The OSCE and the Crisis in Ukraine.[1]
Focusing on the Theoretical Characteristics of the European Crisis Management.
Concepts, Players, Tools, Vision

Éva REMEK[2]

> "No doctor will be able to help anyone who has neither visions nor a compass for the future at a time of fundamental upheavals and challenges."[3] [1: 5]

European security and defence policy is one of today's main topics. One of the reasons for this, is the high number of operations conducted by the European players in regards to its crisis management. The second reason we can find in the actual substance. Testament to this is Europe's fight for global peace and stability. To achieve this, the robust international presence is imperative. Especially in places, where following an armed conflict the state's structure is destroyed and aiding the creation of the new political structure, as well as levelling the democratic playing field is needed.

Operations conducted in crisis management are not limited to European ground only. In the creation of global and regional stability, which is paramount from Europe's point of view due to its nature, a shift occurred: from military power to civilian power.[4] This justifies the need to deal with European security, with particular regard to crisis management and international actors, including the OSCE and its role in Ukraine. I prefer this analysis to be a theoretical approach (thought provoking) than to fully present the Ukrainian crisis. And I look at it from the point of view of the OSCE.

Introduction

Security and its absence, which due to its complexity is an ever recurring problematic topic, is heavily connected to managing various conflicts and local and global crises. Looking at our topic we cannot ignore the fact that during the changes of the nineties, which was the time of the fall of the possibility of global confrontation, the number of local and

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[2] Ph.D., Associate Professor, National University of Public Service, Faculty of International and European Studies; e-mail: remek.eva@uni-nke.hu ORCID ID: 0000-0002-0403-8466

[3] German Chairperson-in-Office, Frank-Walter Steinmeier said in December 2016 in Hamburg at the 23rd Ministerial Council.

[4] For the importance of civic attitudes see another similar example: [35].

regional conflicts have risen. The variety of these conflicts meant a great deal of challenges to the international players, namely various governments, states and national organizations, e.g. the European Union (EU) and especially the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), (hereinafter Organization).

Even at the end of 2016, the German Foreign Minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier said—he was officially the OSCE's Chairperson-in-Office in that year—the OSCE arrived at crossroads. Furthermore it faced a number of serious security challenges e.g. mass migration, terrorism, conflict in and around Ukraine, crises close and far from Europe (Moldova, Syrian crisis). And the *vision* of a cooperative and comprehensive security is also in danger. What can be done at this point? He believed that "the OSCE must become more effective and more capable of taking action as regards preventing and resolving conflicts." [1: 3] This analysis aims to examine this endeavour. How does the OSCE achieve a goal? What methods will be effective in crisis management in the Ukrainian crisis?

The paper shows e.g. that the chairmanships (it is called Troika, which consists of the previous, current and succeeding OSCE Chairmanships) of the Organization were ready to lead an important dialogue and co-operation in various fields of common interest and principle using every tool of the OSCE (old and new tools, such as the confidence building measures [CBMs] and cyberspace, cyber security—according to experts that is just what it needs, namely CBMs can improve cybersecurity). [2]

Concepts

First of all it is worth analysing the concept of the security-conflict-crisis-security sector reform, although these terms are all well known, still their meaning can change from time to time. This is particularly true from what we have experienced in the past twenty five years as the subject's experts or enthusiasts. The reason is the diversity in concepts of security was created by the different theoretical school [3: 37–46]

Secondly, here are a few words about the extended meaning of security, which comes under a five dimensional model, developed by Barry Buzan and his colleagues. In this we can observe the problem through different perspectives. These elements are economy, military, politics, societal and environmental security. [4: 439] Concerning the five sectors, we can talk about lack of security, when there is an existential threat.

Thirdly, we can describe conflicts in many ways. "The origin of conflict is within the human mind"—wrote János Matus in one of his publications, then continues: "All violent acts are preceded by a chain of thought, within the acts similarities or differences, the harmony or disparity of the values." [5: 83]

Last but not least, a few words about crisis. We are talking about crisis when accumulated stress comes to the surface in such a way, that it cannot be determined a war situation. It is true, the likelihood of the use of violence is rather high. This term is used mainly to describe an uncooperative period among states.

What are the reasons for a prolonged crisis situation:
- there is an unreasonable disagreement among participants;
- this (crisis situation) touches on existential interests;
- the efforts to resolve the crisis situation fail;

- and there is a chance of war developing among the participants (a good example of this is the Cyprus debate today).

It is crucial to define conflict and crisis, and it is even so nowadays, when it is essential for the effective response from the European international actors for European security order such as the European Union or the OSCE, as the representatives of the soft security, rather than NATO.

According to some expert opinion, e.g. the *Trends in Armed Conflict 1946–2014* report [6: 2] or to Janusz Bugajski's opinion, [8: 1–2] we can see, (despite a wide range of approaches, there is a common element in these analyses), that the number of civil crises and the number of civilian casualties have increased since the nineties.

So it can be said that conflict has three types: intra-state, inter-state (in the traditional sense of the territorial disputes or even escalating of the intra-ethnic conflicts, etc.) and trans-state (today's global security challenges e.g. cyber-attacks, international terrorism, trade, energy security, etc.).

Accordingly, in a little more detail, the intra-state conflicts include civil conflicts, which can cause ethnic conflicts, economic hardships, separatist activity, refugee problems, serious military intervention etc. All this can be strengthened by the weakness of the state, or precisely because of the state's economic and foreign policy uncertainty.

I think this was well exemplified by the Ukrainian case. Firstly, let us see some key statistics on Ukraine. Ukraine is located in Eastern Europe. Its neighbours are Poland, Belarus, Russia, Romania, Moldova, Hungary, Slovakia, the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Its population is 44,209,733. [9: 227] Many ethnic groups live there: Ukrainian 77.8%, Russian 17.3%, Belarusian 0.6%, Moldovan 0.5%, Crimean Tatar 0.5%, Bulgarian 0.4%, Hungarian, Polish and Romanian 0.3%, Jewish 0.2%, other 1.8% (2001 est.). [10] In 2015 the inflation was 48.7% and in 2016 only 15.06%. [9: 227] These are *telling* numbers.

The Ukrainian economy was weak with a high degree of financial uncertainty; it can be seen in the data of the World Bank, namely that the Ukrainian GDP growth was in 2012 0.2%, in 2013 0.0%, in 2014 –6.6%, in 2015 –9.8% and in 2016 2.3%.[5] The European countries have tried to help her on the path of reform. This growth was achieved by financial support and expertise, especially e.g. regulatory issues, agricultural and rural development, energy-sector reform[6] and Security Sector Reform (SSR).[7]

This latter reform is slowly moving,[8] so in particular the work of the EU here is very important (the EU Advisory Mission in Kyiv). Key partners of the EU on the Security Sector Reform are the US, Canada and OSCE. It can be said that the Security Sector Reform has become one of the major crisis management tools of international crisis management methods. (See Figure 1.)

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[5] See details and comments in [36].
[6] See details in [37: 11–12] [37: 23–38].
[7] Key definitions can be found in [39: 4].
[8] For reasons and details of this, see [40].

Figure 1. *The elements of the Security Sector.* [41]

What is the security sector reform from the point of view of the OSCE? As the OSCE Secretary Genaral, Lamberto Zannier said in June 2017: "A security sector that lacks […] can contribute to deteriorating security conditions and escalation of violence and conflict. […] well-functioning, accountable and resilient security sector can play an important role in managing emerging conflict situations and preventing escalation and recurrence." [7]

It is worth highlighting the OSCE's Project Co-ordinator (OSCE–PCU) in Ukraine [27] field operations, because it participates in 34 *projects,* such as Parliamentary and Public Oversight, Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), small arms control and transitional justice (Justice Reform), or the gender dimensions of security, etc.[9] [43]

Therefore, in the OSCE context, the Security Sector Reform, as an old and new tool, played/plays an important role in conflict prevention. In total, while we were clarifying the concepts, we have also gained a slight insight into the OSCE's crisis management toolkit.

To sum up, the crises and the challenges in the period after the cold war sparked the need for new solutions. The international players have been looking for correct answers ever since the beginning of the nineties, but it became apparent rather quickly that, in crisis management the running of military operations are not enough. As I mentioned, in the year 1990 the crisis that took place previously among states, migrated to within the states themselves. Due to the nature of these problems, this forced new tasks onto the ones trying to solve them. The document created by Boutros-Ghali stated that the use of new tools are needed in the resolution of new conflicts, and due to the complexity of the situation, it demands a deep co-operation from the international actors and the international organizations. "Although

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[9]   See details in [43].

the subject of my report is on the skills used by the Global organization to improve on the peace making and pace keeping skills […] the member states cannot forget that the research invested into discovering better mechanisms are only significant if, this new communal spirit is moved by will, which is mandatory in the current need for difficult decisions." [44: 6] The United Nations Security Council have accepted the report and marked four areas where the UN's activity is needed in the future: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping missions, peace development. [44: 14–34] Military operations are not enough in the new style of crisis management, other activities, such as peace keeping and peace building also became a part of the picture. The OSCE contributes to this work…

The OSCE and the Ukrainian Crisis

After the cold war the OSCE, like other security organizations (such as the UN, NATO, the EU), is being adapted to this new security paradigm and until the beginning of the first years of 2000 the OSCE was really modernized. Since 1995 (CSCE—the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe has a new name, namely it has become OSCE) it has played a constructive role in cooperation from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Unfortunately, the dynamism of modernization was lost by 2013. What is the reason for this? The Ukrainian crisis, which "plunged the OSCE also into an existential crisis, threatening its role as legitimate guardian of European security." [11] The Ukrainian crisis led the OSCE into crisis management, because its role as a classic defender of European security was shaken. The idea (that was born yet under the Swiss Presidency in 2014) was to prepare the basis for "an inclusive and constructive security dialogue across the Euro–Atlantic and Eurasian regions, taking into consideration the Ukraine crisis in its broader perspective as well as other developments in the OSCE area where participating states consider their security to be threatened." [11] That is why it is important to review some events between 2014 and 2017, firstly the beginning and then the causes of the crisis.

The Ukrainian crisis began with protests against Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych's decision. It was in November 2013. The reason for that was that the President refused an agreement for the economic integration with the European Union (see later).

The next element of the crisis occurred when Russia annexed the Crimea so fast that the West (the US and Europe) could only be surprised. The next step was the war in the Donbas (it is well known that it has two parts Donetsk and Luhansk), the West was still a passive viewer.

Finally, since the beginning of 2015, Ukraine, Russia, France, and Germany have tried to solve this difficult problem, which resulted in an agreement, namely the Minsk Accord II.[10] This Accord has three main parts. These are: a cease-fire, withdrawal of heavy weaponry, and full Ukrainian government control of the whole conflict zone. The question arises whether the Minsk Accord can be a new hope?[11]

According to the topic's expert, the conflict in Ukraine caused huge damages "of territory (7%) and population (15%), loss of lives (ca. 10,000), and also forced 2.5 million people

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[10] In order to avoid any misunderstanding, there were two agreements. The first agreement was signed in September 2014, the second one was signed in February 2015.
[11] See possible answers in [45].

to leave their homes." [12: 3] However, in this context again a question arises whether the Minsk Agreement[12] is a success or a failure agreement. It is worth checking out some reviews of experts. [13]

The opinions are very different, but one thing is common. Namely that the agreement has reduced the violence and the number of casualties in eastern Ukraine. But quoting Pierre Vimont words this Agreement "has not delivered an end to the current conflict or a political solution to this confrontation. It is far from certain that the Minsk process was ever intended to do so, and the reality on the ground makes success even more unlikely." [14]

The Ukrainian crisis is in the first instance a domestic problem and its resolution will depend on the Ukrainians themselves. But it is well known that Russia also has a key role in resolving the crisis. But why is Ukraine so important for Russia? Zbigniew Brzezinski compared this region (Eurasia) to a chessboard in his book with a similar title. [15: 9] According to him the main players are the US, Russia, the EU and NATO. In his book, Brzezinski writes that without Ukraine, Russia "ceases to be a Eurasian empire and would become predominantly an Asian imperial state at risk of being drawn into conflicts in Central Asia." [46] But if Moscow were able to gain control over Ukraine and its resources, in his view, the Russian Federation would be a *powerful imperial state.* [46] It is clear, therefore, that geopolitically, Ukraine is a key area for everyone.

It is a well-known fact that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia had difficulties accepting the independent Ukraine. In addition, the planned EU-Ukraine Association Agreement (Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area at the Eastern Partnership) which was to happen in November 2013, quite clearly projected that Russia was losing Ukraine. [16] So, we go back to the starting point, i.e. when the Kremlin put pressure on Ukraine in 2013, imposing *limiting measures*[13] on Ukrainian exports to Russia. However, Russia "crossed the Rubicon" [26] when she annexed Crimea and started a military attack in Donbas.

Hereupon the Ukrainian leadership had two options at that time of the crisis: the signature of the Free Trade Agreement with the EU or the acceptance of Russia's economic assistance. [17: 5] Finally the last option was chosen. It can be interesting for my research topic to explain details of the Ukraine–Russia relations by focusing on why and how Ukraine reacted to, and engaged with Russia-led projects for regional integration, but its detailed explanation will be the subject of an another analysis.[14]

It is noteworthy to examine yet another feature of the crisis, which also greatly influences the work of the OSCE. This, in turn, is the problem of national identity. I think this will be a more and more significant research field among security challenges in the future. Namely this security aspect is related directly to the issue of human security, human rights and indirectly to Security Sector Reform (see above) especially in this region.

Furthermore, here are two more reasons which are important to mention: the issue of identity and human security. On the one hand, it is important because it

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[12] Firstly Minsk I was born, this Protocol on the results of consultations of the Trilateral Contact Group, signed in Minsk, on 5th September 2014. http://osce.org/home/123257 (Downloaded: 22.08.2017) This was complemented by a memorandum. (Memorandum of 19th September 2014.) The failure of the implementation led to the signing of an additional ceasefire agreement, Minsk II, on 12th February 2015. http://osce.org/ru/cio/140221?download=true (Downloaded: 22.08.2017)

[13] Helpful data are available in CEPS Working Document. [47: 1–4]

[14] I recommend Albert O. Hirschman's seminal work (1980). Referred in [19].

constitutes the cornerstone of all democracy. On the other hand, traditionally the OSCE (from the seventies e.g. The Helsinki Final Act 1975)[15] pays much attention to the issues of human rights and human security. This is also practiced in Ukraine. A good example of this is the field operations, already mentioned above, the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine (PCU). It implements projects focusing on "spreading human security norms within the civilian security sector reform in Ukraine, namely: training new police patrol officers in combating human trafficking and domestic violence; improving community police approach; training the reformed neighbourhood police units; supporting human-rights-based education." [18: 2] As the OSCE in general became the "eyes and ears" [49] of the international community, thus PCU published many documents with recommendations on e.g. the human security situation.

Without aiming to give an exhaustive summary of all reasons, but in the light of the above, the complex nature of the Ukrainian situation (between East and West) can be clearly seen. As Keohane and Nye said "employing force on one issue against an independent state with which one has a variety of relationships is likely to rupture mutually profitable relations on other issues." [19: 693] Ergo Russia wanted reintegration of her neighbour, but Ukraine wanted to be part of the West, still the government's action suggests that nevertheless it aims to be part of the East.

Next year (2015) the Normandy Format (Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine)[16] was formed. Their discussion is an important step for any political attempt to resolve the situation in Donbas. All players have underlined that this is essential and have publicly stated their strong support for it. The role of Ukraine in the Agreement (Minsk II) is very important. But the stronger party—"Russia and its proxies"[17]—has been uninterested in the fulfilment of its (Ukraine's) commitments, and this attitude will weaken its chances. Therefore, Ukraine's situation in these days is not easy. "Russia,[18] the aggressor, which claims that the situation in Donbas is a "civil war,"[19] sits at the negotiating table and appears to be trying to look for a diplomatic solution." [21: 72]

It is a known fact that, what Ukraine needs is a responsible and stable state. But it has an over-bureaucratized system that accepts real power to be exercised in the shadows. In turn,

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[15] More details in [48].

[16] Created on 6th June 2014, when the leaders of France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine met on the margins of the 70th anniversary of the D-Day allied landing in Normandy. This was the first meeting between Presidents Vladimir Putin of Russia and Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine since the crisis had erupted in Ukraine. The Normandy Format does not include the United States or the European Union, nor any other European countries beyond France and Germany.

[17] As described Besemeres (whole paragraph from him) the Minsk II Agreement uses the lots of shooting words like Ukrainian sovereignty and "in accordance Ukrainian law". But in the text are some significant concessions to both the proxies and Russian sponsors. To mention for example: "Ukraine is required to reach with the "representatives" of Russia's proxies in eastern Ukraine (legitimating them as negotiating partners for Kyiv's elected government) on constitutional changes that would decentralise government. This is the condition of Kyiv's recovering access to that part of its eastern border that is now controlled in tandem, by the proxy forces and the Russian army. The proxies are given the freedom to form cross-border cooperative arrangements with Russian authorities." More details in [51: 422–423].

[18] "Russia is like a wolf in sheep's clothing." [16]

[19] Is Ukraine really headed for "civil war"? The name of the "civil war" is controversial, so there are several explanations. Some opinions are for (inter alia Oliver Boyd-Barrett: *Civil war*) and some against (inter alia Fisher [52] or László Póti stressed that what happened in Ukraine was not a revolution, a civil war, a coup d'etat, an ethnic confrontation, or an outside manipulated series of events but a clear rebellion, antitrust action, and an attempt to break with the Soviet past. [53]

President Poroshenko has supported political democracy in Ukraine, but he has not supported a deep reform of the system of power. However, it is a fact that he does not do anything against oligarchic interests. In this free but not transparent environment, Russia continues to work to destabilize the country via "hybrid ways."[20] Some experts said two perceptions of Ukraine: "one is, that Russia will widen the war (Russia continues to maintain a large concentration of forces in close proximity to the Ukrainian border); the other is, that the West will grow tired and walk away." [17]

Many and many different analyses were written in connection with the Ukrainian crisis. During my research work I found remarkable comments by James Sherr about two misperceptions. He said these have determined the Russia-Ukraine conflict from the beginning. The first misperception is that Russia holds all the cards. Sherr's opinion is that by now, Ukraine has already refuted this. The Russian military power is really deterrent, but with the right diplomatic cooperation of Ukraine and the West it could be counterbalanced.

The second misperception is that time helps Russia. In his opinion, this has not happened, yet. In November 2014, a prominent regime ideologist told Mr Sherr, that "by next winter, there will be no Ukraine […] but […] Ukraine was stronger two years later than it was at the beginning. Yet time is not a strategic actor. It must be used." [17] Russia thinks that she has enough military and political power for the Ukrainian governance structure to collapse. Until the time comes that Ukraine and the West change their current perception of their own security and interest, unfortunately, the conflict will not be settled. I think there was enough evidence to prove Ukraine's strategic importance for Russia.

The OSCE and its Role in the European Security System

Today this organization has 57 Participating States in North America, Europe and Asia. The OSCE is the world's largest regional security and pan-European organization. The OSCE works "for stability, peace and democracy for more than a billion people, through political dialogue about shared values and through practical work that makes a lasting difference." [23] Moreover, the OSCE is being consensus-based. This is an important advantage, but at times this causes difficulties in making decisions and progress, nevertheless it balances the conflicts of interest among partners.

The OSCE is chaired on a rotational basis by the Participating States. Each state holds the chairmanship for one year and this capacity plays a major role in governing the work of the organization and in representing the OSCE in the world. "The Foreign Minister of the chairing state holds the function of the Chairperson-in-Office." [55] The rule is that the task of the Chairperson-in-Office is exercised by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the concerned state (e.g. in 2017 Austria).

And now let us look at our topic: what were Austria's priorities for her 2017 Chairmanship? Austria defined the priorities for its Chairmanship of the OSCE 2017 in response to the current

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[20]   The analysis does not want to go into the explanation of the concept because the recent Russian intervention in Ukraine has generated much debate about the use and effectiveness of hybrid warfare, a type of warfare widely understood to blend conventional/unconventional, regular/irregular, and information and cyber warfare. More details of this expression see in [54].

threats and challenges in the OSCE area.[21] In the context of her Chairmanship, Austria focused on [56] contributing towards solving existing conflicts, especially concerning the Ukrainian crisis.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my work, the last few months have seen a further worsening of conflicts, which have already resulted in numerous victims, displacements and destruction (data see above). The Austrian Chairmanship therefore placed a major focus on addressing and countering these developments. "There can be no military solution for the existing conflicts in the OSCE area" said Sebastian Kurz, who travelled to Ukraine in January 2017. The crisis in and around Ukraine necessitated the presence of the OSCE for the security of people's lives and to help operating normal life. He underlined the need to continue supporting and further strengthening the work of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, which was deployed in 2014. Furthermore Sebastian Kurz pointed out the importance of co-operation with the Trilateral Contact Group[22] and the OSCE Chairperson's Special Representative Ambassador Martin Sajdik, as well as the Normandy Format, because a solution needs to be found to the crisis. [25]

Here a little detour is worth making for explaining the relationship between the EU and OSCE. From the beginning the EU was a strong and basic actor within the OSCE.[23] It was essential, because the EU member states had well thought out plans that they would have liked to achieve through the OSCE. It was also important that they clearly articulated the OSCE's role, with the EU's interests in mind. Despite a very good practical co-operation between these organizations, the OSCE–EU partnership should be strengthened to become more strategic. According to experts, there is a solution to this. The EU–OSCE relationship should be based on a more pragmatic cooperation of some common interests (e.g. the energy field, global and regional security challenges such as terrorism or climate problems, etc.). [26: 3–4]

The OSCE has no military capacity (contrary to NATO) and this limits its risk management competence. The OSCE has a limited legal capacity (contrary to the EU) and this limits its relationship management competence. But the OSCE e.g. has confidence-building competence and it is a forum for interstate dialogue, where cooperation is built on trust and confidence and as a rule, debates can end in results. All this together gives the uniqueness of the OSCE crisis management forms.

The OSCE Crisis Management Forms in Ukraine

The OSCE's field operations[24] help host countries (where the OSCE performs its task) in putting their OSCE commitments into practice. (The information below has been taken from (partly as a whole) the German Federal Office's [25] and OSCE's website; [27] other sources are marked.)

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[21] Beyond that: "Contributing towards defusing existing conflicts, and re-establishing trust and confidence." [55]
[22] The Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine is a group of representatives from Ukraine, the Russian Federation, and the OSCE.
[23] All 28 member states are members of the OSCE.
[24] Currently there are 16 missions to the OSCE. [50]

Currently, in Ukraine there are three field operations. Briefly about them:

1. The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine (PCU) was mentioned earlier. To sum up, it can be said, that the work of this mission covers all aspects of the OSCE activities. Moreover the governmental and non-governmental bodies of Ukraine was joined in this job. [27]

2. Special Monitoring Mission (SMM): In March 2014, the OSCE Permanent Council deployed a civilian Special Monitoring Mission. This is the largest mission of three. Mission members are 1,172 monitors, from 44 countries. [30] The presence of the SMM is intended to try reduce tensions, but sometimes it seems without real success.[25] Furthermore, its daily reports are meant to contribute to transparency and consequently, stabilization. With the Minsk documents of 2014 and the Minsk package of 2015, the SMM took on essential tasks, namely controls the ceasefire agreement and the implementation of the revocation of heavy weapons. [28] The difficulty is caused by the fact that the civilian populated areas are not fully controlled by the OSCE mission. So the residents there often encounter a cumulative risk. E.g. they usually meet freedom of movement restrictions imposed (sometimes on both sides), thus they go through mined woods… or the situation is further complicated by lack of adequate health care in these areas, furthermore no electricity or drinking water is available… it is a real humanitarian crisis.

3. Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk (OM): Nowadays the mission comprising 22 civilians has been observing traffic at the checkpoints on the Russian–Ukrainian border at Gukovo and Donetsk since July 2014. The OM operates on the territory of the Russian Federation. The observers regularly observe activities across the border at the Donetsk and Gukovo checkpoints. [29] The latest notable news is that the OSCE Permanent Council decided by consensus to extend the OM's mandate by three months to 31 January 2018. [33]

All in all in 2017, under Austrian chairmanship, the OSCE faced a difficult task, which has tested its crisis management practice. Meanwhile the events of the crisis in Ukraine helped to find the OSCE, namely the organization itself. In the meantime, apparently the West concentrated on building up deterrence within NATO (to avoid a new Crimean example in the Baltic).[26] The OSCE started work in Ukraine first and foremost, then cooperated with other organizations, firstly with the UN. All in all, neither the Austrian chairmanship nor the OSCE could settle the Ukrainian conflict in 2017, because "this would require the political will of all 57 OSCE Participating States and the decades-long alienation of Russia from the Euro–Atlantic security architecture cannot be reversed overnight." [31]

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[25] E.g. the SMM wrote down approximately 19,700 ceasefire violations between 27 November and 10 December – for the previous week this was 25% more. [30]

[26] At the Warsaw Summit, NATO decided the establishment of an enhanced forward presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland based on four battalion-sized battlegroups. [42] [38]

Conclusions

The OSCE is based on two advantageous values. These are its inclusive nature and its consensus-based decision making. But it has a significant weakness in terms of leadership (e.g. annual change of the chairperson, consensus decision of the 57 Member States) and effectiveness (e.g. lack of competencies), which limits the potential of the organization. [20] We can say that its huge geographic size has little functionality.

Lilia Shevtsova said that "as long as the current authorities continue to run Russia, it is hard to see them letting Ukraine go." [32] Robert Golanski pointed to an interesting parallel when he was analysing Russian actions in Ukraine of Winston Churchill's words: "From what I have seen of our Russian friends and allies during the war, I am convinced that there is nothing they admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for weakness, especially military weakness." [22] Then Golanski finished: "Weakness is no longer an option for Ukraine." [16]

Experts agreed that after the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements, the next urgent task is to stop the hostility in Ukraine, because without this there will be no stabilization later. Furthermore it has been remarked that "the Special Monitoring Mission has to walk a fine line between the sides demands for verification and security of its own staff." [34: 24]

Now it seems that the OSCE's "compass and vision" (as a forum for inclusive and security dialogue which is both a tool and a method) does not allow the conflict to continue to icing. This way the global and European players such as the UN, the OSCE, the EU, NATO, the Council of Europe, and others can create stability in the OSCE area.

In order to create a real sustainable (common) European security order, it would be worth focusing on the (common) Eurasian security order, too. The OSCE has the opportunity to take this step, because the key characteristics of the OSCE is adapting to new challenges.

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