



ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE
(OSCE)

Establishment: 1 August 1975

Secretary General: Ambassador Lamberto Zannier (2011-2014)

Member States: 57 States from Europe, Central Asia and North America¹

Areas of Work: The OSCE works with a number of international and non-governmental organizations to address global challenges to security.

Areas of Cooperation with the OAS: Combating terrorism and improving international security, in human rights, specifically freedom of expression and cooperation in the area of electoral observation is beginning to take shape.

Address of Headquarter: Wallnerstrasse 6, 1010 Vienna, Austria

Phone: + 43 1 514 36 6000

Website: <http://www.osce.org/>

BACKGROUND

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is the largest regional security organization in the world; it is a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation in its area. It was established on August 1st, 1975 when the Helsinki Final Act was signed. Initially it was named the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) which until 1990 functioned mainly as a multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between East and West. The Charter of Paris for a New Europe in the Paris Summit of November 1990 called upon the CSCE to play its part in responding to the challenges of the post-Cold War period. As part of this institutionalization process, the name was changed from the CSCE to the OSCE by a decision of the Budapest Summit of Heads of State and Government in December 1994.

¹ The 57 members states of the OSCE are: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Mongolia (2012), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uzbekistan.

The OSCE counts with 56 member states (reaching out to more than 1.2 billion people). All of them enjoy equal status, and decisions are taken by consensus on a politically, but not legally binding basis. The 56 participating States are from Europe, Central Asia and North America. Canada and the United States are the only OAS members to also have membership in the OSCE.² The Organization also has 19 missions or field operations in South-eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

OBJECTIVES

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is founded on shared values and commitments to build peace and security, and safeguard freedoms and human rights. The core commitments are enshrined in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, and the 1990 Charter of Paris which proclaims: *Ours is a time for fulfilling the hopes and expectations our peoples have cherished for decades: steadfast commitment to democracy based on human rights and fundamental freedoms; prosperity through economic liberty and social justice; and equal security for all of our countries.*

The OSCE conducts a wide range of activities related to three dimensions of security:

- the politico-military security dimension
 - arms control
 - border management
 - combating terrorism
 - conflict prevention
 - military reform and policing

- the economic and environmental security dimension
 - monitoring of developments in this area with the aim of alerting participating States to any threat to security and stability while assisting in the creation of economic and environmental policies

- the human security dimension
 - anti-trafficking
 - democratization
 - education
 - elections
 - gender equality
 - human rights
 - media freedom
 - minority rights
 - rule of law
 - tolerance and non-discrimination

On 22 December 2009, the OSCE Permanent Council adopted the Organization's Unified Budget for 2010, totaling EUR 150,765,000 (205,209,936 USD). The OSCE devotes nearly three quarters of

its budget to field operations, eight of every nine staff members are working in the field to improve politico-military security, promote human security and encourage sound economic and ecological environments.

The Chairperson-in-Office (CiO) who is in office for a one-year period provides the political leadership of the OSCE and oversees the Organization's activities in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. The functions of the CiO are exercised by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the presiding State, and the CiO is assisted by the previous and succeeding Chairpersons. The three of them together constitute the Troika. Lithuania was designated for 2011 and Ukraine for 2013. The Chairperson-in-office for 2012 is the Irish Minister for European Affairs Lucinda Creighton.

SECRETARY GENERAL



Ambassador Lamberto Zannier was appointed Secretary General of the OSCE on July 1, 2011.

Mr. Zannier had a distinguished career as an Italian diplomat; he served the Foreign Service of Italy for more than 30 years. Before being appointed Secretary General of the OSCE, he was the UN Special Representative for Kosovo and Head of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMK) from June 2008 to 2011. Prior to being appointed Secretary General of the OSCE, Mr. Zannier had previously held another senior position at the Organization; he occupied the post of Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre from 2002 to 2006.

Other senior positions which Mr. Zannier held include Permanent Representative of Italy to the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague from 2000 to 2002. In addition, he served as chairperson of the negotiations on the adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional in Europe (1997-2000) and Head of Disarmament, Arms Control and Cooperative Security at NATO (1991-1997). Mr. Zannier graduated from the University of Trieste with a law degree.

GOVERNING BODIES

Ministerial Council

The Ministerial Council is the central decision-making and governing body of the OSCE between Summits. It is composed of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Member States.

Secretary General

The Secretary General of the OSCE is selected by the Ministerial council for a 3 year term and may be reelected once. The mandate of the Secretary General states that he is the representative of the Chairman-in-Office, and the OSCE Chief Administrative Officer.

Parliamentary Assembly

The Parliamentary Assembly is composed of 320 members from the different Member States of the organization. This Assembly was created in 1990 at the Paris Summit in order to enhance the

participation in the OSCE by the national parliaments of the Member States and its mandate is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue

The Court of Conciliation and Arbitration

The Court has the specific mandate to ensure the peaceful settlement of disputes between Member States. It entered into force with the signing of the Convention on Conciliation and Arbitration, which to date has been signed by 36 States.

The Court's Convention states that it is an instrument used to settle, by means of conciliation or arbitration, the disputes between States that are brought to its attention. Cases on which the Court may have to render a decision could include conflicts in respect of territorial integrity, maritime delimitation, and environmental and economic issues. The conciliation commissions and arbitral tribunals are established by the Court on an *ad hoc* basis; therefore the Court is not a permanent body and it can render a decision that is legally binding.

A dispute can be submitted either unilaterally or by all States Parties involved in the dispute. The first instance of the Court is the Commission, which publishes a report and recommendations to the Parties. If a conflict persists, the Parties may then submit the case to arbitration.

The conciliators and arbitrators are under the authority of a Bureau. The current chairman of the Bureau is Robert Badinter, former Minister of Justice of France and President of the Court.

MAIN AREAS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE OSCE AND THE OAS

The OSCE works with a number of international and non-governmental organizations to address global challenges to security. It has reached a high level of cooperation with the United Nations, the European Union, the Council of Europe and NATO to maximize each organization's strengths and avoid overlap. The main areas of cooperation between the OAS and the OSCE to date have been in combating terrorism and improving international security, human rights, freedom of expression and cooperation in the area of electoral observation.

International Security

The partnership between the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) of the OAS Secretariat for Multidimensional Security and the Action Against Terrorism Unit (ATU) of the OSCE is a strong one and has been ongoing since 2006. The units within both organizations were created in 2002 to reflect the strong commitment of countries in Europe and the Americas to prevent and combat terrorist acts and are the most active bodies of all the regional organizations dealing with counter terrorism. Raphael Perl, an expert on terrorism for the United States Congress, assumed the position of Director of the ATU within the OSCE in November 2007 and has met with the CICTE Secretariat on numerous occasions. Under his leadership the OSCE/ATU has become a key partner for the CICTE Secretariat.

OSCE /ATU and CICTE regularly exchange information regarding counter- terrorism policies in their respective regions and keep each other informed of upcoming training programs and other efforts. This and other relevant information exchanged between the two is regularly published in their respective newsletters. As a direct result of ongoing cooperation, the CICTE Secretariat's sub-

regional workshops on travel document security were developed largely based on the ATU model. The OSCE/ ATU has sought input from the CICTE Secretariat for the development of its own cyber security technical assistance and information-sharing program, and indicated its interest in using the CICTE Secretariat's Cyber Security Program as a model.

Specific activities and meetings in which the two organizations have cooperated in the security area over the past two years include the following:

- CICTE Secretariat Program Manager for Document Security and Fraud Prevention participated in an ATU Workshop on Border Security in 2007; the former Executive Director of the ATU attended CICTE's Seventh Regular Session in Panama City, Panama, February 28 to March 2, 2007; an OASC/ATU Program Manager participated in each of two workshops co-organized by the CICTE Secretariat and ICAO on travel document security and fraud prevention, held in El Salvador and Colombia in June and November 2008, respectively; ATU Director Raphael Perl participated as a moderator in the joint CICTE-Council of Europe Conference on Cyber Security in April 2009 in El Escorial, Spain.
- OSCE/ATU is regularly invited as an observer to the CICTE's Annual meetings. OSCE/ATU has been invited to deliver a speech on Public- Private Partnerships for Critical Infrastructure Protection at the X Annual CICTE Meeting that took place in Washington DC, March 17-19, 2010.
- The CICTE Secretariat and the OSCE /ATU are both official observers to the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on Terrorism (CODEXTER).

Electoral Cooperation and Observation

The Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation (DECO) of the OAS Secretariat for Political Affairs has initiated its cooperation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the OSCE, which is responsible for electoral observation for the OSCE. In 2005, both the OAS and the OSCE signed the Declaration of Principles for International Electoral Observation and have actively participated in the annual meetings in different regions of the world. In 2005, the OAS hosted the second annual meeting at its headquarters in Washington, D.C. and ODIHR hosted the fifth meeting in 2009, in Warsaw, Poland, where two DECO specialists participated.

Both organizations send observation teams to elections across their regions – to monitor election preparations, campaigns, legislation, media coverage, voting and counting. During a visit of the ODIHR director and his election advisor to OAS Headquarters in February 2010, representatives of the two organizations discussed possible joint activities, addressing particularly the issues of gender and electoral observation methodology.

Freedom of Expression

For the past ten years, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, the Representative on Freedom of the Media of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Organization of American States (OAS) have issued an annual joint statement on the "Global Campaign for Free Expression".

The joint declarations began in 1999. Every year these declarations set out the position of the three signatory Rapporteurs on many problems that threaten the full exercise of freedom of expression around the world. Declarations focus on and condemn attempts by governments to limit freedom of expression and to control the media and access to information. They also deal with problems related to the defamation of religion, anti-terrorism, anti-extremism legislation, media and elections, and support measures to sustain freedom of expression.

The "Declaration on Ten Key Threats to Freedom of Expression", was signed on February 3, 2010 when a joint meeting was held in Washington DC between the freedom of expression Rapporteurs of the United Nations, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the OAS and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), with the support of the Global Campaign for Free Expression and the Centre for Law and Democracy.

On June 25th 2012, the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, Frank LaRue; the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) of the Organization of American States (OAS), Catalina Botero Marino; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatović; and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, Faith Pansy Tlakula; issued a joint declaration in which they stated their abhorrence over the unacceptable rate of crimes against freedom of expression, including killings, death threats, disappearances, prosecutions, and imprisonments, which target the media and individuals who play a crucial role in informing society.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe holds three meetings for its Parliamentary Assembly: an Annual Session and Winter and Fall Meetings. The Annual Session is the largest event in the Assembly calendar and takes place in July every year. At this meeting, the Assembly's three General Committees (Political affairs and Security, Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment and Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions) meet to debate and pass recommendations on OSCE-related issues and to elect new Officers.

SOURCES

[OSCE Website](#)

Updated: November 28th, 2012