

Romania's Contributions Towards Strengthening and Optimizing the Institutional Framework of the OSCE

Key words: OSCE, institutional reform, co-operative security, Chairman in Office, institutional framework

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Abstract

The introductory chapter focusses on explaining the reasons for choosing this topic in a first instance and then explains the methodology used in elaborating the paper. Thus, considering the complexity of the OSCE as institution it is underlined the fact that the study is based based on several paradigms, that characterizes the organizations: realism, neorealism, liberalism and constructivism.

The diversity of the actors involved, on the other hand imposes a pluridisciplinary approach using methods not only particular for international relations, but also for sociology of international relations, political sciences and history.

As far as the sources are considered, they covered three main fields, academical, political and mass-media. Nevertheless, a fundamental role in elaborating the theses was represented by the informal element.

The academical information sources were developed in what we called the triangle **Geneva** (Graduate Institute for International Studies) - **Hague** (through the publication „Helsinki Monitor”) – **Hamburg** (through publications of the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg).

The second chapter, *The institutional framework of the OSCE*, focusses on three aspects. First, there are presented the fundamental features of the OSCE as an organization based on co-operative security, insisting on the particularities that confer it a special status, apart from the traditional militar ones, care îi conferă un statut aparte, diferit de cel al organizațiilor de securitate militară, emphasizing the advantages and disadvantages os such an approach. Secondly there are analized the decisional and negotiation bodies, in a historical evolution, from there initial forms since OSCE was a conference to the moment of Romanian chairmanship. Thus, the analysis

covers several aspects concerning the efficiency or the reforming needs of Summits, Ministerial Council, Superior Council, Permanent Council and Forum for Security Cooperation. A special attention is granted to the last two, not only because they represent the most important bodies of the OSCE, but they are also subjects that everyone agrees they need radical reforms some of them achieved under the Romanian chairmanship.

The third part of this chapter deals with the operational structures of the OSCE. As they represent the technocratic dimension of the organization, they (Chairman in office, Secretary General, High Commissioner on National Minorities, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Parliamentary Assembly, Representative for Freedom of Media and the OSCE field Missions) are also studied from the perspective of their efficiency or reforming needs. As in the case of decisional bodies, the operational ones are also analyzed in their historical evolution, emphasizing those particularities that allow them to become efficient instruments in conflict management.

Fourthly, we tried an analysis of the concepts, mentioning the cases when the terminology does not match the field activity, or the cases when the institutions double their responsibilities in a costly and useless way.

Despite its title, that might suggest that it is not in compliance with the subject, the third chapter, presents not just aspects related to Austria's mandate, during 2000, but also the difficulties, challenges and opportunities they posed for Romania. In a first part it is shown that Austrian chairmanship had a rich agenda, focussed on the priorities of the organization, but it faced an unhappy moment – the ascension of Haider. The fragile institutions of the OSCE, doubled by the Austrian realities undermined the authority of the new Chairperson of the organization, many

participating states considering it without legitimacy, under the circumstances that he/she is the representative of a state governed by a party with an orientation incompatible with the values and norms of the OSCE, making impossible almost any initiative.

The second part deals with the activities and the results of the Vienna Ministerial Council (December 2000), a unique moment, in the negative sense, of the OSCE's history. Austria's situation, joined by a lack of discipline and misunderstandings within the organization conducted to what was afterwards called „Vienna Ministerial failure”, as no document reached consensus, not even the budget. In the final part of the chapter are presented and analyzed the solutions proposed by the great actors of the organization in order to overcome a delicate situation and normalize the situation, though consensus of any kind could not be reached, especially due to the different views and approaches of the USA and Russia.

The fourth chapter, though might not look in a harmony with the rest of the paper was necessary, as the information exposed confirm our theses that aims not only to reveal the Romanian contributions towards institutional reforms, but tries also to find the motivations for taking two great responsibilities – co-ordination of an institution in a severe crisis, an financial burden, considering the costs that a mandate of Chairperson impose. In this respect, it was never a secret the fact that Romania used its mandate to reach its goals of foreign policy – NATO and EU accession. În acest sens, nu a constituit niciodată un secret faptul că România a folosit mandatul de președinte al OSCE pentru a-și îndeplini cele mai stringente obiective de politică externă – accesul în NATO și aderarea la UE. It is easy noticeable the fact that Romania spent huge efforts in creating co-operative formulas OSCE – NATO, compared to the previous years. Nevertheless,

though this thing is extremely visible, co-operation's intensification was a positive thing for both parts involved.

The sixth chapter, *The Romanian Chairmanship of the OSCE* deals with several key elements concerning the position that Romania enjoyed during the year 2001. Its first part deals with the history of the surprisingly decisions that backed this choice – the Istanbul Summit in 1999, when Romania is invested in this dignity, though the elections in Romania were due to the year 2000, which meant that no one could know the name of the future foreign affairs minister or in other words who was going to be the Chairman in Office. Secondly, there are analyzed the objectives and priorities of the Romanian Chairman and last, the opportunities offered by the new position. The second part is focussed on the multitude of challenges that Romania had to face in its new job, translated not only in an extremely tensioned situation in most of the conflict areas, but also in a tensioned atmosphere inside the organization, facing stringent needs for institutional reforms, but with different views concerning these reforms.

The third part reveals the Romanian vision concerning the evolution that the organization needs to follow, by a set of reforms permissive enough not to destroy its main characteristic as a flexible political instrument opened for dialogue, but well equipped with means to overcome threats, ready to fulfill its purposes.

The sixth chapter, though might look as a nonsense represents a radiography of Chairman's activities as far as field work is concerned, being one of the most efficient instruments to evaluate it, especially from a cantitative point of view. Press releasses belong entirely to the OSCE officials (spokespersons), thus they represent the official position of the organization.

The over forty visits as a Chairman in office end all with a press release and a lot other are joining each of his statements on different occasions and events. The analysis is a chronological one and does not consist in enumerating events, but also in emphasizing elements of language and strategy in using it.

The seventh chapter has as main objective an analysis of the Romanian Chairmanship using one of the most efficient ways of evaluation, the Ministerial Council, that groups the foreign affairs ministers of the participating states. In its sub-divisions, the results of the Romanian Chairmanship are looked upon in a - one might say – unnaturally perspective, that of a chain reaction – Chairman’s action – the activities and results of the Ministerial Council – press responses, through the interviewed officials. Though the evaluation reveals a positive situation concerning the event, there are presented several unsuccesses, some of them paradoxically due to the reforming measures taken under the Romanian Chairmanship.

The eighth chapter argues that the diplomatic Romanian offensive within the cannot be understood or taken out from the regional context that Romania faced at the beginning of the 21st century. Co-operation necessity under all aspects could not be covered in the case of the OSCE just by itself, especially in the field of economy and organized crime, making imperative a complementarity within regional initiatives, like our case, The Stability Pact. As the foreign policy goals were clear formulated, the use of the Stability Pact as a complimentary instrument for co-operation with its activity during its mandate of Chairmanship of the OSCE helped to facilitate could be not anything else but helpful. The international jobs that allowed contacts with potential European or Euro /Atlantic partners joined by the actions taken

through the Stability Pact (put under the auspices of the OSCE, though not necessarily under its competences) were elements that competed for a better co-operation within the organization with the states that hosted missions on their territories.

The ninth chapter is conceived as an evaluation instrument of the activities of the Romanian Chairmanship of the OSCE, by comparing it to the presidencies that followed on one side and to the content of the debates that followed on the other side. What is very clear in a first instance is the fact that though important institutional reforms were realized under the Romanian Chairmanship, after it, the old oppositions gain territory on OSCE's agenda, overtaking the reforming euphoria. The antagonisms not only diminished the efficiency of the organization in the years that followed, but also threatened the entire existence in its original formula. (i.e. the intention of Russia to leave the organization). Hopes were expressed for as called "Panel of Eminent Persons" (grouping several appreciated persons related to the OSCE), but even so, the organization could not reach the same degree of cohesion, efficiency and prosperity that characterized the period of 2001.

Finally, conclusions confirm the initial hypothesis – an institutional reform has been made under the Romanian chairmanship of the OSCE, one not to be repeated after or noticed before in the short history of the organization. The turn of the after events – the decrease as importance of the OSCE in conflict management has multiple causes depending not on the institutional efficiency, but more likely to the appearance on the security stage of more important actors in the fields traditionally under the competences of the organization.