The OSCE: Soft Security for a Hard World

Competing Theories for Understanding the OSCE

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Chapter 1

Introduction: The OSCE as a Security Provider

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Introduction

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has provided security for nearly four decades to 57 countries from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Since its inception, the OSCE has developed and implemented a broad and multidimensional concept of security, focused on negotiations and consensus-making activities, and adapted to various changing circumstances at an international level. Under the name of the Conference for Security and Cooperation (CSCE), the organization was founded in 1975 on the basis of what is often called the Helsinki Process and consisted of a series of conferences involving 35 members from Europe and North America. While the main achievement of the CSCE was to bridge the East-West divide in Europe during the Cold War, the CSCE was transformed into the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 1995, to respond to the various issues challenging the emergence of a multipolar world.

Despite this impressive track record, the OSCE has been curiously absent in newspaper headlines, overshadowed by the persuasive power of the European Union (EU) and the military might of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This apparent contradiction begs the following questions: Is the OSCE a significant regional organization in dealing with international security? Has the OSCE been able to reinvent itself to face the post-Cold War world? What type of security is the OSCE providing to its member states? This book argues that the OSCE is indeed a regional security provider with a great flexibility to adapt itself to the changing demands of international security. Aware of the limits of its consensual decision-making process and the diversity of worldviews in its member states, the OSCE was one of the first regional organizations to develop a comprehensive concept of security and develop an ample thematic agenda ranging from diplomatic multilateral cooperation to field operations. While the OSCE is not an organization sitting in the driving seat of international security, it is, as Galbreath (2007) argues, a key

institution positioned between the European Union and NATO, focused on furthering democracy, protecting human and minority rights, and encouraging military reform in a dynamic region.

In order to assess the OSCE contributions to international security, the methodological assumptions will be influenced, if not determined, by the theories adopted for the analysis. While the realist theories are skeptical of the OSCE, other approaches less centered on power and the state are more appreciative of the OSCE's security contributions. In this regard, five different approaches to international security form a prism of angles from which to study the OSCE: Realism, Liberal Institutionalism, Social Constructivism, Post-Structuralism, and the Copenhagen School. While all these theories will provide different understandings of what the OSCE does, the significant argument of this book and the common thread among all the chapters is the fact that the strength of the OSCE lies in its soft power. In order to reach significant theoretical conclusions, each chapter in this book follows the same structure. The first section of each chapter will present the main tenets of the theory chosen to study the OSCE; the second section will provide a global assessment of the OSCE through the lens of the theoretical framework of the chapter; and the third section will analyze a case study in which the OSCE has played an important role. Before moving forward with the core part of this book, a brief overview of the evolution of the OSCE is pertinent in order to explain some facts that are taken for granted in the subsequent chapters.

The OSCE: Evolution as a Security Provider in Four Vectors

The activities of the OSCE are based on the premises of persuasion, negotiation and consensus. Lacking the economic incentives of EU membership or the military power enshrined in Article 5 of NATO, the OSCE makes its main contributions through the agreements reached to implement confidence building measures in the political-military area, to monitor the protection of individual rights and to enhance cooperation in the environmental area. In this regard, while the following chapters take different approaches to evaluate the contributions of the OSCE, all of them converge in identifying the OSCE as a provider of soft security. Similar to the EU and NATO, the OSCE has been a security provider for several decades. While the three organizations contribute to the stability of the region from different angles, they do it by their unique characters, available instruments, added value and comparative advantage (Churruca 2005). Based on the initial concept developed by Erhart (2001, 18-20) to explain the EU as a security provider, this book argues that the OSCE as a security provider aims to ameliorate the problems derived from the

security dilemma by developing policies. They entail six characteristics: normativism (use of military force checked by civilian norms), appropriateness (internalization and implementation of collective norms), comprehensiveness (policies encompassing a broad conceptualization of security), inclusiveness (open to new members), multi-level orientation (inclusion of various levels of authority in the implementation of policies), and multilateralism (multilateral cooperation in order to strengthen regional and global norms and institutions). All these elements are present in most OSCE policies. OSCE policies epitomize the substance of the concept of soft power, which was first developed by Joseph Nye in the book *Bound to Lead* in 1990 and developed further in the *Paradox of American Power* in 2001, *Soft Power* in 2004 and *The Future of Power* in 2011. Essentially, soft and hard powers are two sides of the same coin because both aim to affect the behavior of other international actors. The difference, Nye argues, "is one of degree… Command power – the ability to change what others do – can rest on coercion or inducement. Cooptive power – the ability to shape what others want – can rest on the attractiveness on one's culture and ability to manipulate the agenda of political choices in a manner that makes others fail to express…" (Nye 2004, 7).

From the perspective of this book, the provision of security as a collective good is based on the contribution of a variety of actors including subnational, national and international. The examination of international security crises in the past two decades indicates that regional organizations participate in crises using a variety of instruments and policies. In some cases, the EU, NATO, and the OSCE are able to coordinate polices, but often some duplication takes place. In this regard, due to the characteristics of the recent evolution of the security scheme in Europe and the type of threats against the region, it is crucial to adopt an analytical framework that captures the uniqueness of European security. The following chapters delve into case studies while taking for granted some basic facts about the OSCE. While the multidimensionality of the OSCE has been extensively explained in manuals and electronic resources, this introductory chapter considers it appropriate to map out the evolution of the OSCE by following four main vectors: comprehensive conceptualization of security, consensus and pace of the summits, institutional structure, and areas of action.

The *first vector* is based on the early comprehensive conceptualization of security in comparison to other regional organizations. Since its inception in the 1970s as the CSCE, the OSCE has advocated an international agenda focused on three dimensions: a) politico-military, b) economic and environmental, and c) humanitarian. The cooperation between these so called "three baskets" has allowed the participant members to obtain something in their interests and has contributed to developing networks

in order to build confidence and increase security in Europe and Central Asia. The overview of these three dimensions provides a background about the comprehensive approach of the OSCE to security and the multiple areas where it has been able to build bridges of cooperation.

Four Vectors of the OSCE Evolution

Comprehensive Security	**Summit Consensuses**	**Institutions**	**Field Operations**
Three Dimensions a) Politico-Security b) Economic and Environmental c) Humanitarian	Three Waves a) Helsinki 1975 b) Paris (1990), Helsinki (1992), Budapest (1994), Lisbon (1996), and Istanbul (1999) c) Astana (2010)	Three Types a) Negotiating and decision-making: –Summits-Ministerial Councils –Permanent Council –Forum for Security Cooperation –Economic and Environmental Forum b) Operational Structures: –Chairmanship –Secretariat –OSCE Parliamentary Assembly c) Focus-oriented: –OSCE Representative on Freedom and Media –OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities –OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights	Four Areas a) South Caucasus b) Central Asia c) Eastern Europe d) South-Eastern Europe

The politico-military dimension of security includes a number of commitments by participating states and mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution in a variety of areas: arms control, border management, combating terrorism, conflict prevention, military reform and policing. Particularly relevant in this dimension is the 2011 Vienna Document on Confidence Building and Stabilization Measures (CSBMs) and the role of the Forum for Security and Cooperation (FSC) as a body to reach consensus on core politico-military issues, such as arms control and CBSMs, small arms and light weapons, stockpiles of conventional ammunition and the code of conduct on politico-military aspects of security. With regard to the economic and environmental dimension, the main activities include

monitoring and alerting member states to any threat to security and stability, while assisting in the creation of economic and environmental policies and related initiatives for the promotion of security and cooperation in the OSCE region. Among other activities in the economic and environmental dimension, the OSCE has worked on areas such as combating money laundering and financing terrorism, promoting good governance, supporting transport development and security, assisting migration management, promoting integrated water resource management, supporting the disposal of hazardous waste, and promoting energy security dialogue. In the human dimension, the OSCE has developed a more visible face as an international actor in promoting policies aimed at ensuring full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, abiding by the rule of law, promoting the principles of democracy by building, strengthening and protecting democratic institutions, and promoting tolerance throughout the OSCE region.

The *second vector* of the OSCE evolution is the transformation of the consensus of its member states as reflected in its summits. The frequency of the seven summits and the compromises involved in them have been influenced by the international milieu and the capacity of the responses from member states to adapt to new circumstances. At some summits, the OSCE took decisive steps to impact international security, while in others it only outlined the possible routes of action. The creation of the CSCE was one of the most significant summits because it questioned the viability of the lack of communication between the two poles of the Cold War and marked an important step in the rapprochement between the 35 states in the East and West. The 1975 Helsinki Summit was perceived in Moscow to be the culmination of the Soviet détente policy and a masterpiece of multilateral diplomacy (Zagorski 2010, 4). It would take fifteen years for the next summit to take place, surrounded by the uncertainty of the end of the Cold War. In fact, the transformations that took place in the 1990s would provide the setting for five more summits: Paris (1990), Helsinki (1992), Budapest (1994), Lisbon (1996), and Istanbul (1999). Each one of these summits was embedded with a sense of uncertainty derived from the rapid transformations in the 1990s, but at the same time they would build a new security consensus. In 1990 the Chapter of Paris was designed as a blueprint for the new Europe and updated the previous "three baskets" to advance new areas of cooperation (de Brichambaut 2010). The 1992 Helsinki meeting has often been overshadowed by other summits, but it produced the document *The Challenges of Change* and its main contribution was instrumental in forging a consensus for future meetings (Nemcova 2010). The 1994 Budapest Summit was quite significant from an institutional perspective because it decided

to turn the CSCE into the OSCE, strengthen the role of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and adopt the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (Munro 2010). The 1996 Lisbon Summit was a catalyst for security decisions, particularly focused on the prospects of developing a Charter on European Security and the adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (Kunz 2010). The last meeting in the 1990s was the Istanbul Summit, which was surrounded by events such as the widespread violence in Kosovo, the NATO enlargement, and the Russian troops repelling Chechen forces from Dagestan. Nonetheless, several documents were drawn up as a result of years of previous negotiations, such as the Vienna Document in 1999, which updated and strengthened the continent's most inclusive confidence and security building regime (Fritch 2010). The subsequent turn of the century was a time imbued with tensions unleashed by the use of force (i.e. Iraq 2003, Georgia 2008) and again a period of silence prevailed at summit level. After eleven years, a new summit took place in Astana (2010), which adopted the *Astana Commemorative Declaration: Towards a Security Community* and reaffirmed the OSCE's commitment to the creation of a free, democratic, common, and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community.

The *third vector* is associated with the evolution of the institutional structure. Overall political responsibility lies with the Chairperson-in-Office, which rotates annually and is supported by the previous and succeeding Chairmanships (OSCE Troika).[1] Continuous dialogue and negotiations take place in Vienna, where the ambassadors of the member states and Partners for Co-operation meet weekly in the form of the Permanent Council, the OSCE's political decision-making body, and the Forum for Security Co-operation, where the member states make decisions regarding military aspects of security in the OSCE area, particularly regarding confidence and security-building measures. The decisions are made by consensus, which immediately entails the obvious problems associated with timely decision-making among 56 countries. The Secretariat in Vienna, under the direction of the Secretary General, supports the Chairmanship throughout the year and is home to units focusing on conflict prevention and mediation, economic and environmental activities, co-operation with partner countries and organizations, gender equality, combating transnational threats (anti-terrorism, border management

[1] The Chairmanships are perceived as opportunities to contribute to the collective agenda by advancing national priorities. For instance, one of the priorities of the 2012 Irish Chairmanship was conflict resolution based on the Northern Ireland peace process. Ukraine, Switzerland and Serbia will chair the OSCE in 2013, 2014 and 2015, respectively.

and policing), and anti-trafficking. Secretariat activities range from implementing projects on the ground and monitoring any developments that could affect the organization's work, to offering support to the whole of the organization and providing expert analysis and advice. Similar to other regional organizations, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, with an international secretariat in Copenhagen, brings together parliamentarians from OSCE member states to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue and plays an important role in election observation activities.

The end of the Cold War sparked a number of institutional innovations in order to address the priority issues posed by the countries in transition in the OSCE area. Three institutions were created in this regard. In 1991, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) was inaugurated in Warsaw. This institution works in the fields of election observation, democratic development, human rights, tolerance, non-discrimination, and the rule of law. The ODIHR has become a gravitational center for the OSCE's commitments in the human dimension security pillar by actively engaging in a variety of activities such as the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, the promotion of full integration of Roma and Sinti or the 18 election observation activities carried out in 2011 (OSCE 2012). On the other hand, the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), created in 1992 and based in The Hague, intervenes using quiet diplomacy as an effective conflict prevention tool at the earliest possible stage. Some of their areas of action are statelessness, integration with respect to diversity, and language legislation. Finally, the Vienna-based Representative on Freedom of the Media observes media developments in the OSCE region as well as providing early warnings to violations of freedom of expression and promoting full compliance with OSCE media freedom commitments. The Representative has advocated the decriminalization of defamation as well as the maximum openness of the Internet and media.

The *fourth vector* of the OSCE evolution focuses on the 31 field operations that the OSCE has launched during its history. Most of the current OSCE staff and resources are deployed in 16 of the OSCE's field operations in four geographical areas: South-Eastern Europe (six operations), Eastern Europe (two), the South Caucasus (three), and Central Asia (five). These operations are established at the invitation of the respective host countries, and their mandates are agreed upon through consensus of the participating states. In this regard, the cooperation of local authorities is crucial and raises such expectations in order to reach the goals of the operations. In particular, the chapter by Zanotti in this book underlines the fact that beyond the agreement of the parties to promote peace, the role of the OSCE in monitoring and contributing to the implementation of agreements is of the utmost importance.

The Chapters Ahead

From Chapter Two through Six, this book applies five different theories to evaluate the contributions of the OSCE through the use of case studies. In Chapter Two, Giulio Venneri reconstructs the dynamics that prevented the CSCE/OSCE from developing into a treaty-based collective security organization in the 1990s. By comparing key concepts of the realist and the liberal institutionalist traditions, the author argues that as a multilateral institution with broad-based membership and extremely flexible structures – designed to promote quiet and preventive diplomacy – the CSCE/OSCE suffered from a lack of mutual interests among the participating states. Thus, it approached the possible institutional developments by relying mostly on the logic of relative-gains.

The next chapter by Boyka Stefanova explores the application of institutionalist theories and focuses on the security of the Western Balkans. The author underlines the OSCE's significance as a security institution and its capacity to reinvent itself in the post-Cold War world. Stefanova argues that as a result of the post-Cold War transformation of the European security order, the OSCE has emerged as a secondary security actor maintaining a niche, rather than a leadership profile, in Europe's security architecture. Through the lens of the institutionalist perspective, the author identifies the factors that have determined the relative decline in the capacity of the organization to affect security outcomes. The subregion of the Western Balkans serves as a critical case study in its role of shaping the modalities of European security governance and identifies the OSCE's strategies for contributing to the resolution of the Balkan security crises in relation to other frameworks of European regionalism: integration and alliances. Stefanova draws conclusions with regard to the need for continued institutional innovation in response to an evolving regional demand for conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict reconstruction.

Chapter Four applies Social Constructivism to study the reconstruction of European Security (1965-1975) and the rationale of the creation of the OSCE. Pablo Toral argues that from a realist "Americocentric" perspective, 1989 marked the triumph of the United States in the Cold War, the end of bipolarity, and the beginning of the reign of the United States as the sole world hegemon. However, a Euro-centric perspective of the Cold War offers a different picture of bipolarity, which was always contested by Western Europe. This chapter applies rule-oriented constructivism to analyze the changing definition of "European security" since the 1950s. An observation of the rules of interaction between Europe and the two superpowers reveals important changes to have taken place since the late 1950s. The Europeans feared that a) the US would not come to the rescue

if the USSR threatened Western Europe for fear of a nuclear war or b) the US would fight the USSR in the European theater, causing major destruction. These options made Western Europe distance itself from the North American security strategy, initiating a process of rapprochement with the Soviet Union that institutionalized tripolarity. Toral asserts that the OSCE came to play a pivotal role at the center of this tripolar security system.

The next chapter, by Laura Zanotti, explores the premises of post-structuralism and soft power in the OSCE's role in Croatia. Zanotti argues that after the withdrawal of the United Nations Blue Helmets and United Nations Liaison Office, the OSCE continued to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement brokered by the UN for the integration of the Danube region into Croatian territory, especially with regard to the protection of minority rights and the repossession of property lost during the war. In addition, the OSCE engaged in the broader task of bringing Croatia closer to European standards of rule of law. While not possessing, *per se*, the means to enforce implementation, the OSCE engaged in a series of efforts – including advisory activities to the government, promoting diplomatic demarches, reporting to the international partners and the EU – aimed at promoting legal reforms, fostering the rule of law and the freedom of the media, and reforming the police. Zanotti's analysis indicates that while the OSCE has been represented as a "soft power" organization that operates through persuasion rather than enforcement, the complex modalities through which it operates are part of a broader international disciplinary security regime. In this regard, she claims, the OSCE must be seen as part of a wider security regime that works in a decentralized manner, combining regulatory and disciplinary modalities, advisory activities and training with intensified coercion through conditionality and the use of military force.

In Chapter Six, Markus Thiel explains how the Copenhagen School understands the link between the OSCE and Human Rights. This chapter reviews the constitution of collective identities held by national minorities that are present in Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) and assesses the state of societal security in the region. Security-community building institutions such as NATO, the EU, the Council of Europe, and the OSCE have had a varying impact on the traditional military-political aspect of regional security. However, Thiel states that the issues surrounding human and societal security evolving from a post-Cold War regional instability rooted in ethnically motivated conflicts have not been sufficiently addressed in the past. This chapter examines the societal security threats as perceived by national minorities in Central and Eastern Europe and provides an overview of the key provisions of societal security, such as minority rights and conflict prevention, and shows that the OSCE remains the organization with the most effective desecuritizing

strategies. Nonetheless, Thiel argues that while the OSCE cooperates well with other intergovernmental organizations in the field, its institutional norms do not always match the actual preventative strategies required on the ground. In conclusion, it is argued that only an integrated approach relying on a set of interlocking institutions can optimize results and avoid further conflict in the region.

The last theoretical exercise is about the use of the analytical concept of soft power to explain the role of Canada in the OSCE. Unlike the theories in international relations applied in the previous chapters, Benjamin Zyla argues in Chapter Seven that while soft power is not a theory *per se*, it is an analytical concept used by foreign policy analysts to examine one or more aspects of public policy, and that this concept in particular encapsulates the type of security the OSCE provides. The author argues that the Cold War's end brought about an institutional change for the CSCE that significantly expanded and subsequently institutionalized its objectives and mandates. Canada, on the other hand, has also enjoyed an international reputation of being a middle power, and by definition a middle power heavily relies on its non-coercive or soft power resources as a means of pursuing its objectives in the field of international politics. The successful negotiations of the landmines treaty and the implementation of the International Criminal Court (ICC), both of which were negotiated under Canada's leadership, underline the increasing role of Canada as an international soft power. Two arguments are made in this chapter. The first is that the OSCE has developed discrete but persuasive powers to mediate inter as well as intra-state conflicts and to monitor post-conflict situations by employing a set of symbolic or soft powers. The second is that in the 1990s Canada demonstrated that an OSCE member could effectively and successfully employ soft powers in international politics.

The final section of this book includes two chapters. In Chapter Eight, Maxime Larive explains the current European security architecture by looking at the collaboration and coordination problems among the OSCE, NATO, and the EU. Larive argues that, while the three institutions have different institutional structures, different membership procedures, and different security cultures, there are some areas of convergence. This chapter reviews the evolution of the relations between the institutional troika (NATO, the EU, and the OSCE) since the beginning of the twenty-first century. The selection of this particular timeline offers a higher degree of comparison as by then the EU had implemented the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). With the utilization of the ESDP, the EU, NATO, and the OSCE, there have been three international organizations aspiring to contribute and provide security at regional and international levels. In conclusion, the author asserts that the issue of competition and institutional overlap will stress the limits of cooperation between the

security troika. The final chapter presents the overall findings of this book by comparing the theories used by the authors and their explanations about the OSCE.

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