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OSCE
MAGAZINE

Special anniversary issue
30 years of the Helsinki Final Act
1975-2005



Recapturing the spirit of Helsinki

The OSCE reflects on the past to shape its future



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The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe is a pan-European security body whose 55 participating States span the geographical area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

OSCE Chairmanship 2005: Slovenia

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- Forum for Security Co-operation, *Vienna*
- Secretariat, *Vienna*
- OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, *Vienna*
- Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Warsaw*
- High Commissioner on National Minorities, *The Hague*
- OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, *Copenhagen*

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- Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference

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Message from the Secretary General

This summer, the OSCE community marked the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act with special events. The articles and classic images in this issue of the *OSCE Magazine* are meant to bring us back to the birth of the Helsinki Process and to give us a sense of how the historic date of 1 August 1975 was commemorated.

Celebrations in about a dozen world capitals have given us cause for reflection on the significant role of the Helsinki Process in bridging a divided Europe during the Cold War and in assisting the transition process of post-Communist societies.

It has been a time for looking at vintage pictures, re-reading eloquent speeches by great statesmen, and examining yellowing press clippings from 30 years ago.

But anniversaries are not just occasions for looking back. While the Cold War has long been over and threats to European security have changed, the need to maintain security through co-operation based on common values remains as crucial as ever.

To fulfil our responsibility towards the OSCE community, we need a vigorous Organization. This is why all of us have been exerting considerable efforts directed at strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE and plotting a common course for the future.

The Meeting of the Ministerial Council in Ljubljana on 5 and 6 December will demonstrate the extent to which the "Spirit of Helsinki" lives on and how participating States can work together to achieve the ideals set out in the Final Act and in the landmark agreements that followed it.



Finlandia Hall, 31 July 2005: Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut and Chairman-in-Office Dmitrij Rupel leaf through an album of old photographs taken at the historic Helsinki gathering 30 years ago.

Marc Perrin de Brichambaut
 Vienna
 October 2005

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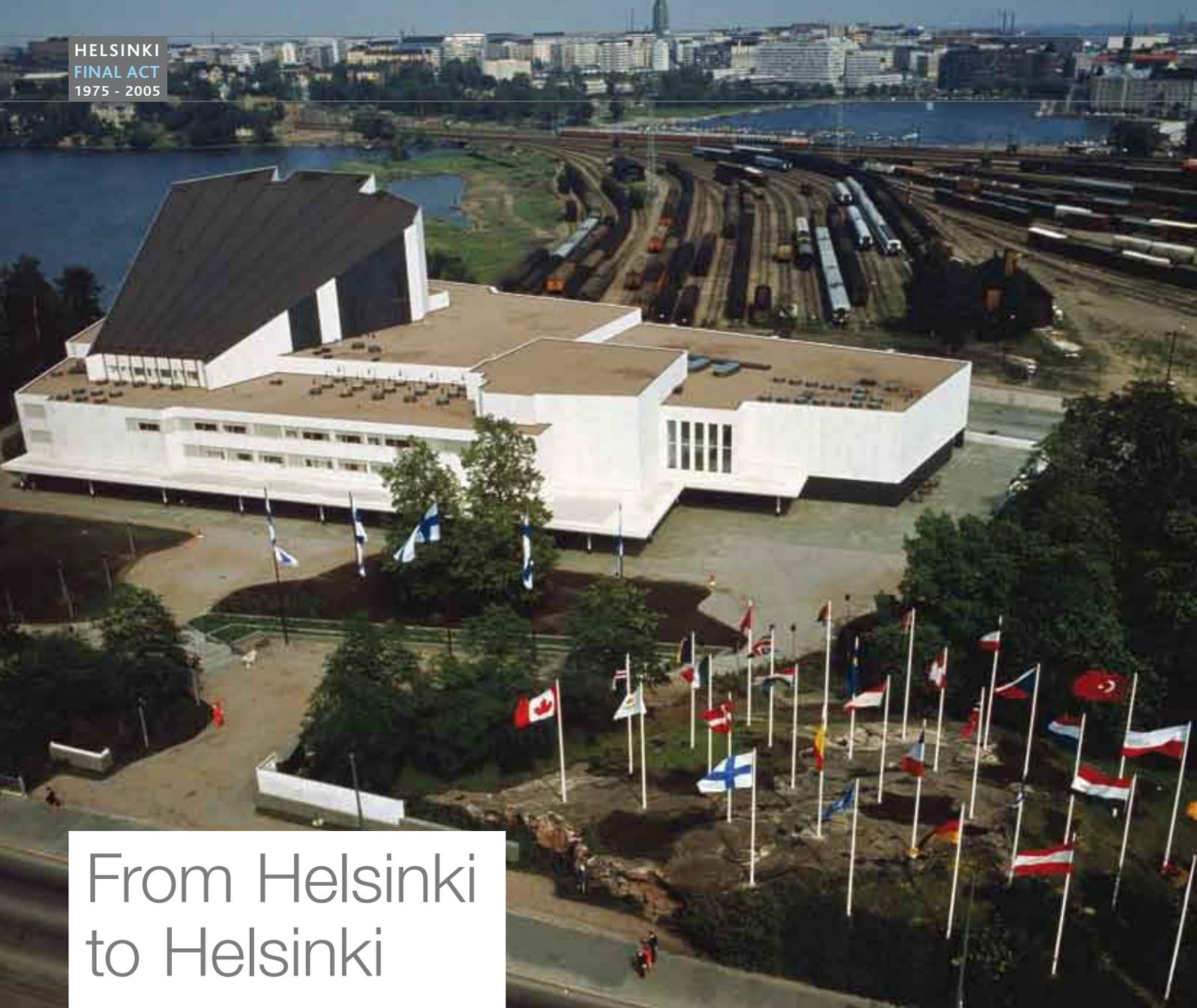
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Front cover: Thirty years ago in Helsinki, cameras captured Leonid Brezhnev in a jovial mood. The Soviet leader is flanked by U.S. President Gerald Ford and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. APA-IMAGES/Lehtikuva

Back cover: Signatures of 35 European and North American leaders on the Helsinki Final Act in 1975

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From Helsinki to Helsinki

“Three decades
of positive
developments”

Finlandia Hall, designed by Alvar Aalto, was the scene of one of the most auspicious political events in post-World War II history.
APA-Images/Lehtikuva

Finland, a nation of just 5.3 million people, does not claim sole ownership of the momentous events in Helsinki 30 years ago, but neither does it take its historic legacy lightly. Under the leadership of its visionary and charismatic president, Urho Kekkonen, Finland helped make 1 August 1975 happen, enhancing its role as mediator and peacekeeper and strengthening its neutral status during the Cold War and beyond.

Thirty years later to the day, Finland once again played gracious host, this time to representatives of the 55 participating States of the OSCE — the organization born in 1995 out of the series of meetings known as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). The current OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel, and Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut led the list of illustrious guests, many of whom had contributed significantly to the transformation of the CSCE into the OSCE.

Designed to evoke the “spirit of Helsinki”, the two-day programme featured a visit to President Kekkonen’s former home, where Helsinki Final Act memorabilia were on display, and a panel discussion in Finlandia Hall, the famed setting of the unprecedented gathering of Heads of State and Government.

The following are excerpts from the remarks and statements delivered in Finlandia Hall on 1 August 2005, focusing on the future of European and global security.

The world leaders who signed the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe knew they were making history. Few people could have foreseen or predicted, however, that consequential events would lead to the end of the Cold War and to the end of the political division of Europe.

The Helsinki Final Act was the real Magna Carta of détente. Not only was it a charter governing relations between States, it was also a charter of freedom for nations and individuals.

Today, the world is in the midst of changes that have been going on since the end of the Cold War. There are both positive and negative trends in international relations.

We find ourselves, in the middle of this decade, still faced with tasks inherited from the 1990s. We also need to prevent new threats and risks, and to protect societies without infringing upon our basic values.

There has hardly ever been a greater need for effective multilateralism than today. People's hopes for a better future

are greater than ever. At the same time, problems have become more complex. Our resources are, however, limited. Multilateral institutions and organizations must engage in fair and frank co-operation in which they complement and strengthen each other's work.

We must aim for effective decision-making and institutional clarity in the midst of uncertainty and complexity. We must boldly evaluate institutions' specific tasks and their unique roles and relations with other actors. Co-operation between international organizations must be developed while ensuring that "forum-shopping" does not occur.

The OSCE remains vital to maintaining the broad concept of security. I hope that this historic meeting will stimulate all participants to reflect on issues from a historical perspective — not only evaluating the past but also reflecting on how our era and our work will be seen in the future.

Tarja Halonen
President of Finland



President Tarja Halonen and Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel at Finlandia Hall

It took 30 years to travel from Helsinki to Helsinki. But what a journey, what a time it was! Despite the conflicts and problems, even tragedies, overall the past three decades were marked by positive developments.

I remember Helsinki and the CSCE from the meetings of the Slovenian opposition on the eve of the first democratic election in the former Yugoslavia. What we knew about the CSCE sounded subversive and liberating. We whispered the letters "CSCE" with hope and enthusiasm.

That first meeting in 1972, in Dipoli, Finland, set in motion a process that surpassed the wildest dreams of its plan-

ners. Two years of negotiations came to fruition in the summer of 1975 when 35 Heads of State and Government met in Finlandia Hall.

Despite the grand occasion, there were plenty of sceptics who felt that the meeting was a de facto recognition of the Cold War status quo. The critics said that the West had sold out to the Communist bloc. But it did not turn out that way.

In 1990 and in 1991, the Iron Curtain fell and new democratic governments took over. The OSCE was at the centre of this great moment in history, working over a period of 30 years to pull the West and the East together.

In many ways, this moment of unification continues as the OSCE now spans a region from Vancouver to Vladivostok, with 55 nations under one roof. For that we have the Helsinki Process to thank — the series of meetings and commitments that followed up the Final Act and created momentum for dialogue, confidence-building and openness.

The process of creating a whole, free and prosperous Europe is not yet complete. Peace in the Balkans is still fragile, while in parts of Europe, the reform process is only a few years old. It is important that we remain vigilant and that the OSCE stay involved in south-eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

We need to show the same political courage shown by the founders of the OSCE as we plot a future course for this great Organization and the ideals it stands for.

Dimitrij Rupel
Foreign Minister of Slovenia
Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE

The CSCE/OSCE has offered a particularly workable opportunity for small States to pursue their interests while contributing to common goals. The OSCE, more than most other international organizations, has opened its doors for civil society actors, non-governmental organizations, researchers and activists to participate in field operations and other activities and to become involved in the practice of world politics.

Moreover, as an institution, the OSCE combines multilateralism with the concept of comprehensive security. This can be called an OSCE innovation from

the early 1990s, traceable back to the so-called three baskets of co-operation adopted by the CSCE in the 1970s.

The OSCE experience shows that it is possible to build a bridge between universal values and norms and their practical application. With the concept of follow-up, it teaches the international community to pursue an issue systematically and not to give in — even if progress may take time, even decades.

Although global solutions are indispensable when global problems are addressed, the history of the OSCE confirms the significance of regional

arrangements and innovations. We can all recall numerous examples of appeals for the launch of a CSCE/OSCE process to solve problems and conflicts in almost every region in the world.

From the perspective of the European Union, the wider Europe, or the OSCE area, is a strategic space. The EU has both specific and general reasons to upgrade its role within the OSCE.

Today, it is in the Union's special interest to see that its neighbouring regions are stable and firmly placed on the road towards peace and democracy.

Here, the EU can co-operate even more closely with the OSCE, the Council of Europe and other actors, including the United Nations. The EU is not there to duplicate what others do better.

Erkki Tuomioja
Foreign Minister of Finland



FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTRY/PANO HEINONEN

Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja and Georgian official Nino Burjanadze talk to the press.

I was about 11 years old then and still remember well what a significant event the signing of the Helsinki Final Act was. It gave us Soviet citizens hope that it would be possible to bring about a small measure of democracy and freedom. The fact that today 15 independent countries exist in the space of the former Soviet Union is testimony to the importance of the role played by the Helsinki Agreement.

I believe that the principles signed up to in Helsinki remain important.

However, we cannot speak about the OSCE's work in the human dimension as long as we continue to have unresolved conflicts, as long as we continue to face separatist and terrorist threats within OSCE countries. These threats are even more tangible and dangerous in countries where democracy is less well developed.

Just as democratic nations tend not to fight against one another, neither should international organizations compete with one another. On the contrary, they

should co-operate closely to ensure global peace and security, and work actively towards making the democratization process irreversible. This is precisely what we are trying to do in my country.

Sometimes, when we speak about frozen conflicts, we do not want to open our eyes to the problems. How can we speak about freedom and human rights when we have thousands and thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons on OSCE territory? And how can we speak about the future of the OSCE if we do not mention why these conflicts remain unresolved?

How long do we have to wait to implement decisions adopted by OSCE? How long should we wait to resolve frozen conflicts — 5, 10, 15 or 100 years? I am expressing the feelings of my people. We do not want to have to wait 100 years to build real democracy. It is our obligation to live up to the principles that we adopted 30 years ago. Please help us, the new democracies, to solve the problems that we are not able to on our own.

Nino Burjanadze
Speaker, Parliament of Georgia
Vice President,
OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

For me and many of my generation, Helsinki was part of our personal history. I am half-Hungarian and for a large part of my childhood, my uncle was in prison in Hungary and my aunt and cousin were in a Stalinist labour camp. My mother was an anti-nuclear activist. She took me to my first demonstration in 1955 and, in 1957, she took my sisters up to London for the founding of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, with Canon Collins and Bertrand Russell.

In 1957, my Hungarian family were allowed to visit us in London for the first time and I still remember my uncle asking, "Why didn't the West save us in 1956, in the Hungarian Revolution? Why didn't you stop the Russian tanks?" My mother replied that this would have led to nuclear war and the whole family would have been killed on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

That exchange was profoundly important in shaping my political thinking.

Helsinki began the reconciliation of the two halves of Europe and also the reconciliation of the two sides of my family.

The Helsinki idea was to bring peace and human rights together. Peace was about the international arena and it was about relations between States. This was the Soviet preoccupation — to maintain the security of the borders of the Soviet empire. Human rights were about the rule of law and democracy, which were supposed to operate within a domestic setting. And this was the American preoccupation.

Helsinki was a bargain between these two viewpoints. It also included co-operation [in technology], something the Eastern bloc was also keen on. When it was signed, many people were sceptical about its significance. Milan Simecka, a spokesman for Charter 77, the Czech dissident movement, described it as a "party at the expense of the East Europeans". Any mention of Helsinki, he wrote, "would send police officers into fits of laughter".

But Helsinki spawned both the peace movement in the West and the human rights movement in the East. It is usually only the latter that is mentioned. I believe, however, that the Western movement was also an offspring of Helsinki. The NATO decision to deploy a new generation of nuclear weapons four years after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act seemed completely unacceptable to a generation that had seen the thawing of the Cold War.

A huge peace movement sprang up all over Europe — I remember coming to a demonstration here in Helsinki in the early 1980s. Helsinki also spawned a new democracy movement in the East

which found that the Helsinki Agreement could be used as an instrument to defend human rights. The travel and co-operation element under the Agreement was also important.

I was part of the peace movement that saw itself as trying to end the Cold War, and took a stand against both nuclear weapons and oppression. We talked about "détente from below" and "Helsinki from below". The movements in both East and West shook the status quo and led to the 1989 revolutions. Afterwards we created the Helsinki Citizens Assembly, which aimed at being "an OSCE from below".

The main legacy of the Final Act is the Helsinki idea. Many had hoped that the CSCE, as it was called then, would eventually supplant both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. That did not happen and the OSCE is rather marginal nowadays. But I believe that the new roles of the family of international organizations owe a lot to the Helsinki idea.

Just as Helsinki spawned the peace and human rights movements, so could the OSCE also play a unique role in facilitating the involvement of civil society. Could not the OSCE host a civil society meeting in Nagorno Karabakh? Could it not act on behalf of the displaced persons and refugees and help them to organize and represent their interests?

I would like to end by remembering Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme. When the Helsinki Final Act was signed here in this very room, French President Giscard d'Estaing said: "Now we can all agree." "No," Olof Palme said, "now we can begin to disagree."



Professor Mary Kaldor
Director, Centre for the Study of Global Governance
London School of Economics and Political Science

Finland's year-round celebrations of 30 years of the Helsinki Final Act were, in the words of Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, "a sign of the permanent and special affinity of Finland and the Finns with the CSCE/OSCE". The Foreign Ministry and its partners were at the forefront of a wide range of initiatives.

The celebration in Finlandia Hall started on 31 July with the unveiling of a commemorative plaque, followed by a panel discussion and a dinner-reception.

The Culture of Dialogue: The OSCE Acquis 30 Years after Helsinki, published by the Centre for OSCE Research (CORE), University of Hamburg, was launched on 21 July. Focusing on partnerships, the booklet is a primer on the OSCE.

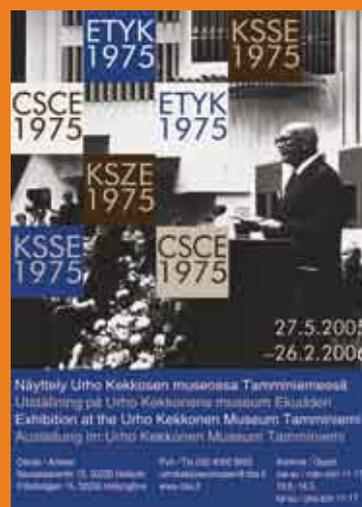
Managing Change in Europe — Evaluating the OSCE and its Future Role: Competencies, Capabilities and Missions, a CORE working paper, was also presented to participating States on 21 July.

CSCE 1975, a special exhibition at the Urho Kekkonen Museum in Tamminiemi, Helsinki, runs until 26 February 2006.

The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe: 30 Years, an exhibition, is making the rounds of European capitals.

STETE, the Finnish Committee for European Security, held an anniversary seminar in February; launched *For a*

More Humane Europe, a book in Finnish on the OSCE's human dimension, in early August; and is planning a symposium on 8 December.



Like any process that has gone on for the past 30 years, especially during a time of revolutionary change such as has taken place these past three decades, the Helsinki Process can be retooled and improved.

Some reforms have already been implemented. *The Panel of Eminent Persons on Strengthening the Effectiveness of the OSCE*, on which I sat, examined the Organization to develop other ideas.

Today, the OSCE has an active work programme. But for the OSCE to go forward, more important than any particular work programme is the participating States' fidelity to the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

Today the Cold War is

over, but we are still engaged in a great struggle. In the war on terror, there are those blinded by hopelessness, fanaticism and hate who target innocent civilians to advance their extremist causes. And the struggle continues between the few who benefit from authoritarian rule and the many who long to live in freedom, with dignity and liberty, and under the rule of law.

The OSCE's core mission remains helping to foster democratic change. By helping strengthen democratic institutions and civil society, the OSCE helps to defeat the underlying causes of instability. That was the OSCE's novel idea, the concept of comprehensive security. While it is

far more widely understood and more broadly accepted today than 30 years ago when the Helsinki Final Act was signed, there still are millions of people who do not know freedom.

Some OSCE participating States now claim that political dialogue on human rights is an internal affair of the State concerned. That is factually inaccurate. All participating States have signed up to commitments that are clear and unequivocal.

We will build on the sterling legacy already brought into being by the Helsinki Final Act. Human rights and democracy *do* bring stability. Advancing these values will ensure that 30 years from today more

people will live in freedom, and the world will be safer and more secure.

In this way we will have kept our promise, the promise of the Helsinki Final Act.



Ambassador Richard S. Williamson
Former senior U.S. official and diplomat
Member, Panel of Eminent Persons



Ambassador Vladimir V. Shustov
Former Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE
Member, Panel of Eminent Persons

All of us remember Finland's hosting a similar international meeting 10 years ago to mark the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of what we once called the CSCE — proof of Finland's devotion to the cause of our Organization, now the OSCE.

Frankly speaking, though, the OSCE can be considered an organization only in a specific and rather limited sense of the word. As was recognized by the Panel of Eminent Persons, it still bears many "remnants" of the initial CSCE. That is why some colleagues from other organizations, for example, in the

European Union, confess from time to time that it is not so convenient for them to deal with the OSCE, which does not have a legal capacity.

To correct this situation and to help the OSCE become a full-scale regional organization was one of the tasks before the Panel. Its report notes with satisfaction that the OSCE has contributed to what has been achieved in Europe since Helsinki 1975 along the road to democratic institutions and market economies.

At the same time, the report makes another acknowledgement: "Although the OSCE's ability to adjust in a flexible manner to the changing security environment is generally appreciated, its relevance, effectiveness and strategic orientation have been questioned."

This critical remark is followed by a whole set of questions that are being asked at the highest level. One of them is: "Does a real political will exist to make use of the Organization to solve problems related to the region's security issues?" To my mind the report gives answers to all these pertinent questions.

The report lists 11 issues that the OSCE should give priority to. So far, the OSCE has been known to the public mostly for its activities in human rights, monitoring elections and, in part, in democracy-building. But if the OSCE starts implementing the priority agenda of 11 issues proposed by the Panel, the Organization will become better known and could greatly improve its image. This process could also be helped by the strengthening of the OSCE's identity and profile.

Speaking purely from a personal perspective, I would favour transferring all the permanent OSCE institutions to one centre — Vienna. This would prove useful both from the operational and financial point of view.



Professor P. Terrence Hopmann
Chair, Political Science Department,
Brown University, United States

Inspired by the results [of the Helsinki Final Act], the newly enlarged CSCE created new and more ambitious principles at Copenhagen and Paris in 1990, Moscow in

1991, Helsinki in 1992, and Budapest in 1994.

Participating States declared “categorically and irrevocably” in Moscow in 1991 that “commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension of the CSCE are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned.” This explicit limitation of absolute sovereignty represents a major innovation introduced in contemporary international relations by the OSCE.

No other international institution has embodied the eighteenth-century German philosopher Immanuel Kant’s democratic peace theory as clearly as the OSCE. Just as Kant linked good governance,

economic interdependence and co-operative international institutions as the foundation of a peaceful world order, the CSCE/OSCE has linked, since 1975, human security, economic and environmental well-being, and institutional structures to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts co-operatively.

The wisdom of those who crafted the Helsinki Final Act and brought together normative principles of good governance as the most essential foundation of international peace and security, seems to have been clearly confirmed.

Indeed, with the end of the Cold War, the CSCE wisely seized the opportunity to strengthen this vital linkage by creating such institutions as the Office for Democratic Institutions

and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, and the Conflict Prevention Centre. Collectively, these institutional structures, along with more recent innovations such as the Representative on Freedom of the Media, have established a new set of norms which, if fully realized, can usher in a new era of peace and security within the OSCE region.

The OSCE achieves its greatest successes bit by bit, with thousands of small efforts that seldom make it into the headlines or history books. But the cumulative efforts of thousands of OSCE people “on the ground” have contributed immeasurably to the security of this region in ways largely unrecognized.



Professor Raimo Väyrynen
President, Academy of Finland

Thirty years is not a long time for an international institution, but — in particular if international circumstances change in a major way — it may experience several phases of restructuring and adaptation in the course of such a period. The development of the OSCE provides ample

evidence of the pronounced consequences of such processes of adaptation.

The rise of political violence in the early 1990s called for new solutions by international actors. As a result, conflict prevention became a cottage industry both in politics and academia. The OSCE was a pioneer and a pace-setter in [conflict prevention] by virtue of the involvement of its special representatives and field missions. However, its role in crisis management and peacekeeping remained more limited.

A key reason for this failure has been the difficulty of coming to grips with the right and obligation to undertake external interventions. As we know, the issue of intervention has been high on the international agenda, especially in the United Nations, as a means to stop genocide and protect civilians.

Obviously the problem has by no means been solved, but one can detect a certain movement towards a more permissive interpretation of intervention on humanitarian grounds.

In the OSCE, on the other hand, there has been some backtracking from the conclusion reached in the early 1990s that human rights do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of States.

So far at least, the OSCE’s interventions have been of the soft kind, intended to secure human rights by diplomatic means and to promote democracy and good governance.

However, as the history of the OSCE shows, even such actions can become a source of controversy if human rights and democracy are defined differently by various key parties. The situation becomes even more complicated if human rights

and democracy are used as tools of politics instead of as references to commitments to fundamental values.

It is often pointed out that the OSCE is now going through its third major transformation due to the fact that its original Cold War function has ceased to exist and intra-national conflicts have been mostly frozen, though not extinguished.

Compared with the very State-centric origins of the OSCE, this trend creates entirely new institutional and political challenges to the Organization and its member states. The founding fathers of the CSCE/OSCE could hardly have imagined that high up on the Organization’s agenda would be such issues as election monitoring, human trafficking, police training, and counter-terrorism.



Austrian celebrations call for courageous contribution to a changing world

By holding a special event on 20 July to celebrate 30 years of the Helsinki Process — “one of the most noteworthy political and diplomatic success stories of the second half of the last century” — Austria was not merely paying lip service as the host country of the OSCE, said Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik.

“We have rather gathered here because Austria values the OSCE and its work highly,” the Foreign Minister told a packed hall at Vienna’s *Haus der Industrie*. Austria and other neutral and smaller countries had been among

Finland’s most important partners when it tried to forge East-West consensus during the initial phases of the CSCE.

In an address to the Permanent Council the following day, Minister Plassnik linked the 30 years of the Helsinki Final Act with other significant anniversaries that Austria was commemorating.

She noted that the Helsinki event in the summer of 1975 was “the result of détente in Europe, which had begun with the conclusion of the Austrian State Treaty in 1955 — a visible signal that it had again become possible to achieve substantial and lasting results at the negotiating table.”

“Vienna and Austria represent the idea of a bridge in the best sense of the word,” said Armenian Ambassador Jivan Tabibian at the Permanent Council. “Even after the Cold War, that role has not disappeared; people still think of Austrian foreign policy as one that quite often tries to transcend obvious rifts and schisms, East and West, right and left.”

The following are selected highlights from the statements delivered at the anniversary panel discussion on 20 July:

Neutral and non-aligned States were well-represented in Helsinki by Austria’s Bruno Kreisky (right) and Yugoslavia’s Josip Broz Tito.
Photo: Finnish Foreign Ministry

We have witnessed first-hand the truly incredible transformation of Europe in the past decades. Without the Helsinki Process and the European policy of détente, these achievements would simply not have been possible. This détente has been much more long-lasting than those who witnessed the beginning of this development had imagined and had dreamed it could be.

Today, we all share a comprehensive concept of security, a concept which in its global dimension also underlies Secretary-General Kofi Annan's report on United Nations reform, *In Larger Freedom*.



The Foreign Ministers of Austria and Poland

One may ask if key objectives pursued by the OSCE for the past decade have lost their importance and value, whether the OSCE's mandate has lost its validity. In my view, some OSCE tasks are no longer valid and its mandate has, to a considerable extent, been implemented.

However, some questions remain:

Would we be better advised to reformulate the Organization's tasks to make it capable of meeting the expectations of participating States and of addressing new challenges?

Can the OSCE be a factor for change? How can one harness its strengths, and in which areas should one admit it can no longer deliver?

Therefore, we should be more courageous and use the synergies between the UN, the Council of Europe, the EU and the OSCE. I am stating this deliberately as foreign minister of a neutral country that belongs to all four organizations and as host country for two of them.

Our citizens demand concrete and tangible results. We have to meet this requirement by a clever combination of our experience and our expertise.

As for the competition between international actors — neither the EU nor other organizations, nor individual States can provide the answers to the many open questions pertaining to the OSCE participating States that are undergoing transformation. So let us use the institutional experience of the OSCE and the commitment of its staff towards this purpose.

Those who want to be strong tomorrow have to be capable of genuine partnership. Only those who are ready to be partners themselves will enjoy credibility by enlisting others as partners, too. Partnership means that nobody — big

or small — feels marginalized, and that each partner considers the legitimate interests and needs of the other in an open-minded and constructive way.

Thirty years after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, we have no reason for self-doubt. My conviction that the Helsinki Process has an exciting and promising future is also based on my knowledge of how much commitment, professionalism and talent is available within the OSCE.

But I am also expressing this conviction as a representative of a country in the heart of a changing continent; of a country which is extremely well informed about the value of freedom, security, neighbourliness and regional co-operation; and of a country which is especially interested in a good and lasting trans-Atlantic partnership as well as in mutually trusting relations with the Russian Federation.

Ursula Plassnik
Foreign Minister of Austria

What, then, should we do to redefine a new mandate for the OSCE?

First, we must restore the sense of community and identity to the entire area between Vancouver and Vladivostok, including the sense of shared responsibility for the Organization.

Second, we must overhaul the OSCE's relations with the outside world and think seriously about opening up the Organization to all those who are ready to embrace its norms and standards.

Third, we must specify what kind of leadership we actually need. The present leadership formula will not help strengthen the OSCE. On the other hand, we are not sure whether the Secretary General's new mandate can inject new momentum into the Organization and stimulate its workings.

Fourth, we must set our priorities. In my view, we must soon focus on Central Asia. What is now going on in that part of the world highlights the fiasco of our policies. And, significantly, frustration is conspicuous on both sides.

Central Asian nations consider

themselves cheated because promised economic aid has never materialized. Europe, for its part, is surprised at the scale of the non-observance of human rights there, at the decline of the rule of law, and at a deficit of democracy in Central Asian States.

Fifth, we must stop thinking in terms of various OSCE "dimensions". This may sound too controversial, but I find current calls for rebalancing of the three OSCE dimensions quite pointless. Given the complexity and interdependence of present-day threats, all attempts at striking a balance between the dimensions look quite artificial.

Let us consider holding a series of high-level OSCE, NATO and EU meetings organized back-to-back and devoted to just one theme. And, after establishing a common purpose, let us set in train common action. Let us start by hammering out a joint strategy vis-à-vis the Central Asian States. Let us create a platform for action without rivalry, competition, or a bureaucratic allocation of tasks.

Adam Daniel Rotfeld
Foreign Minister of Poland



AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY/HOLZNER

My involvement in the CSCE/OSCE is related to a great number of places between Vancouver and Vladivostok.

However, Vienna has a special place for me, as on 15 June 1993, I started the work of the CSCE Secretariat in the *Ballbüro* of the Hofburg.

With the end of East-West confrontation in the late 1980s — starting by the way in 1988-1989 during the last phase of the Vienna follow-up meeting — the CSCE began its transition from a conference to an international organization. Since then, an unending debate on CSCE/OSCE reform has unfolded.

All OSCE States are pleading for a more meaningful political dialogue. The question is: Why does it not happen? One reason seems to be that key players in OSCE prefer other forums, bilateral or multilateral. Of course, more restricted (in terms of participants or issues) and more like-minded forums promise easier discussions, perhaps also better results.

However, we all praise the comprehensive membership of OSCE as one of its clear comparative advantages. Whatever can be achieved in smaller, more restricted forums cannot have the same impact on really comprehensive security as the all-inclusive discussions and decisions in the OSCE.

That will become even clearer when we look at another reason for the OSCE's often somewhat sterile debates. It sounds simplistic: We have a lack of meaningful political dialogue because

OSCE States hesitate to start or engage in a debate about really hot issues. One of these, possibly the most relevant one, is the question of the OSCE's role in critical situations related to democratic change — for example, those in Kyiv, Tbilisi and Bishkek.

We all know that this is a very sensitive subject. However, it seems to me that the time is ripe to discuss this problem. To continue with a dialogue of the deaf, while providing advice that some understand as lecturing, is not a promising way to encourage policy changes.

By now the OSCE has had a lot of practical experience on which to build efforts to re-establish a broad consensus on procedure and substance for OSCE support in critical internal situations. If such a discussion is postponed, the OSCE risks further erosion of what was until the mid-1990s a broad consensus on the OSCE's basic orientations and tasks.

Whether we are discussing election-monitoring, OSCE activities in Kyrgyzstan, or the possibilities for a more substantial political debate, one thing is clear: There is no need to re-invent the OSCE. What is needed is increasing efficiency in the efforts to realize OSCE standards and commitments. That, of course, must be accompanied by a higher degree of readiness to co-operate with the OSCE. Andijan is a case in point.

Ambassador Wilhelm Höynck
First Secretary General of the OSCE
Member, Panel of Eminent Persons



AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY/HOLZNER

As far as Russia is concerned, its attitude towards the OSCE has gone through a “romantic” period of hopes for its transformation into a system-forming organization in the security sphere in the Euro-Atlantic space. In the meantime, though, during the past decade, the OSCE has ceased to be an exclusive mechanism of multilateral co-operation for Russia.

Presently, Russia is implementing its interests in the vast Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian regions through co-operation in a broad range of formats apart from the OSCE — the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Co-operation Organization, as well as the Russia-NATO Council and its strategic partnership with the EU.

In recent years, even though the OSCE has started to address urgent problems concerned with countering terrorism — illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and in shoulder-fired missiles (MANPADs), human trafficking, and the issue of tolerance — the disproportions in its activities have expanded so greatly that they have provoked a credibility crisis in the OSCE.

A number of State-shareholders have discovered that the enterprise in which they are co-owners is being run virtually behind their backs and sometimes to the detriment of their interests.

This has been compounded not only by an incompleteness in the OSCE's institution-building and its organizational looseness, but also by growing duplication — with elements of competition — with the Council of Europe, the EU and NATO, thus reducing the popularity of the Organization and its added value.

The OSCE's role and strategic objectives have been eroded. Doubts have been voiced in a number of countries, including Russia, concerning the usefulness of its further existence. There were indeed grounds for such doubts, in particular concerning the far less than impeccable use of OSCE instruments in the CIS area vis-à-vis one of the basic Helsinki principles — the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States.

However, we do not consider the OSCE to be doomed to an ignominious fate. I am convinced that, subject to serious reform of its political

agenda and structure and a return to its roots, the Organization is capable of continuing to play a meaningful and useful role in the sphere of European security.

There are several reasons in favour of trying to give a second wind to the OSCE by subjecting it to profound reform.

Firstly, the OSCE remains the custodian of the Helsinki Decalogue of basic principles of international relations, which is also applicable to other European and Euro-Atlantic organizations, and which is undoubtedly relevant even 30 years on.

Secondly, as a regional organization under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, the OSCE should, increasingly, turn into a mechanism for the regional implementation of universal and global instruments of international law in all fields for the maintenance of peace, the prevention and settlement of conflicts, economic and environmental co-operation, and the protection of human rights.

Thirdly, though the term “comparative advantages” has become somewhat worn out as a result of frequent use, these advantages have not disappeared.

Fourthly, despite the serious inner tensions felt in recent years, the OSCE still manages to develop specific and viable agreements, including those focusing on new security threats and challenges. The list of priorities for the Organization drawn up by the Panel of Eminent Persons and widely supported by participating States has wide scope.

Fifthly, the OSCE is objectively better suited than any other organization to finding an answer to the problem of the increasing “overlapping” between European organizations. The Platform for Co-operative Security, adopted at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in 1999, sets the framework for combining their efforts and providing for complementarity.

We hope that the participating States will show political will — similar to the will that gave our continent the Helsinki Final Act 30 years ago. Otherwise, let’s face it, the Organization simply has no future.

Ambassador Vladimir A. Chizhov
Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

The opportunity to be here today and to moderate this discussion is an emotional one for me. Thirty years ago we, the Czech dissidents, studied the “Ten Commandments of Helsinki” and the “Helsinki Holy Trinity”, as we jokingly called them, even though we took them dead seriously.

The OSCE Trinity meant sovereign States, and economic and humanitarian stability. We had been used to living only under the shadow of the first pillar, under the omnipotence of State security. The potency of production and of individuals was promising. Even if some of those who signed were only making empty promises, there were other signatories who felt bound by their obligations. We all had begun to live in a world that was moving together.

And was it pure coincidence that the OSCE’s political principles had ten points? This allusion to the Ten Commandments was irritating. Do you remember? The first one (“no other God”) has changed a little bit but it still sounds very monotheistic: The State is sovereign, no interference, please!

There were some other exciting similarities. For example, the famous “Thou shall not kill” was interpreted as non-intervention in internal affairs. The commandment not to commit adultery was represented as respect for human rights and the fundamental freedoms of thought, conscience, religion and belief. This especially pleased not only me personally but all the other

dissidents as well.

Not that the other points were any less important. But the acceptance of this particular one really was a commandment. *And* they signed it! Even if it was not meant seriously, the signature had its effect. It was the wolf in the bag or, better said, in the basket. Basket number three! We decided to take it seriously.

The reaction of our Government did not lack a certain charm. Although it was one of the 35 signatories, it insulted us as slanderers and failures, and as usurpers and enemies of the working classes.

We had signed Charter 77, a declaration based on the human rights passages of the Helsinki Act. We pointed to its idea of freedom with its non-collectivist roots, to a freedom that belongs to man by virtue of his nature, and not only of his tribe or class. Many of us, including myself, were imprisoned, expelled or silenced. But sooner or later, we were released and became active again.

Regardless of all the chicanery of totalitarian regimes, the signatures had their effect. The world entered the era of global proximity. The Helsinki Act represented not only skilful diplomacy and the desire to implement it; it was also an expression of this new proximity, a symptom of an emerging and growing interdependence — and perhaps the first intelligent reaction to it.

Ambassador Jiří Gruša
Director, Diplomatic Academy of Vienna
Former Czech Ambassador to Germany and Austria





Helsinki Final Act: “Catalyst for German unification”

Reflecting on the historical significance of the Helsinki Final Act, Hans-Dietrich Genscher told some 250 guests at a 30-year anniversary event in Berlin on 1 August that “the underlying philosophy of the CSCE made possible what many had considered impossible — bringing a peaceful end to the division of Germany and Europe.”

The long-serving Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany (1974-1992) added: “That succeeded because responsibility and far-sightedness rather than timidity and thinking in terms of rivalry were the determining factors.”

Other speakers were Wolfgang Gerhardt, leader of Germany’s Free Democratic Party (FDP), and OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel, who flew in directly from the celebrations in Helsinki held earlier that same day. The event was sponsored by the German Foreign Policy Society (DGAP) and the FDP’s parliamentary group.

Excerpts from the speeches of Mr. Genscher and Mr. Gerhardt follow.

What happened 30 years ago will be regarded, when the history of the twentieth century is written, as one of the outstanding events of that period.

At a time when our continent was most deeply divided, racked by deep-seated ideological conflicts and plagued by the prospect of a military confrontation unlike any other, the Heads of State or Government of 35 nations came together in order to reach an understanding on the rules that were to govern their future co-existence.

The multilateral structure of the policy of détente ensured that all European States in the West and in the East, and not only the major powers, would be able to make their influence felt more effectively. With the participation of the United States and Canada in the conference, the Soviet Union, too, finally recognized the responsibility of these States towards Europe.

Of particular importance for us Germans was the incorporation of a provision regarding the possibility of changing borders in Europe through

Helsinki, 1975: Foreign Minister Genscher is seated next to Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt (right), who lights up along with Yugoslavia’s Marshall Tito.
APA-IMAGES/Lehtikuva

peaceful means and the freedom to select an alliance — something that, in 1990, guaranteed the right of a unified Germany to remain a member of NATO.

The provision regarding the possibility of changing borders in Europe through peaceful means opened up an opportunity for German unity, as well as the forever greater integration of what was then the European Community and is now the European Union.

With these options for Germany and Europe — for which we succeeded in gaining recognition — the door was left wide open for the developments of 1989 and 1990.

It is also part of the history of the CSCE that the outcome of the Helsinki Conference was highly controversial. Some people saw in the outcome nothing more than a worthless document, which like many others would simply be filed away, while other observers saw in the Final Act the consolidation of the status quo in all areas.

Our interpretation was different.

The Federal Government of that time did not see in the Final Act a confirmation of the existing status quo — a static concept — but rather, the beginning of a dynamic process based on values, which was to lead to an overcoming of the division on the continent.

Even before the Final Act, men and women in the Warsaw Pact States had taken a stand on their fundamental rights. However, following the adoption of the Final Act and other CSCE documents, civil rights movements had a platform on which they could base their appeals and which the Communist leaders themselves had accepted.

The extent of the changes in the Eastern bloc as a result of the policy of détente became increasingly obvious in the 1980s. It was in Vienna that Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze declared, speaking at the CSCE conference in early 1989: “The Iron Curtain is rusting.”

The CSCE principle of linking together complex issues, as in the case of the “three baskets” of the Final Act, and the desire not to lose sight of mutual advantage, proved to be a successful formula.

However, this is no reason to rest on our laurels.

It is true of the OSCE, as of all other organizations, that it cannot be better than its members want it to be. This also means that all participating States should fulfil in their entirety all the obligations they have assumed. For this reason, the call for a stronger OSCE is primarily an appeal to participating States.

It is decisively important that the OSCE’s ability to act should be strengthened. In the final

analysis, participating States will have to face the question whether they are prepared to promote a strengthening of the OSCE. Otherwise, the Organization will degenerate into an empty shell.

This appeal includes the demand not to create new borders in Europe, but rather to establish a peaceful order throughout Europe — politically, economically, environmentally and in terms of security for the benefit of all — as envisaged as early as 1967 by NATO’s Harmel Report.

If the OSCE participating States wish to discharge their responsibility for stability in a new world order, then they must resolutely grasp the unique opportunity offered to them by the Organization itself. History is not in the habit of giving second chances and the opportunities it offers us do not last forever.

DGAP/EVA KNOLL



Berlin, 2005: Hans-Dietrich Genscher (right) and German FDP party leader Wolfgang Gerhardt listen to Dimitrij Rupel (left).

Hans-Dietrich Genscher
Former Foreign Minister
Federal Republic of Germany

The signing of the CSCE’s Final Act in Helsinki 30 years ago was, without a doubt, a result — indeed, represented the success — of the liberal German foreign policy ushered in by Foreign Minister Walter Scheel and later permanently linked to the name Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

With the conclusion of the Final Act, governments with completely different political systems pledged themselves to arms control, economic co-operation and the observance of minimum standards in human rights. The CSCE process also paved the way for the reunification of our country and the peaceful coming together of our continent.

We must remember this because the OSCE needs greater recognition.

This concerns the capitals. Ministerial Councils, unfortunately, draw attention at an increasingly lower political level. This is also true of the public in OSCE countries: The OSCE hardly features in the media’s political reporting, too many people are hardly aware of it, and the



Helsinki, 1975: Erich Honecker (left), leader of the German Democratic Republic, with Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau

opportunities it offers are ignored.

This can be traced, to some degree, to the expansion of NATO and the EU and to the enlargement of their sphere of co-operation activities. Most countries in the OSCE area are striving to join the EU or NATO or are already linked to these organizations through different forms of co-operation agreements.

But the OSCE, too, *could* and in my view *should* take on a much more active role in the shaping of peaceful and friendly co-existence on our continent. With its broad membership, the OSCE also encompasses States that, on the basis of their geographical position alone, have no likelihood of joining the EU or NATO.

Some believe that by putting an end to the

Cold War, the Helsinki Process served its purpose and has now successfully discharged its principal tasks. According to this reasoning, the OSCE is, as it were, a victim of the success of the CSCE. This is partly true, but it does not mean that there is nothing left for the OSCE to do. On the contrary, I believe that the present is speaking a different language altogether.

We still have unresolved conflicts in the OSCE area. Many countries are in the middle of — or on the verge of — transformation processes that are threatened not only by the resistance of current regimes but also by potential ethnic or even cross-border conflicts.

What is more, the OSCE links the trans-Atlantic and the Eurasian dimension of common security in an area extending from Vancouver to Vladivostok. I will mention only the key words here: terrorism, cross-border crime, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The OSCE has a decisive role to play in the efforts to ensure, after the successful surmounting of the East-West conflict, that no new dividing lines emerge in the trans-Atlantic-Eurasian area.

In my view, the CSCE process with its three-basket approach could definitely serve as an example for other conflict regions. The OSCE should strengthen the potential of its out-of-area activities. A recent example is the Organization's sending some 50 of its experienced election observers to support the parliamentary elections in Afghanistan on 18 September.

The CSCE and the Helsinki Process were a model for success. This success has not banished the process to the history books; on the contrary, the current situation on our continent and the new threats to security make the Helsinki approach as relevant today as it was 20 or 30 years ago.

Wolfgang Gerhardt
Chairman of Germany's
FDP parliamentary group

The Helsinki Decalogue

1. Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty
2. Refraining from the threat or use of force
3. Inviolability of frontiers
4. Territorial integrity of States
5. Peaceful settlement of disputes
6. Non-intervention in internal affairs
7. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief
8. Equal rights and self-determination of peoples
9. Co-operation among States
10. Fulfilment in good faith of obligations under international law

The Three "Baskets" of the Helsinki Final Act

The Helsinki Final Act encompassed three main sets of recommendations, commonly referred to as "baskets".

- The first set ("Basket I") related to politico-military aspects of security: principles guiding relations between and among participating States (the "Decalogue"), and military confidence-building measures.
- The second set ("Basket II") concerned co-operation in a number of fields including economics, science and technology, and the environment.
- The third set ("Basket III") dealt with "co-operation in humanitarian and other fields" — a formula covering human rights issues under the headings of "human contacts", "information", "co-operation in the field of culture" and "co-operation in the field of education". It also included a specific set of recommendations related to Mediterranean issues.



Kissinger: Impact of Helsinki Accords “beyond what we could have imagined”

At the formal banquet hosted by Finnish President Kekkonen, Henry Kissinger is right in the middle of a discussion between Archbishop Makarios III of Cyprus and U.S. President Gerald Ford.
APA-IMAGES/Lehtikuva

Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, leading architect of American foreign policy during the run-up to the Helsinki Agreements, was the keynote speaker at a special event in Washington, D.C., to mark 30 years of the Helsinki Final Act. Guests included Ambassador Max Kampelman, head of the U.S. Delegation to the CSCE under various administrations, and the new U.S. Ambassador to the OSCE, Julie Finley.

The anniversary luncheon, held on Capitol Hill on 28 July, was organized by the U.S. Commission on Security and Co-

operation in Europe. Also known as the Helsinki Commission, the independent, bi-partisan U.S. Government agency was created in 1976 to monitor and encourage compliance with the Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE commitments. It comprises nine members from the Senate, nine members from the House of Representatives, and three members of the executive branch.

“As both Secretary of State and National Security Adviser to President Gerald Ford, Dr. Kissinger had a unique vantage point from which to observe the process that culminated in the Helsinki Final Act,” said Commission Chairman, Senator Sam Brownback, in his introductory remarks. “I think he will probably say he was maybe a little bit more suspicious of it 30 years ago than he is today.”

Here are excerpts from Henry Kissinger’s remarks:



A representative of the Russian Pentecostals (fifth from left) presents a painting to the Helsinki Commission on the occasion of the Helsinki Final Act's 30th anniversary. With him are (left to right) Congressmen Robert Aderholt, Mike Pence, Joseph Pitts and Christopher Smith, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and Congressmen Benjamin Cardin and Mike McIntyre.

It's hard to remember what the atmosphere was like at the time of the Vietnam War, how divided our country was, and what the views were when the Soviet Union was believed to have huge arsenals of nuclear weapons.

That was a real dilemma we went through during that period. It explains many of our policies.

When the Soviet Union first proposed a conference for security — and I don't wish to pretend that we ever imagined we would wind up where we are now — we thought it was a Soviet manoeuvre following the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops in order to make themselves acceptable or more legitimate again.

We also thought it was a manoeuvre to undermine NATO. And so our first attitude — the American one — toward the conference was essentially defensive. The German Government — and I see German Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger here — made a huge contribution to the evolution of this negotiation.

We all agreed that we would make our progress on the security conference dependent on Soviet conduct in other spheres. And so we doled out progress on the negotiations in very small doses.

Under the Nixon administration, we were very active in supporting Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union as our principal human rights effort, and we managed to increase it from less than a thousand to nearly 40,000. But we did not have it as a formal part of our diplomacy.

However, starting in 1972, we agreed with our European allies on two things. Firstly, we agreed that one could use the security conference to promote changes in the political and in the human rights situations.

In the political situation, you may remember that there was a debate [in the U.S.]. You might want to look some time at the editorial comments on the Helsinki Agreement, which described the conference as recognizing for all time the Soviet domination of [the Warsaw Pact] countries.

Exactly the opposite was the case. The purpose of the security conference, as we “evolved” it, was to establish the principle that borders in Europe could be changed. To be sure, we said it could be changed by negotiation, but no one was in any position to start a war. And there was really only one border that was an issue: the dividing line through the centre of Germany.

Secondly, we managed to include a statement that countries were free to join and leave alliances ... which meant that the Warsaw Pact was not sacrosanct. So the document signed by the Soviet Union certainly was inconsistent with the Brezhnev Doctrine, which held that once a country had been Communist, it could never change from the communist system without the Soviet Union interfering.

So, on the political side, this was an example of the kind of co-operation in the Atlantic alliance that has not been characteristic in recent years, and which is the ideal towards which we should strive.

There were many points over which we did not agree — on formulations or even on objectives — but we managed to achieve an Atlantic position on all the key issues.

But then came a really novel idea — the so-called Basket Three — to implement an acceptance of certain human rights principles as part of an international agreement. A lot of credit for this goes to our European allies who were very committed to it.

I'm not claiming that this was the first idea that came into our heads when this process started — for many reasons, including the fact that we had the Vietnam War, China, among many other things. But once we examined it, we became very active supporters of it.

Now, let me be frank: I did not expect these provisions would reach the scope and the impact that they now have. If you had given me some truth serum in 1975, I would have said that this was what we achieved: Firstly, we had made human rights a legitimate subject of international debate and, secondly, we had created a major obstacle to Soviet re-intervention in the Warsaw Pact treaties because that would have been incompatible with so many provisions of the Agreement.

Then, tremendous figures whom we did not know about at the time, like Walesa and Havel, cited these provisions in the name of their own national values.

Our successors in the American Government, under the Carter and Reagan administrations, gave Basket Three a scope and a vitality which went beyond what we could have imagined at the time.



AP IMAGES/LEHTIKUVA

In a message read out to the audience at the anniversary event in Washington, D.C., former U.S. President Gerald R. Ford said the Helsinki Agreement would prove to be “a landmark in international relations, the first of its kind to link peace and security while upholding the fundamental principles of universal human rights”. Excerpts:

At the signing of the Helsinki Final Act 30 years ago, I said that history would judge the conference not by the promises we made that day, but by the promises we had kept.

Europe and the world have witnessed tremendous changes in the past 30 years. These original 35 signatories now number 55 and we have seen an expansion of liberty throughout the region and the globe that was unimaginable when we signed the Final Act.

As we move toward a new generation, we can look back and say that despite the difficulties and tensions, we have kept our word. But we must never cease to maintain our vigilance and our support for freedom, democracy and the inalienable rights that we have for so long struggled to protect.

The OSCE has a proud legacy 30 years later and it is one that we hope will endure for another 30 and beyond.

Gerald R. Ford
Former President
United States

The U.S. President and his Secretary of State take a breather from the marathon talks in Helsinki.

“To meet with them — two seminal figures of that period — was one of the truly moving experiences in my life,” said Henry Kissinger. He was referring to Soviet dissidents Andrei Sakharov and his wife, Elena Bonner, whose daughter Tatiana Yankelevich also addressed the anniversary event on Capitol Hill on 28 July. Excerpts:



AP IMAGES/ANDRZEJ CIEPLAK

December 1988, Paris: Lech Walesa, then-leader of Poland's Solidarity trade union, Andrei Sakharov, Elena Bonner and another key Polish dissident, Bronislaw Geremek, were guests at the 40th anniversary celebrations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In 1975, two historic events took place. One was the signing of the Final Act on Security and Co-operation in Europe; the other was the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Andrei Sakharov, the first time the Peace Prize was awarded for achievements in human rights.

Both events gave unprecedented recognition to the

place and role of human rights in the modern world. There was a meaningful connection between these two events, which contributed to the eventual collapse of Communism and the end of the Cold War.

It was gratifying for Sakharov to find the Helsinki Agreement's Principle 7 echoing his idea that human

rights are an essential factor in détente between nations:

“The participating States will respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. They will promote and encourage the effective exercise of civil, political, economic, social, cultural and other rights and freedoms all of which derive from the inherent dignity of the human person and are essential for his free and full development.”

These words were in turn echoed by the 1975 Nobel Peace Prize citation:

“Uncompromisingly and forcefully, Sakharov has fought not only against the abuse of power and violations of human dignity in all its forms, but he has with equal vigour fought for the ideal of a State founded on the principle of justice for all. In a convincing fashion, Sakharov has emphasized that the individual rights of man can serve as the only sure foundation for a genuine and long-lasting system of international co-operation.”

Sakharov and other Soviet dissidents contributed mightily to the globalization of human rights, breathing profound meaning into the Helsinki Agreement. It is not too late to hope that the twenty-first century, whose birth they facilitated, will come to embrace their agenda and thereby distinguish itself from its bloody predecessor.

Preserving their legacy in the form of the Sakharov Archive is a vital step in this direction; it will also keep alive the spirit of the Helsinki Agreement.

Tatiana Yankelevich, Director
Sakharov Programme on Human Rights
Harvard University

Prague Crossroads

Former dissidents reflect on their impact

BY WALTER KEMP

On 5 June this year, a group of former dissidents from the OSCE area came together in a newly restored gothic cloister in Prague to reminisce about their efforts to hold their leaders to account for the promises that they had signed up to in the summer of 1975.

Sponsored by the Czechoslovak Documentation Centre, the Helsinki Final Act anniversary event was supported by the Prague Crossroads, which is part of the foundation established by former Czech President Vaclav Havel and his wife, Dagmar.

Ludmilla Alexeyeva, one of the founding members of the Moscow Helsinki Group, recalled that it was an era of determination, mixed with no small measure of trepidation: Andrei Sakharov, Yuri Orlov and other activists wrote and distributed pamphlets, and organized meetings to spread information on the CSCE's human dimension provisions. Working on well-worn typewriters, gathering clandestinely in private apartments, smuggling *samizdat* documents (underground publishing), and being arrested for their convictions — these were all part and parcel of the life of a dissident.

But their perseverance was to pay off. Their activities raised the awareness of

people at home and attracted support from abroad. As one participant put it, their work, with external assistance, helped to punch a hole in the Iron Curtain; by highlighting the persecution that was taking place, they forced Communist regimes to become more conscious of the respect due to human rights.

Vaclav Havel spoke about how the Helsinki Process had been an inspiration to Charter 77 and other civic movements. Principle 7 of the Final Act gave power to the powerless, helping small groups of committed people in their fight for human dignity by obliging rulers to turn words into deeds.

He told the audience that the struggle for human rights should never be considered passé. He noted examples of present-day human rights violations — both within and outside the OSCE area — and urged continued vigilance.

Mr. Havel said that during a recent visit to the United States, politicians he met expressed concern about “whether the democratic world was trying hard enough to protect human rights”. They were worried that “since the fall of Communism, human rights were in danger of being considered a closed chapter, and that priority was being given to economics, trade, and the like”.

The opening event was followed by a two-day academic conference at the Czech Foreign Ministry's Czernin Palace, where researchers from around the world exchanged information and opinions on the activities of Central European dissidents and their impact on the demise of Communism.

Walter Kemp is Senior Adviser, Office of the Secretary General.

Former Czech President Vaclav Havel and OSCE staff member Walter Kemp chat at the 30-year anniversary celebration in Prague. The event was held at the former Anensky Convent (right photo), now part of the Vize 97 Foundation.



OSCE/LUBOMIR KOTEK



OSCE/LUBOMIR KOTEK

Field missions: Helsinki principles live on

Anniversary celebrations in Albania, Armenia, Croatia and Tajikistan served as an opportunity for host Governments and the OSCE to reaffirm their constructive working ties and to continue drawing local and international partners into their activities. Government leaders stressed in their messages that the principles of the Helsinki Final Act had lost none of their relevance 30 years later, and that these continued to serve as guideposts for the behaviour of States towards each other and towards their citizens.



OSCE/TOMISLAV PAVLEK

Croatian President Stjepan Mesic (centre) is introduced by Ambassador Jorge Fuentes, Head of the OSCE Mission to Croatia (left), to the OSCE's Stefano Gnocchi (right) and other senior Mission members.

ZAGREB, October 6 — The 1975 Helsinki summit turned out to be more than the closing of the chapter on World War II, President Stjepan Mesic said today. The Helsinki Final Act, with its focus on comprehensive security and co-operation, was precisely what Europe needed: “a counterpoint to confrontation and conflict”.

The President was addressing about 200 people who had gathered at the headquarters of the OSCE Mission to Croatia to commemorate the Helsinki Accords’ 30th anniversary.

He said that the OSCE’s monitoring activities in Croatia had been necessary and thanked all those who had called attention to occurrences and trends in the country that were not in accordance with European principles and standards.

Croatia signed the Helsinki Final Act on 8 July 1992.

TIRANA, 5 August — President Alfred Moisiu of Albania said today that “after the fall of the Iron Curtain and the freeing of Europe from totalitarian political systems, our country, too, signed on to the democratic principles of the Helsinki Act”.

President Moisiu led about 200 guests in celebrating the anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act at an event hosted by the OSCE Presence in Albania and the Albanian Institute for International Studies.

Albania was the only country in Europe that did not take part in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

“Our country has profited a great deal from CSCE/OSCE assistance and experience,” he said. “In the past 15 years, Albania has achieved a great deal in meeting the Final Act’s democratic standards. The recent parliamentary elections have also marked noticeable progress.”

Albania signed the Helsinki Final Act on 16 September 1991.



COURTESY OF ALBERT MOISIU

President Alfred Moisiu of Albania and Ambassador Pavel Vacek, Head of the OSCE Presence, share a light moment at the celebration in Tirana.

DUSHANBE, 30 September — Tajikistan’s First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sirojiddin Aslov, stressed the significance of the OSCE’s contribution to the development of the country’s democratic institutions through wide-ranging activities carried out by the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe and its five field offices.

He was speaking to some 100 guests at an event marking 30 years of the Helsinki Final Act.

The Head of the OSCE Centre, Ambassador Alain Couanon, traced the history of the Organization’s 14 years of involvement in the country — from the opening of the Mission to Tajikistan in February 1994 and the assistance rendered in forging the Tajik Peace Agreement in 1997, to its activities in fostering post-conflict security and stability.

Tajikistan signed the Helsinki Final Act on 26 February 1992.



OSCE CENTRE IN DUSHANBE

Kamol Abdurahimov, editor-in-chief of *Jumhuriyat*, a leading Tajik newspaper, examines OSCE publications on display as part of the anniversary celebrations.



OSCE OFFICE IN YEREVAN/GOHAR AMASYAN

YEREVAN, 2 September — The first Armenian translation of the Helsinki Final Act, a joint initiative of the OSCE Office in Yerevan and the Armenian Foreign Ministry, was presented to some 150 guests on the occasion of the document’s 30-year anniversary.

“We hope that this translation will help the Armenian people gain a better understanding of OSCE principles, values and commitments,” said Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin, Head of the OSCE Office.

“The Helsinki Final Act created a platform for dialogue in which the voice of every participating State had a right to be heard and in which every opinion was taken into account and every interest was articulated, regardless of the State’s military or economic weight,” Armenian Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanian said.

“Today, we are not the same participating States that joined at the beginning of the 1990s. We have learned, we have changed, we have matured, and we need the OSCE not in the same way we did then.”

Armenia signed the Helsinki Final Act on 8 July 1992.



Scrutinizing scribblings of world leaders

History buff preserves practice signatures

World leaders take turns signing the Final Act while Mikko Pyhälä (left, with eyeglasses) and his colleagues stand ready to assist.
 APA-IMAGES/Lehtikuva

BY KAIUS NIEMI

“The way it was torn shows creative thinking. It is completely scrunched up,” says Mikko Pyhälä with a smile, showing a piece of scrap paper that the late Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme used at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in 1975.

The Finnish diplomat recounts how, as a 29-year-old attaché assigned to work in the Conference secretariat, he collected the sheets of paper on which leaders from East and West tested the thick fountain pens right before putting their signatures on the Helsinki Final Act — a document that many

researchers consider as having held back the tyranny of the Soviet Union in Cold War Europe.

Thirty years later, the sheets are seeing the light of day for the first time since Ambassador Pyhälä, now a senior Foreign Ministry official, put them in a bank vault in 1975.

“Now that three decades have gone by, I thought it might be a good idea to put the scribblings forward,” he says. “They reveal some insights into psychology and culture. They will probably be of interest to biographical historians, as well as experts researching the psycho-dynamics of the signing event.”

This article, originally in Finnish, was first published in Helsingin Sanomat on 26 May 2005. It is reproduced here with the paper's permission. The paper's international edition can be found at: www.helsinki-hs.net

He has never considered selling the collection. “This is national property, in a way,” he says.

Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky tested his pen using broad strokes, while East German leader Erich Honecker made do with a minimalist “E”. The notebook of Romania’s dictator Nicolae Ceausescu was in an upright position as he doodled some waves. Finnish President Urho Kekkonen tested the first letters of his name, “Ur” and “Urh”.

Olof Palme scribbled the names of countries, such as his native “Sweden”, and “Holy See” in French. “The spot for each signature had the name of the country in French, but the Secretariat had left the accents out,” Ambassador Pyhälä explains. “I noticed that British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Olof Palme tried to mark the accents in all the right places. These were the thoughts going through their minds.”

A few of the 35 signatories did not bother practising their signatures at all.

Some tore their note papers into tiny shreds. Ambassador Pyhälä salvaged them from ashtrays and pieced them together. He later pasted copies of the final signatures on the individual sheets to make it easier to compare them with the practice signatures.

To dry the ink after each signing, another blotter was needed in addition to the one lent by the Office

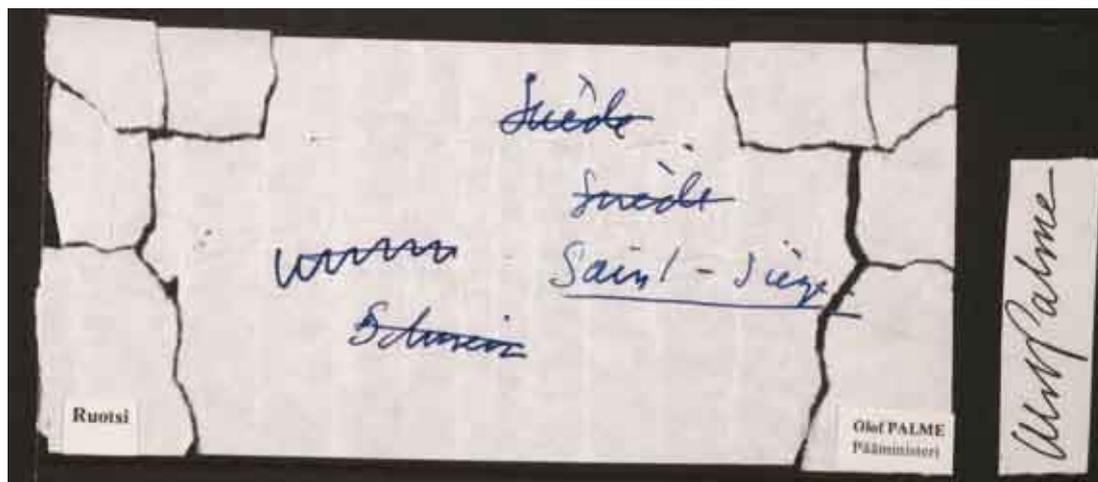
of the Prime Minister. When none could be found in the Foreign Ministry or other government agencies, Ambassador Pyhälä borrowed his father’s. “We didn’t have the nerve to ask the Office of the President,” he recalls.

There were a few awkward moments. The President of Cyprus, Orthodox Archbishop Makarios III, had to resort to his own fountain pen because he could sign documents only in red ink, in line with protocol in the Cypriot Orthodox Church.

In a security inspection before the meeting in Finlandia Hall, two pens disappeared from Ambassador Pyhälä’s cabinet. To preclude the possibility of bombs and other attempts at sabotage, he was asked to examine every pen.

The trial signatures and Ambassador Pyhälä’s other memorabilia can be viewed at the special CSE 1975 exhibition at the Urho Kekkonen Museum in Tamminiemi, on the outskirts of Helsinki, until the end of February 2006.

Kaius Niemi, City Editor of *Helsingin Sanomat*, was a year old when the Helsinki Final Act was signed. As a long-time staff writer in the daily’s foreign news section, he reported on conflicts in the Balkans and Central Asia as well as OSCE-related developments.



Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme thought he had wiped out all traces of his scribbles. After writing down some words on several sheets of paper, he folded each sheet several times and tore it up. Mikko Pyhälä gathered the shreds and pieced them together. Photo courtesy of Pertti Nisonen.

The signing: Panic, and a sigh of relief

As the 30th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act approached, Mikko Pyhälä, Ambassador (Asia and Oceania) in the Finnish Foreign Ministry, found himself being sought after by local journalists in their efforts to recreate the heady excitement of the historic events in Finlandia Hall. Since he has enough material to fill a book, Ambassador Pyhälä agreed to reserve some of his favourite anecdotes for the *OSCE Magazine*.

BY MIKKO PYHÄLÄ

My role was to take care of purchases and oversee the restaurants and cafeterias in Finlandia Hall, but I also had another assignment that brought me

into direct contact with Heads of State or Government. This involved co-ordinating bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the gathering. On my watch alone, some 120 such meetings took place in three days in ten rooms.



COURTESY OF PERTTI NISONEN

Ambassador Pyhälä holds his father's ink-blotter and one of the two original blotter sheets with signatures which he keeps in a vault.

To put all this into perspective, it would have taken several years or more for these East-West meetings to be held — if they could have taken place at all — within that era's international diplomacy. Hungary's Janos Kadar, Poland's Edward Gierek and Czechoslovakia's Gustav Husak were suddenly sitting down separately with French, American, British and other western leaders.

Most significantly, it was also in connection with

the conference that the leaders of the two Germanies — Helmut Schmidt and Erich Honecker — met face-to-face for the first time.

During the signing ceremony, my colleagues and I stood behind each signatory, handling the ink-blotters.

I don't know how many people saw the highly original histrionics of Soviet

Communist Party leader Leonid Brezhnev, but some of us were certainly close enough to witness it.

When his turn came to sign the Helsinki Final Act, Mr. Brezhnev reacted disapprovingly with a wave of his finger as if to say, "I am not going to sign this." This caused us momentary panic, since we knew that there had been some internal opposition in the USSR to being party to the Act. But it turned out to be mere drama. Mr. Brezhnev quickly grasped the pen from its holder and signed. And we sighed with relief.

The last person to sign was President Tito of Yugoslavia. When it was all over, all the leaders rose to their feet and started leaving the podium. I figured I should stay on to make sure that all the items connected with the signing — the pens, pen-holders and table pads — would end up in safe hands. We had planned to turn them over to the respective delegations and indeed, most asked to have them as historical keepsakes.

Barely had the leaders vacated their seats when the chief of protocol of one of the Warsaw Pact countries jumped to the podium and made a dash for Mr. Brezhnev's pen. Luckily, I was faster; I literally had to push him down from the podium. He protested, saying that the pen should be saved for posterity. Well, that's exactly what I had in mind, too, and I promptly delivered the pen to the USSR delegation.



“The biggest since the Congress of Vienna”

“Everyone seems to be groping for a phrase that would sum up the ‘spectacle,’” said *Time Magazine*. The weekly publication's European edition of 4 August 1975 devoted a nine-page cover story (left) to the three-day Helsinki gathering, describing it as a “star-studded summit, the most spectacular gathering of world leaders since the 1814-1815 Congress of Vienna”.

The Chicago Sun-Times of 31 July said the conference, the culmination of more than two years of painstaking negotiations, was “a jet-age Congress of Vienna in which Heads of State arrive in Boeing 707s and Soviet *Ilyushins* instead of gilded carriages”.

British Prime Minister Harold Wilson's breathless description was widely quoted in the press: “In territorial coverage, in representation at top level of almost every State, large and small, this conference so transcends any previous meeting that it makes the legendary Congress of Vienna of 1814 and the Congress of Berlin of 1878 seem like well-dressed tea parties.”

One delegate also succumbed to hyperbole: “Helsinki will be a living Madame Tussaud's — the greatest show of living waxworks on earth.”

Noting that there were no precedents for the meeting, the *International Herald Tribune* of 29 July said: “The Congress of Vienna is cited, but there were only 32 excellencies there, most of them minor German princes.”



15 November 2004: On a visit to the Zadar field office of the OSCE Mission to Croatia, Stephan Minikes (left) and Peter Semneby, then-Head of Mission, look in on the situation of Serb returnees. One of them, Sofia Skoric, shows off her pictures with Prime Minister Ivo Sanader.

INTERVIEW WITH STEPHAN M. MINIKES

“U.S.-Russian relations crucial to OSCE future”

In his farewell address on 14 July 2005, the outgoing United States Ambassador to the OSCE, Stephan M. Minikes, called on the Permanent Council to “fight for and defend valiantly the principles embodied in the Helsinki Final Act that are at the core of this great Organization”. He urged his fellow ambassadors, as they debated the OSCE’s future, “never to give up your principles, never yield to the temptation of thinking, that even one life of an Uzbek refugee in Kyrgyzstan or Kazakhstan does not matter”. Shortly before turning over the helm of the U.S. Mission to Ambassador Julie Finley, Ambassador Minikes was interviewed by the *OSCE Magazine* about his three and a half years in Vienna.

OSCE Magazine: What gave you professional satisfaction in your term as U.S. Ambassador to the OSCE and what were the main frustrations?

Ambassador Stephan Minikes: I have gained great satisfaction from working with my fellow ambassadors — all outstanding professionals — to do things that have brought a better life closer to millions of people. We have helped to bring them freedom and democracy, market economies, free and fair elections, honest and corruption-free government, and an independent and trustworthy judiciary. We have strengthened, or created, conditions in which men and women can freely choose their governments and how to worship; in which they can accept each other and live peacefully regardless of race, creed, culture, religion or colour; and in which they can earn a living, enjoy the fruits of their labour and educate their children as they desire.

My main frustration is twofold: that we cannot make this way of life available to more people more quickly, and that there are a number of States whose commitment to the OSCE’s principles has been weakening.

What are the Organization’s main strengths and weaknesses?

The OSCE’s greatest strength is what it stands for. Its other strengths are its low operational costs, lack of bureaucracy, a broad membership generally based on shared commitments, and a rotating political leadership. The consensus principle is a weakness that also happens to be a strength: Achieving consensus can be frustrating while we are forging it, but the result is always solid unity.

How do you see the future of OSCE field missions?

The field missions are a vital aspect of the OSCE’s work. As long as there are countries — whether east or west of Vienna — with concerns that can be addressed by the Organization’s expertise, I see the field missions and their broad range of activities as an indispensable resource.

Field missions are vehicles for positive change and are a sign that a country wants to be a member of the community of democracies. If a participating State wants to limit or close a mission without an agreement that it is time to do so, it can damage the way it is perceived as a State. The mere presence of an OSCE Mission, however, cannot.

Could the decision-making process in the OSCE be improved and if so, how?

Common Purpose, the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons, has some interesting ideas in this regard. I don’t see any appetite for abolishing consensus, but there might be some interest in the recommendation that States blocking consensus be identified, or that States with candidates for key positions should not abuse consensus by unilaterally blocking decisions. We have to realize that the way the OSCE makes decisions strongly influences our effectiveness. The inability to adopt a decision because of a lone holdout and protracted delays in filling key jobs because one State is blocking consensus paint an unattractive picture of the Organization.

In which areas in participating States has the OSCE made a significant impact?

Firstly, in OSCE missions. In most cases, they have been carrying out excellent work. I say “in most cases” because there have also been some poor leadership, but that is now changing. With poor leadership, we can achieve almost nothing.

Secondly, in recent election-monitoring activities of the Office for Democratic

Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). In each of the 12 elections that the ODIHR observed in 2004 — including the U.S. presidential election — it upheld the single standard that all 55 participating States have agreed upon: The election outcome must represent the will of the people. Otherwise, the resulting government lacks legitimacy. The criticism that the ODIHR has used an alleged “double standard” is, to use a homely but appropriate English word, hogwash. There is no double standard. There is, however, double interpretation of the universal standard by some States as they see fit to meet their political objectives.

What are your thoughts on the OSCE's future?

I think the OSCE has a wonderful future. The OSCE's basic principles form the bedrock upon which its work is shaped. What the OSCE most needs is to have staying power so that future generations can continue its work in security, democracy, migration and tolerance — to name just a few crucial areas.

Equally important, the Organization has the ability to evolve in order to meet tomorrow's challenges. For example, before 11 September 2001, the OSCE did not have a focus on terrorism. But it mobilized quickly to become a significant actor in the world's counter-terrorism efforts. The Bucharest Plan established the Secretariat's Action against Terrorism Unit, which now responds rapidly and efficiently to requests from participating States for anti-terrorism assistance. It is this kind of reaction to future events and changing needs that will ensure a bright future for the OSCE.

How can the OSCE's leadership strengthen its ability to fulfil its mandate?

The Chairmanship should have a vision and a plan for meeting its goals, and should stay on message. It is vital that it should keep its main objectives in sight and not be tempted by the “flavour of the week”. One of the most important tasks of the Chairman-in-Office is to constantly remind fellow foreign ministers of the OSCE's capabilities so they understand the Organization and support it.

The Secretary General must have the tools and flexibility needed to support the Chairmanship and the participating States in fulfilling the OSCE's political goals. He must also take a broader view of how the OSCE can be most effective in sustaining long-term activities — both in the administrative area and in implementing fundamental OSCE principles and commitments.

Marc Perrin de Brichambaut brings great experience and capabilities to the position. He has a tremendous opportunity to work closely with the Chair and to ensure the best use of the OSCE's capabilities, including co-operation with other international institutions.

How do you see the U.S.-Russia relationship within the framework of the OSCE?

The OSCE is a forum in which the U.S. has worked closely with Russia and the EU on issues of common interest. In the course of my tenure as Ambassador, the U.S. and Russia have jointly tabled numerous proposals, ranging from the administrative (press and publications) to the security-related (adoption and implementation of International Atomic Energy Agency standards for the

handling of radioactive materials) to the strategic (our joint draft for the *Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century*).

Russia has many ideas on how to improve the OSCE and we are always willing to listen. It is critical for the future of the OSCE that the U.S. and Russia work well together. However, the OSCE must continue to build on the fundamental principles on which it was founded. We do not want to return to the bad old days when we were criticized for so-called “interference in internal affairs”. The very founding of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe — the CSCE — laid that issue to rest once and for all. We remain prepared to work constructively with Russia and others to enhance OSCE activities in the security and economic dimensions, while also maintaining the vital work that the OSCE does in the human dimension.

What role do you see for the OSCE as one of the pillars of the Euro-Atlantic security structure?

I strongly support the expansion of co-operation with other international organizations, including the recent discussions between the OSCE and the Council of Europe on how to improve co-ordination between the two bodies, as well as the on-the-ground work that the OSCE is now doing with NATO on such issues as border management and security. It is important that we all work closely together. However, to be really effective, these co-operative efforts also need to be strongly reinforced in the world's capitals by the Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General.

Is there a need for the OSCE's “soft security” approach?

The phrase “soft security” has always puzzled me. What is “hard security”? Is it security that is enforced from the business end of a weapon? The OSCE's comprehensive security approach, as I prefer to call it, is as useful today as ever — perhaps even more so. While the OSCE will continue to foster a wide range of traditional politico-military confidence- and security-building measures, it also has the flexibility to negotiate new agreements that address the evolving security threats in Europe.

The accords reached after 11 September 2001 on small arms and light weapons, travel documents, and container security demonstrate the OSCE's willingness to tackle real-world, transnational issues that help combat terrorism. Its flexibility also provides a unique opportunity to effectively combine such new agreements with traditional arms control security measures.

Where do election-monitoring, tolerance, anti-trafficking, conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation fit in? If that is “soft security” to some, it is pretty “hard” where I have seen it in action. Not long ago, when wars were won, they stayed won. That is not so today. Instead, peace and security require a comprehensive approach. That is what the OSCE does so well, and that is why it is needed more than ever. It is time for those who lament over the OSCE's future to stop wringing their hands, put their shoulder to the wheel, and help move this great organization forward.

In search of the OSCE

The making of “On the Frontlines of Peace”

“On the Frontlines of Peace: OSCE in Action” is a newly produced half-hour documentary aimed at raising public awareness of the work of the Organization. In his own inimitable style, former CNN senior correspondent Richard Blystone, the film’s scriptwriter and narrator, takes us on an exclusive tour behind the scenes and shares some personal insights into the world of the OSCE’s “diplomats in blue jeans”.

BY RICHARD BLYSTONE

To tell the story of an organization for European security, what was our Linx Productions crew doing on a pleasant residential street in Ankara?

We wanted to start with someone who had seen it all, been part of it all, and Süleyman Demirel was that someone.

In his eight decades, this courtly Turkish statesman had seen “hot” war and “cold”, and had at home weathered coups and comebacks, seven terms as prime minister and one as president. Mostly, though, we had come to see him because he was one of the few surviving signatories to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act.

“We thought it was an excellent thing,” he said, “but none of us foresaw — none of us *could* have foreseen — what happened 14 years later.”

His voice went quiet. “... that the Soviet empire would collapse without a major war.”

I knew what he meant. For those of us who grew up with the Cold War division of the world, it seemed back in those days as eternal as the constellations in the skies, not something that would crumble within the length of a football season.

Helsinki was the product of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe — the CSCE. It built confidence and reduced tension between the two sides of the Iron Curtain. But crucially, quietly, its human rights provisions emboldened East European dissidents, and ultimately they rose up.

“But after 1989, there was still a need to establish



Helsinki Days: Süleyman Demirel discusses Turkish-U.S. relations with Gerald Ford.

peace,” Mr. Demirel said. “Helsinki was no longer the instrument. We needed something more.”

And so, a decade ago, the Turkish leader again had his pen out: signing into existence the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

To go looking for *that*, you have to range farther afield than Ankara. With 55 participating States, nowadays it could *almost* be said that the sun never sets on the OSCE.

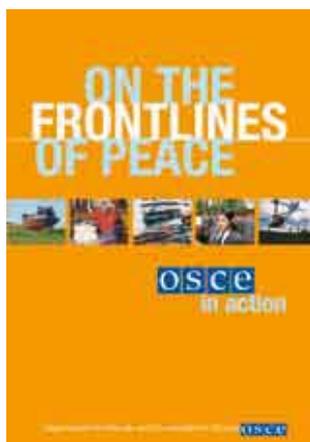
For a portrait of today’s OSCE, Linx teams gathered in material from a polluted river in Kyrgyzstan, from what had been a battleground in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, from the Caucasus mountains between Georgia and Russia, and from voting booths in Florida.

And in case you think life goes in one end of the camera and a documentary comes out the other, here are some scenes you won’t see:

Waiting. Most memorably at the end of a 12-hour drive from Croatia to Macedonia via Belgrade. (That’s how the crow might fly if he was being paid by the mile, but strange as it seems, it’s the fastest route.) Welcome to four hours awaiting clearance to enter Macedonia, a trip enriched by hours of Balkan pop radio and Croatian cameraman Vjeran Hrpka’s knowledgeable commentary thereon. I was encouraged to learn that while all the ethnic factions in the region may be at each other’s throats,

all agree that Croatian pop music’s the best.

That shiver you feel at Mailuu Suu in Kyrgyzstan when you see nothing wrong, but the radiation counter



For more information on the English and Russian versions, send an e-mail to: info@osce.org



OSCE MISSION TO CROATIA/CHRISTIAN LODA

The OSCE documentary features returnee Nebojsa Eremic and his wife, Slavica, who live in a run-down home behind a dilapidated barn while refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina occupy Nebojsa's pre-war home in Vojnic, central Croatia.

suddenly screams, “DANGER!” And the sadness at hearing the stories of people who have no choice but to live with the toxic former uranium mines here.

The weather gremlin. We’d planned a three-day shoot in the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek. Suddenly nature cut that in half with a giant rainstorm. What

do you do? To stay around for more shots means waiting three days for the next plane out. So you make good with what you’ve got — and it’s not bad at all.

The march of time. While we were editing our material, facts on the ground changed. We were working on OSCE election monitoring in Georgia when Ukraine’s disputed elections sprang up and demanded to be left in. For this and other election material, we got help from Reuters TV, who were very supportive of the OSCE project and gave us material at no cost.

Nice people outside the frame. Like the British Airways staff who gave Linx’s excess baggage a free ride out of Kyrgyzstan — after Linx producer Faridoun Hemani convinced them that helping the OSCE with this important story would be beneficial for that impoverished country.

New talent. An excellent video of the Georgia-Russia border was shot for Linx by Igor Zdorovets, a member of a young, fit and enthusiastic multi-national OSCE team that was charged with monitoring that highly sensitive mountain area until the end of 2004.

We were to learn that, important as elder statesmen like Süleyman Demirel may be, youth, fitness and enthusiasm are the norm for the field teams that are the soul and the muscle of the OSCE.

But as our Linx Productions team learned, enthusiasm alone is not enough. Whether the scene is an election in Russia or a housing project in Croatia, the host country is an OSCE *participating* State, with its own national pride and its own sensitivities.

So, to that list of qualifications add: *tact*. OSCE field staff are like diplomats in blue jeans — except that they don’t hang out with diplomats.

Nikola Gaon, an OSCE staffer originally from Sarajevo, took us to Aracinovo and introduced us to one of his Macedonian contacts: Police Chief Ismet Ismaili.

I’ve often seen places at peace and then come back to report on them when they have been racked by war. Unfortunately, it’s rare to find a place like this where furious

battles between ethnic Albanians and ethnic Macedonians have given way to a calm so deep that illegal woodcutting tops the crime list.

Chief Ismaili knows the OSCE not only from the smiling agents who drive up in their white field cars, but also from the conferences, courses and workshops held in the grand and dignified halls of Europe, and he credits the OSCE with making it possible to have peace in his town.

“We’re showing the people that if we policemen can work and live together, then *they can too*,” he says.

If there’s a prize for the most miles put on one of those white four-by-fours, Christian Loda is certainly in the running.

The young Italian has spent three years tracing and retracing the back roads and dirt tracks of his remote part of Croatia. He knows routes even the locals don’t know.

And he’s met almost all of the ethnic Serb citizens of Croatia who had to flee during the fighting and now have come back to try to recover their homes and their lives.

Last year he found one old man all the authorities had missed. Milos Popovich was facing autumn and winter in a windowless house with a broken door, a leaking roof and no running water.

Chris Loda couldn’t fix that, but he knew some people who could, and did. And that was worth a trip to the back of beyond to witness.

“That’s what I like most about my job,” says Chris. “I have direct contact with the people, and I can be their advocate with the government and the NGOs — and those authorities know that I know what I’m talking about.”

The story of the OSCE is the story of the field workers, and for us at Linx Productions it was pure pleasure to tell it.



PRIVATE

Richard Blystone amid the oil fires set by Saddam Hussein’s fleeing troops in the oilfields of Kuwait after Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Now retired, he joined CNN three weeks before it went on the air 25 years ago.



Orchestrating language needs

Andrey Groshev's mission: Making sense of Babel

Diplomat, interpreter for presidents, translator and CSCE/OSCE expert — Andrey Groshev is all that and more: He is also the OSCE's first Chief of Language Services. After graduating from the Moscow State Institute of Foreign Languages specializing in techniques of interpretation in Russian, English and French, Mr. Groshev worked as an interpreter at the United Nations Office at Geneva for five years. He went on to a 20-year career with the Russian Foreign Ministry, 17 of which were spent commuting between Vienna and Geneva to help in follow-up work on the Helsinki Final Act and U.S.-Soviet nuclear arms control negotiations. Shortly before Mr. Groshev completed his seven-year assignment with the OSCE Secretariat at the end of August, Nadia Puchinyan, intern with the Press and Public Information Section, asked Mr. Groshev about the world of interpretation and translation, and what it was like to be — literally — in the middle of East-West history in the making.

Nadia Puchinyan: How true is it that simultaneous interpreters are born, not made?

Andrey Groshev: It's a fact that for some people, listening to one language while orally translating it into another language, almost at the same time as the speaker, is virtually impossible to learn no matter how much training they undergo. Some scientists say that when the brain does not have sufficient neuron fibres connecting the left and right hemispheres, it simply cannot process information quickly enough.

Another complicating factor in the process is that different types of memory are applied depending on whether it's simultaneous or consecutive interpretation. Simultaneous interpreters store a message only briefly, and they usually cannot reconstruct what has been said. In contrast, consecutive interpreters, who have a pause between language conversions, often take notes and rely both on their short- and on their long-term memories, so in most cases they are able to recall what they have interpreted.

In your experience as an interpreter with the United Nations and later with your Foreign Ministry, are practices pretty standardized?

In international organizations — and the OSCE is no exception — interpreters always translate *into* their native language. So, in the English-language booth at the Hofburg Congress Centre where there is an OSCE meeting practically every day except during three recess periods, you will find only English native speakers interpreting from other foreign languages, and in the Russian booth, only Russian native speakers.

In bilateral diplomatic talks, however, interpretation is always *from* a native language into a foreign one — that is, for the benefit of the “other” party. This is because it is assumed — correctly, I believe — that official interpreters, especially those who work in their government ministries, have the advantage of being familiar with the subject in hand and can therefore deliver more accurate interpretations into the foreign language.

A view of the interpreters' booths during a meeting in the Hofburg's *Neuer Saal*.
Photo: OSCE/Mikhail Evstafiev



PRIVATE

Language Services took the Documents Control function under its wing within Conference Services.

This gave me an opportunity to put my background to practical use on the job — whether I'm authorizing, reviewing and approving translations, doing spot-checks in interpretation booths, or handling the concerns of both the providers and consumers of our services. It also helps that I was once at the receiving end of language services when I was a member of the Russian Delegation to the OSCE.

What is the profile of a translator and interpreter in the OSCE?

Most of them are graduates from internationally recognized schools of interpretation and translation and have university degrees in such fields as languages and political science.

They are required to have at least two foreign languages. Some have three languages. We even have some people who know all six OSCE official languages.

You can imagine how complex it is to interpret and translate the discussions at the Permanent Council, the Forum for Security Co-operation, the Open Skies Consultative Committee and the Joint Consultative Group, which is all about compliance with the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. There are terms that have had to be "invented" in another language. This is why we hire only seasoned interpreters and translators.

You served for long periods as interpreter for some formidable personalities — Soviet leaders Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Yevgeni Primakov. Have you thought about writing your memoirs one day?

Well, I'll have to think about that, since my recollections of these diplomatic meetings may not be as important as those of the main actors.

This much I can tell you: I was Gorbachev's back-up interpreter from 1985 until the end of his leadership in 1991, and I interpreted at the summit meetings between him and U.S. Presidents Ronald Reagan and President George Bush, Sr. The most significant of these was of course the very first meeting between Gorbachev and Reagan in November 1985 in Geneva, which marked the thawing of U.S.-Soviet relations.

I then became the official English-language interpreter for President Yeltsin from 1992 to 1998, which covered almost his entire term in office. I liked working with him. Even when he did not rely on prepared

Geneva, 19-21 November 1985: Andrey Groshev sits next to Mikhail Gorbachev at the first summit meeting between the Soviet leader and U.S. President Ronald Reagan. Also in the picture are Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and Reagan's Chief of Staff, Donald Regan.

This is especially true in the Russian tradition. We have only one term for both interpreter and translator — *perevodchik*. They are also diplomats who have access to confidential matters, so there is a strong trust element there. In one-on-one meetings, you will often find an adviser or counsellor serving as the translator, whose notes are, in fact, the main source for follow-up action by the relevant ministries.

What about the interpretation/translation practices in the OSCE and at the United Nations Offices at Vienna? How do they compare?

We are guided by the same high international standards and norms, and do in fact consult and co-operate closely with one another, but obviously our precise needs vary.

The UN and the OSCE have four official languages in common: English, French, Russian and Spanish. In addition, the OSCE has German and Italian, while the UN has Arabic and Chinese.

An important distinction that works in our favour is that, in the OSCE, the meetings mostly involve heads and members of Vienna-based delegations and they get to know the quality of the work of our interpreters and translators. At the UN, with its numerous committees and working groups, participants come and go. Here, delegations give me feedback directly, which I then relay to the Language Services team. This encourages us to become more responsive to our clients' needs. I must say I can't imagine it any other way.

Language Services expanded on your watch, and the new responsibilities turned out to be a perfect fit for you. How did that come about?

The task of the head of Language Services used to be limited to recruiting interpreters and translators. That changed in 2000 under an OSCE-wide reorganization, when

texts, he spoke calmly and clearly, which made my job much easier.

I know that interpreters have to be discreet, but can you give us a glimpse into their fascinating world?

One event that I experienced up close took place after the signing ceremony of the Russian-NATO Founding Act on 27 May 1997, which also called for a strengthening of the OSCE, by the way. This was in a small restaurant in Paris, and although every leader was entitled to his own interpreter, the protocol people said initially that only one interpreter could be allowed in. The Russian interpreter was given priority by virtue of the Russian language being less well known.

So I found myself sitting between Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton, with Jacques Chirac across the table. I had to help them understand each other both in English and French. Eventually, the logistics were solved and the U.S. and French interpreters joined us.

Earlier that year, in March, there was also an occasion in Helsinki with a highly intimate character — one of the most crucial meetings between “Boris” and “Bill”, which is what they called each other. That was when both were on the mend — Clinton from right-knee surgery and Yeltsin from quintuple bypass surgery. There were anxious moments on both sides about issues such as arms control and NATO expansion, and the talks threatened to collapse a couple of times.

Then Clinton said he wanted to have a private conversation with Yeltsin without the usual entourage around them. Normally,

Clinton’s interpreter should have been present, but since they wanted the utmost privacy, it was agreed that I could serve as sole interpreter between them.

I can still picture the scene — both walking slowly towards a corner without anyone else except me between them, Clinton hobbling, on crutches. Clinton put his arm around my shoulder, as if for support, and almost instinctively, Yeltsin also did the same. The gestures seemed to me an effort by the two leaders at building friendship and confidence and trust. At that dramatic moment I might as well have been non-existent — which, in a sense, precisely what the main actors want their interpreters to be: inconspicuous.

Nadia Puchinyan was the first Russian intern in the OSCE Secretariat’s Press and Public Information Section. She is currently finishing her doctoral studies at the Moscow State University of International Affairs.



Helsinki, November 1997: Andrey Groshev (standing, left) “whispers” President Yeltsin’s remarks into President Clinton’s ear.



The OSCE’s Language Services at a glance

The provision of interpretation and translation services in the OSCE follows international guidelines that are tailored to the Organization’s special needs, focusing on flexibility, pragmatism and cost-effectiveness without sacrificing professionalism.

- Language Services has a core team of 12 interpreters and 12 translators, who are hired on a freelance, local basis for the duration of one session, ranging from three to four months. The OSCE annual calendar of meetings comprises three sessions.
- The OSCE’s six working languages are English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish. This goes back to the “Blue Book” — the Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations in 1973 setting out the arrangements for the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE).

- Up to eight regular meetings a week are serviced. Interpretation is also provided at OSCE Summits, Ministerial Council meetings, and Economic Forum meetings.
- Two interpreters take turns every half-hour in a booth. A team works no more than three hours continuously and services not more than two consecutive meetings a day, with a break of one and a half hours between meetings.
- Most written translations are from English into the other OSCE languages (95 per cent), followed by Russian into English (about 4 per cent).



Homage to Helsinki

One Czech's passion for the spirit of '75

From a garage ceiling in Prague's Lhotka district, a massive woodcut immortalizing the Helsinki Final Act is firmly supported by a grid of bolts and rope, shielded from the public eye. Its creator, 80-year-old retired engineer Otakar Becvar, has been looking after it for the past 15 years as faithfully as he tends the family garden, making sure it keeps its natural lustre. However, this was not the way he had envisaged the fate of his grand design. In a letter to the *OSCE Magazine*, the committed European sounded an emotional appeal for help in finding a permanent spot from which his medium could finally spread its noble message.



Otakar Becvar's work is temporarily placed in a garden setting before it is taken indoors.

BY FLORENCE LE CLEZIO

Some eight years had passed after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act when Otakar Becvar chanced upon excerpts in a local weekly newspaper. Intrigued, he made up for lost time by ordering a 1983 reprint of the document's Czech version from the Foreign Ministry of Czechoslovakia.

"As a European, I have always been concerned with developments in the continent," he says. He was 14 when Hitler invaded Poland, 35 when the Warsaw Pact military alliance was formed, 43 during the Communist invasion of Czechoslovakia, and 52 when Czech dissidents drew up the Charter 77 human rights document and distributed it secretly throughout the country.

"Once the Helsinki Final Act arrived, I read it from cover to cover," he says. "It dawned on me that I had in my hands a major life-changing document. I felt I had to create something lasting to honour it."

The following year, for inspiration, he walked through Alvar Aalto's Finlandia Hall in the heart of Helsinki to be one in spirit with the Agreement's 35 original signatories. To those who knew Otakar

Becvar well, this came as no surprise. At 58, although his profession as an engineering consultant was taking him to far-flung world capitals, he preferred exploring European cities that had either been affected by war or had figured prominently in bringing about peace.

"The Helsinki Final Act gave Europe a much-needed impulse," he says. "Finally, things were going to change. Its signing represented one of the most significant political milestones of our time. Without the document, our 'velvet revolution' and the fall of the Berlin Wall would have happened much later."

On his return to Prague from his two-day stay in the Finnish capital, he sat at the drawing board to develop a concept. "I taught myself woodcarving as a young man and had crafted occasional pieces, so I knew I would go down this path," he says.

The idea of peace in Europe is omnipresent in his work, including his poetry. He dedicated a poem, "European Bridges", to Vaclav Havel. Last year, he carved the names of every country in the European Union on a totem pole. He recently completed a similar piece with the names of all 55 participating States.

"I'm not really an artist and so it was a challenge to translate some of the highlights of the Helsinki Final Act into pictograms," Mr. Becvar says, who is an economist as well as an engineer. Using some 50 different carving tools and especially prepared boards of limewood, he whittled away at his creation during his leisure time for more than two years, either in his garage in Prague or at his weekend home.

"It was enjoyable, a change from sit-

As the CSCE negotiations were winding down in Geneva, a Prague intellectual wrote to a friend in the West: "Everyone here has his own reaction to this: We, the people from the ghetto, feel a cautious hope; the secret police feel an increased nervousness." Once the post-summit celebrations were over, the Communist regimes tried to protect their status-

quo framing of Helsinki by limiting public awareness of the actual content of the Final Act ... In Czechoslovakia, thousands of copies of the Helsinki Final Act were published, but never distributed.

— from *The Helsinki Effect*, by Daniel C. Thomas, Princeton University Press, 2001



Committed European:
Otokar Becvar

ting all day long in an office. My son offered to help, but I wanted to do it my way.”

Adopting a “tactile sculpture” approach to enable the blind to decipher his message, Mr. Becvar carved a relief of Europe, surrounded by seven circles, each of which

features universal logos illustrating some of the main areas of co-operation set out in the Helsinki Final Act. He dedicated one circle to the Finlandia Hall.

A pictogram of a man, a woman and a child holding hands surrounded by nature depicts the reunification of families, an issue that takes up almost a page in the Final Act. A factory chimney represents industrial co-operation, another commitment signed up to by Heads of State.

Mr. Becvar chose a stylized sun (purity) and a pair of birds (freedom) as unifying symbols. Along the edge he carved the flags of the 35 Helsinki Final Act countries, with the names of the signatories.

For ease of transport and assembly, he designed the plaque so that it could be dismantled into separate segments, which are held together from the back by sliding bolts and screws.

In an unintended but fitting finale, Otakar Becvar’s imposing *oeuvre* was ready

in 1989 — the year of the velvet revolution. It measured more than 3 metres (10 feet) in diameter and weighed 270 kg (595 pounds). “It was, and is, I believe, the biggest commemorative emblem of its kind,” he says.

Still, much to his disappointment, his feat did not make it into the *Guinness Book of Records*.

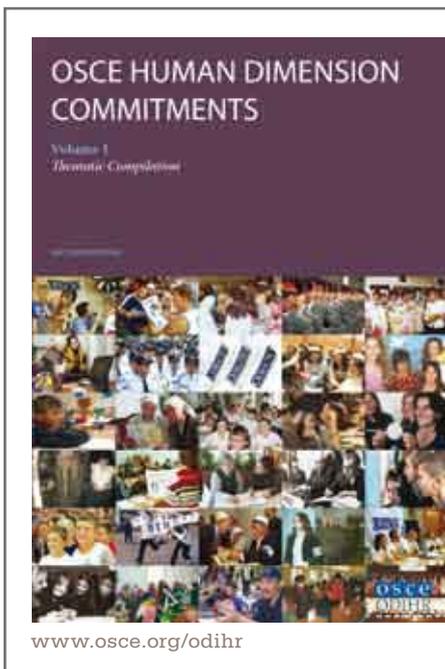
“We certainly do not underestimate what might be considered to be a significant record,” the global authority in record-breaking achievements said in May 1989, in response to Mr. Becvar’s submission, “but we think that this item is a little too specialized for a book of competitive records as general as ours.”

Contacts with several diplomats and more than a dozen organizations within and outside the Czech Republic to find an exhibit area were to no avail, many citing the lack of sufficient indoor space for a gigantic piece made of limewood, which is soft and malleable and thus not suitable as an outdoor installation.

Mr. Becvar refuses to give up. Late last year, as the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Final Act drew nearer, he sent a letter to the editor of the *OSCE Magazine*, enclosing a picture of his homage to Helsinki.

“I am nearly 80 years old and I am afraid that after my death, this work will be destroyed,” he said, enclosing a picture of his plaque. “I am very worried about what to do with it. Should I burn it? I am disappointed that it has not drawn anyone’s interest. Everybody I have approached has been polite with me, but the plaque is still in my garage. You are my last chance for the preservation of this work for the future.”

Florence Le Clezio is a Public Information Assistant in the OSCE Secretariat’s Press and Public Information Section.



Human dimension commitments now available in expanded compilation

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, the OSCE’s Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has published a new two-volume edition of its guide to the OSCE’s commitments relating to the human dimension.

The first volume presents the commitments according to themes, and the second volume takes a chronological approach.

The Helsinki Final Act succeeded in placing human rights on the East-West agenda, making it a legitimate subject of international dialogue.

Following the historic changes in Europe in 1989, the OSCE’s participating States developed the basic outline of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act into a comprehensive set of norms and standards, especially in the area of human rights.

These principles, together with those dealing with democratization and the rule of law, are the building blocks of what the OSCE refers to as the “human dimension” of security.

The first compilation, published in 2001, has served as an invaluable reference tool for individuals and institutions engaged in promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

www.osce.org/odihhr



OSCE/MIKHAEL EVSTAFIEV

Bernard Snoy was appointed **Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities** in the OSCE Secretariat on 4 July, succeeding Marcin Swiecicki. A Belgian national, he has had extensive experience in international financial institutions.

Mr. Snoy was a staff member of the World Bank from 1974 to 1986. Later, from 1991 to 1994, he served as Executive Director on the Bank's Board, representing Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Turkey and several countries in transition to

market economies (Belarus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Slovakia and Slovenia).
Earlier positions include Economic Adviser at the European Commission (1986-1988) and Chief of the Cabinet of Belgian Finance Minister Philippe Maystadt (1988-1991).

Prior to joining the OSCE, he served as Director of Working Table II (Economic Reconstruction, Development and Co-operation) in the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

Mr. Snoy holds a Doctor of Law degree from the Catholic University of Louvain and a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University.

market economies (Belarus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Slovakia and Slovenia).

From 1994 to 2002, he served on the Board of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development as Executive Director representing Belgium, Luxembourg and Slovenia.

Earlier positions include Economic



OSCE/MIKHAEL EVSTAFIEV

Joseph Hili, a Maltese national, was appointed the OSCE's **Director for Management and Finance** starting 8 August. He has had more than 20 years of international experience in finance, auditing, support services and general administration.

After qualifying as a UK Chartered Certified Accountant and UK Chartered Management Accountant, he joined Whinney Murray & Co. in Bahrain as senior auditor for financial institutions practice.

In 1980, Mr. Hili helped establish the Bahrain-based Arab Banking Corporation as a leading Arab-owned financial institution with a global presence. He served as its first Group Chief Accountant and Head of Support Services in a career that spanned 16 years.

He joined the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome in 1997, managing its staff credit union. In 2002, he moved to Hong Kong as Executive Vice President for the Support Group of the International Bank of Asia.

Mr. Hili, who succeeded Michael von der Schulenberg of Germany, holds a UK professional qualification in the management of information systems and is a qualified UK corporate treasurer.

James F. Schumaker was appointed **OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine** on 15 June, succeeding the late David R. Nicholas.

An American career diplomat, Ambassador Schumaker joined the U.S. Foreign Service in 1973, and over the next two decades served in Belgrade, Moscow, Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) and Kabul. He also served in Kyiv as Deputy Chief of Mission (1995-1999).

In 1999, Ambassador Schumaker was selected to head the Kosovo Implementation Office in the State Department. He later served as Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Minsk (2000), Consul General in Vladivostok (2001-2002), Senior Adviser to the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow (2002-2003), Acting Consul General in Yekaterinburg (2003) and Minister-Counselor for Political Affairs in Moscow (2003-2004).

Ambassador Schumaker served in the U.S. Army from 1969 to 1973, including a year at the Defense Language Institute (Russian) and a three-year tour of duty with the White House Communications Agency. He is a history graduate of Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut.



Ambassador Schumaker (right) with Boris Tarasyuk, Foreign Minister of Ukraine (left), and Ukrainian diplomat Dmitro Tkach

PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR IN UKRAINE

OSCE Office in Minsk/Komsomolskaya Pravadu v Belarusi



Åke Peterson of Sweden took up his post as **Head of the OSCE Office in Minsk** on 29 August, succeeding Ambassador Eberhard Heyken, who opened the Office in January 2003. A career diplomat, he recently held the post of Director of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy in Sweden's Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

"I am honoured to have been chosen for this position," Ambassador Peterson said at his first press conference in Minsk. "I hope to continue and

develop further constructive co-operation with the Government and with civil society in Belarus in accordance with the mandate of the Office."

He has held diplomatic postings in Helsinki, Dar es Salaam and Belgrade, as well as in Washington, D.C., at the Delegation of the European Commission to the United States. From 2000 to 2004, he was the Swedish Ambassador to Kyiv.

Ambassador Peterson studied Russian at the University of Lund and Japanese at the University of Stockholm, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1974. That same year he joined the Swedish diplomatic service, Moscow being his first assignment.

Karl Wycoff, a senior member of the U.S. Foreign Service, has succeeded Brian Woo as **Head of the OSCE Secretariat's Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU)**, starting 5 September.

Prior to his appointment, Mr. Wycoff was Deputy to the Ambassador-at-Large and Co-ordinator for Counter-terrorism in the U.S. State Department for two years. He managed the Department's counter-terrorism programmes in such key areas as law enforcement, border control, finance, research and development, public diplomacy, and homeland defence.

His most recent overseas posting was in Rangoon, Burma (Myanmar), as Deputy

Chief of Mission. Earlier, he served as Principal Officer of the U.S. Consulate General in Shenyang, China, and Deputy Chief of the U.S. Embassy in Vientiane. On his return to Washington, D.C., he was appointed Deputy

Country Director for the Pacific Islands and, later, Deputy Country Director for Thailand and Burma.

Mr. Wycoff started his diplomatic career in Africa, serving at the U.S. embassies in Monrovia, Liberia, and in Yaoundé, Cameroon, as well as

at the U.S. Consulate General in Douala.

A graduate of the U.S. State Department's Senior Seminar and the recipient of numerous performance and honour awards, he holds a B.A. and M.A. in political science from the University of Georgia.



OSCE/MIKHAIL LEVSTAFIEV



APPA IMAGES/LEHTIKUVA

Photographers click away during the signing of the Helsinki Final Act.

On the Web:

Three sites spotlight 30 years of the Helsinki Final Act

As part of the 30-year anniversary celebrations of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, the OSCE website features three special sites:

30 Years, 30 Opinions

Read the stories of 15 prominent personalities, some of whom played key roles in CSCE/OSCE history, and 15 people whose lives have been affected by the Organization.

CSCE/OSCE Timeline

An in-depth chronology, illustrated with photos, speeches and original documents, traces the key events that shaped the development of the CSCE/OSCE from Conference to Organization.

This Week in OSCE History

Would you like to know what was happening in the CSCE/OSCE 10, 20 or even 30 years ago? This site is your guide to *what* happened and *when* in the Organization's rich and eventful history.

Links to all three anniversary sites can be found on the OSCE home page at www.osce.org.