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Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**CODE OF CONDUCT
ON POLITICO-MILITARY ASPECTS
OF SECURITY**

3 December 1994

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CODE OF CONDUCT ON POLITICO-MILITARY ASPECTS OF SECURITY

PREAMBLE

The participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE),

Recognizing the need to enhance security co-operation, including through the further encouragement of norms of responsible and co-operative behaviour in the field of security,

Confirming that nothing in this Code diminishes the validity and applicability of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations or of other provisions of international law,

Reaffirming the undiminished validity of the guiding principles and common values of the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and the Helsinki Document 1992, embodying responsibilities of States towards each other and of governments towards their people, as well as the validity of other CSCE commitments,

Have adopted the following Code of Conduct on politico-military aspects of security:

I

1. The participating States emphasize that the full respect for all CSCE principles embodied in the Helsinki Final Act and the implementation in good faith of all commitments undertaken in the CSCE are of fundamental importance for stability and security, and consequently constitute a matter of direct and legitimate concern to all of them.
2. The participating States confirm 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 and fundamental freedoms. It links economic and environmental co-operation with peaceful inter-State relations.
3. They remain convinced that security is indivisible and that the security of each of them is inseparably linked to the security of all others. They will not strengthen their security at the expense of the security of other States. They will pursue their own security interests in conformity with the common effort to strengthen security and stability in the CSCE area and beyond.
4. Reaffirming their respect for each other's sovereign equality and individuality as well as the rights inherent in and encompassed by its sovereignty, the participating States will base their mutual security relations upon a co-operative approach. They emphasize in this regard the key role of the CSCE. They will continue to develop complementary and mutually reinforcing institutions that include European and transatlantic organizations, multilateral and bilateral undertakings and various forms of regional and subregional co-operation. The participating

States will co-operate in ensuring that all such security arrangements are in harmony with CSCE principles and commitments under this Code.

5. They are determined to act in solidarity if CSCE norms and commitments are violated and to facilitate concerted responses to security challenges that they may face as a result. They will consult promptly, in conformity with their CSCE responsibilities, with a participating State seeking assistance in realizing its individual or collective self-defence. They will consider jointly the nature of the threat and actions that may be required in defence of their common values.

II

6. The participating States will not support terrorist acts in any way and will take appropriate measures to prevent and combat terrorism in all its forms. They will co-operate fully in combating the threat of terrorist activities through implementation of international instruments and commitments they agree upon in this respect. They will, in particular, take steps to fulfil the requirements of international agreements by which they are bound to prosecute or extradite terrorists.

III

7. The participating States recall that the principles of the Helsinki Final Act are all of primary significance and, accordingly, that they will be equally and unreservedly applied, each of them being interpreted taking into account the others.

8. The participating States will not provide assistance to or support States that are in violation of their obligation to refrain 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 Charter of the United Nations and with the Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States contained in the Helsinki Final Act.

IV

9. The participating States reaffirm the inherent right, as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, of individual and collective self-defence.

10. Each participating State, bearing in mind the legitimate security concerns of other States, is free to determine its security interests itself on the basis of sovereign equality and has the right freely to choose its own security arrangements, in accordance with international law and with commitments to CSCE principles and objectives.

11. The participating States each have the sovereign right to belong or not to belong to international organizations, and to be or not to be a party to bilateral or multilateral treaties, including treaties of alliance; they also have the right to neutrality. Each has the right to change its status in this respect, subject to relevant agreements and procedures. Each will respect the rights of all others in this regard.

12. Each participating State will maintain only such military capabilities as are commensurate with individual or collective legitimate security needs, taking into account its obligations under international law.

13. Each participating State will determine its military capabilities on the basis of national democratic procedures, bearing in mind the legitimate security concerns of other States as well as the need to contribute to international security and stability. No participating State will attempt to impose military domination over any other participating State.

14. A participating State may station its armed forces on the territory of another participating State in accordance with their freely negotiated agreement as well as in accordance with international law.

V

15. The participating States will implement in good faith each of their commitments in the field of arms control, disarmament and confidence- and security-building as an important element of their indivisible security.

16. With a view to enhancing security and stability in the CSCE area, the participating States reaffirm their commitment to pursue arms control, disarmament and confidence- and security-building measures.

VI

17. The participating States commit themselves to co-operate, including through development of sound economic and environmental conditions, to counter tensions that may lead to conflict. The sources of such tensions include violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms and of other commitments in the human dimension; manifestations of aggressive nationalism, racism, chauvinism, xenophobia and anti-semitism also endanger peace and security.

18. The participating States stress the importance both of early identification of potential conflicts and of their joint efforts in the field of conflict prevention, crisis management and peaceful settlement of disputes.

19. In the event of armed conflict, they will seek to facilitate the effective cessation of hostilities and seek to create conditions favourable to the political solution of the conflict. They will co-operate in support of humanitarian assistance to alleviate suffering among the civilian population, including facilitating the movement of personnel and resources dedicated to such tasks.

VII

20. The participating States consider the democratic political control of military, paramilitary and internal security forces as well as of intelligence services and the police to be an indispensable element of stability and security. They will further the integration of their armed forces with civil society as an important expression of democracy.

21. Each participating State will at all times provide for and maintain effective guidance to and control of its military, paramilitary and security forces by constitutionally established authorities vested with democratic legitimacy. Each participating State will provide controls to ensure that such authorities fulfil their constitutional and legal responsibilities. They will clearly

define the roles and missions of such forces and their obligation to act solely within the constitutional framework.

22. Each participating State will provide for its legislative approval of defence expenditures. Each participating State will, with due regard to national security requirements, exercise restraint in its military expenditures and provide for transparency and public access to information related to the armed forces.

23. Each participating State, while providing for the individual service member's exercise of his or her civil rights, will ensure that its armed forces as such are politically neutral.

24. Each participating State will provide and maintain measures to guard against accidental or unauthorized use of military means.

25. The participating States will not tolerate or support forces that are not accountable to or controlled by their constitutionally established authorities. If a participating State is unable to exercise its authority over such forces, it may seek consultations within the CSCE to consider steps to be taken.

26. Each participating State will ensure that in accordance with its international commitments its paramilitary forces refrain from the acquisition of combat mission capabilities in excess of those for which they were established.

27. Each participating State will ensure that the recruitment or call-up of personnel for service in its military, paramilitary and security forces is consistent with its obligations and commitments in respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

28. The participating States will reflect in their laws or other relevant documents the rights and duties of armed forces personnel. They will consider introducing exemptions from or alternatives to military service.

29. The participating States will make widely available in their respective countries the international humanitarian law of war. They will reflect, in accordance with national practice, their commitments in this field in their military training programmes and regulations.

30. Each participating State will instruct its armed forces personnel in international humanitarian law, rules, conventions and commitments governing armed conflict and will ensure that such personnel are aware that they are individually accountable under national and international law for their actions.

31. The participating States will ensure that armed forces personnel vested with command authority exercise it in accordance with relevant national as well as international law and are made aware that they can be held individually accountable under those laws for the unlawful exercise of such authority and that orders contrary to national and international law must not be given. The responsibility of superiors does not exempt subordinates from any of their individual responsibilities.

32. Each participating State will ensure that military, paramilitary and security forces personnel will be able to enjoy and exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms as

reflected in CSCE documents and international law, in conformity with relevant constitutional and legal provisions and with the requirements of service.

33. Each participating State will provide appropriate legal and administrative procedures to protect the rights of all its forces personnel.

VIII

34. Each participating State will ensure that its armed forces are, in peace and in war, commanded, manned, trained and equipped in ways that are consistent with the provisions of international law and its respective obligations and commitments related to the use of armed forces in armed conflict, including as applicable the Hague Conventions of 1907 and 1954, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the 1977 Protocols Additional thereto, as well as the 1980 Convention on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons.

35. Each participating State will ensure that its defence policy and doctrine are consistent with international law related to the use of armed forces, including in armed conflict, and the relevant commitments of this Code.

36. Each participating State will ensure that any decision to assign its armed forces to internal security missions is arrived at in conformity with constitutional procedures. Such decisions will prescribe the armed forces' missions, ensuring that they will be performed under the effective control of constitutionally established authorities and subject to the rule of law. If recourse to force cannot be avoided in performing internal security missions, each participating State will ensure that its use must be commensurate with the needs for enforcement. The armed forces will take due care to avoid injury to civilians or their property.

37. The participating States will not use armed forces to limit the peaceful and lawful exercise of their human and civil rights by persons as individuals or as representatives of groups nor to deprive them of their national, religious, cultural, linguistic or ethnic identity.

IX

38. Each participating State is responsible for implementation of this Code. If requested, a participating State will provide appropriate clarification regarding its implementation of the Code. Appropriate CSCE bodies, mechanisms and procedures will be used to assess, review and improve if necessary the implementation of this Code.

X

39. The provisions adopted in this Code of Conduct are politically binding. Accordingly, this Code is not eligible for registration under Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations. This Code will come into effect on 1 January 1995.

40. Nothing in this Code alters the nature and content of the commitments undertaken in other CSCE documents.

41. The participating States will seek to ensure that their relevant internal documents and procedures or, where appropriate, legal instruments reflect the commitments made in this Code.

42. The text of the Code will be published in each participating State, which will disseminate it and make it known as widely as possible.

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