

**Commission:** OSCE : Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Council

**Subject:** Towards a strategy of cooperation between the OSCE and the European Union to counter terrorism and cyberwarfare

**Author:** Turkey

The Republic of Turkey is a transcontinental country located mainly in Western Asia, with a portion of the Balkans in Southeast Europe. It shares borders with Greece and Bulgaria to the northwest; the Black Sea to the north; Georgia to the northeast; Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Iran to the east; Iraq to the southeast; Syria and the Mediterranean Sea to the south; and the Aegean Sea to the west. Cyprus is located off the south coast. Turks form the vast majority of the nation's population. Ankara is Turkey's capital, while Istanbul is its largest city and financial center.

Turkey has been a member of the OSCE since its very inception in 1975, when it was formed as a standing conference (CSCE), and has actively supported its development and strengthening. As a proof of particular importance attached to this Organization, Turkey hosted the OSCE Summit Meeting in Istanbul in 1999. The Istanbul Summit at which the Charter for European Security, the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the revised Vienna Document were signed and adopted, has become a milestone and point of reference for the OSCE activities since that date.

Today, Turkey's contribution to the work of the OSCE covers all three dimensions. Turkish Government has provided technical and financial assistance as well as expertise to the OSCE projects especially in the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Balkans in areas such as democratic policing, border management, counter-terrorism, customs control, antidrug trafficking, institution building, post-conflict rehabilitation, good governance, specialized training, minority protection and public order. There are currently around twenty Turkish citizens employed at the OSCE secretariat, field missions and institutions. Turkey also actively contributes to the efforts aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the OSCE and tries to avoid a further polarization within the Organization between West and East. Turkey attaches importance to maintain the balance among the three pillars of the OSCE and the consensus rule in the decision making process.

Around the 90s, the Scandinavian countries began to criticize the human rights situation, limits on freedom of opinion and treatment of minorities. Turkey has also been a target. In July of 1994, at the meeting of the OSCE's Parliamentary Assembly in Vienna, there was a demand that the Moscow Mechanism (=a mechanism that looks into the human rights situation in Turkey) be sent to Turkey. The Turkish side rejected both of these initiatives. But continuing accusations about human rights violations and curtailment of freedom of opinion led to a decision at the next session in July 1996 in Stockholm which called upon Turkey to ask for the despatch of a commission and invite the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to visit Turkey so that the accusations about human rights and the observance of OSCE rules could investigate on the scene. Turkey rejected the initiative.

Finally let's do a recap. Turkey strives in a number of fields to collaborate within the OSCE: co-operation in the fight against terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking and weapons smuggling.

Turkey has gone to the OSCE Missions to Bosnia and Herzegovina, or Georgia, as well as involvement in the Assistance Group to Chechnya, where Turkey was represented by delegates and also took part in the joint negotiations.

Most recently, Turkey has been concerning itself more intensively with the problems of migrant workers in the various European receiving countries.