

Resolution on strengthening the OSCE - a role of the EU

2010/2839(RSP) - 11/11/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

After the debate which took place in plenary on 10 November 2010, following the declaration of the Council (on behalf of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission), the European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled by the Committee on Foreign Affairs on strengthening the OSCE: a role for the EU.

The resolution underscores the importance of the current intensive discussions on **European security** within the OSCE, NATO and the EU since reaffirming common values and strengthening mechanisms could enhance mutual trust and confidence in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian region and thus result in a stronger European security architecture.

OSCE added value - Cross-cutting issues: Members recall the tasks and impact of the OSCE and emphasise the need to maintain a balance between the three dimensions of the OSCE (i.e. politico-military dimension, economic and environmental dimension and human dimension), developing them coherently and comprehensively. They also point out that, if action is to be truly effective, the strengthening of the OSCE should not come at the price of weakening the existing institutions and mechanisms, such as the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). On the contrary, the OSCE needs to further strengthen its capacity to ensure respect for and the implementation of principles and commitments and support the existing institutions and mechanisms.

Returning to the 3 dimensions of the OSCE, Members make the following remarks:

1) Political-military dimension: Members consider that the OSCE has played an essential role in enhancing security, even if its political-military dimension has lost some of its relevance in recent years, in particular in relation to the conflict in Georgia in 2008, and its inability to address effectively certain protracted conflicts (e.g. in the Caucasus), or the refusal of NATO member states to ratify the CFE Treaty (treaty on conventional forces in Europe). They urge NATO member states and Russian Federation to ratify and implement the existing treaties and to comply with their obligations. Considering moreover that the OSCE is the suitable framework for negotiations concerning regional conflicts, the resolution argues in favour of strengthening the OSCE's instruments for conflict prevention. Members revisit certain local conflicts and recall:

- the OSCE mission in Transnistria (Moldova) and deplore the stalemate in the conflict;
- the Union's important engagement in stopping the hostilities during the conflict in Georgia and call for a revival of an OSCE peace monitoring mission in Georgia in order to prevent further violence, protect minorities and promote negotiations, ensuring security and stability in the South Caucasus region;
- the role played by the OSCE in the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, especially with regard to the ceasefire and ongoing negotiations and call for greater involvement of the European Union in this part of the South Caucasus.

The resolution calls for the revival of the process for **conventional arms limitation** and disarmament in the OSCE and invites the EU and its Member States to make available their experience and capacities in the field of defence conversion and to actively promote OSCE agreements in this area. In parallel,

Members underline the great importance of re-establishing mutual trust between the parties and a sense of common purpose by establishing a strong and efficient regime of conventional arms control. To this end, they emphasise the crucial importance of finding a solution to the CFE Treaty crisis.

Members also note that the EU's development of its capacities should not be perceived as downgrading the role of the OSCE but as a **necessary step towards improving cooperation** also among the OSCE participating States.

2) Economic-Environmental dimension: Members support the Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension, recognising that more effective cooperation by the OSCE participating States to counteract threats and challenges caused by economic and environmental factors. They also believe that cooperation and promotion of early warning on economic and environmental issues – such as energy, trade, climate change, or water security - may serve as tools to diminish tensions, prevent conflict, build confidence and promote good neighbourly relations. They take the view that since not only the EU and the Russian Federation, but all the member states of the OSCE, are dependent on each other as importers and exporters of energy and energy sources, the energy policy dialogue for the whole region should be given a central role. They also call on the OSCE to strengthen efforts to mitigate man-made contributions to global warming.

3) Human dimension: Members emphasise that human and minority rights and fundamental freedoms are at the core of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security, as witnessed by the wide-ranging set of existing commitments and mechanisms that should be fully implemented. Recognising the essential role of the ODIHR in promoting human rights and democratisation, Members call on the OSCE, in particular in regard to election observation, to reaffirm and preserve the independence of the ODIHR. They call for the strengthening of this cooperation and coordination between the OSCE/ODIHR and the European Parliament both in preparation for, during and after international election observation missions in OSCE countries.

Field missions: Members call on the Member States to emphasise the importance of the OSCE field missions. They call on the parties to ensure that funding for field missions is not decreased; urges the EU to learn from this expertise in its own field missions. They note, in particular, the OSCE's efforts in Kyrgyzstan.

Corfu Process: Members welcome the Corfu Process, launched by the Greek OSCE Chairmanship and promptly taken up by the Kazakh OSCE Chairmanship, aiming to re-establish trust and confidence and renew commitment to the principles of the OSCE and to tackle security challenges through multilateral dialogue and cooperation. They consider that the final aim of the Corfu Process should be the strengthening of the OSCE, to ensure that it can play a significant role in dealing with current and future challenges, including a more flexible decision-making procedure and discussing comprehensively the security issues in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area. Identifying the priorities for the next OSCE Summit in December 2010, on the initiative of Kazakhstan, Members call on the EU Member States, the Commission and the High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy to cooperate with OSCE members at the Summit with the goal of formulating **an Action Plan that would outline a road map towards a charter for a security community in the OSCE area** and to mandate preparation of a follow-up summit two to four years from now. They also call on the OSCE and EU member states to add US Vice President Biden's proposal for an OSCE Crisis Prevention Mechanism to the agenda for the Summit.

Role of the European Union: returning, lastly, to the role of the EU in this context, Members call for a serious reflection on how the EU can take on greater responsibilities and participate more efficiently in achieving joint objectives, for which implementing a system of permanent dialogue, agreeing on joint initiatives and coordinating local activities may be appropriate instruments in the context of a formal agreement between the OSCE and the EU. They call for the creation of a mechanism aimed at increasing cooperation, coordination and consultations between the two organisations, as well as proposals

concerning the EU's willingness and **ability to participate in OSCE-mandated missions**. Members also mention i) the possibility of how the future EEAS could establish appropriate cooperation procedures with the ODIHR, ii) an EU common position on OSCE reforms, particularly with regard to conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, iii) the interest for the EU, its Member States, and the present and the incoming OSCE Chairmanships-in-Office to continue the dialogue on the legal framework of the OSCE, and iv) the importance for Parliament to consolidate its relations with the OSCE and to consider, in particular, its participation in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.