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SECOND INFORMAL UNODA WORKSHOP ON GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNT WITH RESPECT TO EXISTING NUCLEAR-WEAPONS FREE ZONES

Panel 4: Transparency, security- and confidence-building measures,
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Reflections from the European point of view

I wish to thank the Under-Secretary General and the UNODA for inviting me to this panel.

At the outset, let me point out that my remarks today are solely on my personal responsibility.

One can identify a multitude of reasons why the model and framework of post-Cold War Europe in building security, cooperation and trust - better known as the Helsinki Process - cannot be exported to other regions.

Yet, I would argue that, despite temporal and geopolitical differences, many lessons and best practices of the Helsinki Process are worth looking at from the perspective of the Middle East region.

Before taking a closer look at some confidence- and security-building measures proper, I would like to raise a couple of general factors in the overall European security process and structure which I see quite fundamental for the development of CSBMs over the years.

First, inclusiveness: the Conference (and now Organization) for the Security and Co-operation in Europe has all the states from Vancouver to Vladivostok as its participating States.

Second, a broad agenda. The OSCE focuses on comprehensive security with an agenda in the fields of, inter alia, human rights, media freedom, politico-military issues, conflict prevention and CSBMs. Thus, all participating States can find issues of relevance for them on the all-European agenda.

I am convinced that these two factors have been cornerstones of the relatively successful development of security- and confidence-building measures in Europe during past decades. By "relative success" I refer to a situation where after three decades of positive development, we have had to witness that the basic principles and commitments underlying the CSBM regime have been broken. This has had erosive impact on the implementation of the CSBM regime.

The building of trust and security is not a self-evidently progressive process, but it takes political will and nursing from all parties involved to be sustained.

All in all, the OSCE has in place an impressive set of measures which could inspire building of zones free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles in other regions, the Middle East included, and maybe, in the Middle East in particular.

After all, today's Middle East has many of the same characteristics that Cold War Europe had. Those include a persistent threat of the use of force, weapons of mass destruction in the possession of many governments, a

deep lack of trust and stability, and a general perception of a zero-sum situation.

Maybe the biggest difference is symmetry or lack of it. In Europe of 70s the security situation and threat perceptions emerging from it were pretty symmetrical. In the Middle East today there are many asymmetrical conflicts.

As known, the discussion of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction has over the years highlighted the question about what should come first - peace and security or disarmament.

In the Helsinki Process, political agreement on the basic principles of interstate behaviour and commitment to cooperation preceded step-by-step deals on military confidence-building measures. Disarmament measures - in fact, agreed by the then two military alliances - only came later.

I leave disarmament measures like CFE Treaty aside, and try to give a brief overview of main CSBMs that promote predictability and military stability among OSCE participating States.

Time will not allow me to take you through the long development process of the CSBMs in the OSCE area, so let me introduce to you a cross-section of the main categories of those CSBMs today. What has been essential in the process is that the first somewhat vague and declaratory CSBMs were later followed by more robust and verifiable ones.

The earliest CSBMs, established by the Helsinki Final Act in 1975, aimed to prevent a surprise attack and reduce the risk of conflict sparked by misunderstandings or miscalculations.

The Vienna Document, an evolving instrument first adopted in 1990, contains politically binding CSBMs. They promote predictability and military stability among OSCE participating States through transparency and verification measures.

The OSCE CSBM regime is not a static collection of norms. In 1992, the Forum for Security Co-operation was created as a platform that supports the work on CSBMs, arms control, and disarmament. The Forum meets every week. It reviews, among other things, the implementation of the CSBMs. The FSC has also established an Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting. There the implementation of Vienna Document is evaluated by the capitals of participating States.

To increase transparency the Participating States have to provide each other with information about their military forces annually, including on personnel strength and major conventional weapon and equipment systems, organization as well as defence plans and budgets. They have also to notify each other ahead of time about major military activities such as exercises.

In order to make verification possible, Participating States have to accept three inspections and at least one evaluation visit per year to check the provided military data. They have also committed to invite other States to observe certain military activities above a certain threshold of troops or equipment numbers.

The Vienna Document, furthermore, includes a consultation and co-operation obligation in case of unusual military activity or increasing tensions.

To facilitate management of some 3500 notifications between the Participating States per year under the Vienna Document, a computer-based Communications Network has been built.

Next, I would like to take up the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. Adopted in 1994, it constitutes a rulebook for Participating States to guide their inter-State relations and to increase confidence in the armed and security forces and ensure the protection of their human rights by placing them under democratic control. A major cornerstone of this agreement is democratic - civilian - control of the armed forces as well as respect of the international humanitarian law and proportionate and adequate use of force.

The OSCE Participating States have adopted documents on Small Arms and Light Weapons, and on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition. They stipulate norms, principles and measures to regulate and manage the life cycle of Small Arms and Light Weapons from production to destruction. They also control their export.

The Forum for Security Co-operation supports the participating States to implement the provisions of these documents. The FSC also assists OSCE States, upon their request with collecting and destroying Small Arms and Light Weapons.

The OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation is active in non-proliferation, too. It supports Participating States with the complex task of implementing the UN Security Council Resolution 1540.

To sum up, while I see inclusiveness and a comprehensive agenda important for the success of a regional CSBM regime, the process towards it

can take different forms and sequences. If considered useful and inspiring, European experiences, naturally, are available to other regions and states.

Security in the OSCE area is inseparably linked to that of neighbouring regions and can be strengthened through dialogue and the sharing of norms, commitments and expertise. In fact, there already exists a channel for this. The OSCE maintains privileged relations with 11 Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation to better address shared security challenges.

Thank you for your attention!