

Working Paper

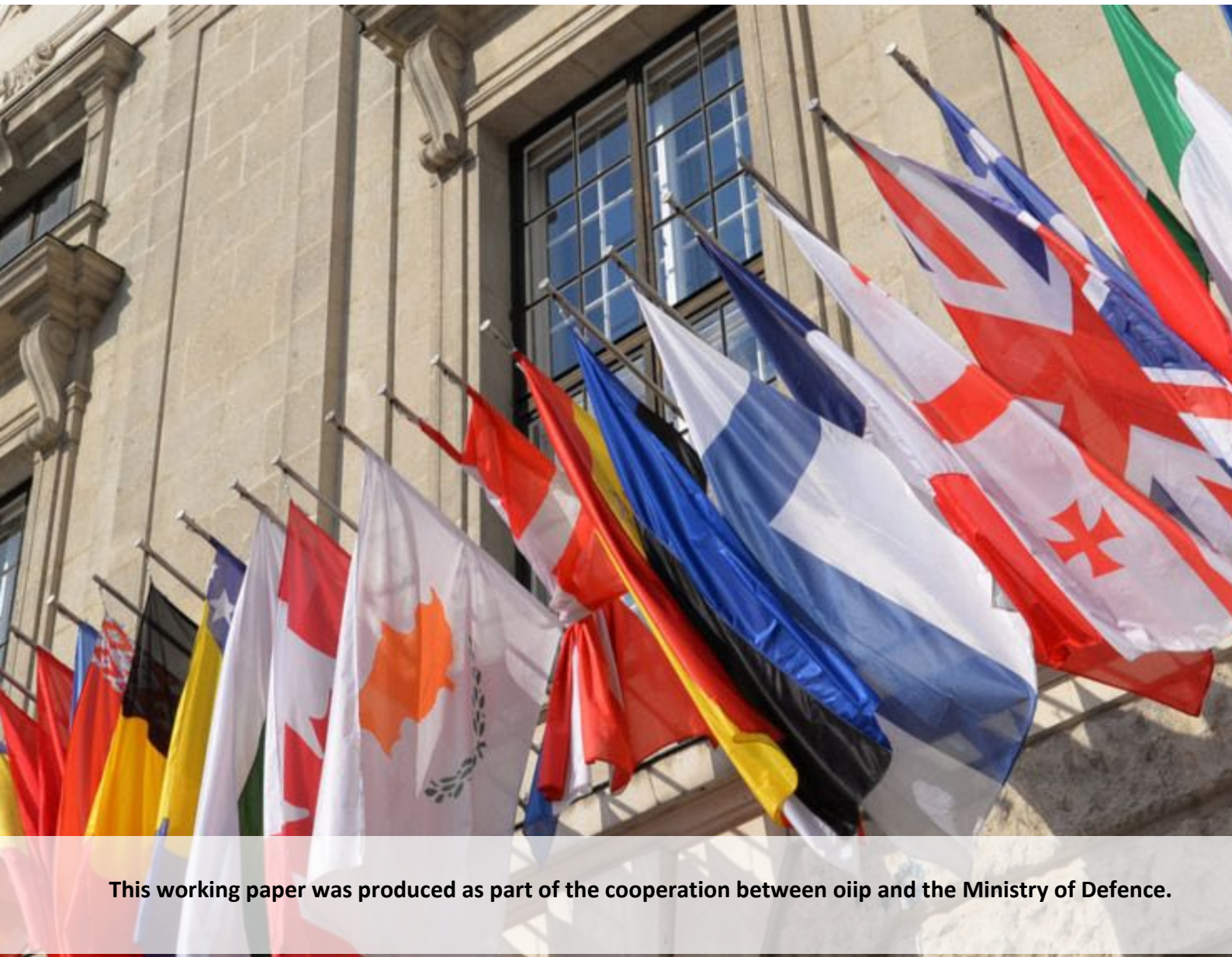
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The UN Summit of the Future (September 2024): Which opportunities for the OSCE?

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Keywords

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Executive Summary

The UN Summit of the Future, scheduled for 22-23 September 2024, brings together the United Nations' 193 member states under the theme "multilateral solutions for a better tomorrow." Despite a sour mood in New York City against the backdrop of the war in Ukraine and the Israel-Gaza conflict, the Summit can act as a 'reset'. The OSCE, which is "multilateralism in action", should use the event and its aftermaths to promote its remarkable contribution as a 'regional arrangement' under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter and its thirty-year concrete co-operation with the UN. Both UNSG Guterres's 'New Agenda for Peace' and the draft 'Pact for the Future', the two conceptual foundations of the forthcoming Summit, resonate well with the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security. By taking proactive steps in that framework, the Vienna Organization can enhance its role and effectiveness in the evolving international system.

This paper's ten recommendations include: the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration at the December 2024 Council, taking advantage of Malta's current 'double-hatted' status - OSCE Chair and non-permanent member of the UN Security Council -; the continuation of the joint OSCE-UN preparation in view of future opportunities in Ukraine, leveraging the SMM's experience and lessons learned including the use of advanced monitoring technologies; the establishment of the OSCE as a 'regional hub' for climate change, building on Guterres's call to address the interlinkages between climate, peace and insecurity as a "political priority"; and the increased involvement of the OSCE's Mediterranean and Asian partners for co-operation which offer gateways to the 'broader world'.

Zusammenfassung

Der UN-Zukunftsgipfel, der für den 22. und 23. September 2024 geplant ist, bringt die 193 Mitgliedsstaaten der Vereinten Nationen unter dem Motto "multilaterale Lösungen für eine bessere Zukunft" zusammen. Trotz der schlechten Stimmung in New York City vor dem Hintergrund des Krieges in der Ukraine und des Konflikts zwischen Israel und Gaza kann der Gipfel als "Reset" dienen. Die OSZE, die "Multilateralismus in Aktion" ist, sollte die Veranstaltung und deren Nachwirkungen nutzen, um ihren bemerkenswerten Beitrag als "regionale Abmachung" nach Kapitel VIII der UN-Charta und ihre dreißigjährige konkrete Zusammenarbeit mit den Vereinten Nationen zu fördern. Sowohl die "Neue Friedensagenda" des UN-Generalsekretärs Guterres als auch der Entwurf des "Pakts für die Zukunft", die beiden konzeptionellen Grundlagen des bevorstehenden Gipfeltreffens, stehen in engem Zusammenhang mit dem OSZE-Konzept der umfassenden Sicherheit. Indem sie in diesem Rahmen proaktive Schritte unternimmt, kann die Wiener Organisation ihre Rolle und Wirksamkeit im sich entwickelnden internationalen System stärken.

Zu den zehn Empfehlungen dieses Papiers gehören: die Verabschiedung einer Ministererklärung auf der Ratstagung im Dezember 2024, wobei der derzeitige "Doppelhut"-Status Malts - OSZE-Vorsitz und nichtständiges Mitglied des UN-Sicherheitsrats - genutzt werden soll; die Fortsetzung der gemeinsamen Vorbereitung von OSZE und UN im Hinblick auf künftige Möglichkeiten in der Ukraine, wobei die Erfahrungen und Lehren der SMM, einschließlich des Einsatzes fortschrittlicher Überwachungstechnologien, genutzt werden sollen; die Einrichtung der OSZE als "regionale Drehscheibe" für den Klimawandel, aufbauend auf der Forderung von Guterres, die Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Klima, Frieden und Unsicherheit als "politische Priorität" zu behandeln, und die verstärkte Einbeziehung der Kooperationspartner der OSZE im Mittelmeerraum und in Asien, die Tore zur "weiteren Welt" bieten.

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Introduction

On 22 and 23 September 2024, the United Nations' 193 member states are expected to gather at the Summit of the Future ahead of the General Assembly's annual high-level week in New York City. Under the overarching theme "multilateral solutions for a better tomorrow", the Summit aims at "reaffirming the Charter of the United Nations, reinvigorating multilateralism, boosting implementation of existing commitments, agreeing on concrete solutions to challenges and restoring trust among Member States" (A/RES/76/307). The meeting should result in the adoption of an intergovernmentally negotiated 'Pact for the Future', the first revised draft of which was issued on 14 May by the two co-facilitators Germany and Namibia. The Pact will draw from 'Our Common Agenda', UN Secretary-General (SG) Antonio Guterres's vision for the future of global cooperation in response to the 'UN@75 Declaration'. It will also draw from Guterres's 'New Agenda for Peace', a Policy Brief issued in July 2023 to lay the groundwork for the 2024 Summit. Regional organizations including the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) have been asked to contribute to this document. A 'Global Digital Compact' will also be adopted at the September event, with Sweden and Zambia as co-facilitators. This document will outline guiding principles for driving data governance and the digital economy, and managing the internet, Artificial Intelligence and data.

Expectations with regard to the Summit of the Future should be kept reasonable. The mood at the UN is currently very sour. The paralysis and polarization of the Security Council is certainly nothing new in the history of the world organization but, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, its fracture appears beyond the point of no return. Cascading divisions between the wider West and Russia, as well as between the U.S. and China, are blocking virtually all decisions of strategic relevance. The Israel-Gaza war reopened old wounds in the UN General Assembly. The growing rift between the 'Global South' and the West, which I recently highlighted with regard to universal human rights (Simonet, 2023), has further aggravated this trend. For these reasons, the September event might well turn to be "the right summit at the wrong time" (Gowan, 2024). UN members have agreed that the Pact would be concluded by consensus, making it likely that the text will reflect the lowest common denominator. Given the many obstacles to agreeing major reforms (for example at the distinct and parallel Intergovernmental Negotiations on the reform of the UN Security Council, currently chaired by Austria and Kuwait), some UN members are already predicting that the document will prove fairly insubstantial. Even worse, instead of an opportunity for governments to search for common ground, diplomats worry that it could in fact have the opposite effect, highlighting how far apart member states are on many problems (Gowan, 2023b). Coherence and rigor will be needed: UN member states will have to agree on

both the purposes of a new international rules-based order, and the means (norms and governance instruments) to realize them (Cleary, 2023, 17). Previous similarly ambitious universal agendas such as the first Agenda for Peace in 1992 or the Millennium Summit of the UN in 2000 have had a limited influence on the world's governance. All this explains why the 2024 Summit, so far, has triggered little media attention.

However, there is at least one reason why the OSCE should keep a close eye on the process. UNSG Guterres proposed the Summit of the Future as an occasion for promoting “a vision for multilateralism in a world in transition” as well as an “effective collective security system” (New Agenda for Peace, 2023, 3, 8 & 11), objectives that have received broad international support. For the largest regional security organization which truly is “multilateralism in action” (Lajčák, 2020, 12), the Summit therefore represents a unique opportunity.

Multilateral co-operation has lost the power of attraction that it once had, with its key institutions being questioned and at risk of being further weakened. As global issues such as climate change and threats to democracy are on the rise, disaffection with globalization and current forms of global governance has emerged, threatening the very edifice of the rules-based multilateral order. Unilateral action and bilateral dealings are challenging broader multilateral forms of governance, making the international community's response both fragmented and divergent – a ‘Great Puzzle’, the 2019 Munich Security Conference hammered (MSC, 2019, 5). Some of the world's most powerful leaders have started to openly display their distrust of international institutions. Emerging powers are rising in different regions of the world, seemingly aiming at counterbalancing the existing global order. Russia and China's ‘illiberal multilateralism’ is on the rise (Chen & Hsu, 2021, 242), with a front-in-house support for the international law-based order and the UN's central and coordinating role but filtered through the prism of each country's specific situation and interests. Financial resources are turning scarcer, in a context of growing competitiveness. Everything becomes ‘weaponized’: trade; migration; information; cyberspace... Both the UN and the OSCE seem to embody what Nathalie Tocci calls “the tragic death of global governance” (Tocci, 2023). Their significant operational limitations have appeared more obvious lately (Debuysere L. & Blockmans S., 2019, 251). Their legitimacy and even existence start to be contested (Scarone, 2022, 30; Schuette & Dijkstra, 2023), especially in a context of substantial budgetary constraints faced by both institutions – a shocking paradox in times of greater needs to act on the global and regional peace and security agenda.

Even if the Summit is unlikely to become a truly transformative moment for multilateralism and global governance, it can serve as an important reset point. It is therefore more important than ever for the

OSCE to closely follow this momentum, since the destinies of both Organizations are linked in many regards. Already in 2005, the Panel of Eminent Persons tasked to report on Strengthening the Effectiveness of the OSCE recommended to “take into account the ongoing discussions on the reform of the UN to strengthen the complementarity between the UN and regional arrangements, for example in the regional implementation of global instruments, in conflict prevention and peace-building” (PEP, 2005, para. 10 a).

Using the Summit of the Future as an opportunity, this paper assesses the close and significant relationship that the UN and the OSCE have built during the past 30 years, based on the OSCE’s status as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Building on ideas and suggestions provided by core actors of the OSCE-UN partnership I have interviewed, it also provides recommendations to the OSCE leadership and participating states in view of an adequate ‘branding’ of the Vienna institution in the margins of the September event.

The OSCE as a ‘regional arrangement’ under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter

Regional organizations play a crucial role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peacebuilding efforts. They are often the first to identify risks of potential conflicts and systematic human rights violations. They bring an important understanding of the issues at stake. They can act as a vanguard for the UN by building regional consensus around security issues before they are taken up at the global level. This is why Chapter VIII of the UN Charter provides the basis for the involvement of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security for which the Security Council is primarily responsible. It calls on member states that have entered into ‘regional arrangements’ to “make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes (...) before referring them to the Security Council” and states that “the Security Council shall encourage the development of pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements.” Moreover, it emphasizes that “the Security Council shall, where appropriate, utilize such regional arrangements or agencies for enforcement action under its authority.”

At their Helsinki meeting in 1992, states of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE, the OSCE’s ‘ancestor’) declared that the Conference is a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the Charter (Helsinki Document, Chapter IV para. 2). Building on this decision, on 28 October 1992, the UN General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 47/10 entitled ‘Cooperation between the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe’ which

stressed the need for enhanced coordination between the two organizations. Through resolution 48/5, adopted on 22 October 1993, the CSCE was given observer status at the UN.

Throughout its history, the OSCE has been one of the few international organizations that have consistently engaged and played a clear and active role as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII. The OSCE's co-operation with other organizations, including the UN as *primus inter pares*, was comprehensively defined in the Platform for Co-operative Security adopted at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999. The goal of the Platform was "to strengthen the mutually reinforcing nature of the relationship between those organizations and institutions concerned with the promotion of comprehensive security within the OSCE area" (Simonet, 2020). Years after, although tragically interrupted by Russia's invasion, the OSCE's swift and flexible response to the unfolding crisis in and around Ukraine in 2014 has been a visible example of the OSCE's ability to live up to its Chapter VIII responsibilities. The joint contributions of the UN, the OSCE, and the EU in the Geneva International Discussions and related Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism formats, set up straight after the armed hostilities between Georgia and the Russian Federation in 2008, are another important example of UN-OSCE cooperation in crisis management and conflict resolution efforts.

During the decade 2010-2020, Chapter VIII seemed to experience a gradual revival (Lind, 2014; Zanier, 2015; Van Langenhove *et al.*, 2015), but this momentum has faded away. The OSCE is well positioned to nurture and bolster the potential of Chapter VIII and the need to keep this mechanism alive.

Thirty years of operational cooperation

The UN-OSCE institutional collaboration really started with the 1993 'Framework for Co-operation' concluded between the UN Secretary-General and the then Swedish Chair of the CSCE. The CSCE/OSCE was among the first regional arrangements under Chapter VIII to formalize its relationship with the UN through the conclusion of a written document. The Framework document laid down the modalities for cooperation, which included exchange of information, political dialogue, consultations and the provision of UN expertise/advice in cases of OSCE-led peacekeeping operations in its geographical area. Its content was very much Chairpersonship-centered, in the sense that the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office (CiO) was the main point of contact of the UN Secretariat, in Vienna and New York alike, and had the overall responsibility for maintaining and developing the relations with the UN. While this approach may have reflected the division of labor between the OSCE CiO and Secretariat back in 1993, during the implementation of the agreement, the OSCE Secretariat has assumed an increasingly central role;

for all practical purposes, it has transformed itself into the UN's point of contact on all matters of mutual interest.

Although no clear division of labour was agreed,¹ the 1993 Framework corresponded to a 'golden age' of UN-OSCE collaboration in the Western Balkans. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, formal co-operation was initiated in the spring of 1993 and expanded following the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, and the establishment of the OSCE Mission to BiH in 1995 (Kemp, 1995). In Kosovo, the OSCE Mission was linked to Security Council Resolution 1244 and was assigned the lead role in matters relating to institution-building and human rights, as a distinct but constituent component in the framework of the UN mission (UNMIK).

On 21 December 2001, by its resolution 56/216 on cooperation between the UN and the OSCE, the UN General Assembly acknowledged the increasing contribution of the latter to the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security in its region through activities in early warning and preventive diplomacy, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, and arms control and disarmament. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution and the cooperation between the two bodies. For unclear reasons, after two reports,² this practice definitely stopped in 2002. On 16 March 2006, the OSCE Permanent Council adopted a Declaration welcoming UNSCR 1631 (2005) on UN co-operation with regional organizations and declaring the OSCE's readiness to further strengthen co-operation with the UN (PC.DOC/1/06). In 2019, the 1993 Framework was supplemented by a short Joint Statement between the two Organizations, the main added value of which was to endorse the transformation of the CSCE to the OSCE in 1995 and highlight the growing partnership and institutional links.³

The 1993 Framework has been reinforced over the decades by a host of agreements between the OSCE and various UN bodies and entities, strengthening the co-operation between the organizations from high-level political collaboration to technical co-operation on the ground, allowing for flexible approaches and adaptation in the spirit of Chapter VIII. For instance, with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), a first exchange of letters signed in 2011 set out the terms and conditions of a Joint

¹ A/48/549 (Cooperation between the UN and the CSCE, 1 November 1993) simply stated that "it has been agreed that there should be a practical division of labour between the two organizations, with one taking the lead on each issue of common interest, and the other playing a supporting role".

² UN doc. A/56/125 (29 June 2001) and A/57/217 (16 July 2002).

³ Joint Statement to Supplement the Framework for Cooperation and Coordination between the United Nations Secretariat and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 10 December 2019, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2019-12-10/note-correspondents-joint-statement-supplement-the-framework-for-cooperation-and-coordination-between-the-united-nations-secretariat-and-the-organization-for>.

Action Plan which has been extended several times since then. Together with UNODC, the OSCE coordinates capacity-building activities to counter cybercrime, including on cryptocurrencies and dark web investigations in South-Eastern Europe, and on cross-border requests for electronic evidence in Central Asia. In this last region, the two organizations jointly contribute to enforcing UN Security Council resolutions concerning and applying targeted financial sanctions against ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities.

The OSCE's Chapter VIII status has made it all the more important to align its agenda with the UN's global goals. The OSCE has been regularly working in support of UN-driven processes, for instance by promoting the implementation of a number of UN Security Council Resolutions and UN Conventions in OSCE participating states. These include UNSC Res. 1540 on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (with the UN Office for Disarmament as a key partner), Res. 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), as well as UN policies on migration, countering terrorism, cyber, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, environment and climate change/climate security. The UN 2030 Agenda built around five pillars: peace, people, planet, prosperity, and partnerships, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by world leaders in 2015, also resonated well with the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security. SDG 16, the 'peace pillar' and the natural entry point of the OSCE, has been considered an enabler or catalyst for successful implementation of many other goals. As a facilitator of regional co-operation, the OSCE has also played an important role as a bridge between the global, regional and national levels necessary for the success of the SDGs. Its cross-dimensional approach and capacity to create synergies have well served SDG 17 (Strengthening Global Partnerships), for example as a member of the UN Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) and as a coordinator of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, which has served as a platform for joint advocacy by international, regional and subregional organizations dealing with combating trafficking in human beings since 2004.

Over the past decade the visibility of the OSCE has grown significantly within the entire UN system. Two factors have contributed to these positive developments. First, the prominent role of the OSCE in addressing the crisis in and around Ukraine. In this context, the OSCE Secretariat has asked and received UN expertise on mission start-up, ceasefire mediation and the use of technology, whereas the OSCE Chief Monitor and the Special Representative of the OSCE CiO in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Group have addressed the UN Security Council on several occasions. Second, the efforts of the successive OSCE SGs to strengthen the partnership. Back in 2014 a Security Day event was dedicated to the role of regional organizations under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter (OSCE Secretariat, 2014). The OSCE SGs have attended annually the high-level segment of the UNGA, addressed the UN Security Council

as well as major UN events such as the SDG Summit in 2019 and the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. In turn, UN high level officials and top leadership have addressed the OSCE bodies on several occasions.⁴

In 2016, in order to deepen the cooperation between the two organizations and following a proposal of the OSCE Secretariat, the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (UN/DPPA) established a Liaison Office (LO) in Vienna, as an important step in further strengthening partnership. In addition to supporting senior-level and working-level engagements between both organizations on a broad range of issues, the LO channels expertise from various departments of the UN Secretariat to the OSCE, including by ensuring effective information sharing on relevant peace and security issues as well as relevant policy documents. It also supports inter-agency fora that are regularly organized to facilitate high-level and working-level engagements between both organizations. The LO soon gained access to the weekly meetings of the OSCE Permanent Council and Forum for Security Co-operation, which allows it to monitor and report on institutional and political developments in Vienna that are relevant to New York. This resource is key to informing the UN Headquarters on a number of peace and security issues led by the OSCE and ensure stronger synergies between the two organizations. Effectively channeling the support and expertise of various UN departments to strengthen the capacities of the OSCE Secretariat has been increasingly important element of cooperation during the deployment of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). The LO has been instrumental in supporting the efforts of the OSCE Secretariat to finalize the 2017 Letter of Understanding signed with the UN Department of Field Support (DFS) - today Department of Operational Support (DOS) -, aiming at providing the OSCE with access to UN system contracts and technical training.

On 26 May 2023, the two organizations celebrated three decades of mutually beneficial close collaboration. A few days earlier, on 4 May, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister of Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia Bujar Osmani, addressed the UN Security Council to reflect on this experience. OSCE SG Helga Schmid also engaged throughout the year with several UN High-Level officials to advance the cooperation and collective/joint efforts in addressing the challenges of international peace and security agenda, including in the upcoming framework of the New Agenda for Peace. The 2024 Chair Malta promotes his dual role as current OSCE Chair and an elected member of the Security Council to advocate for and enhance the co-operation between the OSCE and the UN. Chairperson-in-Office Ian Borg addressed UN Security Council on 19 April 2024. “In so much of this work, our partnership with the

⁴ In May 2022, UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo addressed the OSCE Permanent Council.

United Nations has been and remains vital. (...) We have a lot to show for our work together.” (Schmid, 2023).

Ten recommendations to the OSCE and its participating countries

The UN Summit of the Future offers an important opportunity in response to a compelling need to re-conceptualize and reform the international system in the light of profound and accelerating, geopolitical, geo-economic, social and technological changes. The OSCE could consider the following recommendations and use the event as a sounding board to take action.

1. Further herald the value of Chapter VIII in 2024 and 2025 (OSCE+50)

The New Agenda for Peace relies on “**robust regional frameworks and organizations**” in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, that promote trust-building, transparency and détente. These bodies are “critical building blocks for the networked multilateralism that I envisage”, SG Guterres highlighted, particularly in regions where long-standing security architectures are collapsing – which is unfortunately the case in the Euro-Atlantic region (New Agenda for Peace, 2023, 12 & 18). The draft Pact for the Future calls for “enhanc(ing) cooperation between the United Nations and regional, sub-regional and other organizations, which will be critical to maintaining international peace and security, promoting and protecting human rights, and achieving sustainable development.” (Pact Rev. 1, Transforming global governance, Action 51, (f)).

- **The OSCE could set up a dedicated Chapter VIII side-event in the margins of the Summit of the Future, possibly in collaboration with partner organizations such as the European Union (EU), the ASEAN, the League of Arab States (LAS) or the African Union (AU).**
- **The 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Accords (H+50) in 2025 will coincide with the UN’s 80th anniversary. Both commemorations could offer the framework for discussion, workshops and side-events on Chapter VIII.**
- **The OSCE should support the recommendation of the 2023 report of the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, co-chaired by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia, and Stefan Löfven, former Prime Minister of Sweden, to “Establish a collective security framework between the United Nations and major regional bodies.” (HLAB, shift 5, rec. 3, 50-51).**

2. An OSCE Declaration on the Summit of the Future at the 2024 Ministerial Council meeting

Notwithstanding sharp political divisions and polarization within the OSCE, a **short and concise MC declaration** building on UNGA24 deliberations, acknowledging the outcome of the Summit and the OSCE's role in supporting and complementing the UN, and emphasizing the specific role of regional organizations, could be endorsed at the Valetta Ministerial meeting in December 2024.⁵ **Foreign Minister Borg's 'double hat' (current CiO and non-permanent member of the UNSC) and his commitment to both organizations could be leveraged to advance some issues relating to the OSCE-UN cooperation during the Maltese Chairpersonship.**

3. The African Union's 'reset' with the UN: observe and learn from it

Another Chapter VIII regional organization, the African Union (AU) recently gained considerable visibility on the UN agenda. The signature of a framework agreement on human rights on 28 November 2023 by the two organizations followed the 2017 UN-AU Joint Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and the adoption of UNSC Res. 2719 (2023) on UN Funding for African-led Peace Missions, which have created a new chapter for peace operations in Africa. SG Guterres, who regularly attends meetings of AU's instances, coined the UN-AU's partnership "a cornerstone of multilateralism".

Although the panafrikan organization and the OSCE differ in many respects, **the OSCE could draw inspiration from the AU's example to reinvigorate its own relationship with the UN, both at the institutional level and at practical / technical levels** such as climate change (see hereafter rec. 7). **The interaction between Vienna and Addis Ababa, which has been almost inexistent these past two decades, could be enhanced, also using the OSCE's North-African partners for co-operation as leverage and facilitators** (see hereafter rec. 10).

4. "Explor(ing) new ways to be helpful in Ukraine"⁶

History teaches us that windows of opportunity emerge unexpectedly. There might be a political constellation in the future in which an OSCE field operation is tasked to monitor and verify a ceasefire

⁵ The failure of the 2015 Serbian OSCE CiO to negotiate a MC decision on the OSCE's role to implement the SDGs related to environmental issues, testifies that similar initiatives ten years after would be even more complicated.

⁶ This is one of the remarkable "Seven Priorities for Preserving the OSCE in a Time of War" issued by the International Crisis Group (ICG, 2022, 16).

and/or other developments on the ground. **The OSCE can and should prepare for such a scenario** (Wittkowsky, 2022, 81).

Discussions in 2016-2017 to establish a **UN Peace Keeping Operation in Ukraine**, based on the Russian draft proposal for a UN 'protection mission' for the OSCE SMM (Tass, 2017) and Ukraine's diametrically opposed draft resolution stated by President Poroshenko (ICG, 2018), saw the OSCE and its Conflict Prevention Center (CPC) ready for a direct involvement in an eventual planning process.

The OSCE and the UN should continue to further build on their close and practical cooperation on operational matters with regard to mission planning, mission start-up and related technical training and exchange of expertise. OSCE–UN operational outreach and partnership should be strengthened in all phases of operational planning and implementation, but specifically aimed in developing and concluding standing operational, logistical, technical, informational and other type of arrangements for mutual support during pre-deployment preparations, initial deployment and conducting of an OSCE field operation.

5. Making full benefit of the best practices and lessons learned from the SMM

SG Guterres underlined the need to **strengthen the “toolbox for networked multilateralism”** (New Agenda for Peace, 2023, 14). Having highlighted such a need for years, the OSCE has a lot to offer in leveraging the role of regional organizations in that regard.

The SMM, throughout its relatively short history, has proven comparatively speedy and highly ductile in deploying increasingly sophisticated monitoring technologies (Unmanned/Unpersonned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), satellite images, remote (on-site) cameras), becoming a cutting-edge peace operation compared to the UN's more mixed record in deployed technology (Kemp, 2018, 117; Dorn & Giardullo, 2020). In that regard, the largest international civilian field operation in Ukraine should not be relegated to history. **Important lessons can still be identified for future monitoring work or ceasefire monitoring context, whether in Ukraine or elsewhere**, including agreeing on the mechanisms for consequences when violations occur, better understanding the limitations of remote sensing technology in monitoring, and establishing more robust planning for mission suspension, evacuation and termination (Verjee, 2022).

The 2017 Letter of Understanding signed with UN DFS which was – obviously – very much SMM-centered, could be extended and expanded in order to explore further technical assistance and provide the OSCE with a broader access to the wealth of goods and services that the UN can offer.

6. Set up and possibly lead creative and case-specific partnerships

In many peace and security-related areas, the OSCE has been setting the tone and acting as a ‘center of excellence’. The **model of its Alliance against Trafficking in Persons** could be replicated to areas such as the WPS agenda, arms control, climate change/security, and cyber/ICT security. Such OSCE-coordinated forms of ‘flexible multilateralism’ (‘groups of friends’ or ‘coalitions of the willing’) would be particularly useful to support and complement the UN’s action.

7. Coordinate a ‘joint regional hub’ on climate change and security

Climate change/security is not a separate agenda but an integral part of the international community’s prevention, peace-making and peacebuilding work. In its Action 6, the New Agenda for Peace calls for addressing the **interlinkages between climate, peace and insecurity**, and for recognizing it as a “**political priority**” (2023, 21). The draft Pact for the Future further builds on “environmental and climate impacts on peace and security” (Action 17).

Building on the High-Level Conference on Climate Change organized by SG Schmid on 7 July 2023 and its follow-up, drawing on the considerable expertise gathered by some of its participating states including host country Austria (Lampalzer & Hainzl, 2024), **the OSCE should express readiness to join and even coordinate one of the ‘joint regional hubs’ on climate, peace and security that SG Guterres foresees as a way to connect national and regional experience.**

Based on the feasibility study commissioned by the OSCE Secretariat in 2019,⁷ a **Regional Thematic Hub** on climate change/security could be experimented in **Central Asia** where the OSCE holds field operations as well as significant projects (particularly on water management) in all five countries.

Here in particular, **the OSCE could learn from the AU** and other African regional arrangements (see rec. 3 above). Concepts such as the African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) established in 2008 as a

⁷ Ivo Petrov, Luis Gomez-Echeverri & Matthias Boss, draft Feasibility Study on “OSCE Thematic Hubs or Centers for Analysis and Research in the Second Dimension”, 28 August 2019 (the author’s document, not publicly available).

knowledge hub and policy facilitation arm for mitigation and adaptation to climate change and the IGAD's (Intergovernmental Authority on Development in Eastern Africa) Regional Climate Security Coordination Mechanism, established in 2023 in partnership with the UN Climate Security Mechanism,⁸ could be replicated to Central Asia under the OSCE's auspices.

8. A pole of excellence on small arms and light weapons

The OSCE's *acquis* and action with regard to **small arms and light weapons (SALW)** is one of its most recognized assets. Through its dynamic role in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects, the OSCE actively contributes to the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on SALW and aims to reduce illicit arms flows in line with target 16.4 of the SDGs (OSCE, 2024, 5).

In line with the UN Agenda for Disarmament (UNODA, 2018) and with Action 7 of the New Agenda for Peace ("reduce the human costs of weapons"), the OSCE should establish itself as a pole of excellence to promote the first recommendation set forward by SG Guterres, which it has already largely implemented: "Strengthen, develop and implement regional, subregional and national instruments and road maps to address challenges related to the diversion, proliferation and misuse of SALW" (New Agenda for Peace, 2023, 23).

9. Use the UN Global Digital Compact to leverage the benefit of digital technology

In line with its written contribution to the New Agenda for Peace, **the OSCE should keep closely abreast of the UN's endeavor to "leverage the benefits of technology to analyse and synthesize information, to contribute to early warning and more targeted response to emerging threats, while at the same time increasing the resilience against harmful activities emanating from cyberspace, including cybercrime" (OSCE contribution to the New Agenda for Peace).**

⁸ Established in 2018 as a joint initiative between UN DPPA, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), then joined by the UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Climate Security Mechanism (CSM) seeks to help the UN system address climate-related security risks more systematically. To this end, the CSM supports UN field missions, UN Resident Coordinators and regional organizations to conduct climate security risk assessments and develop risk management strategies (see https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023-06/climate_security_mechanism_brochure_may_2023.pdf).

10. On all these goals, engage the OSCE Partners for Co-operation

The OSCE maintains relations with its Mediterranean (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia) and Asian Partners for Co-operation (Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand). Paradoxically, though, the PFC are rarely involved when it comes to the OSCE-UN interaction, although several of them are prominent actors in the 'Global South'.

The OSCE should make greater use of the capacity of its PFC to act as transmission belts with the UN system and the 'broader world' and engage further with other regional organizations that PFC are members of (ASEAN, AU, LAS), hence contributing to 'networked' multilateralism.

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