

Training and Capacity-Building of OSCE Staff

The Implementation of the "OSCE Strategy for Capacity-Building through Training"

In March 1999 the "OSCE Strategy for Capacity-Building through Training"¹ was passed by the OSCE Permanent Council. In the OSCE Yearbook 1999, the former Co-ordinator for Capacity-Building and Training, Ambassador Sune Danielsson, gave a report on the background and the origin of this strategy, as well as its contents and goals. Now, a first assessment of its implementation is to be made in the following.

Implementation Status and Assessing Requirements

Due to inadequate resources as well as the special demands placed on the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna during the build-up of the Mission in Kosovo (OMIK) since July 1999, the implementation of the Strategy got off to a rather slow start. At the same time the personnel in the OSCE Secretariat, in the institutions and particularly in OSCE missions had doubled since the Strategy was adopted. In the missions alone, the number of staff had increased from around 500 international to over 1,000 international and approximately 3,000 local mission members.

All the same, starting on 1 January 2000, we were able to fuse the two-day induction course for new Kosovo Mission Members with the course for new mission members seconded to other OSCE missions. Since January 2000, this has led to the fact that new mission members as well as Secretariat employees have been introduced to administrative and substantive OSCE matters every two weeks.

The induction programme is made up of the following modules, which are continually being developed and updated: an administrative inprocessing in which also fundamental topics such as the mission members' code of conduct are covered, an overview of the OSCE, its history, its structure and institutions (ODIHR and the HCNM), an overview of field activities, i.e. the OSCE missions in Eastern and South-eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, as well as modules on OSCE co-operation with other international organizations, the human dimension, the importance of gender issues for mission work, the rights of the child, operational and security issues, and last but not least stress management and inter-cultural communication. Since January

1 SEC.GAL/25/99/Rev.1.

2001, the schedule of the latest induction programme has been available at the website of the OSCE Training Section.²

Thanks to the availability of seconded trainers from the US, Canada and Austria, in the spring of 2000 specialized courses were initiated, at first for Secretariat staff, and since 2001, for participants from medium-sized and small missions. The courses focus on management training and seminars on conflict analysis and conflict management. Rather than giving priority to theoretical knowledge, the focus is on acquiring practical skills, like the improvement of language and communication skills, office skills as well as methods of facilitation and mediation.

Within the framework of the OSCE's broader task as the one regional organization from Vancouver to Vladivostok which has made civil conflict prevention and conflict management its cause, the Training Section deems it necessary to provide all OSCE employees with at least basic knowledge in these areas. Thus far, in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo this has to a large extent been accomplished by an expert with a Ph.D. from the University of Bradford. Another trainer, educated at the Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre and seconded to the OSCE by Canada in 2000 and 2001, conducted this type of training seminar in OSCE missions and the Secretariat on various occasions. He will continue to be available to the OSCE on a freelance basis. In order to cover the needs of the OSCE Secretariat, the institutions and the small and medium-sized missions fully, however, we are planning before long to hire a trainer for conflict management if we get the backing of participating States.

This is also in accord with the endeavours of the EU to develop its own capacities in the area of conflict prevention and management in co-operation with other international organizations, in particular the OSCE. The OSCE has many years of experience on the political level as well as practical know-how in the field.

There are also plans to develop a training programme on gender issues throughout the entire organization. The OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues³ adopted in the year 2000 is to increase awareness and conduct training programmes in this area in the OSCE. However this will only be feasible if - at least for a certain period - training capacities are developed, especially in the field missions.

Therefore in future, "training of trainer" programmes will be of immense importance in this and all of the above-mentioned areas. To ensure continuity, preparing local trainers in particular will contribute greatly to the cost-efficient and sustainable implementation of the Training Strategy.

² See: www.osce.org/training/.

³ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Permanent Council, PC-Journal No. 285, Decision No. 353, OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues, PC.DEC/353, 1 June 2000.

In May 2000, the first meeting of Focal Points for Training took place providing a first general exchange of experiences and opinions. According to the Strategy, these contact persons were appointed from each of the OSCE missions and institutions by the Heads of Mission and/or Directors. At the end of the first meeting of Focal Points a declaration was adopted on further co-operation between them and the Secretariat. Within the current OSCE structure, the Secretariat in Vienna has the function of a service provider for the delegations of the participating States and the field missions and thus does not have the authority to issue directives. Because of this, the OSCE Training Co-ordinator is dependent on co-operation with and the assistance of the missions.

At this first meeting of all contact persons for the OSCE staff training area, it quickly became clear that the situation in the three large OSCE Missions to Croatia, to Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo was very different from that in the medium-sized and small missions. Croatia and Bosnia both have a training section each occupied by one international mission member as well as local personnel. In Kosovo, two international mission members backed by several local employees work in the training section offering varying training programmes to the over 2,000 local employees and international members of the Mission. All three missions have organized induction programmes on their particular mission for new mission members.

The training programmes in the three large missions had first been developed spontaneously according to the needs of the particular mission and its personnel. The focus had been on language courses to improve the English skills of the national as well as international mission members and adapt to the needs of the mission. Furthermore, however, management and administrative skills, conflict management, human rights work, computer proficiency, project management and much more were also covered.

Many courses were conducted using internal resources. Because of the relatively ample funds that the larger missions have for training programmes both in their training sections as well as in the various departments, they were able to hire external training experts. During the OSCE budget planning for 2001, the OSCE Training Section team in Vienna, which in the meantime had been almost completely replaced, was confronted with the difficult task of gaining an overview of the training programmes in the missions, in particular the larger ones. It became clear that, for the Missions in Kosovo and to Bosnia and Herzegovina, this task could not be achieved. In addition to the general training courses conducted by the training sections of both these missions, most of their departments also organized further training for their staff. There was no co-operation or co-ordination between departments or between departments and the training section. However, to be able to defend one's budget estimate before the OSCE financial body, the so-called Informal Financial Committee, it is important that the Co-ordinator for Capacity-Building and Training has an overview also of the training programmes conducted

in these two missions. Thus in view of the budgeting for the year 2002, at the beginning of December 2000, an Organizational Directive was issued to both missions calling upon them to co-ordinate all internal mission training activities. In the meantime the structural prerequisites in both missions have been fulfilled for the comprehensive co-ordination of all training programmes offered to mission personnel. The Mission to Croatia had a centralized structure from the start so that the international mission member responsible for training and further training had always been in charge of all activities in this area. In this Organizational Directive however, smaller OSCE field activities were also reminded of their duties and called upon to report regularly on the training programmes in their missions.

During a meeting of Training Section staff in Vienna with their colleagues from the three large missions in February 2001, common standards for planning, reporting, budgeting and evaluation of training activities were developed. In the meantime, the medium-sized and small missions have been provided with these standards, all of which are designed to facilitate the work in both the Secretariat as well as the missions. Assessing training requirements plays a special role in this process. These requirements vary according to mission mandate, but also show common consistent features. Systematic assessment of training requirements had only taken place sporadically up to then. However, the assessments made so far have already shown that training and further training in the areas of management, leadership skills, conflict resolution, stress management and intercultural communication are to be the focus of future training programmes.

An OSCE mission preparedness evaluation project planned by the Centre for OSCE Research (CORE) in Hamburg will hopefully provide knowledge based on scientific research on the requirements for training and capacity-building in the missions in the near future, thus placing the work of the Coordinator for Capacity-Building and Training on a more solid foundation.

At the second meeting of Focal Points for Training, which took place on 10 and 11 May 2001, it was confirmed that close inter-mission co-operation in training activities was needed. While the training sections of the large missions now have a lively and continual exchange of information and also cooperate in practice, the small and medium-sized missions are dependent on the direction and active support of the Vienna Training Section. Indeed, they have begun to send a few members, especially local staff, to the training courses at the Secretariat. However, this has not sufficed to satisfy the requirements of the missions, especially the three "medium-sized" missions in Georgia, Albania and - recently - the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia which each have a total of around 100 national and international staff. The ODIHR in Warsaw has, up to now, conducted only a few *ad hoc* courses organized exclusively through its own resources. For the year 2002, it will apply for funding for training programmes for its personnel for the first time. An assessment of its training requirements is currently being conducted.

An important achievement of the second meeting of Focal Points was the decision on future co-operation between the missions, which was taken jointly by the group. The missions in the Balkans have started to exchange training officers as well as materials. The largest mission in the Caucasus, the Mission to Georgia, will invite participants from the neighbouring offices in Yerevan and Baku to their training programmes and if the Assistance Group to Chechnya returns there, its members will be invited as well. Starting in 2002, ODIHR is to open up its training programmes to members of the missions in Belarus and Moldova as well as personnel working at the office of the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. In Central Asia, the plan is to offer regional training activities to the four OSCE Centres in Almaty, Ashgabad, Bishkek and Tashkent as well as the Mission to Tajikistan. The Mission to Tajikistan, the largest in the region, will play a key role in future.

The Training Section in Vienna, for its part, will give clear instructions to the missions on budgeting training programmes for the 2002 budget preparations to be able to allow the greatest possible transparency in preparation of the future budget. This will allow the OSCE participating States to determine more easily how the funds earmarked for training programmes are utilized in mission budgets, OSCE institutions and the Secretariat.

Although the Strategy has been in effect for over two years, a number of OSCE participating States, also for fiscal reasons, still have doubts about the need for systematic training and capacity-building of OSCE personnel during their deployment at an OSCE mission or in an OSCE institution. There is more willingness in granting local employees the right to further training. This is also understood as being a tool for building the capacities of local OSCE personnel to benefit the mandate area after the end of the mandate of a certain mission. The OSCE Training Section and the OSCE missions have already been taking this into account by designing between 60 and 70 per cent of all their training activities for local personnel. Quite a number of participating States however reject training for the international mission members seconded by their states. They point out that these are qualified experts and that the stay in a mission is on average relatively short, currently around 18 months long. However, this discounts the fact that in particular for short stays, focused training could considerably increase the efficiency and motivation of mission members. Thus, a considerable effort was to be made to convince those responsible to extend the current Training Strategy for the next three years.⁴

In January 2001, the Training Section set up its own website to provide information and a communications network within the OSCE as well as for the participating States. Moreover, the first four issues of the OSCE Training Newsletter have been published. In addition, the Section provides classified

4 After extensive discussions with Delegations, a revised version of the Training Strategy was adopted by the Permanent Council on 7 February 2002, which covers the period 2002-2004.

training material especially to the governments of the participating States through the websites of the delegates. In this manner, the participating States have the opportunity to form an impression of the Training Section's services at any time. Although the Training Section's website and the delegates' websites are still in rudimentary stages and/or are still pilot projects, the hope is that they will be influential in convincing the participating States of the necessity and utility of training and capacity-building measures in the OSCE. The new Training Strategy mentioned above aims, *inter alia*, at supporting the measures for mission preparation training in the participating States as well as strengthening international co-operation; both have not been taken into account adequately in the former strategy.

Pre-Mission Preparation and Training

The number of participants in OSCE field activities and missions has increased dramatically during the past few years. In 1995, when the Conference on Security and Co-operation (CSCE) was transformed into the OSCE, the total number of international mission members was less than 100. Today the mission member total is over 1,000. Because the Organization invests almost 90 per cent of its resources in the missions and field activities currently in existence, international as well as local personnel are the most important contribution the OSCE community of states makes to conflict prevention in its numerous host countries.

The establishment of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of 1995 chimed in the beginning of a phase of new challenges. Since then, it would no longer have sufficed to recruit a few qualified mission members from diplomatic circles and academia, who in general have profound knowledge of the host country and the course of a conflict as well as adequate language skills and therefore do not require nearly as much training and capacity-building as the huge number of mission members that are now required.

The three large OSCE Balkan missions, to Bosnia and Herzegovina (since 1995), Croatia (since 1996) and in Kosovo (KVM 1998, OMIK since 1999) made it clear to the participating States and the OSCE Secretariat that adequate preparation and capacity-building during the mission assignment were enormously important. Because of the recruitment system unique to the OSCE, which is based almost exclusively on secondment, i.e. the assignment of national experts to the OSCE, the participating States felt the necessity to take action to provide for adequate mission preparation training for their candidates. A number of participating States have recently met this challenge by initiating special training courses for future OSCE mission members. However, the substance and scope of these mission preparation courses vary tremendously.

The decision by the Heads of State or Government of the OSCE participating States at the Summit Meeting in Istanbul in 1999 to strengthen the capacity of the OSCE for future field operations with Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams, the so-called REACT programme, also called for the adequate preparation of future mission members in this new structure.

It was explicitly stated that training would play an important role in implementing REACT, making selected personnel fully operational upon arrival in a host country after having received the appropriate preparation, i.e. allowing them to be operational from the start. This also allows mission members with little experience to meet the challenges in the field. Within this framework, in November 2000, the Training Section in the OSCE Secretariat developed a set of training standards designed to aid the participating States in implementing the appropriate preparatory measures to fulfil OSCE minimum requirements. The goal of these standards is to ensure the greatest possible agreement and compatibility between the various preparation initiatives. The preparation courses for future OSCE mission members in Germany, Switzerland and Austria have been designed according to OSCE Training Standards. In particular, the specific OSCE Mission Preparation Training Course organized by the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution in Stadtschlaining was conducted for the first time in October 2000 in close co-operation with the OSCE Secretariat as a pilot project for testing the standards. Since then the course is conducted twice a year. Moreover, it offers up to ten local members in each OSCE mission the opportunity to acquire comprehensive knowledge on the Organization and its numerous activities as well as obtaining required skills.

The OSCE dispatches 500 to 600 experts yearly to OSCE long-term missions, where professional expertise as well as readiness and operational capacity are a prerequisite. Therefore it is extremely important that a participating State links selection closely with preparation. A growing number of participating States utilize the preparation courses to build up a personnel reserve, which is on standby for international missions. In this context, the introduction of the REACT concept activated the corresponding processes as the participating States are required to provide a specified number of experts who are well prepared and ready for deployment at short notice, especially for emerging crisis situations.

In summary, the area of mission preparation is very dynamic in the sense that to a much larger extent, an increasing number of participating States realize the necessity and take on the responsibility for the preparation of future mission members for their activities. In this undertaking, the OSCE Secretariat gives them substantial support and advice through standards, modules and experts. Furthermore, there are a certain number of places reserved in the current courses for participants from other countries, who because they have fewer secondments and/or lack the financial means forgo their own activities. However, there is also a need for further co-ordination on the international

level with partner organizations like the United Nations, the European Union and the Council of Europe as the preparation of national civilian personnel is most often oriented towards deployment in all international organizations.

International Co-operation and Synergies in the Field of Training

The increasing complexity of international peace missions has, particularly during the nineties, led to an increased need for available, highly-qualified civilian experts. The new generation of peace missions (recently in Kosovo and East Timor equipped even with executive power) is multi-dimensional, multi-disciplinary and as a rule the missions take place through the interaction of various international actors co-ordinated to a greater or lesser extent. International as well as regional organizations, states and non-governmental organizations compete for a limited number of qualified experts who are required to carry out these complex operations.

The flexibility for potential deployment of skilled personnel in missions whose management is often for political considerations entrusted to one particular international organization, in other words the *interoperability* strived for by influential international organizations has also led to increased international co-operation in the recent past. Because of these considerations, the Training Standards developed by the OSCE contribute to unified preparation. Among other things, they reflect the training standards of the United Nations for civilian police and attempt to meet minimum requirements for deployment eligibility, which are also relevant for missions not under the direction of the OSCE.

Co-operation between the OSCE and the United Nations in the field of training is currently concentrated on common training measures in the area of conflict management and/or prevention in Central Asia in collaboration with the UN Staff College in Turin. Contacts on the working level were also made with the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in the UN Secretariat. However, the comprehensive training and capacity-building measures of this unit are currently limited to civilian police and military units for peacekeeping operations. Thus the strongly diverging civilian approach in OSCE training activities only allows a limited number of common activities. The implementation of the so-called UN *Brahimi Report* keeps hopes alive that in the future there will be increased overlaps in mutual undertakings. In addition, it should be mentioned that there are efforts being made for increased co-operation with the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Among the UN specialized agencies, a mention should be given to the UN Refugee Agency (UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR) which has been conducting crisis management courses in which OSCE staff members participate.

Because the majority of OSCE mission members are deployed in the area of the human dimension, the adequate preparation of specialists in the area of human rights gains particular significance. The necessity for a unified, coherent preparation of human rights monitors had already been identified by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson in 1999, calling for increased co-operation in this area between the UN, the EU, the Council of Europe and the OSCE. After a joint training session of all organizations on human rights monitoring, which took place during the summer of 1999 in Venice, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights announced that a training handbook would be published in the near future. As a result of this, the OSCE drafted a European annex of this handbook, which takes into account European human rights commitments that go beyond those of the UN. The OSCE hopes that in the near future in a follow-up seminar to the training session in Venice, a training package in the area of human rights will be created which will be supported by all of the above-mentioned organizations.

In the meantime, good contacts have been established with the Council of Europe with the goal of jointly developing training programmes in the areas of human rights and democratization. The latest efforts of the European Union to develop crisis management capacities also in the civilian area give hope that there will be increased co-operation in the field of training in the coming years. The EU has in this connection already announced that it will utilize OSCE Training Standards for its own or for joint pre-mission training. The areas of conflict analysis, conflict prevention and management as well as peace-building measures offer opportunities for concrete projects in co-operation.