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The Role of OSCE and EU Cooperation in Resolving the Russia-Ukraine Conflict

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Abstract

The ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine has had significant consequences not only for the two states but also for the international community. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union (EU) have played crucial roles in resolving the conflict, with their cooperation being essential for creating a peaceful and stable outcome. This paper aims to analyze the role of OSCE and EU cooperation in resolving the Russia-Ukraine conflict and identify the challenges and areas for improvement in their coordination based on a qualitative approach. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) and the European Union Satellite Centre (SatCen) were particularly instrumental in providing unbiased monitoring and reporting of violations of the ceasefire agreement. Despite the challenges faced in coordinating their efforts, this paper presents that SMM and SatCen have proven to be valuable tools in promoting peace, security, and respect for human rights in the conflict-affected region. Thus, through this paper scholars could use it as a reference to start to study more the SatCen relevance and SMM role, to explain relations between EU and OSCE through their influential tools. The OSCE and EU have been actively engaged in conflict resolution efforts, with a focus on diplomatic and economic sanctions against Russia. In reviewing the OSCE's cooperation with the EU, this paper suggests that they need to find other ways to minimize their limitations. The lack of political will and agreement among member states has weakened the effectiveness of the OSCE, while the EU's sanctions

policy has been questioned as a means of resolving the conflict. The paper suggests that the OSCE should focus on strengthening its capacity for conflict prevention, management, and resolution as well as monitoring and reporting on violations of human rights. The EU should increase economic assistance to Ukraine and find other ways to cooperate with the OSCE to address human rights concerns and support a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Ultimately, the paper argues that a comprehensive and inclusive approach is needed to effectively address the conflict and promote sustainable peace and stability in the region.

Keywords: Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, European Union, Russia – Ukraine conflict, Special Monitoring Mission, European Union Satellite Centre

1. Introduction

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is an intergovernmental organization that aims to promote stability, security, and cooperation among its 57 participating states (OSCE, 2023). OSCE has played a significant role in attempting to resolve the conflict between Russia and Ukraine since the annexation of Crimea in 2014, primarily through its Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). The SMM was in charge of monitoring and reporting on the security situation in eastern Ukraine. The SMM also had the mission to monitor the implementation of the Minsk Agreements, a set of peace agreements signed in 2015 to resolve the conflict. SMM has faced numerous challenges, including security risks, limited access to certain areas, and difficulties in verifying ceasefire violations (Petrû, 2021). The security situation in eastern Ukraine has remained volatile, with regular human rights violations, ceasefire violations, and military activity. (Nations, 2015) The SMM has faced difficulties accessing some areas, particularly those controlled by separatist forces, which has limited its ability to monitor the situation on the ground (European Union External Action Service, 2021).

According to the Congressional Research Service report 'Conflict in Ukraine: The OSCE's Role in Supporting a Peaceful Solution,' the OSCE has played a significant role in monitoring the conflict and negotiating ceasefires, but the peace process has been largely ineffective in bringing about a lasting settlement (Congressional Research Service, 2021). The European Council on Foreign Relations has released a report that discusses the shortcomings of the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) in Ukraine, noting that the SMM has been unable to fulfill its mandate to monitor and verify the ceasefire due to the lack of political will and outright opposition of the parties to the conflict (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2021). Alexey Arbatov discusses the difficulties the OSCE faces in resolving the conflict in an article for the

Carnegie Moscow Center, noting that despite its valiant efforts, the OSCE has been unable to resolve the crisis in Ukraine, as the security situation remains fragile and the conflict continues to smolder (Arbatov, 2021). Although the OSCE has played an important role in the dispute, there is agreement among experts that its efforts have not yet led to a sustainable conclusion.

Right now, Moscow is blocking the 2024 budget and the next chairmanship, which is to be held by Estonia (Friesendorf & Wolff, 2022). So, it is an ongoing conflict that also needs to be analyzed from the perspective of coordination and cooperation with other international organizations. In this way, one can better understand its effectiveness and its role in international relations. To add more, most communication channels between Russia and the West are now strained and blocked, including the NATO–Russia Council and EU-Russia meetings (Dunay, 2022). There are also organizations like the UN Human Rights Council and the Council of Europe that have suspended Russia. So, this makes the OSCE important because it is an organization that puts Russia at the table to dialogue and discuss matters with other states. Currently, as Dunay (2020) stated, it is considered to be the most inclusive security forum in Europe.

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states located primarily in Europe. It has been a key partner and supporter of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in its efforts to address the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Together with the OSCE, the EU works to prevent conflicts through early warning systems and conflict analysis. To identify opportunities for preventive action and to stop conflicts from getting worse, cooperation is crucial.

In 1975, the European Union took part in the negotiations on the Helsinki Final Act, which established the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as the main forum for security cooperation in Europe. It has also signed the Charter of Paris for a New Europe (1990), which sets the goals for the OSCE and its participating states, and the Charter for European Security (1999). In 2006 the EU's participation in the OSCE was formalized in the organization's Rules of Procedure, which assigned it a seat next to the participating state that held the rotating EU Presidency (Chairperson-in-Office, 2006).

The two organizations work together and collaborate on a variety of issues. The OSCE and the EU have a strong partnership in addressing a wide range of security challenges, including the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Collaboration takes place in a variety of ways, including joint projects and programs, regular dialogue and consultations, and coordinated efforts to address specific security challenges. The role of the OSCE and EU in conflict resolution efforts is crucial, given their mandates to promote peace and security in the region. In 2018, the Secretary-General of the OSCE and

the European Union exchanged letters committing to strengthening their institutional interaction and operational cooperation in areas of shared interest across the three dimensions (The Diplomatic Service of the European Union, 2018). The Diplomatic Service of the European Union reported on this commitment. It is worth noting that more than two-thirds of the OSCE's primary budget is provided by EU member states. Additionally, the EU and its member states also fund several extra-budgetary projects carried out by the OSCE, according to information provided by the OSCE's official website on its relations with the EU (OSCE relations to EU, 2021). This clearly shows the importance that the EU plays in helping the OSCE in its role and aims. To add more, the OSCE and EU have collaborated to address other security issues such as terrorism, cyber threats, and organized crime, highlighting joint efforts to improve information sharing, coordinate policy responses, and implement targeted initiatives to address specific security challenges (OSCE, 2019).

2. Methodology

The purpose of the research question in this paper is to investigate the role of EU and OSCE cooperation in promoting a peaceful and stable resolution to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and to identify the challenges and areas for improvement in their coordination. To better understand the significance of OSCE and EU cooperation in resolving the Russia-Ukraine conflict, this paper will use a qualitative research approach. The primary means of data collection for this research will be document analysis. This will involve the collection and analysis of official statements, declarations, reports, and other documents approved by the decision-making bodies within the OSCE and EU. In addition, scholarly publications and press sources will also be consulted to gather information on the effectiveness of the OSCE and the EU in addressing the conflict. The focus of the data analysis will be on understanding the role of the OSCE and the EU in addressing the conflict, as well as identifying gaps and challenges in their coordination, by analyzing SatCen and SMM as one of the most successful coordination tools used by them. The analysis will seek to identify the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of their relationship and identify areas for improvement.

This research is subject to certain limitations. One limitation is the reliance on publicly available documents, which may not provide a complete picture of the OSCE's and EU's actions and strategies. Another limitation is the potential for bias in the documents, as they may reflect the perspectives and interests of the organizations themselves. To mitigate these limitations, multiple sources will be consulted and efforts will be made to critically evaluate the information obtained.

Because of the current criticism that OSCE is facing, this paper is primarily focused on OSCE. One of the biggest criticisms against the OSCE

is that, as a result of a lack of political will and agreement among its member states, it has become increasingly ineffective in recent years (Lough, 2021) and has also been criticized for its perceived weakness (Bladel, 2022). Another article revealed that depending on how Moscow and the major Western states play their cards this time, the OSCE is in for a rough ride—or slow death (Liechtenstein, 2022).

3. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and European Union Analysis

3.1 The Role of the OSCE and EU in conflict resolution

The OSCE and the EU have played an important role in conflict resolution efforts in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Their efforts have focused on promoting a peaceful resolution to the conflict, reducing tensions, and promoting stability in the region (Šimáková, 2016). The EU has implemented economic penalties on Russia because it annexed Crimea, its participation in eastern Ukraine, and the 2022 conflict (European Commission, 2022). The economic sanctions imposed on Russia are intended to put pressure on the country to respect Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty and to hold substantive talks in an effort to end the conflict peacefully. The sanctions imposed by the EU on Russia are in line with the principles of international law, specifically the United Nations Charter, which prohibits the use of force in interstate relations and defends states' sovereignty and territorial integrity. Article 2(4) states that:

"All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations".

The sanctions are aimed at pressuring Russia to abide by these principles and to engage in dialogue with Ukraine to peacefully resolve the conflict. However, some scholars argue that the sanctions have had a limited impact on Russia's behavior and have not contributed significantly to resolve the conflict. For instance, research by Richard Youngs and Ivan Krastev (2019) suggests that the EU sanctions policy has neither altered Russia's position on Ukraine nor brought a peaceful conclusion to the conflict (Youngs & Krastev, 2019). Some scholars argue that the sanctions can be perceived as a method of imposing collective penalties, which adversely affects the general population of Russia, rather than the country's political elite, (Galeotti, 2019) and they may drive Russia closer to China and other nations that may give economic and political help in reaction to the sanctions (Kuchins, 2017). Overall, the criticisms of the EU sanctions on Russia show that, although they may have been well-intended, they may not have been successful in accomplishing their claimed aims of ending the crisis in Ukraine or

influencing Russia about ending it. Some opponents say the penalties are not tough enough and don't go after the appropriate people. Others say they are too harsh and hurt regular Russians.

Despite this, the EU, together with the OSCE, has actively participated in diplomatic efforts to end the conflict, including the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine and the Normandy format talks. The EU has supported these efforts through political and financial means, including by providing financial assistance to Ukraine and supporting the work of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (European External Action Service, 2022).

The most significant initiative to date to end the conflict is represented by the Minsk Agreements, signed in 2015-2016. The agreements, which were mediated by France and Germany with assistance from the OSCE and the EU, had three main objectives: to establish a ceasefire; remove heavy weapons; and lay out a plan for a political resolution (OSCE, 2015). The Minsk agreements have also received support from the EU. The agreements have nevertheless been slowly and sporadically put into effect, with each side accusing the other of breaking the ceasefire and failing to advance political reforms (EEAS, 2022). Consequently, the conflict has persisted, occasionally erupting in violence and the 2022 war.

To address the conflict's underlying causes, the OSCE and the EU have jointly launched several programs and projects. Programs focusing on human rights, media freedom, and economic and social development are among these initiatives. The EU's Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD) conducts conflict analysis as part of its work on conflict prevention and management (EEAS, 2023). The OSCE also conducts conflict analysis through its Conflict Prevention Centre. The European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Conflict Prevention Centre both provide mediation and facilitation services to parties in conflict. The EU's Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace provides funding for programs aimed at promoting human rights, democracy, and the rule of law (European Commission, 2023). Similarly, the OSCE has a range of programs and initiatives aimed at promoting good governance and human rights, including the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the High Commissioner on National Minorities. But, because the OSCE and the EU take different stances on conflict resolution, their interaction may be constrained. For instance, the OSCE places more emphasis on dialogue and negotiation, while the EU frequently emphasizes diplomatic and economic pressure (Solonenko, 2019).

The EU was more capable of shaping the OSCE crisis response when it adapted well to the constraints of the external opportunity structure and block dynamics and responded to them pragmatically in collaboration with its member states that took discreet leadership (Šimáková, 2016). Based on its

comprehensive security toolbox, the OSCE has emerged as the only regional organization capable of acting effectively toward conflict resolution and establishing a meaningful presence on the ground, as evidenced by the annexation of Crimea (Šimáková, 2016). Despite the challenges and limitations, they face, OSCE and EU efforts have contributed to reducing tensions and advancing stability in the region.

It should be mentioned that the OSCE and EU have provided significant humanitarian assistance to those affected by the conflict, including food, shelter, and medical aid. This aid has been crucial in mitigating the impact of the conflict on civilians. Since 2014, the European Commission's humanitarian aid department (ECHO) has allocated a total of €677 million in aid to Ukraine, with the primary objective of addressing the fundamental requirements of populations affected by the ongoing conflict (Commission, 2021). The OSCE has also done a lot to help those in need in areas of conflict (Kostadinova et al, 2017). The OSCE started the Humanitarian Assistance and Reconstruction Programme (HARP) in 2015 to help people in eastern Ukraine who were harmed by the conflict. HARP focuses on helping people with housing, water, sanitation, ways to make a living, and social protection, with a special focus on the elderly, handicapped, and those who have moved inside their own country (HARP, 2018).

The OSCE and EU have made significant efforts to promote a peaceful and stable resolution to the Russia-Ukraine conflict by also prioritizing the protection of human rights. Both organizations have emphasized the need to respect human rights and ensure the protection of vulnerable populations affected by the conflict (European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, 2021). However, claims of human rights violations by Ukrainian government forces have continued to raise worries about the human rights situation in the conflict-affected regions. In 2018, the United Nations (UN) claimed that armed groups in eastern Ukraine continued to use arbitrary imprisonment, torture, and ill-treatment (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2018). In 2021, Human Rights Watch reported Ukrainian law enforcement's unlawful executions, torture, and arbitrary imprisonment during the war (Human Rights Watch, 2021). Both OSCE and EU have emphasized protecting vulnerable conflict-affected individuals despite persistent fears of human rights abuses by Ukrainian government troops and armed groups that are supported and helped by Russia. The UN's and Human Rights Watch's reports of arbitrary incarceration, torture, ill-treatment, and illegal executions show the seriousness of their efforts to protect human rights. Thus, the OSCE and EU must continue to monitor and report human rights violations, advocate for accountability, and help those affected by war.

3.1.1 OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM)

The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine was an unarmed civilian mission, which started its activities in March 2014 and discontinued its operations in March 2022 (OSCE-Where-we-are, 2023). The EU provides significant financial and technical support to the OSCE field operations, including the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). The SMM plays a critical role in monitoring and verifying the implementation of the ceasefire and other aspects of the conflict, which is essential for building trust and confidence between the parties. In the 2022 final report, SMM reported based on its observations of ceasefire violations, explosions attributable to fire forms, weapons in violation of withdrawal lines, etc., (SMM-Ukraine, 2022). In addition, the OSCE's ability to establish a meaningful presence on the ground has allowed it to play a unique role in promoting stability and preventing the escalation of conflicts.

The SMM uses a variety of methods to collect and analyze data, including on-site observations, interviews with witnesses, and analysis of open-source information. The number of violations in the periods that occurred is what raises questions about violation statistics (SMM-Ukraine, 2022). However, it is important to note that the SMM's mandate is limited to monitoring and reporting on ceasefire violations, and not preventing conflict or predicting future outbreaks of violence. The reported violations are an important indicator of the ongoing conflict, but they do not necessarily indicate war or the complete extent of the conflict. Additionally, it's important to consider that the number of reported violations can be affected by a variety of factors, including changes in the level of hostilities, fluctuations in the SMM's access and ability to observe, and shifts in reporting practices. In summary, the number of ceasefire violations reported by the SMM can provide some insight into the security situation in Ukraine, but it is only one indicator among many. It is important to consider other factors, such as political tensions and military buildup when assessing the risk of war. The effectiveness of the monitoring efforts depends on many factors, and it is an ongoing challenge to ensure that monitoring is timely and accurate. It is all a very complex case study. Restrictions on the freedom of movement and access to certain areas often hinder the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission's ability to effectively monitor the conflict in Ukraine, which can limit the accuracy and completeness of its reporting. For example, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President issued a joint statement in 2021 expressing concern over restrictions on the SMM's freedom of movement and his access to certain areas in eastern Ukraine (OSCE relations to EU, 2021). Despite these challenges, the SMM remains an important tool of OSCE not only for Ukraine but as a source of information and analysis for different cases.

The position of Russia created the necessary situation to implement the closure of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. According to a report by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine had to close numerous field offices in 2022 because of Russia and its allies standing within the OSCE (RFE/RL, 2022). The report says that Russia opposed a draft resolution that would have extended the SMM's mandate, causing the mission to shut down certain offices and cut its employees. This scenario impacted the OSCE's capacity to conduct monitoring and reporting in Ukraine. Even though the 2022 chairmanship holder in a press release stressed that:

“The Polish Chairmanship will continue to engage with participating states to explore alternatives for the OSCE's future role in Ukraine”.

This reaction might be an indication that the OSCE is currently feeling powerless due to its reliance on consensus. And this naturally raises concerns about its functionality and effectiveness. The closure of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine is certainly a setback for the OSCE's efforts to promote peace and security in the region. The fact that the OSCE Chairmanship is exploring alternatives for the organization's future role in Ukraine suggests that the organization is aware of the challenges it faces and is looking for ways to adapt and respond.

As of early 2022, the EU had contributed over 80 million euros to the SMM, making it one of the largest donors to the mission (EU Statements at the General Council Meeting, 2022). This financial support has helped to sustain the work of the SMM and enhance its capacity to carry out its mandate in a challenging and volatile environment. A strong sign of the fact that the EU and the OSCE are on this path to support and collaborate for the sake of maintaining international security.

3.1.2 European Union Satellite Centre (SatCen)

SatCen, as an agency of the European Union established in 2002, helps OSCE and other organizations by providing services based on space assets and collateral data, including satellite imagery and aerial imagery, and it contributes to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (Council Decision , 2019). It provides services to support the Common Foreign and Security Policy, and it works by providing decision-makers with early warning of potential crises as well as global situational awareness. The importance of cooperation with the OSCE lies in the fact that it is a Europe-wide organization with a transatlantic connection and is at the heart of the European security order (EU Global Strategy, 2016).

Because of the sensitivity of the documents related to the conflict in Ukraine, it is impossible to find directly any data or the documents and information that SatCen has given to OSCE. What is found is not only

mentioned in the OSCE reports and updates on its monitoring of the situation in Ukraine but also in one jointly published report of the OSCE and SatCen (SatCen, 2014). Satellite imagery is critical in assisting the SMM in gaining a clearer picture of the security and humanitarian situation in areas where the Ukrainian government has no control and monitors are difficult to deploy (FPI, 2018).

Since 2015, this tool from the EU has been a crucial help for the OSCE to monitor the Ukraine situation through SMM. SatCen's satellite imagery was used by the OSCE to verify the withdrawal of heavy weapons by the Ukrainian military and separatist forces in 2015. The OSCE was able to certify that the weapons had been taken out of the specified zones with the use of images from SatCen (OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, 2015). It has been put to work keeping a close watch on the border between Russia and Ukraine. This has been essential to the OSCE to monitor the security situation in Ukraine by identifying the movement of soldiers and military equipment over the border (European Space Agency, 2019). The US intelligence agencies had issued advance alerts to the European Union and European states regarding the potential of a Russian invasion of Ukraine. However, it appears that this warning was not given due weight (Kolovos A., 2022). So, after this situation could SatCen be seen as a crucial cooperation tool? Although the intelligence agencies of the United States may indeed possess more sophisticated capabilities and resources, SatCen can still be regarded as an essential collaborative instrument for monitoring and verifying compliance with agreements related to the conflict in Ukraine.

But how can this EU tool help if SMM is no longer operational? As a result, the current situation demonstrates that cooperation between organizations is sometimes closely related to the power they possess. Furthermore, even if the SMM is no longer operational, a new mission or monitoring mechanism may be established in the future, in which SatCen's services once again could be used to support the monitoring efforts.

The EU's ability to provide effective assistance to the OSCE in the Russia-Ukraine conflict is hindered by the OSCE's reliance on state consensus, which often leads to an inability to make decisions. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has affected the relationship between the OSCE and EU to help each other, and it can be analyzed by the changes in their collaboration and the challenges they face in addressing the conflict. The complexities of the situation in Ukraine, especially the continuing violence and the difficulties the OSCE has in monitoring the situation, have substantial consequences for the organization's future. When cooperation among the member states breaks down, as it has in Ukraine, it is impossible for the OSCE to carry out its mission. As one report notes, the Ukraine crisis has exposed the limitations of the OSCE's consensus-based decision-making process (Gänzle, S., 2017). The

prolonged violence has also shown that the OSCE has to change and adapt to meet new problems. The OSCE must find innovative measures to assist its members in coping with emerging security risks and the possibility of new conflicts, argues a different report (Eriksson et al, 2017). Moreover, the altered conditions of the OSCE underline the necessity for a more explicit EU policy in the OSCE.

3.2 Challenges to improving OSCE effectiveness

The OSCE is a key regional security organization, and the conflict in Ukraine has put its ability to promote peace and stability in the region to the test. The effectiveness of the OSCE in resolving the conflict in Ukraine can be influenced by several factors, including its cooperation with other international organizations, its role in negotiating and implementing peace treaties, and the impact of the ongoing conflict on its finances and resources. That is why analyzing the relationship between the OSCE and the EU, which have both taken an active role in promoting regional stability and security, is important and relevant to the current situation.

While the cooperation between the OSCE and the EU has been important in the context of resolving the Russia-Ukraine conflict, several factors have limited their cooperation. There are several challenges in improving the effectiveness of the OSCE's relationship with the EU. First, because the OSCE and the EU have different strategic priorities and interests, their ability to work together on particular conflict-related issues may be constrained. For instance, some EU members may be less willing to take a tough stance against Moscow because of their closer economic ties to Russia. Some EU member states, particularly those in Eastern Europe, have been more outspoken in their criticism of Russia and support for Ukraine, while others, particularly those with significant economic ties to Russia, have been more cautious (European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2018).

Secondly, the conflict has become very politicized, and attempts to resolve it by the OSCE and EU have run into political roadblocks. For instance, if one goes back in time, political opposition in Russia and Ukraine has prevented the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. A Russian political analyst, Trenin (2020) argued that the Minsk agreements had become a "stalemate" because of the political opposition in Russia and Ukraine. Even the formerly appointed Special Representative of the OSCE for the Minsk Agreements, M. Sajdik (2015–2019) cited a lack of political will in favor of putting the agreements into effect (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Press Release, 2023).

There are different kinds of tools that can be used by the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. On one hand, the EU could strengthen its economic sanctions on Russia by imposing

more targeted measures. On the other hand, together could engage in a more direct and constructive dialogue with Russia to try to find a peaceful solution to the conflict, especially through the OSCE, which has the power to facilitate discussions between Russia and other states. The OSCE and EU can use their diplomatic channels to facilitate negotiations with both sides.

The OSCE and the EU could also work with other important international actors, such as the UN, to increase pressure on Russia to engage in constructive negotiations and find a peaceful resolution to the conflict. For instance, the OSCE and the EU emphasized the need for international support to address the conflict in a joint statement released in March 2021 and urged the UN to take a more active role in promoting a peaceful resolution. The statement read:

“We call on the UN to step up support for the Minsk agreements, encourage their implementation, and help facilitate a thorough, lasting, and peaceful resolution of the conflict”.

Regarding the constraints, it shows that the OSCE and EU have various interests and priorities, which can make it difficult to create a coordinated and efficient strategy for resolving conflicts. Additionally, their ability to resolve the intricate and protracted conflict between Russia and Ukraine may be hampered by the limited resources they have available to them (Taylor, P. M., 2018). Geopolitical tensions may hinder the ability of the OSCE and EU to achieve their goals of promoting global peace and security.

The OSCE operates within a constrained legal framework because it lacks a binding treaty or charter that outlines its specific legal rights and obligations. It may find it difficult to effectively influence international relations and advance peace, stability, and security in the region due to these constraints and the organization's reliance on consensus. As the organization reaches its 50th year in 2025, long-term success can sometimes be seen as a positive indicator of continuity, but on the other hand, it can also indicate a need for reforms. Since the future always brings new international security challenges, the OSCE must also adapt to these challenges. Given the changing nature of security threats and the shifting political landscape, some reforms may be necessary for the good of this organization. Specifically, the OSCE should concentrate on strengthening its capacity for conflict prevention, management, and resolution, as well as its capacity for monitoring and reporting violations of human rights. This is important because it can help prevent conflicts from escalating and turning violent, which can have serious humanitarian consequences and destabilize the region. To achieve this, the organization may need to increase its available resources, enhance its interactions with other regional organizations, and develop new methods for addressing growing security risks. In addition, the OSCE should seek to guarantee that its member nations are held responsible for their commitments

and obligations, as well as explore methods for improving its efficacy in promoting regional cooperation and stability.

The last thing to mention, and the most important challenge for the future, is the ongoing conflict. The conflict in Ukraine is an ongoing rollercoaster, and it remains a significant challenge for the OSCE and the EU. A conflict that is also directly affecting OSCE because, as mentioned at the beginning of this paper, Moscow is blocking the 2024 budget and the next chairmanship of OSCE. Despite these challenges, it seems that the OSCE and the EU remain committed to working together to promote a peaceful and stable resolution to the conflict.

Conclusion

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has presented an immense threat to the established European security framework, thereby jeopardizing regional stability and peace. In light of this, it can be inferred that the situation requires urgent attention and resolution. The role of the OSCE and EU in promoting a peaceful and stable resolution to the Russia-Ukraine conflict has been significant, with both organizations providing political and economic support to Ukraine as well as sanctions against Russia and humanitarian assistance to all those affected by the conflict. Despite their efforts, the conflict persists unresolved, and the circumstances on the ground continue to be with tension and instability. The SMM's presence on the ground allowed it to provide accurate and unbiased information on the situation, while SatCen's satellite imagery provided an additional layer of verification. Together, these two organizations helped hold parties accountable for violations of the ceasefire and contributed to efforts to de-escalate tensions in the region.

The European Union has played a critical role in promoting regional stability and security in the face of the Russia-Ukraine conflict since 2014. The EU has provided political and economic support to Ukraine, including sanctions against Russia, while also providing humanitarian assistance to those affected by the conflict. The EU has also been closely cooperating with the OSCE in promoting a peaceful resolution to the conflict. However, the OSCE and EU face several challenges in their coordination efforts. As a consensus-based organization, the OSCE requires agreement from all participating states before taking action, which can often lead to delays and inaction when there are conflicting views among states, as is the case with Russia and Ukraine. This impedes the OSCE's ability to respond quickly and effectively to security challenges in the region. As a result, EU assistance has sometimes proved of no use when the OSCE is unable to act. By using various instruments, including sanctions, external pressure, and diplomatic efforts, the OSCE and EU must establish new lines of communication to promote peace and stability in the area.

Another challenge is the limited mandate and resources of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. The capacity of the mission is constrained by the difficulty of accessing all conflict-affected regions as well as by certain areas' interference and harassment by non-state actors. This limits the mission's capacity to thoroughly observe and document ceasefire breaches and human rights violations, which makes it harder for the OSCE to confront the conflict effectively.

Overall, the OSCE and the EU have done a lot to help bring an end to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine in a peaceful way, but there are still some problems that need to be fixed. The two organizations should work together to create a way to solve conflicts that is more coordinated and includes all parties, including Russia and Ukraine. This strategy should put more emphasis on helping those in need, making economic and political changes, and promoting human rights. The OSCE and the EU should also look at new ways of communicating with each other and new instruments to help maintain peace and stability in the area. By sharing their resources and knowledge, these organizations may be able to make their efforts more successful and help keep international security in the region. While the road ahead may be difficult, the OSCE and the EU's past successes and ongoing efforts provide reasons to be optimistic about their future as key players in promoting peace, security, and cooperation in Europe and beyond.

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