

Foreword

When the Heads of State or Government of the participating States parted after their Meeting on 6 December 1994, they had "set up a milestone in the history of the OSCE" with the Budapest Document - as Heinrich Schneider wrote in the first volume of the OSCE Yearbook -, but a number of things that could be found on the tables of their delegations were left behind unfinished. There was some hope that the decisions that were left open could be adopted in the next period or - together with new proposals - on the next Meeting in Lisbon in December 1996 at the latest. Moreover, something new was initiated in Budapest - the discussion on a European Security Model for the 21st Century. What has happened meanwhile?

In the 20 months since Budapest the Ministerial Council and the Senior Council met as frequently as agreed upon, but these meetings could neither compensate the Budapest deficits nor did they produce any results with regard to a forward-looking discussion on the Security Model. There is a shortage of visions and care for "the biggest organization of states in the northern hemisphere", as a member of the Parliamentary Assembly called the OSCE recently. Much of the attention of the foreign and security policy establishment of the participating States was claimed by the debates on NATO enlargement and the deepening of the European Union. Yet it wouldn't be correct to reproach the diplomats and military officers directly involved in OSCE events for indifference. Operative tasks - first of all the efforts on mediation and conflict settlement in Chechnya, then especially the qualitatively new engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina - required a great deal of time and effort.

The Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina will prove to be a touchstone for the OSCE and its participating States. From the experiences garnered in that Mission and the results achieved it will be possible not only to gain specific insights into the aims of a mission as such, but also into the responsibilities and perspectives of the OSCE in general.

Each of the operative actions of the OSCE, its missions, has its own characteristics. The peculiarity of each of their profiles can be seen in differences in mandate, size, duration and equipment, the local settings, the activities carried out and in the modification of the political and social environment. But the Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina differs to an even greater extent from all the other missions. This Mission has to be seen as a new quality of mission as its mandate forms nothing less than a new category of OSCE activities; it has nothing to do with conflict prevention, conflict settlement or conflict management nor with specific concerns about human rights. It means

something new and different. The activity of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina can be characterized as a post-conflict reconstruction of political institutions and political culture. It resembles the political work of the Allies in Germany between 1945 and 1947.

A failure of this Mission could spread resignation and fatalism like no other failure could, it could even jeopardize the future of the OSCE. Conversely, a successful Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina could give the OSCE an impetus that is currently not attainable in other ways, although possibly an impetus that could be just unbalanced. In 1995 the Hungarian Chairman-in-Office called the impending task confronting the OSCE intimidating and described it as the biggest challenge in the history of the Helsinki process. His Swiss successor, who has to carry it out, admitted in mid-1996 that the conditions had not yet turned out the way they were supposed to, but that there wasn't any alternative to continuing the already undertaken course of action at an extraordinarily high risk.

Against this background, what should the people between Vancouver and Vladivostok expect from their representatives at the Lisbon Summit?

First, the execution of already overdue tasks. These include: the clarification of the relationship between different international organizations, e.g. "OSCE first"; the creation of a general treaty basis for the OSCE; a reform of the internal structure; strengthening the position of the Secretary General and strengthening the Organization itself, especially the Secretariat; the harmonization of competences in the sphere of confidence-building measures and arms control; a decision on the third-party-involvement; and the provision of peacekeeping units as well as an innovative and substantial development of the economic dimension appropriate to present requirements.

Furthermore, the Heads of State or Government will have to turn to that particular issue they have promised themselves and the public in Budapest to deal with: the discussion on the Security Model for the 21st Century.

This Yearbook - the first as well as the volume on hand - intends to make a contribution to this discussion. If we are successful with the modest means at our disposal in the first place it will be thanks to our authors, the benevolent, immaterial and orientating support of the OSCE Secretariat and other official authorities and their incumbents in the ministries of the participating States. In my position as responsible editor I wish to thank them for contributing to the new issue of the Yearbook.