

Poland and the OSCE: In Search of more Effective European Security

Poland's attitude towards the CSCE/OSCE² throughout its entire history has reflected the Polish search for more effective national and European security as well as the meandering course of its policy and options in this respect. It has also mirrored different expectations of the leading Polish political forces vis-a-vis the West and Russia.

The CSCE/OSCE has never been accorded the highest priority in Polish security policy, but our attitude towards it and involvement in its activities have provided a litmus test, showing the degree of Poland's pan-European vocation, its abandonment of narrow or parochial approaches to European problems. In other words, participation in the CSCE/OSCE has been helpful in developing in Warsaw a more universal approach to the new challenges facing the continent.

A Glance at the Past

Before 1989, under conditions of limited sovereignty, the Polish People's Republic was a more active participant in the Helsinki process than the other satellites of the Soviet Union. However, the attitude of the regime and of the opposition towards the CSCE was ambivalent.

More liberal groups within the ruling communist establishment in Warsaw hoped that the CSCE could help in loosening the grip of the concept of "socialist camp unity" (read: control by Moscow) in foreign policy, in opening new channels of multilateral dialogue with the West, in legitimizing a certain degree of internal liberalization, and in promoting a greater opening of Poland to the outside world. The CSCE's emphasis on human rights and the "third basket" was to provide an instrument for toning down the persistent criticism levelled by Moscow and hardliners in other communist capitals against the Polish "specificities", e.g. as regards private agriculture, the position of the Catholic Church, and Poland's greater freedom in the areas of culture and personal contacts with the West than that enjoyed in the other

¹ The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of his Government.

² Here called the CSCE for the period up to the end of 1994, OSCE after 1 January 1995, and CSCE/OSCE for time periods overlapping 1994/95. Occasionally, the term "Helsinki process" is also used.

"people's democracies". For obvious reasons these views were not presented in public but were pragmatically introduced internally in the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act decisions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw and the diplomats involved in the Helsinki process tried their best, amidst uneasy conditions, to activate Polish participation in the CSCE, albeit in a way that would not provoke the Kremlin or affect the foundations of the system. These efforts were particularly evident in cultural and educational cooperation, increased personal contacts and intensified dialogue with the West.

On the other hand, conservative elements within the Polish United Workers' Party (Communist), feared that the CSCE's human dimension, and in particular the idea of the individual freedoms and of the free flow of people and information, could undermine communist dogmas, including Edward Gierek's concept of the "ideological and moral unity of the nation", and lead to the creation of more favourable conditions for the development of various forms of opposition activities. These fears were often expressed in public but were not decisive in the government's final attitude towards the CSCE, which was in turn a mixture of the two approaches.³

The expectations and apprehensions of both groups within the elites of the *ancien régime* were in some sense realized. CSCE ideas promoted links with the West, contributed to the decline of the authoritarian system by encouraging democratic change through peaceful means, and helped to ease the Soviet grip over the Central European nations.

No picture of Poland's attitude towards the CSCE before 1989 would be complete without describing the position of the democratic opposition, which emerged prominently after 1976.⁴ Here too the approach was ambivalent. On the one hand, the CSCE was associated with the danger of strengthening the status quo since Yalta, de facto approval of the concept of limited sovereignty, full legitimation of communist rule, and the risk that the Helsinki process might be treated as a substitute for developed contacts with Western structures, organizations and institutions. These fears were not fully justified, since the opposition underestimated the dynamic elements of the Helsinki process. They were, however, not surprising when one recalls that the CSCE decisions were in fact products of far-reaching compromises expressed sometimes in blurred language. It is enough to remember that, at

³ It is interesting to recall that the Polish negotiators of the Helsinki Final Act were later often objects of internal Communist Party criticism for "selling out the interests of socialism", in particular regarding provisions on national minorities (German context), passport policies, free flow of information ("Free Europe" context) etc.

⁴ The Polish opposition developed from large groups of dissidents and formed itself following food riots of June 1976. The protests against proposed changes to the constitution, the same year, legitimizing the "leading role" of the Communist Party and raising the alliance with the Soviet Union to a constitutional principle impelled large sectors of the "intelligentsia" to go into opposition too.

Soviet insistence, the Helsinki Final Act nowhere mentioned the word "democracy" except in the name of the "German Democratic Republic".

On the other hand, many opposition activists, in particular lawyers, quickly understood that the Helsinki norms and decisions could well be used for the moral and political legitimization of opposition activities and for the enhanced protection of human rights. The establishment of the Polish Helsinki Committee after 1976 was a practical manifestation of this line of thinking.

The course of political developments strengthened the second tendency within the opposition. Fears regarding possible negative implications of the understanding reached between the USSR and the West paving the way to the CSCE (approval of the territorial status quo in return for more dynamic relations and interaction in "human dimension" issues and in arms control) proved to be exaggerated. Post-Yalta frontiers had indeed been strengthened and the severities of the East-West division had been slightly reduced, but the communist regimes did not gain legitimacy. What is more, the Polish case demonstrated that, thanks to the CSCE, a "new spectre was haunting Europe", this time not the spectre of communism but of human rights, in particular individual political liberties and the free flow of people and ideas, "thus revealing to the world the true nature of Communist regimes".⁵ Communism's restrictive character and economic ineffectiveness became even more apparent to the public at large.

The way in which the CSCE operated, based as it was on the rule of consensus, made it impossible to respond to and condemn the "state of war" in Poland declared on 13 December 1981. This was evident at the CSCE Follow-up Meeting in Madrid, which opened on 9 February 1982. The NATO states sharply criticized the introduction of martial law in Poland, but left the Jaruzelski regime a way out by presenting conditions for a return to normal relations, which included the repeal of martial law and the resumption of reforms. The Polish delegation at that meeting, under internal Soviet threats to wreck the Helsinki process, tried to limit the time devoted to criticizing the "state of war" by resorting to procedural tricks aimed at preventing open and prolonged criticism by the Foreign Ministers.⁶ This provoked sharp reactions all over Europe, further increasing the isolation of the martial law regime in Warsaw.

⁵ Victor-Yves Ghebali, *European Security in the 1990s: Challenges and Perspectives*, New York/Geneva 1995, p. 144. The use of the "human rights" term in this context may be somewhat misleading. The then communist states accepted verbally this notion, but were trying to give within it a priority to economic, social and cultural rights, as opposed to individual freedoms.

⁶ For a detailed description of this incident see: Jan Sizoo and Rudolf Th. Jurrjens, *CSCE Decision Making: The Madrid Experience*, The Hague/Boston/Lancaster 1984, pp. 197-203.

At the same time, the democratic opposition was engaged in a behind-the-scenes lobbying effort in Madrid, presenting factual reports on the repressions in Poland and urging Western states to raise this issue under all possible items of the agenda, such as human rights protection, freedom of contacts, flow of information, trade union liberties etc.⁷ It is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of this action, but it contributed to more concrete criticism of the martial law situation and led to a number of decisions, including a call for greater freedom for trade unions.

Altogether, the Madrid Meeting did play a part in widening international criticism of the curtailment of human rights in Poland without severing contacts and dialogue at a time of a dramatic deterioration in East-West relations as a result of the Polish crisis. This fact made it possible to exert greater pressure on the martial law regime and to extract certain concessions from it in form of new CSCE commitments.

In summary, the following elements should be pointed out when considering the CSCE's impact on Polish national interests before 1989:

- (a) The norms laid down in the Decalogue of Principles contained in the Helsinki Final Act buttressed the validity in international law of Poland's Oder-Neisse frontier and facilitated its subsequent ultimate recognition in 1990.
- (b) Even if in only a limited way, the CSCE restrained the employment of repressive measures against the Polish opposition and the imposition of restrictions on contacts with the outside world (something particularly evident during the last years of the Gierek regime).⁸
- (c) The CSCE dented the communist bloc's dogma of continuing ideological struggle, which in fact was a Soviet-prescribed instrument of self-isolation from the West.
- (d) The Helsinki process hindered the imposed Sovietization of culture and facilitated the de facto legitimation of an opposition.
- (e) The CSCE gave Poland, like the other Soviet satellites, wider insights along with opportunities to contribute to military and arms control agreements between the USSR and the West.

⁷ This action was organized and coordinated by the "Solidarity" Office in Brussels, mainly by two activists: the Head of the Office, Jerzy Milewski, and a young academician, Jan Zielonka.

⁸ For instance, an amnesty in July 1977 which released more than 20,000 prisoners, in order to release with them a dozen members of the nascent opposition, gave the Head of the Polish delegation to the Belgrade CSCE Follow-up Meeting an opportunity to show this event as a striking evident of his government's attitude towards human rights (verbatim: CSCE/BM/VR.6, p. 22). For more on this subject see Adam D. Rotfeld, *A Polish View*, in: R. Davy (Ed.), *European Détente: A Reappraisal*, London 1992, p. 178.

These are contributions that are difficult to quantify but which, all in all, helped to advance Poland's objective interests in a difficult period of lost or limited independence. They broadened the scope of sovereignty enjoyed by the Polish people and helped preserve the identity of its culture. Finally they contributed to the process of Poland's recovery as a sovereign and democratic nation at the end of the 1980s.⁹

Evolution of the Polish Approach to the CSCE after 1989

With the end of the Cold War, Poland's considerable contribution to the CSCE/OSCE has been maintained and even increased, but Warsaw's perception of the process and later of the Organization has evolved. First of all, Poland became an actor rather than an object in the process of political change involving the CSCE. Remarkably soon, new and far-reaching foreign policy objectives were set, namely, recovery of full sovereignty, gradual integration into the Western world, equal security for all countries in the region, and removal of East-West divisions.

However, some of the early initiatives, hastily formulated under new conditions and in a mood of euphoria, were more like "ambitious experiments" than realistic objectives, and were sometimes "at odds with the mainstream security thinking of the West".¹⁰ For example, in early 1990 Poland proposed the creation of a Council of European Cooperation within the CSCE. This was followed by a more developed Czechoslovak proposal calling for the dissolution of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact and suggesting a treaty on European security under the aegis of the CSCE.

Animated by hopes that the CSCE would help to protect their newly acquired independence and further the process of liberating the region from Soviet domination, Poland and the other Central European states actively supported the Helsinki process. As a result, in early 1991 two CSCE institutions were established in Central Europe: the Secretariat in Prague and the Office for Free Elections in Warsaw (now the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights - ODIHR). The rationale behind this decision was to forge a closer tie between the fragile new democracies and the CSCE and, in this way, send the right signal to the USSR in the event of the emergence of neo-imperialist tendencies in Moscow.

This view started to change in pace with events. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the natural demise of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, as well as the increased professionalism of the new democratic elites in the foreign

⁹ See Jerzy M. Nowak, OSCE - between Expectations and Realities (on Its 20th Anniversary), in: *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs*, No. 2/1995, p. 36-37.

¹⁰ Jan Zielonka, Security in Central Europe, in: *Adelphi Paper 272*, London 1992, p. 33.

policy area quickly led to new and more mature security policy options. An early, hypothetical option to reform profoundly the Warsaw Pact and convert it into an alliance based on partnership relations lacked any realistic hope of success owing to the historic experiences of the preceding 45 years. Similarly, another option, based on a neutrality or a non-alignment concept, had no chance in a country located between major European powers. There was a consensus that both possibilities would lead to a "grey zone" or "buffer state" status, with all the related negative implications, including a high degree of destabilization in the region and on the continent. As a consequence, in 1992 a political document, approved by the President and the government, was issued under the title "Basic Assumptions of Polish Security Policy", clearly stating Poland's aim of joining Western European and trans-Atlantic structures.

This policy, which concentrated on the European Union, Western European Union and NATO, diminished proportionally the role played by the CSCE among Polish international security objectives. There was a deep belief among many politicians in Warsaw and other Central European capitals that the CSCE had already fulfilled its goals, specifically when Russian forces were withdrawn, the sovereignty of the Central and Eastern European states was formally recognized in bilateral treaties with the Soviet Union, and the Warsaw Treaty Organization was dissolved more smoothly than had been expected. Although not stated in public, there were no illusions that the CSCE had the potential to offer so-called "hard security guarantees" or to serve as a collective security structure. Its impotence (like that of other international bodies) in Yugoslavia only served to strengthen those feelings. These views were soon revised when the ethnic conflicts showed the necessity of a pan-European organization to prevent them. Furthermore, the NATO enlargement process proved to be slower than expected.

Another problem also emerged to affect the value of the OSCE to the new Polish governing establishment. Warsaw's diplomatic efforts to secure NATO membership have shown that these efforts need to be accompanied by the parallel elaboration of a new formula defining Russia's place and role in the new European security order. Assuming that there is no prospect in the mid-term for the admission of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus to NATO, the OSCE could become an instrument allowing those countries to meet their international security needs and to participate in shaping European security. For this reason, after some initial vacillation on the part of the Solidarity-dominated governments, the OSCE began to play a more independent role in Polish policy.

Understanding the complementarity of the policy towards NATO and the EU, on the one hand, and to the OSCE, on the other, in fact required the re-

jection of two extreme currents of thought regarding the Polish approach to the OSCE:

1. One view saw Polish engagement in the OSCE as a waste of energy, which needed instead to be concentrated on joining NATO. This view held that the OSCE would not use military force to defend the security of the Polish state in case of aggression and was therefore useless. The first of these arguments was gradually refuted by the facts of life: failing the proper development of the OSCE, it is unlikely that Poland will be admitted into NATO. The second view, apart from neglecting "soft security guarantees", fails to appreciate that the OSCE may be useful in strengthening security and stability in its immediate environment, in particular in the East.

2. The second line of thinking, anchored in the idea of a neutral Poland, advocated making the OSCE the priority in Polish security policy. This, too, was a none-too-prudent counsel since it sent the wrong signals to the West and Russia about Poland's commitment to joining Euro-Atlantic and European structures, as well as not making it any easier to find a lasting, democratic solution to Moscow's aspirations regarding Russia's role in Europe.

While the objective importance of the CSCE had somewhat modified and even diminished in the beginning of the 1990s, Polish activity in Vienna did not decrease. Priorities within the CSCE, however, shifted towards arms control, confidence- and security-building measures and human rights in general. The OSCE was treated more modestly, but still as an instrument for developing a more stable military order in Europe that might also be helpful in stabilizing the areas east of Poland, including the Kaliningrad district. The role of the CSCE in tackling new security challenges in Europe also became an object of interest and study in Warsaw.

New interests came to light both in Vienna and at the Helsinki Summit in 1992. In Vienna, Polish diplomacy played a leading role in drafting the Vienna Document 1992 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (Polish initiatives in the arms control area will be treated separately; see below). In Helsinki, Poland contributed to the decision setting up the CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation and to the mandate allowing the CSCE to engage in peacekeeping activities.

Poland also took an active interest in CSCE/OSCE's conflict prevention and crisis management activities, in particular on the territory of the former Soviet Union. A new instrument devised by the CSCE - long-term missions in the field - provided an opportunity for concrete involvement, giving Poland and other Central European states a unique chance to participate in stabilizing efforts east of their borders. Accordingly, Poland was for a long time the largest single contributor to the staffing of CSCE/OSCE long-term missions. A group of specialists, civilian and military, has been assembled, who have participated, often in a prominent capacity, in OSCE missions, particularly in

countries where at the time Poland had no diplomatic or consular representations - for example, in Georgia, Tajikistan or Macedonia. A Pole has also served with the OSCE Assistance Group in Chechnya.¹¹ Twice, high-ranking Polish diplomats have been entrusted with important missions: in 1992/93 Dr. Adam Daniel Rotfeld (Director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI) acted as Personal Representative of the CSCE Chairman-in-Office in the conflict over the Trans-Dniester region¹², and Ambassador Stanislaw Przygodzki was active in the same capacity in the conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh (he also organized the CSCE office for that mission in Tbilisi).

Poland was also actively involved in the protracted negotiations over Moscow's request for the endorsement of its "peacekeeping operations", sometimes conducted under the aegis of the CIS, but with limited participation by CIS members, near Russian borders.¹³ Poland's primary concern in this extremely delicate case - like the concern of Ukraine, the three Baltic states and Turkey in particular - was to find a proper balance between the requirements of stability and the strengthening of the independence and sovereignty of the newly independent states born on the territories of the former USSR. Poland was not against the Russian offer to use its peacekeeping forces but wanted clear guarantees of OSCE control over such CIS-sponsored "peacekeeping operations" and the establishment of a strong linkage to the development of the political process in the country receiving these operations as well as arrangements for winding them up and withdrawal of Russian troops. The protracted Russian involvement in the Chechen war and certain ambiguities in Moscow's position regarding the extent of possible CSCE control over such operations caused the de facto suspension of the negotiations.

Nor were other areas of OSCE activity neglected by Poland. As host country to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Poland has consistently endeavoured to strengthen the position and mandate of that Office. Establishment of ODIHR in Warsaw has made the Polish capital one of the centres - alongside Vienna, Prague and The Hague - of OSCE activities. Warsaw has become a hub of multilateral initiatives in the field of

¹¹ Out of around 70 persons serving in eight OSCE missions in the field, ten were Polish nationals. See: Adam Halacinski, OSCE Long-Term Missions, in: *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs* 2/1995, pp. 165-190.

¹² See his reflections on his Mission: Adam Daniel Rotfeld, In Search for a Political Settlement - the Case of Conflict in Moldova, in: *The Challenge of Preventive Diplomacy. The Experience of the OSCE*, Stockholm 1994.

¹³ This idea is known in the OSCE under the title: Further Development of the Capabilities of the CSCE in Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management, cf. CSCE Budapest Document 1994, Towards a Genuine Partnership in a New Era, in: *Helsinki Monitor* 1/1995, pp. 79-106, here: p. 87. See also: J.M. Nowak, The OSCE, in: T. Findlay (Ed.), *Challenges for the New Peacekeepers*, SIPRI Research Report No. 12, Oxford 1995.

human dimension issues, in particular concerning free elections and building of democratic institutions in the newly emerged states.

Polish diplomacy has also sought to use the possibilities of the OSCE to mitigate the negative implications of the Schengen agreement for human contacts in Europe. This agreement, eliminating border controls between a number of European Union member States, has produced new hardships for neighbouring countries, which in turn believe that new inequalities and lines of division are in fact being re-created in Europe. A Polish proposal on this question, tabled at the Budapest Review Conference in autumn 1994, was aimed at eliminating obstacles to travel between States, improving human contacts, combating negative stereotypes regarding foreigners and doing away with instances of degrading treatment at border crossings.¹⁴ The Polish proposal was supported by a broad coalition of former communist states. It is an irony of history that former totalitarian and authoritarian states, now new democracies, had to use a language almost identical to that of the West in the 1970s, directed at that time against restrictive communist practices, and to ask Western states for greater understanding and more help in the realm of human contacts and free travel. The negotiations in Budapest were difficult. Apart from general promises to "further encourage and facilitate human contacts" and to "refrain from degrading treatment and other outrages against personal dignity" in the case of travelling citizens of other States, this effort has not produced much in the way of concrete results, owing to Western reluctance.¹⁵

Poland's role and importance in the OSCE have been enhanced by its tradition of involvement, its authorship of a number of initiatives, notably in the military and cultural dimensions, its participation in a consultation system (specifically the Visegrád Group), its contacts with European Union, NATO and CIS nations, and the presence of Polish nationals in influential posts in a number of OSCE institutions. Thanks to its active role, Poland has won itself a place in an informal group consisting of ten or twelve of the most active and influential states in the Organization. Not being a power, Poland has to persist in an almost daily effort in every field to maintain and strengthen its position.

¹⁴ Cf. Improvement of cultural, educational and human contacts, CSCE/BC.10, Budapest, 22 November 1994. It was also sponsored by: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, The Slovak Republic and Turkey.

¹⁵ CSCE Budapest Document 1994, cited above (Note 13), p. 101.

Arms control has become a Polish "speciality" in the OSCE and, as such, merits somewhat greater attention.

The rapid emancipation of Hungary and Poland in terms of national security shortly before and just after the wave of democratic revolutions of 1989, and later more gradually of Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania, increased these countries' general level of activity in the arms control area as a new means of military stabilization and as an instrument for overcoming the division of the continent. The main focal point of this activity was the CSCE through the arms control negotiations conducted within its framework.

The new and independent strategic thinking on the part of Poland and Hungary was reflected in a number of cases, particularly in separating Central Europe from a strategic military union with the USSR in the future CFE Treaty regime and in establishing a link between the CFE negotiations and the CSCE.¹⁶ The objective was clear: to emphasize that the CFE negotiations, regardless of initial intentions and in spite of their composition (NATO and WTO states only) were not bloc-to-bloc talks but an undertaking by a number of individual, militarily significant states in Europe. Thanks to Polish and Hungarian efforts, the CFE negotiations, which started out as a bloc-to-bloc exercise, ended almost as a trilateral one: NATO - USSR - other WTO members. The link with the multilateral Helsinki process was reflected in the Preamble of the Treaty, which clearly states that its signatories are "guided by the objectives and the purposes of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, within the framework of which the negotiation of this Treaty was conducted".¹⁷

Some similarities between the CFE and the Open Skies regimes are also worth mentioning. The principles of individual participation and of linkage with the CSCE were also secured thanks to the efforts of the new democracies. For Poland, the Open Skies regime has a fourfold significance: by helping to improve confidence, it strengthens regional security; it facilitates effective monitoring of the military situation in the vicinity of Poland's borders, in particular those to the East; it promotes access to sophisticated surveillance techniques; and it opens up prospects of using the Treaty's potential for the protection of the environment.

New challenges and dilemmas in the politico-military sphere have called for a search for new military stability criteria and disarmament formulas as well as for a conceptual debate leading to the formulation of a new arms control

¹⁶ For more on Polish thinking on this subject see: Jerzy M. Nowak: The CFE Treaty in the Post-Yalta System, in: *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs* 2/1994, pp. 85-106.

¹⁷ For the text see: *Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe*, in: Arie Bloed (Ed.), *The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Analysis and Basic Documents, 1972-1993*, Dordrecht/Boston/London 1993, pp. 1223-1253, here: p. 1223.

agenda. Poland has been active in this intellectual effort too.¹⁸ The development of the concept of the structural inability to launch a surprise attack has been particularly important to Poland because of the country's strategic location and the geo-strategic uncertainties to the east of its borders. When it joins NATO, Poland - in its own and Europe's interests - must not become a front line state. This requires participation, together with all its neighbours regardless of their alliance allegiances, in a common regional regime, based on security- and confidence-building, that rules out the possibility of using offensive capabilities. The hope in Warsaw has been that such a regional undertaking, closely integrated within the CSCE/OSCE framework, would result in a more positive perception of NATO enlargement by states that cannot count on admission to the Alliance.

The proper place for identifying this problem and pursuing a conceptual discussion of how to tackle it has been the CSCE/OSCE, which is a kind of political guardian of existing arms control agreements, a venue for the negotiation of new ones, and an instrument for monitoring implementation.¹⁹

Polish involvement in OSCE arms control endeavours has developed along two major lines: in the current activities of the Forum for Security Cooperation, aimed at reinforcing stability and security through arms control and disarmament, and in the search for a new arms control agenda.

The following illustrative list of Polish initiatives and activities within the Forum shows not only the country's imaginative contributions but also its priorities and the importance it attaches to this field:

- (a) The negotiations on the development of the Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBM) in 1992 and 1994 were directed by Polish coordinators. In 1993 a comprehensive proposal of the Visegrád Group and Ukraine was drawn up on the initiative of Poland.²⁰ This was the most comprehensive and forward-looking proposal, as it tackled *inter alia* the question of improving the implementation of existing CSBM provisions and of enhancing their effectiveness in crisis situations;
- (b) Poland was the first country to submit one of the four proposals that were to become the basis of negotiations on a Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.²¹ Many Polish ideas were incorporated in the Code approved in December 1994 in Budapest. For example, article 5 of the

¹⁸ For more on this subject see: Jerzy .M. Nowak, The Challenges and Future of Conventional Arms Control in Europe: A Polish Viewpoint, in: The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs 4/1994, pp. 7-32.

¹⁹ See the presentation by OSCE Secretary General Wilhelm Höynck at the Royal Institute of International Affairs: The CSCE in the New Europe, 18 May, 1994, London.

²⁰ Cf. CSCE/FSC/SC. 13, 31 March 1993.

²¹ Proposal by the Delegation of Poland: CSCE Code of Conduct in the Field of Security, CSCE/FSC/SC.5/Rev. 1, 18 November 1992. Other proposals were later submitted by the European Community, Turkey, Austria and Hungary.

Code reflected the Polish concept of solidarity with States whose security may be under threat. In addition, the sovereign right of every State to belong or not to belong to an alliance and to change its status in this respect was also reaffirmed, thus strengthening the European security concept, which is rooted in a system of mutually supporting institutions. It is an example of Poland's developing a network of so-called "soft security guarantees", which cannot be neglected by States staying outside viable alliances;

(c) Although problems of cooperation in "force planning" (defence policy, structure of personnel, system for the mutual clarification of doubts and problems) represented uncharted territory for the new democracies, Poland and Hungary submitted joint proposals of their own aimed at increasing transparency in military matters and encouraging cooperation in the establishment of civilian control over armed forces.²² Many of these ideas were later reflected in common decisions of the Forum for Security Cooperation at the end of 1993;

(d) Poland also took an interest in negotiations on stabilization measures for local crisis management in an awareness of their potential usefulness in future conflict prevention and crisis management efforts. The Polish negotiator, Adam Kobieracki, was elected negotiations coordinator and, despite difficulties, brought matters to a successful conclusion in December 1993;

(e) Poland also contributed to the OSCE arms control philosophy by presenting the first paper on a possible *regional* CSBM agreement.²³ This proposal, generally referred to in the corridors of the Vienna Hofburg as the "*Kaliningrad Model*", covered several areas of possible regional cooperation: information exchange (the novelty here being the inclusion of naval forces - hence the association with Kaliningrad), military contacts, verification, inspections etc. The Polish proposal was a starting point for efforts to organize a Baltic table within the Forum for Security Cooperation dealing with Security- and Confidence-Building Measures (CSBM) in the area; this idea took concrete form in spring 1996, also in response to a specific Polish initiative. Before that, in recognition of its active role, Poland was offered the chairmanship of the Seminar on Regional Arms Control in the OSCE area, which gave an intellectual boost to the concept of regional undertakings.²⁴

Finally, Poland also played an innovative role in developing a future OSCE arms control agenda that would encourage shaping a joint responsibility for military security, the improved implementation of existing agreements, and

²² Polish and Hungarian working document, dated 17 December 1992 (mimeographed).

²³ Illustrative Regional Confidence- and Security-Building Measures Complementary to the Vienna Document 1992. Contribution by Poland to Possible Regional Arms Control Negotiations, FSC/CSCE Doc. 385, Vienna, 22 June 1994.

²⁴ See the Chairman's Summary: FSC Seminar on Regional Arms Control in the OSCE Area, REF.FSC/185/95, 18 July 1995.

limitations on military capabilities and activities. These were the basic premises of the comprehensive Polish proposal presented by the Polish Foreign Minister, Andrzej Olechowski, in September 1994 in Vienna.²⁵ It expressly stated that future negotiations should be "based on the concept of national, not bloc military capabilities" and suggested a number of common endeavours in dealing with destabilization on a regional scale, modernization of weapons and equipment, violations of existing agreements etc. Emphasis put on excessive and destabilizing local concentrations of armed forces and armaments reflected Polish interest in a gradual lessening of the military role played by the Russian Kaliningrad district.

The Polish document represented a starting point for discussions on the future arms control agenda. It was a major factor in the emphasis placed on the topic of disarmament at the so-called "Weimar Triangle" talks between the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and Poland in Bamberg and in the drafting of a special declaration on this question.²⁶ This document, following the necessary modifications, was later reworked into a proposal submitted by the three aforementioned states at the CSCE Review Meeting in Budapest.²⁷ It was also helpful in the further work on this subject that was carried out in Vienna in 1995 as part of the preparation of a decision to be adopted at the OSCE Lisbon Summit in December 1996.

Polish involvement in all conceivable arms control areas within the OSCE framework demonstrates that Warsaw regards confidence-building in the military realm as a significant instrument for strengthening stability during the volatile period of change following the end of the Cold War. Arms control in its wider sense (encompassing CSBMs and military conflict-prevention measures as well) is treated in Polish conceptual thinking as one of the major pillars of a new post-Yalta order.

Building a New European Order

The OSCE has lately become a forum for discussions on the need to shape a new security order in Europe, either through a time-limited process of common understandings or a single comprehensive act similar to the Vienna Congress of 1815 or the Treaty of Versailles after the First World War. These discussions are known in Vienna under the somewhat clumsy code

²⁵ Suggestions for a New Agenda for CSCE Arms Control After the Budapest Summit, submitted by the delegation of Poland, CSCE/FSC/SC.29, Vienna, 7 September 1994.

²⁶ Known as "Bamberg Declaration": A New Impetus to Arms Control in Europe. Joint Declaration of Foreign Ministers of Germany, France and Poland, Bamberg, 15 September 1994 (distributed in the CSCE as No. 822/94).

²⁷ Proposal of France, Germany and Poland: Future Arms Control Agenda, CSCE/BC.15, 24 November 1994.

name of "A Common and Comprehensive *Security Model* for Europe for the Twenty-First Century". This invention of Moscow was seen from the outset in Warsaw and other Central and Eastern European capitals, on the one hand, as an instrument to guarantee and legitimize Russia's influence on efforts to reshape the new European order or "new deal" and, on the other, as an opportunity to settle comprehensively the problems of a post-Cold War Europe on a new, possibly democratic, basis. Therefore, while approving the Russian initiative in general, Polish diplomacy took care to ensure that the decision to formulate such a model (adopted by the OSCE Budapest Summit Meeting in December 1994) contained a clause clearly stating that it "will not affect the inherent right of each and every participating State to be free to choose or change its security arrangements, including treaties of alliance, as they evolve".²⁸

For Poland the idea of a Security Model posed a particular dilemma since Poland has had rather negative experiences with rigid systems or models, whether after the Vienna Congress (no place for an independent Poland), the Versailles Treaty (no firm security guarantees) or the Yalta agreements (purely satellite status). For this reason, Warsaw believed that work on the *Model* should rather be directed at adapting structures and ideas to changing realities. The *Model* itself should - according to Polish thinking - reflect the dynamic and evolving nature of international developments since the end of the Cold War, including eastern enlargement of trans-Atlantic structures.

Seen from the Polish perspective, what has been mainly at stake in the efforts to work out a Security *Model* is the future place of Russia and Central Europe in the new order. After the 1989 "Autumn of Peoples", the countries of Central Europe have reappeared on the international stage - this time not as *subordinate* but as *coordinate* components of international relations, in search of an appropriate and stable place in Europe. Their basic concerns and dilemmas may be described as follows:

- how to remove the remnants of the former division of Europe and the vestiges of subordination to the Soviet Union;
- how to respond to the ambitions of the nations of the region to join Western European and trans-Atlantic structures and to escape from a "grey zone";
- how to avoid the trap of turning Central Europe into a "front line" area when NATO enlarges eastwards;
- how to mould their new relations with Russia on a basis of sovereign equality and mutual respect and how to involve positively Russia and Ukraine in a new political order, assist their evolution along democratic lines, and prevent their possible self-imposed isolation;

²⁸ CSCE Budapest Document 1994, cited above (Note 13), Chapter VII, p. 95.

- how to accommodate the USA as an active participant in European affairs and prevent a return to traditions of isolationism in Washington.

One of the common concerns shared by Poland and other countries of the region was to take into account Russia's legitimate interests while preventing them from becoming the sole focus of attention, as in fact they were in the eyes of the Western powers. Another concern was to avoid a situation in which the debate on the *Model* might be transferred to the more intimate, powerful triangle of the three major players in the OSCE: the United States, the European Union and Russia; were that to happen, one could not rule out the possibility that discussions on the *Model* might be used to legitimize internationally decisions agreed in advance among the three. Preventing this kind of development depends on the active involvement and imagination of all the partners. Therefore, from the very beginning Poland has taken active positions in the discussions on the *Model*, trying to contribute ideas of its own and prevent the affirmation of others that might be detrimental to the interests of Central Europe and the democratic nature of the entire enterprise.

This approach was manifested in an initial, comprehensive and official Polish statement on this issue at the OSCE Senior Council Meeting in March 1995 in Prague.²⁹ While calling for a pragmatic and "evolutionary process", Poland emphasized that a new *Model* should be based on existing institutions and organizations, which "should determine for themselves their functions, operations and direction of evolution". It was re-emphasized that the *Model* should not "constrain the free development of such organizations' policies, activities and membership" or lead to a hierarchy of security institutions in Europe. The Polish statement also listed the *Model's* objectives: to face up to new challenges to common security, to enhance stability in the OSCE area, to prevent ethnic conflicts, to avert the possible renationalization of national security policies, to improve international norms and standards of behaviour and ensure their respect, to strengthen the existing military order in Europe and arms control regimes, and to assist in the process of economic and political transformation of the new democracies. In this context, the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security was referred to as a possible starting point for "the establishment of the entire pattern of genuine solidarity and partnership among all OSCE States".

It was not so intended, but - as some academicians have hinted - the Polish vision of a new security model actually became a counterpart to Russian proposals.³⁰ The Polish position on the *Model* was further elaborated during the

²⁹ Statement by Ambassador Dr. Andrzej Towpik, Political Director and Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland on the Common and Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the Twenty-First Century (OSCE Senior Council, Prague, 31 March 1995; mimeographed).

³⁰ Michael Michalka, Restructuring European Security, in: Transition 11/1995, p. 9.

discussions and work at the Hofburg in Vienna. This position contained three major points as the "foundations" of Polish thinking on this subject:

1. the erection of a new democratic order in Europe based on the rule of law, fundamental moral values and solidarity;
2. the development of a flexible European architecture based on four pillars:
 - (a) an enlarged Atlantic Alliance;
 - (b) strategic agreements between NATO and Russia and Ukraine (possibly containing mutual security guarantees);
 - (c) a system of mutually supporting institutions, with the OSCE as a complementary and not an alternative partner vis-a-vis an enlarged NATO;
 - (d) an arms control regime embracing the CFE, CSBMs, the Open Skies regime and regional measures;
3. The development of a system of partnership and comprehensive cooperation in all domains.³¹

Apart from the Russian vision, this has been the only other comprehensive concept of the *Model* presented in the OSCE. At the beginning of 1996, Poland felt it necessary to warn again that commitment to the *Model* should not be allowed to prevent the natural and desirable evolution of existing security arrangements, and that work on the *Model* should be conducted in parallel with "other developments towards genuine and profound partnership" (read: enlargement of trans-Atlantic structures).³² In the same statement, Poland unequivocally rejected the idea of so-called "dovetailing" or "crossed" guarantees for Central and Eastern Europe, from Russia or from Russia and NATO together, as an element to be included in the future *Model*. The reason was clear: such an arrangement would de facto legitimize the unequal status of the region and keep it within a "grey zone", a cause of many past military conflicts in Europe.

In order to guide the work into a more concrete phase, Poland, together with Hungary and Slovakia, presented an initial negotiating paper suggesting working out principles of cooperation among mutually reinforcing institutions in the field of conflict prevention in the OSCE area, drawing on the ex-

³¹ Polish Concept of the Security Model (talking points by Ambassador Jerzy M. Nowak at the Seminar on a Common and Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the 21st Century, Vienna, 18-19 September 1995), REF.PC/58/95, 19 September 1995.

³² Talking points raised by Ambassador Jerzy M. Nowak at the 2nd Meeting of the Security Model Committee on general conditions for formulating the Model, PC/82/96, 26 January 1996.

periences of Bosnia and Herzegovina³³, as a part of a future paper or decision on the *Model*.

The Polish position on the *Security Model* idea and its evolution provide an interesting example of the efforts to build a Central European identity and to find a proper place for the region within the new, post-Yalta order taking shape on the continent.

Conclusions

To sum up, Polish interests in the OSCE, in the second half of the 1990s, may be described as follows:

1. to use the OSCE as a political instrument for the stabilization of the post-Soviet region, the strengthening of the independence of the newly emerged states, and thus the enhancement of the security of Central Europe and Poland;
2. to take full advantage of the OSCE's capabilities in conflict prevention and crisis management in order to develop a common system for dealing with new challenges facing Europe;
3. to exploit fully the OSCE's arms control possibilities so as to strengthen a new military order in Europe and, as a consequence, strategic stability throughout the continent;
4. to take advantage of the discussions on the *Security Model* with a view to strengthening the independent role of the Central European region and lessening Russian concerns over eastward enlargement of trans-Atlantic structures;
5. to have available the OSCE as one of the instruments regulating multilateral relationships in Europe and protecting smaller states against larger ones.

It was, therefore, fully understandable that the Polish President, Lech Walesa, could declare in December 1994, that Poland wants "a strong CSCE, capable of efficient and prompt action".³⁴

The successive architects of Poland's independent foreign policy since 1989 - Krzysztof Skubiszewski, Andrzej Olechowski, Wladyslaw Bartoszewski and Dariusz Rosati - have assigned to the OSCE a fitting, even if perhaps modest, place in the country's overall vision. It is worth mentioning that changes in

³³ The OSCE Role in Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation. Non-paper by the delegations of Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic. OSCE Security Model Committee, Ref.PC/169/96, 1 March 1996.

³⁴ Statement by the President of the Republic of Poland at the CSCE Summit Meeting in Budapest, 5 December 1994.

political orientations of the successive governments did not change the Polish position towards the OSCE. A logical consequence of this consistent attention would be Poland's assumption of the OSCE Chairmanship in 1998 or 1999. If that happens, Poland will be given yet another opportunity to consolidate its position on the European scene and to display the universal character of its policy.