

2.4. “The new CSCE and its contribution to Stability-Building: Possibilities and Limitations”

Speech at the Seminar on General CSCE Issues

Tashkent, 28 September 1994

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The five CSCE-participating States in Central Asia are faced with a great number of tremendous challenges. Re-establishing and developing their identities and finding their places and roles on the international scene are amongst those fundamental and difficult tasks.

We realize with satisfaction that in spite of the well known problems progress is being made. Interstate relations are expanding rapidly; many international organizations are developing together with their partners in Central Asia far-reaching programmes; the private sector is developing and fostered by foreign investments; European newspapers have started to report regularly not only about the problems in this area but also about the rich Uzbek culture, about impressive new films from Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan and about the well-known Kyrgyz author Aitmatov.

This is the background against which we should discuss at this seminar in Tashkent in a frank and open spirit how the process of integration of the Central Asian States into the CSCE can be further developed.

We have come to Tashkent to listen to expectations and concerns. Diplomats and experts want to understand better the strengths and the problems of the countries of the region; and they want to help that CSCE's capabilities are better understood.

We did not come to lecture but to engage in dialogue. We did not come to preach but to learn from each other.

This seminar concludes the series the CSCE seminars started last February in Bishkek with a meeting on small business, continued with a discussion of the Human Dimension in April in Almaty and with a seminar in May in Ashgabat oriented towards military security. As this series concludes now in the capital of Uzbekistan, we are pleased that one of our tasks will be to develop ideas for the next series of such meetings.

We all appreciate very much the hospitality extended to us here in Tashkent. Uzbekistan is a country with ancient civilisation, rich culture, and proud national traditions. But above all – it is a country of friendly and hardworking people consolidating its identity in the newly gained independence. I would like to express, on behalf of all the foreign participants, our thanks to the authorities of Uzbekistan for the excellent preparation of the seminar.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The CSCE is rediscovering for itself the region of Central Asia. It has always been part of the CSCE area. Yet until recently when it was just another part of the Soviet Union, neither we knew much about nor paid special attention to its problems. It was a “blank spot” on our map.

In January 1992 the newly established States in Central Asia joined the ranks of the CSCE participating States. This forward-looking decision implied the challenge of new, additional tasks for the CSCE. But it also opened new political horizons. We now have a common goal that unites us; that of integrating fully the new States into the mainstream of the CSCE activities.

The CSCE has extended its full support to the process of transformation in the Central Asian States on the basis of the CSCE values and principles. The success of the reforms in Central Asia is an indispensable element of new stability in the CSCE area. Based on its concept of indivisible security, the CSCE is committed to attract the attention of the international community to the challenges which the Central Asian countries have to face and to contribute to their settlement.

A major event in bringing the CSCE closer to the problems of the region was the visit of the then CSCE Chairman-in-Office, the Swedish Foreign Minister, Mme af Ugglas in April 1993. It generated concrete ideas for advancing the process of integration. The present series of seminars is the result of one of these ideas. Last February and March I was mandated by the CSCE to visit the region and to continue the dialogue and the mutual “learning” process. Upon my recommendations, the CSCE’s decision making body took a number of new initiatives aimed at continuing CSCE contributions to progress in Central Asia. The establishment of a CSCE-liaison office, the creation of a special fund to finance the participation of Central Asian States in certain CSCE activities and a new series of seminars are among the new measures.

All the countries of the region face problems which in some aspects are alike. Geographical proximity, cultural similarities, and common history explain why we so often refer to these countries as a group. But the closer we get acquainted with the area the better we see the specific identities and problems. We want to know and take into account the aspiration of each one of them.

All CSCE participating States are aware of the magnitude of the problems of transformation. Very serious economic problems exacerbate the situation in other sectors. A key challenge in the process of developing national identities is to find an appropriate status and work out specific arrangements for national groups. Threats to stability persist. The situation in Tajikistan escapes as yet a settlement. All countries in the area, although in different degrees, are concerned about the dangers of aggressive fundamentalism.

The CSCE can offer support to the countries of the region in their efforts to consolidate and develop their national identity and to face the challenges of a developing international environment. However, the level of expectations must be realistic, taking into account possibilities and limitations. At the end of this Seminar

the CSCE should have a better understanding of how it can contribute to stability-building in Central Asia; the Central Asian participating States should have a better understanding of their contribution to stability in the CSCE area.

We will have detailed presentations and discussions on this issue. At this point I will try to give a short overview of what I think is of particular importance for CSCE participating States in Central Asia:

- The CSCE is a forum for dialogue,
- it offers a set of values and coherent orientations,
- it can provide advice and support,
- it is an instrument for fostering international identity.

Mr. President,

The CSCE is a forum of equal partners. It offers a possibility for the countries in the region to articulate their problems, bring them to the attention of other CSCE participating States and spread and increase the awareness about them. The CSCE has been increasingly successful in developing patterns of a frank and candid dialogue. It is a dialogue based on agreed principles and values. It is a dialogue underpinned by a co-operative desire and the intention to help; and therefore it is a dialogue oriented towards concrete action. An open exchange of views can help in the understanding of specific problems of substance and procedure, in particular the crucial time element in all transformation processes.

As a second element the CSCE offers a set of coherent orientations.

They include such priority subjects as Human Dimension, market economies and social solidarity as well as conflict prevention and security issues. The CSCE has an open-ended agenda. In principle, everything relevant to security and stability can be raised within and dealt with by the CSCE. The CSCE has underlined many times the link existing among all aspects of security: political, human rights and democratic freedoms, economic and military. All of these elements are embodied in the CSCE's comprehensive concept of security.

The Human Dimension is at the heart of the CSCE. The CSCE aspires to generate new stability by developing a community of values. It calls for **all** participating States to implement the commitments they have subscribed to. It concerns all, since in the Human Dimensions nobody can claim perfection. Implementation is a process. It can vary according to many specificities, including historical legacy. The right direction of this process can be judged from concrete steps forward. They will prove whether there is a sincere effort to carry out the commitments and to make the Human Dimension an integral part of the national identity.

The CSCE involvement in all aspects of the implementation of human rights, democracy and the rule of law stems from a clearly defined mandate. Issues related to the Human Dimension cannot be considered exclusively internal and are of concern to all the participating States. This is not aimed at complicating the internal situations of CSCE-States but at consolidating it through increased legitimization. This can be an

important factor not only internally but also externally. It contributes to a positive international image. Serious efforts to implement the Human Dimension commitments are decisive in evaluating a country's stability. This will attract not only the attention of other states and their business community, it also facilitates efforts of other international organisations dealing with economic and ecological matters.

The CSCE has also established an active profile in conflict prevention. The work of the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the CSCE missions in the field are the best examples. The High Commissioner has already taken up specific ethnic problems of Central Asia on his agenda. He has visited Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and has submitted his recommendations to the respective authorities.

The CSCE operates a Mission in Tajikistan. In general terms, Missions in the field are a useful instrument for offering advice, encouraging dialogue, strengthening democratic institutions and building civic societies. Their assessment of the situation can have a far-reaching impact on the forming of the international opinion. How this potential is used depends, of course, on the support the receiving Government is giving to the activities of the mission.

Another aspect are the CSCE efforts to strengthen the co-operative elements in the area of military security. The CSCE has developed high standards of military transparency and predictability through its comprehensive confidence and security-building measures. Their implementation strengthens the stability in the CSCE area.

Human Dimension, conflict prevention and military security co-operation do not exhaust the CSCE agenda. The CSCE also helps to increase the awareness of economic and ecological problems.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Another, third element of the CSCE's usefulness on my list is that the CSCE offers a framework for advice and support. This is coupled with the possibility to organise and channel technical advice on concrete matters. The CSCE has developed specific co-operative possibilities in the Human Dimension. They are reflected in the first place in the ever expanding activities of the Warsaw Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, which are being extended to the Central Asian area.

The CSCE can help not only in solving existing problems but through its early warning procedures it can help to identify future ones.

CSCE measures, mechanisms and instruments provide a possibility to build trust, increase transparency, clarify concerns with neighbours and other partners. It is always an offer of a co-operative endeavour. If the CSCE is asked to provide advice on a draft constitution, its comments are not meant to question the professional qualities of the drafters or the political intentions of the authors. The purpose is to be helpful in implementing agreed CSCE principles and values based on experience and the expertise gained within the CSCE community.

Mr. President,

The fourth element which I would like to highlight is a CSCE contribution to international identity and international standing for the countries in the region.

The continuing political dialogue in the CSCE framework is a useful source of information about developments throughout the CSCE area. Active participation in this dialogue can be an important element in developing the multilateral aspects of foreign policy in an environment that includes key players of the international community.

The CSCE can be an additional bridge to some of those countries and regions that are of particular interest to Central Asian States. Such links can help to realise the declared objective of developing a multi-dimensional orientation of external relations. Active participation in the CSCE is a good way of overcoming in a consensual and constructive process a “zones of influence” syndrome.

During my visit to the area several of my interlocutors expressed the conviction that the CSCE adds an important European dimension to their internal and external policies. In this context I am happy to note that active participation by the Central Asian States in the CSCE work is clearly growing. Important statements at CSCE meetings, attendance at CSCE seminars, contributions to the CSCE expert resource lists and, in particular, the opening of the missions to the CSCE in Vienna are welcome developments. Four active missions from Central Asia represent their respective countries in Vienna. We are also looking forward to the opening of a CSCE mission of Kazakhstan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you all know, the CSCE is only one element in a dense framework of international institutions and organisations. Efforts are being made and further efforts are necessary to ascertain close co-operation with a mutually reinforcing character. It is only through such co-operation and division of labour that the international community can deal with all aspects inherent in a comprehensive concept of security and stability. The opportunities extended by the international organisations complement each other.

In this context I welcome the presence of the representatives of other international organisations at this seminar. I would highlight the presence of representatives of the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development because the expertise and the support of these organisations are indispensable for progress in economic dimensions of the transformation process.

As to the United Nations it is my clear impression from the recent meeting of the UN-Secretary General with representatives of regional organisations that the UN wants to see their differing comparative advantages more resolutely used in the difficult task of maintaining international peace and security. CSCE and UN activities in Tajikistan are a good example of close and mutually reinforcing co-operation. I would also mention our intention to connect the CSCE liaison office for Central Asia with a UNDP mission.

In my view the plurality of international organisations active in the CSCE area is an asset. Overlapping membership defuses the dangers of block-building. It allows also

for more flexibility and for choosing and using the best available capabilities on the basis of the comparative advantages of the organisation's activities. We also have to keep in mind that the overall structures in the CSCE area are still developing as are the individual international institutions and organisations. Also the CSCE is still in the process of adapting itself to a fundamentally changed and still changing international environment.

This seminar is taking place on the eve of the Budapest Review Conference. This adds to its importance. It can contribute to the work of the Conference by indicating and developing concrete ideas for bringing to light our new and common challenges.

The Review Conference and Budapest Summit will be important steps in further enhancing the CSCE's role in building new stability in the CSCE area. The success of Budapest is therefore of direct interest to the Central Asian States.

I am sure that the Central Asian States will use the opportunity of the Conference and the Summit to mark their identity in the CSCE community and articulate their specific interests and problems. This will be directly relevant for further CSCE involvement in the region. Seminars like the one here in Tashkent and regular interventions at the Permanent Committee in Vienna are good occasions to make those problems and expectations known but there is not a better one than the Summit.

The CSCE participating States in Central Asia should feel reassured that they are welcome partners linked with all other CSCE participating States by reciprocal interests. The CSCE will continue its policy of integration and support through better information, encouragement and expertise. We will be ever more concrete and the support will be better tailored to the specific needs of the countries in this region.

I am sure that the Tashkent environment and the active support of the Uzbek leadership will inspire us to be frank, forward looking and constructive.