

of Foreign Ministers, the Permanent Secretariat in Vienna and Prague, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in Warsaw, and the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) in Vienna. At Helsinki in 1992, the CSCE developed further competence in the field of conflict prevention and dispute settlement, established a High Commissioner for National Minorities (HCNM), and forged an explicit link to the United Nations (UN) as a regional security body under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. In 1994, the CSCE solidified these institutional changes by transforming itself into the OSCE.

IV. The Origins of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC)

One of the more noteworthy outcomes of the 1992 Helsinki Conference was the establishment of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), a multilateral venue for dialogue and negotiation on issues of military security. For two years, the FSC existed side-by-side with the Consultative Committee of the CPC. In 1994, the OSCE addressed this duplication by merging the two bodies.

The FSC consists of representatives from OSCE participating States (at the ambassadorial level) and meets weekly in Vienna. It was originally designed to enhance the competence of the OSCE in arms control and disarmament, and to facilitate implementation of the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty and the Vienna Document of 1992 on CSBMs. More generally, the FSC was seen as a mechanism for operationalising the CSCE's norms of openness and transparency. Therefore, in addition to its weekly meetings, the FSC was tasked with preparing seminars on military doctrine, hosting the Annual Implementation Assessment Meetings on CSBMs, and managing an annual exchange of military information among the (now) 55 participating states. Although the Permanent Council (PC) of the OSCE remains the primary body for political consultations in the fields of early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management, the FSC does serve as a forum in which to discuss the military aspects of potential conflicts.⁵ Moreover, the FSC's agenda has begun to tackle issues that are clearly political as well as military – such as the role of armed forces in a democratic society.

The triple mandate of the FSC is specified in Chapter V of the 1992 Helsinki Document:

1) Arms control and disarmament: The first role of the FSC was to negotiate concrete measures to reduce the conventional armed forces of OSCE states. The Forum's "Programme for Immediate Action" set out six specific areas for future negotiation:

- i) harmonisation of obligations contracted by OSCE states under the agreements covering conventional forces in Europe;
- ii) development of CSBMs (as described in the Vienna Document of 1992);

⁵ The quality of state representation is the same in both the PC and FSC, and there are joint meetings between the two bodies.