

or communicative. The same is true, on the whole, of the CPC. In addition to the implementation dimension of these institutions, there may be a place for a community-wide dialogue on conflict prevention and regulation which would draw upon the practical experience of the functional institutions. The FSC may be an appropriate venue for such a dialogue, because its proceedings are less politicised than those of, for example, the PC. The experiences and expertise of the HCNM, ODIHR, the CPC and the permanent missions could provide invaluable input into a discussion of this type, which could proceed in an FSC working group and associated seminar activity with broad participation from the expert community and civil society stakeholders.

The OSCE - despite its lack of operational depth - has a significant comparative advantage in peace-building operations because (as mentioned earlier) it is the only truly inclusive **regional** organization operating in the area of security in Europe. OSCE organs - as well as other multilateral organizations - have been involved in many of these aspects of building peace, both in Southeastern Europe and in the Caucasus and in Central Asia (e.g. Tajikistan). With the passage of time, the OSCE implementation role in peacebuilding missions has grown considerably, as is evident in both Bosnia and Kosovo. However, this again has not been a significant element of the evolving discussion in the FSC.

Problems of Transition

A fourth major cluster of security issues facing OSCE states are those related to political and economic transition. The propensity of member states to suffer from civil disorder is closely related to the legitimacy of structures of governance within them. Many of the newly independent states are not fully democratic, as is suggested by recent OSCE refusals to monitor (and hence legitimize) electoral processes in Central Asia.²⁶ Limitations on effective participation in politics risk fostering rising socio-political tension in these societies and consequent outbreaks of anti-government violence. Widespread politically motivated violation of human rights in Southeastern Europe and the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union risk strengthening extra-systemic (and violent) patterns of opposition.

Table 2 below provides ratings of performance for OSCE transitional states in the establishment of free and democratic polities. The data are drawn from Freedom House. Although the indices are complex and contested, there is little reason to contest the overall ranking of the states in question or the direction of trends within the group as a whole. According to these measures, over the period under consideration 13 made progress towards freedom, 11 regressed, and 2 remained unchanged. The 11 moving back are geographically concentrated in the Caucasus, the three Slavic republics of the former Soviet Union, and Central Asia (the exceptions being Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). The 12 moving forward are concentrated in the northern and middle tiers of Central Europe, as well as the Baltics. In short, the data indicate a deepening division in the OSCE

²⁶ See, for example, OSCE/ODIHR, "OSCE/ODIHR Will Not Deploy Observer Mission to Turkmenistan Parliamentary Elections" (9 December, 1999). <http://www.osce.org/e/docs/presrel/1999-090-odihr.htm>.