

On the Path to a European Security Architecture - The Contribution of the Forum for Security Co-operation¹

From Helsinki to Budapest

The Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) was established in Helsinki in 1992 with a broadly conceived responsibility for strengthening security and stability in the OSCE area. In accordance with its mandate, its contribution to the formulation of a new European security architecture lies in the field of politico-military security, the traditional heart of the OSCE's expanded concept of security. With reference to the CFE Treaty and the Vienna Document 1992, the Forum is given responsibility for the further development of arms control in its two fields of disarmament and confidence-building. At the same time it is to devote its attention to improved consultation and co-operation on matters related to security and reducing the risk of conflicts. The mandate of the Forum was broadly elaborated in Helsinki by a 14-point "Programme for Immediate Action" which, however, was admittedly not exhaustive in nature.

Work on many of the points in this Programme for Immediate Action had been successfully begun by the time of the Budapest Summit in December 1994. Worthy of mention in this connection are the further development of the Vienna Document 1992, leading to the Vienna Document 1994, and the adoption of a "Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security", in which the OSCE participating States undertook a new approach to arms control by committing themselves to adapt the domestic rules regulating their armed forces to agreed international guidelines and make themselves accountable in this regard to the community of OSCE States. By the end of 1994 the Forum had worked out declarations on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons as well as a politically binding set of rules on defence planning, military co-operation and contacts and on the global exchange of military information.

The discussion of regional measures has had a less successful course in the FSC, both before 1994 and afterwards. Efforts to set up a "regional table" in the Baltic states got stuck early during the clarification of procedural issues. Numerous bilateral and multilateral accords, e.g. with and around Bulgaria and Central Asia, were reached without any participation by the Forum. The same holds true for what has so far been the most impressive regional arms control measure in the OSCE area, the Article II and IV Agreements of Annex I-B of

1 The article presents the personal views of the authors.

the Dayton Peace Accords. However, the current negotiations on an agreement relating to Article V, Annex I-B - intended to establish a regional arms control regime in and around the former Yugoslavia - are supposed to take place "under the auspices" of the FSC.

The failure of harmonization at Budapest was very important for the future of the FSC. It had been conceived in Helsinki as an operational instrument to find a common denominator for the various approaches and participants in the arms control field by harmonizing the rights and obligations of the CFE States Parties with those of the non-members, thus enabling the FSC to deal with these matters in a comprehensive way. After intensive and ultimately inconclusive discussion of individual aspects such as a harmonized exchange of information and a harmonized verification regime, the attempt to reach an acceptable solution failed at the Budapest Summit.

This meant that the ideal way of carrying out the Helsinki mandate, in an FSC with comprehensive responsibilities, was blocked. The reasons for this failure lay directly in the proposed procedure for harmonization. Neutral countries whose defence strategy was based to a large extent on mobilization saw the adoption of the intrusive verification mechanisms of the CFE Treaty as a security risk. A number of them, taking a closer look at their security interests, discovered the advantages of a CFE Treaty that made them beneficiaries of the Treaty's provisions without burdening them with its obligations. CFE States Parties, particularly the United States and Great Britain, were worried about a weakening of CFE standards and of the Treaty itself. In the situation that prevailed in 1994, when it seemed that various Treaty provisions (e.g. flank rule) were being opened again for discussion, touching or changing the Treaty or even opening it for new members looked to them like a dangerous undertaking. Another cause of the failure in Budapest was undoubtedly the circumstance that the discussion of security policy generally was no longer informed by the optimistic mood of 1992 which had been favourable for the OSCE and the FSC. The issue of NATO enlargement was becoming more and more dominant and there were growing reservations about the OSCE's role in security matters. As a result, the Russian attempt at Budapest (later abandoned) to set up a security hierarchy in Europe under OSCE leadership added to the reservations some participating States felt about a more active role for the Forum. Others, particularly the Baltic states, now viewed the prospect of NATO enlargement as the sole answer to their security concerns. They regarded solutions in the OSCE framework at best as second-class. Agreements reached in the FSC struck them as attempted diversions that might obstruct their path into NATO.

After all of this, an assessment at Budapest of the FSC's success in fulfilling its mandate came to a mixed conclusion. It had done excellent work in confidence-building, in the further development of the Vienna Document and, particularly, in its difficult but successful handling of the Code of Conduct. But the failure of

the harmonization effort, which was perhaps too theoretical and tried to do too much, could not be overlooked as the Budapest Summit left the comprehensive mandate intact. The gap which harmonization was supposed to fill would now have to be closed in another way. If agreement on equal rights and obligations was not feasible there remained the alternative of an operational hinge between various agreements, a framework consisting of binding principles, objectives and methods in the OSCE's arms control structure. In this spirit, Budapest gave the FSC a mandate to develop a framework which "will serve as a basis for an agenda for establishing new measures of arms control, including in particular confidence- and security-building".²

From Budapest to Lisbon

The development of this "Framework for Arms Control" dominated the work of the FSC in the period after Budapest until the summer of 1996. The document adopted at the Lisbon Summit again describes the guidelines from the Helsinki Summit, which view arms control - both disarmament and confidence-building - as an integral part of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security. The goal is to take an interest in the security concerns of the participating States and to contribute to conflict prevention, both between and within countries. The central element of the Framework is a web of interlocking and mutually reinforcing arms control agreements. This web, as formulated by the Framework for Arms Control, already exists. Its core element is the CFE Treaty which is of fundamental importance for all participating States of the OSCE. Along with the Vienna Document and the Code of Conduct it constitutes the heart of the OSCE's system of rules on common military security. It is supplemented by OSCE-wide treaty arrangements such as the Treaty on Open Skies and by agreements on regional arms control such as the agreements on former Yugoslavia, negotiated and implemented under the auspices of the OSCE. New arms control agreements are to be fitted into this web. In addition, the Framework describes, in an extensive catalogue, the challenges and risks of military security. On the basis of past experience it identifies sufficiency, transparency through exchange of information, verification and ceilings for armed forces as the negotiating principles for new agreements. The Framework for Arms Control itself describes the future fields of work in arms control rather abstractly and reticently. For the rest, it refers - as the Budapest mandate for working out the Framework had already done - to the need for an agenda for the FSC as a basis for the implementation of the programme. Taking as a starting point the 1992

2 Budapest Document 1994, Budapest, 6 December 1994, in: Arie Bloed (Ed.), *The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Basic Documents, 1993-1995*, The Hague/London/Boston 1997, pp. 145-189, here p. 168.

mandate from Helsinki, which continues to serve as the foundation of the FSC's work, this agenda should prescribe the specific steps the FSC needs to take to make its contribution to a new co-operative security order in the OSCE area.

Once the framework document on arms control in the OSCE area was nearing completion, in the early summer of 1996, the issue arose of adopting a new agenda for the FSC in Lisbon. Consultations with a number of European partners provided encouragement. Along with France and Poland, our partners in the "Weimar Triangle", the German Federal government, at the beginning of September 1996, introduced in the FSC a proposal with the following main points:

1. Ensuring full implementation of existing agreements, especially of the Vienna Document and the Code of Conduct. Failures of implementation should be dealt with jointly - among other things by strengthening the Conflict Prevention Centre.
2. Giving concrete form to the linkage of existing agreements called for by the Framework for Arms Control. Tying the CFE Treaty into the web - as part of the FSC's task of carrying on a comprehensive dialogue on security issues - would first mean better information and exchange of views in the FSC on progress made in the Joint Consultative Group (JCG), as the body with responsibility for the CFE; one objective of this would be to provide the states not being parties to the CFE Treaty with a forum in which their views on the adaptation of the CFE Treaty can be articulated. Another proposal on the linkage of the CFE Treaty and also of regional agreements emerged from preliminary considerations relating to the design of the Article V Dayton Agreement. It is intended to bring together states with different arms control agreements (CFE Treaty, Dayton IV Agreement) and also ones with no arms control regimes. The possibility of having states without arms control regimes make voluntary declarations of their ceilings in the FSC would create a comparable basis for joint arrangements, and an agreement in the FSC framework on voluntary exchanges of information and voluntary inclusion in existing verification systems could ease the problem of implementation. Both of these things could serve as an example to other regions.
3. Greater transparency and strengthened confidence-building to reduce regional tensions. Regional measures should, as far as possible, be initiated in the regions themselves. Thus the FSC should give priority to a catalogue of measures to be employed in bilateral or multilateral regional agreements; it could include new elements (in the areas of air defence or regional naval co-operation, for example).

4. Agreement on new confidence-building measures (perhaps in the Vienna Document) to take account of the changed parameters of military activities (e.g. the significant lessening of military activities since the disappearance of East-West confrontation).
5. Pressing ahead into new and unfamiliar territory through the discussion of qualitative issues of arms control, e.g. the significance of new technologies for existing agreements. Even if quick solutions cannot be expected here (owing to the inherent difficulty of the subject) the FSC, in its capacity as an overarching dialogue forum for the OSCE area, ought to try to do justice to its role in this regard.

In view of the customary rhythm of discussion in the FSC it must be viewed as a success that the new agenda could be fully negotiated by the end of November 1996, i.e. in the extremely short period of two months leading up to the Lisbon Summit. In comparison with the trilateral proposal the language of the final document is doubtless less clear. This is explained by the fact that it was necessary to overcome big differences of opinion, sometimes of a fundamental kind, especially the American desire to have the FSC, after finishing the Programme for Immediate Action, limit itself to the implementation of existing agreements and to give it a broader role, if anywhere, only on regional issues. Both before and at Lisbon - and not only in the work of the FSC - it became clear that the particular interests of individual states are increasingly being given priority over the common interests of the OSCE community of states. Nonetheless it proved possible to adopt an agenda that put the main points of the trilateral proposal and farther reaching initiatives of other participating States on the work programme of the FSC. Thus the FSC reinforced the claim that it is making its contribution, in the spirit of the Helsinki mandate, in important areas of European security.

After Lisbon

By taking up certain elements of the agenda during the first half of 1997 and putting them in the form of decision proposals, Germany helped significantly to enliven the work of the Forum in the post-Lisbon period. The discussions in Vienna during this period indicate that the following agenda items will be the Forum's main preoccupation in the coming months:

- The revision of the Vienna Document. A comprehensive proposal has been put forward by France, Germany and Poland aimed at creating a Vienna Document 1998. Its purpose is to generate a thorough discussion in two directions. First, it seeks to improve the Document's effectiveness, to eliminate

certain internal contradictions that arose from the partial up-dating of the Vienna Document 94 and to make its provisions easier to apply. Second, the new document is to take account of the new political challenges following the disappearance of bipolarity - especially in the search for durable answers to regional conflict situations and in the development of effective security co-operation.

- On the initiative of the EU countries the FSC decided to hold a follow-up conference on the Code of Conduct in the course of 1997. It is to take place in Vienna from 22 to 24 September 1997 and provide new impetus for the implementation of the norms set forth in the Code of Conduct on democratic control as well as structure and leadership of armed forces. A particular issue will be to evaluate the extent to which initial experience with the implementation of the agreement might justify a cautious beginning of a system of its verification.
- Russia has tabled a proposal for a seminar on military doctrines. It was accepted before the 1997 summer break. The seminar is to be held in Vienna in January 1998 and is designed to give high ranking military officers from OSCE participating States an opportunity for an intensive exchange of views on military doctrines, which have changed greatly since the end of the Cold War.
- Project on anti-personnel mines. The inclusion of two problematic countries, Russia and Turkey, means that this FSC project, which is to supplement initiatives at other locations, is not an easy undertaking. At present the FSC is working on an information system that is meant to illuminate the positions and the activities of participating States.
- As implementation of the Dayton IV Agreement on disarmament proceeds, the way is opened for the beginning of negotiations on the Dayton V Agreement, dealing with the military structure of future security in and around the former Yugoslavia, under the auspices of the FSC. This would represent an important step towards more intensive regional arms control. In this connection the question of voluntary notification of ceilings and also voluntary participation in regional information and verification regimes would be dealt with in the FSC.

Finally, there was a noteworthy move by the NATO countries on 16 April 1997. To improve confidence, transparency and predictability, they proposed negotiations in the FSC on transparency measures in the field of military infrastructure. The goal is an annual exchange of information on new infrastructure developments or any substantial expansion of existing infrastructure. In a broad approach, the exchange should include activities involving military air fields, military storage capacities, stationary air defence facilities, military exercise areas, military headquarters, and oil pipelines used by the military. The proposal

was not listed in the agenda. It is an attempt to create more transparency as NATO opens itself up. It illustrates that the security-related activities of important actors outside of OSCE and FSC (in this case in connection with shaping the enlargement of NATO) lead back to the FSC if that seems justified by the special character of that Forum as an overarching institute for a dialogue on co-operative security. Thus it was possible in the FSC, but not in the direct relationship between NATO and Russia, to include not only the candidates for NATO membership on an equal basis but other states bordering on NATO and Russia as well without whose participation the effectiveness of the desired transparency measures would be significantly curtailed. The proposal is now pending in the plenary of the FSC. It may be that dealing with it in the framework of 55 will not provide the needed flexibility. Even then, however, the rules of procedure in the Helsinki mandate offer enough latitude for appropriate procedures in the FSC amongst the affected and interested participating States.

Summary

In the Framework for Arms Control and the Agenda, the FSC has without question found a new and more pragmatic approach to carrying out the mandate of Helsinki. Its strength in helping to build a new European security architecture lies not so much in practical crisis management but rather in prevention through the building of confidence and transparency on the basis of agreed and jointly implemented rules on the politico-military conduct of countries, both internally and externally. With all due caution one can say that the Forum's prospects for success are not to be underrated. National negotiating positions continue to differ on specific issues but independently of that there now exists a dominant will to solve problems in the OSCE area, including security issues of a politico-military kind, through dialogue, compromise and the co-operation of all concerned. Thus the FSC was and continues to be an important player in the process of change from rigid confrontation to comprehensive co-operation in European thinking about security.