The OSCE Implementation Meeting on Human Dimension Issues 1995

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The Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Implementation Meeting on Human Dimension Issues 1995\(^1\) was held in Warsaw from 2 to 19 October. It was also held at the cross-roads of OSCE development when the practical significance of the 'Human Dimension of the OSCE' is to be determined.

This implementation review meeting on human dimension issues took place during a stage of OSCE development already in evidence in the Second Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the OSCE in Prague\(^2\) and further crystallised at the time of the elaboration of the 1992 Helsinki Document. Whereas a large proportion of the substantive aspects of the human dimension envisaged so far have received attention as regards standard-setting,\(^3\) the same cannot be said when it comes to implementation, and the need to develop the operational aspects of the human dimension is increasingly being felt. This need, to which the decisions in Prague and Helsinki have already testified, was further acknowledged in the 1994 Budapest Document, where the OSCE participating states, 'reaffirming their commitments in the human dimension', decided 'while considering it essential to concentrate their efforts on the implementation of existing CSCE commitments [...] to enhance the framework of their cooperation'.\(^4\)

Consistent with what had begun in Prague,\(^5\) the OSCE participating states in Budapest reiterated the role of the human dimension as an essential component of security and cooperation in the OSCE region and confirmed 'the significance of the Human Dimension in all the activities'\(^6\) of the OSCE,

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1. Henceforth Implementation Meeting.
5. Arie Bloed (ed), op.cit., note 2, pp. 106.
6. CSCE Budapest Document 1994, Towards a Genuine Partnership in a New Era, Budapest Declaration (Henceforth, Budapest Declaration) 14. In the Budapest decisions adopting the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security the OSCE participating states confirmed 'the continuing validity of their comprehensive concept of security, as initiated in the Final Act, which relates the maintenance of peace to the respect for human rights.
adopter several decisions in this regard.7 The implementation of these
decisions, as well as other ways and means in which the significance of the
human dimension is to be articulated, have far-reaching consequences for the
credibility of the OSCE and its capacity to make a difference in the field of
international cooperation. The results of the OSCE conflict prevention en-
deavours will depend, to a large extent, on the level of thoroughness with
which the OSCE comprehensive security concept - including its human dimen-
sion component - is applied. As these endeavours have become the main
‘raison d’être’ and field of activities of the OSCE, special attention must be
paid to the integration of its human dimension and conflict prevention aspects.
The Implementation Meeting on Human Dimension Issues, charged with a
‘thorough exchange of views on the implementation of Human Dimension
commitments […]’ and ‘the evaluation of the procedures for monitoring
compliance with commitments’8 has served to elucidate the current position of
the OSCE and its participating states in relation to this integration.

The Implementation Meeting has served to review how the human
dimension commitments have been implemented by the participating states and
how the OSCE and other institutions have contributed to facilitate this imple-
mentation. Further, at the implementation meeting consideration was given as to
how the human dimension has been integrated into the conflict prevention
activities of the participating states and OSCE institutions. The views expressed
during the meetings and the approach adopted by the participating states and
the OSCE institutions towards the review process itself also help to elucidate
the prospects for the development of human dimension implementation and the
facilitation of its integration into conflict prevention activity. The Implemen-
tation Meeting may therefore have contributed to determining how such
implementation and integration could be better developed in the future.

Participation and outcome
The Implementation Meeting was held on the basis of the Helsinki decisions,
which entrust the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
(ODIHR) with organising a three-week meeting at the expert-level of all
participating states in order to review the implementation of human dimension

7. Budapest Decisions VIII, section on ‘Enhancing compliance with CSCE commitments and
promoting co-operation and dialogue in the human dimension’ in particular. See further,
Martin Harris, ‘Human Rights Monitoring and the CSCE: a Perspective from Budapest’, in
8. Helsinki Decisions vi, 9, 9a and 9b.