibly as the OSCE. Within a few short months order was restored, elections were held, and a new government was installed that was able to re-establish order. While the situation in Albania remains perilous, with the refugee crisis following the war in Kosovo having added further burden to the Albanian government, the OSCE has aided the new government in overcoming these challenges and in restoring some semblance of order and stability in this crucial Balkan country.

Finally, following the agreement to end NATO bombardment of the FRY in June 1999, the OSCE was assigned a significant role to assist in the reconstruction of Kosovo under the auspices of the UN authority that was established in Kosovo. Building on its traditional strengths, the OSCE activities in Kosovo since June 1999 have emphasized democratization, including preparations for elections and monitoring free access by a diverse media, as well as training civilian police in order to provide security for all parties in Kosovo after the NATO-led force departs the region.

In summary, the OSCE activities have expanded significantly since the end of the Cold War, and the sum total of all of its new activities in the security field have made it a substantially different organization from the series of itinerant conferences that took place before 1991. In particular, the security role of the OSCE has extended considerably beyond the initial confidence-building measures adopted at Helsinki in 1975 to include a broad panoply of instruments that may be invoked to respond to developing conflicts throughout the Eurasian region. At the same time, it has remained "organizationally light," relying upon a series of flexible institutions and mechanisms to respond to

potential and actual conflicts with measures that are attuned to the particularities of each and every different situation. Thus the OSCE's conflict prevention mechanism has proven to be adaptable to a wide variety of tasks and able to respond to the rapidly changing security environment in Eurasia over the past decade.

At the same time, in part due to its success, the OSCE has been assigned increasingly challenging missions in places such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Kosovo. In contrast to its early experience with small missions typically consisting of 6 to 20 professionals, the three missions in the former Yugoslavia have employed hundreds of personnel in very complex activities. In many ways, the demands put on the OSCE have overburdened this organization with a staff of only about 340 full-time professional employees based mostly at the secretariat in Vienna and a 2001 budget of about 210 million Euros.

Recent history has demonstrated clearly that there are essential European security functions that only the OSCE can perform. NATO, whatever its strengths, is limited by its primary reliance on military tools which are largely inappropriate for dealing with most of the conflicts in the former socialist states and are politically and geographically far beyond the normal range of NATO intervention. The European Union's ability to affect outcomes in this region is also limited by internal divisions and by the fact that two major states with significant influence in European security - the United States and the Russian Federation - are not members of the EU and are not likely to become members for the foreseeable future. In other words, the OSCE is the only multilateral Eurasian security institution which relies primarily on diplomatic means to prevent conflicts, to serve as a third party between disputants, and to assist in conflict resolution and security building after violence; it is also the only institution that includes as full participants all of the states that have a direct influence on Eurasian security issues and whose cooperation is essential if conflicts in that region are to be managed nonviolently.

In short, the OSCE is essential to the development of a more secure Europe in the first decade of the 21st century. It is time to realize, however, that it cannot play that role with the political, financial, and personnel resources allocated to it during the past decade. It is necessary for the participating states to recognize that it is now necessary to provide the OSCE with the professional capacity of a vital multilateral security institution, without, on the other hand, turning it into an inflexible and ineffective bureaucratic organization. The concluding section of this paper will suggest some modest steps which should be taken immediately to strengthen the capacity of the OSCE to function effectively as the most prominent multilateral institution of European security at the dawn of the 21st century.

### III. Strengthening the OSCE's Capacity in Conflict Prevention, Resolution, and Security-Building:

The argument that multilateral institutions matter, even in issues involving security affairs, has been made often in recent years by liberal theorists of international relations.<sup>11</sup> The importance of the fact that the end of the Cold War took place in Europe at a time when the continent was criss-crossed by a wide array of multilateral institutions has also been noted as contributing to the peaceable dismantling of the Cold War international system. These institutions aided the former opponents to disengage in a way that enabled them to cooperate while also pursuing rational, self-interested security policies.<sup>12</sup> But liberal, institutionalist theories of international relations have not yet sufficiently addressed the question of *how* international security institutions matter - how they restrain violence in an allegedly anarchic international system. This paper has begun to present an assessment of how one such institution, the OSCE, has made a difference, albeit often a modest one, in preventing violence and resolving underlying conflicts that often breed violence.

Once we address seriously the question of how institutions restrain violence, we can then also begin to consider the question of how multilateral institutions can be strengthened to restrain violence more effectively. While it is often useful to note how fortunate we were that the collapse of the Cold War system occurred in an institutionally "thick" context, it is also evident that many of those institutions have been slow to adapt to the new systemic structure. The widespread outbreak of violence throughout Eurasia is ample evidence that those institutions, however helpful they may have been in averting a major catastrophe, have nonetheless failed to stem a serious outbreak, escalation, and diffusion of ethnonational violence throughout Eurasia. Therefore, institutionalists ought not to be content to ponder their good fortune that the transition from a bipolar, Cold War world to the post-Cold War international system was not accompanied by major system-wide violence as has often been the case with past major systemic overhauls. Nor should they succumb to the paralysis induced by the neo-realists' apparent self-satisfaction with having predicting a post-Cold War world rife with chaos and violence. Rather we should be focusing our attention on how existing multilateral institutions can be strengthened

<sup>11</sup>See John Gerard Ruggie, "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution," in John Gerard Ruggie (ed.), *Multilateralism Matters: The Theory and Praxis of an International Forum* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 3-47.

<sup>12</sup>Celeste Wallander, *Mortal Friends, Best Enemies: German-Russian Cooperation after the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 210.

and better coordinated to perform their conflict prevention, management, and resolution functions more effectively than was the case during the final decade of the 20th century.

The first step in deciding how to strengthen the post-Cold War European security institutions is to recognize what has worked, even if imperfectly, thus far. This paper has argued that the OSCE has compiled a significant track record in responding to the many conflicts and security threats that have appeared in Eurasia during the decade after the end of the Cold War, and its capacity to act in such situations has progressively increased since 1990. More than any other institution carried over from the Cold War period, it bridged the east-west gap in Eurasia and has taken on directly the political challenges of the post-Cold War European security disorder. There are, however, several broad ways in which the work of the OSCE could be further strengthened.

First, the OSCE must clarify its relationship to other multilateral institutions dealing with European security, and those relationships should become increasingly complementary rather than competing. Particularly destructive to the development of the OSCE capacity to deal with conflict prevention and security-building has been the perceived competition between the OSCE and NATO. In the United States and some Western European countries there has often been a fear that anything that strengthens the OSCE will weaken NATO. At the same time, Russia has supported the OSCE rhetorically, though not always in concrete actions, as a distinct alternative to an enlarged NATO. Paradoxically, this has strengthened opposition to the OSCE in many quarters, especially in Washington and in some Central European countries, for fear of playing into the hands of what is perceived as Russia's anti-NATO propaganda.

In reality, this perceived competition is largely exaggerated. In fact, NATO and OSCE have different "comparative advantages" that should be mutually reinforcing. OSCE is a broad-based security organization with universal participation, explicit links between military and non-military dimensions of security, and a political role to play in conflict prevention and resolution that cannot possibly be played by a military alliance like NATO, no matter how it is transformed. At the same time, in the few instances where the OSCE's policies require military force for their implementation, including making and keeping peace, close links may be forged between the two, building especially on NATO's Partnership for Peace. Such links were envisioned in the Final Communiqué of NATO's Copenhagen Ministerial in June 1992 and the OSCE's Summit in Helsinki in July 1992. Therefore, far from being inherently in competition with one another, OSCE and NATO in fact need one another in order to be able to fulfill the roles envisioned for both in providing security for Europe in the 21st century.

Similarly, the OSCE is extremely dependent on the European Union, and on powerful and relatively wealthy countries, such as the United States. Those states and multilateral organizations both provide the economic resources for the OSCE to carry out its missions, and they provide the economic foundations for security in those regions of Eurasia where scarcity, poverty, and unemployment breed instability and insecurity. In spite of its ambitions under the Common Foreign and Security Policy adopted in the Maastricht Treaty in 1991, the EU has thus far not shown itself to be a reliable and effective organization for preventing and resolving conflicts, even within its geographical area of interest, as was demonstrated quite dramatically in the former Yugoslavia and more recently during the crisis in Albania. In addition to many internal problems that hinder its role in European security, it is fundamentally limited by the fact that two key states, the United States and the Russian Federation, are not now, and are not likely to become in the foreseeable future, members of the EU. Without these two states, the EU cannot play the same kind of role as the OSCE, within which the two former superpowers are able to exert their influence on European security, while being constrained by their participation in that multilateral organization.

Finally, the OSCE must also enhance its cooperation with other institutions that have overlapping functions, such as the Council of Europe. In the recent past, there have sometimes been conflicts over the similar roles of the OSCE and the Council of Europe in human dimension activities, especially with regard to setting and implementing norms in areas such as human rights, the rule of law, and the promotion of democratization through free elections. Cooperation between these two organizations increased considerably in the second half of the 1990s, and this is a positive development that needs to be replicated elsewhere.

A second major way in which the OSCE can be strengthened involves a conceptual reorientation in thinking about security in the post-Cold War era. What is required above all is a reassessment of some of the assumptions that tended to dominate policy-makers' images during the Cold War. These revised belief systems should now embrace an expanded role for multilateral institutions in providing for common security within the European region. If even the modest successes achieved by the OSCE so far in preventing and resolving conflict and building security were more broadly recognized by governments, experts, and publics alike, then more support might be generated for giving the OSCE the kind of authority and resources that it needs to really do its job effectively and thus to live up to its potential. There are a number of specific ways in which a modest increase in resources and political commitments from participating governments could pay huge dividends in increasing the OSCE's capacity to build

security in the Eurasian region and obviate the necessity to spend even larger sums on peace-making, peace-keeping, and "stabilization" forces like those that have been deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo.

1) The OSCE needs to make financial and personnel commitments to its missions extending beyond the usual six-month mandate now authorized in most cases. Almost all conflicts are too complex to be dealt with in such short periods of time, and long-term planning is required so that missions may build up the expertise and continuity of personnel that is required to be able to perform their functions effectively.

2) The OSCE should reduce its dependence on personnel seconded by participating governments and increasingly develop a professional core of its own specialists in conflict management who can be assigned to different missions as needed. This is not to say that the OSCE should become a large bureaucracy or eliminate seconded personnel altogether, since these features undoubtedly add to its present flexibility, a notable strength of the organization. On the other hand, the OSCE desperately needs persons whose first loyalty is to the multilateral institution rather than to their home government; who develop expertise on certain regions such as the Caucasus, the Balkans, or Central Asia, as well as on techniques of negotiation, mediation, conflict management and resolution; and who can be deployed flexibly as needed from one conflict area to another. The criteria for selection need to be based on qualifications to manage conflicts of the kind that have appeared throughout the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union, rather than selecting individuals who can be spared for one reason or another by their governments.

3) The OSCE needs a capacity to get substantial forces of trained, civilian volunteers into the field on short notice. The experience of the KVM demonstrated dramatically the problems of relying on volunteers when an emergency situation has been identified and individuals must be deployed promptly in very delicate conditions with little or no training. The REACT (Rapid Expert Assistance and Cooperation Teams) concept adopted by the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in November 1999 would seem to go along way towards meeting this goal. It will provide the OSCE with an operational capability to deploy civilian experts to assist participating states in preventing, managing, and resolving crises in the OSCE region. It is essential that the OSCE have the capacity to deploy trained personnel in the field rapidly before the outbreak of large-scale violence. It is equally important to provide the resources to train these individuals properly and to have them available to be called on short notice to serve as an emergency "fire brigade" that can be deployed quickly and hit the ground prepared to take on whatever conflict prevention tasks they are assigned. Again, a major test of the OSCE's

capacity to prevent future violence like that which appeared in Kosovo in 1999 will be the willingness of OSCE participating states to provide the REACT units with a sufficient quantity of highly trained personnel to be available for civilian duty in tense situations that threaten to turn violent. To some degree the events in Macedonia during 2001 represented such a crisis, and the OSCE was able to respond by substantially revising its mission and increasing its size to respond to the developing crisis. However, this response came later than desirable, and the real test in the future will be if the OSCE can learn to read the warning signs well enough and to act on them rapidly enough to be on the ground before violence becomes widespread.

4) The OSCE needs to strengthen both the mandate and resources of the office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, again without making it overly bureaucratized. The High Commissioner is one of the OSCE's most effective tools for early warning and early intervention in potential conflict situations. At present, the HCNM is severely constrained by several provisions of the mandate and by the limited resources and relatively small staff that he has to draw upon in fulfilling his mandate. Interventions are restricted a) to issues where *national* minorities are involved, b) where there is no terrorist element operating, and c) where there is a significant threat that a conflict might spill over international borders.

These constraints largely explain why the High Commissioner has only functioned in conflicts in the former communist countries rather than in other parts of Europe, even though the first High Commissioner, Max van der Stoel of the Netherlands, defined his mandate broadly within the constraints permitted in the document adopted at the 1992 OSCE Summit in Helsinki. This has created the unfortunate perception that the OSCE is largely an organization through which Western European governments can manage conflicts in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, but not the reverse.<sup>13</sup> It means that terrorist activities by extremists associated with a national minority may prevent the High Commissioner from interceding in disputes in which they participate, even though the vast majority of the members of that nationality may have refrained altogether from the use of violence.

The success of the High Commissioner on National Minorities since its creation in 1992 has largely been the result of the dedicated and brilliant work of the former Dutch Foreign Minister, Max van der Stoel, and a small, hard-working professional staff who support him. It is by no means certain that subsequent high commissioners will interpret

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<sup>13</sup>Martin Alexanderson, "The Need for a Generalized Application of the Minorities Regime in Europe," *Helsinki Monitor*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (1997), pp. 50-53.

their mandate as broadly, engage themselves as actively, and perform to the high professional standards set by the present officials in the Hague. This office thus needs to be strengthened in terms of both the mandate and resources - human and financial - in order to assure that its effectiveness is institutionalized now that van der Stoep has been replaced by Ambassador Rolf Ekeus of Sweden. The continued support of the delegations of all major OSCE participating states will be essential to preserve and strengthen what has perhaps been the most innovative and unique contribution made by the OSCE to enhance security in Europe since the end of the Cold War.

In short, the ability of OSCE to achieve its potential in the management of post-Cold War conflict in Eurasia is significantly limited by traditional ideas held over from the Cold War era which place the unilateral prerogatives of certain powerful states above the long-term interests of the community of nations living in Europe. For the OSCE to achieve its potential, participating states must have sufficient confidence that their long-term interests will be served by a stable and secure Europe in order to forego their narrow, short-term interests and instead to support multilateral institutions such as the OSCE as the best guarantor of all states' long-term security.

The OSCE thus faces a "dilemma of expectations": If national governments were more confident in its potential and gave it the support it needs - not only material but political - then it could become demonstrably more successful in producing clear and recognizable joint benefits in terms of improved security for all of its participating states. This would reinforce the confidence that governments of participating states and their populations have in the OSCE and their willingness to give it the support it needs. As a consequence, the OSCE might become even more effective at producing common security, in a positive spiral of mounting confidence and capability. Conversely, in the absence of such support, the OSCE will inevitably fall short of the expectations generated for it. This will cause its critics to dismiss it as another weak and ineffective multilateral organization on which states cannot depend to preserve their national security. States may consequently withdraw their support from the OSCE and put greater confidence in military alliances and unilateral action, as was the case in Kosovo in 1999. This would further weaken the OSCE and make it into the helpless organization that its critics said it was all along, reinforcing a negative cycle of diminishing expectations and effectiveness.

In short, as constructivist theorists point out, the capacity of institutions to perform their functions effectively depends in large measure on the confidence that states and political elites have in them; whether a realist or a liberal institutionalist security regime prevails in the Eurasian region in the future depends not only on the objective security conditions but also upon the subjective expectations and normative values and

goals of the region's political elites concerning the capacity of multilateral institutions to manage conflicts in order to prevent the outbreak of large-scale violence.

The future of the OSCE, therefore, depends not only on its objective accomplishments, but upon the premises with which today's leaders approach European security. Like Jean Monnet and others after World War II, they could adopt a new vision of a cooperative approach to European security at the onset of the 21st century. Belief in that vision might create the political context in which strengthened multilateral security institutions could flourish. As Keohane and Hoffmann note, "international institutions change realities and expectations."<sup>14</sup> Or alternatively, they could fatalistically resign themselves to accept the inevitable future of conflict and insecurity prophesied by the realists. Instead of building and strengthening multilateral institutions, they could fall back on "self help" strategies in which states act unilaterally to protect their own security, thereby reinforcing security dilemmas that in the end make everyone more insecure.

The OSCE alone, of course, is not a panacea for a new, stable, and secure European order, and excessively optimistic expectations could lead to almost certain disappointment and disillusionment. At the same time, the failure by many political leaders to recognize and acknowledge the potential of multilateral security institutions like the OSCE undermines their ability to reach their potential in the field of conflict prevention, management, and resolution. What is needed is a recognition of the concrete accomplishments already made by the OSCE and support for the optimistic, but not unrealistic belief that some modest efforts to strengthen the OSCE could make a significant positive contribution to a more secure common future for all Europeans "from Vancouver to Vladivostok."

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<sup>14</sup>Robert O. Keohane and Stanley Hoffmann, "Conclusion: Structure, Strategy, and Institutional Roles," in Robert P. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye, and Stanley Hoffmann (eds.), *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-91*(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 392.