

Annex: OSCE Toolbox effectiveness

Tool	Effectiveness	Utilisation	Added value	Relevance to specific conflicts	Conditions for future effectiveness
Framework for Arms Control	Partly effective; ongoing challenges in implementation.	Widely adopted among OSCE participating States (pS).	Provides a comprehensive structure for arms reduction and control.	Relevant involving arms proliferation.	Requires continuous political commitment and adaptation to new security challenges.
Stabilising Measures for Localised Crisis Situations	Effective in de-escalating localised tensions.	Applied in specific crisis situations.	Offers practical tools for immediate conflict stabilisation.	Crucial in areas with sudden escalations.	Needs rapid deployment capabilities and local cooperation.
Treaty on Open Skies	Declining effectiveness after withdrawals by key states.	Limited participation post-withdrawals.	Historically unique for aerial surveillance; now limited.	Initially broad, now reduced due to limited participation. Could be revived in a specific post-conflict context.	Potential revival through renewed commitments from major powers.
CFE (ACFE)	Highly effective in the past; ineffective presently.	Some states have suspended implementation.	Enforceable force limits; aims to establish military balance and trust.	Relevant during the post-Cold War era; less so currently.	Requires stabilised European security environment, modernisation and consensus among pS.
Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security	Mixed effectiveness; lacks enforcement mechanisms.	Most OSCE states adhere to its principles.	Promotes transparency and democratic control over armed forces.	Broad relevance; not specific to one conflict.	Strengthening enforcement and regular updates to reflect current security dynamics.
Global Exchange of Military Information	Partly effective; depends on state cooperation.	Participation varies; some states opt out.	Enhances transparency and trust among states.	General applicability; not conflict-specific.	Increased participation and verification mechanisms.
Vienna Document	Partly effective; weakened by political divides.	Many states participate; some have withdrawn.	Critical confidence-building tool and regional arms control framework.	Relevant to various European security concerns, particularly in conflict prevention and confidence building.	Modernising and adapting to address current security challenges, geopolitical realities and technological advances.
Other FSC Tools	Effectiveness depends on geopolitical context	Varied	Regional and thematic focus.	Applied in different security-related initiatives.	Enhancing pS's commitment to peace and security; improving verification mechanisms.
Dayton Peace Agreement	Highly effective in stabilising post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina but contributed to political stagnation over time.	Directly within Bosnia and Herzegovina as a specific arms control mechanism; influenced other agreement as well as discussions on post-conflict stabilisation and arms reduction in other regions	Structured, enforceable model for arms reductions in divided post-conflict societies	Specific to the Balkans conflict. But can serve as a model in post-conflict situations.	Address internal political gridlock the region's long-term security needs; overcoming strict post-war limitations.
OSCE CBMs to Reduce the Risks of Conflict Stemming from the Use of ICTs	Effective but challenges with cyber attribution.	Full utilisation remains inconsistent, with major geopolitical rivalries (e.g., Russia-NATO tensions) limiting cooperation	Diplomatic, rather than military, cybersecurity dialogue; direct crisis communication channels.	More relevant for preventing escalation and crises; potential post-conflict use.	Address state-sponsored cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, and covert cyber operations; integrating private sector and civil society.
Document on CSBM in the Naval Field in the Black Sea	Effective in the past; weakened application presently.	Partial implementation; diminished engagement. Utilised by Black Sea littoral states.	Enhances naval transparency and supports other international instruments.	Specific to Black Sea regional security. Potential post-war role.	De-escalating the Ukraine conflict and reviving trust among Black Sea states; integrating with international maritime security frameworks.
OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)	Effective in setting norms; challenges in enforcement.	Control, reduction, and responsible management of small arms and light weapons.	Regionally focused and more politically inclusive. Supports post-conflict stabilisation.	Post-conflict stabilisation.	Adapting to emerging threats. Enhancing tracking technologies.
OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition	Effective but ongoing challenges.	Mitigates risks from surplus ammunition; enhances safety.	Focuses specifically on ammunition stockpiles; more cooperative, politically inclusive framework	Relevant to post-conflict regions with surplus stockpiles.	Increasing donor funding; better integrating with OSCE arms control frameworks; enhancing monitoring and Compliance mechanisms.
Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1540	Moderately effective, primarily in supporting national implementation efforts and promoting regional cooperation on non-proliferation.	Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and the prevention of their access by non-state actors.	Prevents proliferation of WMDs to non-state actors.	A bridge between national implementation efforts and global non-proliferation strategies. Technical assistance and policy alignment.	Strengthening national capacities and international collaboration. Better integration with OSCE security structures.
Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (WPS)	Moderately effective; gaps in enforcement, political resistance in some states.	Gender mainstreaming, women's participation in peace processes, and the protection of women in conflict settings	Civilian-led response to gender-based violence in conflict zones and promotion of women's leadership in security policy and conflict resolution.	Relevant to the full conflict cycle.	Enhanced commitment to gender equality and resource allocation. Increasing integration into national policies.

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Forum for Security Cooperation	Effectiveness hindered by political divisions	Permanent platform for discussions on military security and disarmament	Supports arms control implementation and norm-setting	Crisis management and military risk reduction	Enhancing crisis response role and strengthening political commitment to CSBMs
Structured Dialogue	Mixed effectiveness due to lack of binding outcomes.	Platform for discussing military security, arms control, and strategic stability discussions	Forum for OSCE States—including NATO members, EU states, and Russia—to exchange views on military security without formal treaty obligations	Broad relevance	Strengthening political engagement and integrating follow-up mechanisms.
Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC)	Effective in enabling strategic discussions and policy exchanges, impact limited by political constraints	Forum for participating States to assess regional security dynamics and assess compliance with OSCE pol-mil commitments.	Facilitates comprehensive security discussions.	Broad relevance; not conflict-specific.	Ensuring actionable outcomes and follow-up mechanisms. ASRC conclusions should feed into concrete OSCE policy decisions.
Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM)	Effective in reviewing compliance; limited enforcement.	Reviewing compliance with the Vienna Document; evaluating the effectiveness of CSBMs and military transparency and verification procedures	Transparency and arms control. Mil-to-mil dialogue.	General applicability; not conflict-specific.	Strengthening follow-up actions and accountability; expanding to emerging security challenges; enhancing public awareness
Security Committee	Largely advisory; effectiveness limited by the consensus-based decision-making and lack of enforcement mechanisms	Coordinating discussions on transnational threats, confidence-building measures, and security-related policies.	Addresses a wide range of security issues; translates high-level political discussions into practical policy recommendations	Broad relevance; not conflict-specific.	Creating mechanisms for tracking compliance with recommendations, increasing political buy-in from pS, and expanding focus on new security challenges.
OSCE Mandated Mechanisms	Varied effectiveness. Often undermined by political resistance, voluntary participation, and enforcement limitations	Structured frameworks for consultation, fact-finding, and mediation	Broader (non-bloc-based) dialogue	Human rights and rule of law crises, interstate tensions, and unresolved territorial disputes.	Improving implementation mechanisms and increasing international coordination.
Peaceful Settlement of Disputes (Valletta Mechanism)	Rarely used; limited impact.	Low utilisation among states.	Provides a formal mechanism for dispute resolution.	Potentially relevant to various conflicts; underutilised.	Revitalisation and promotion of the mechanism among member states.
Mechanism for Consultation and Co-operation (Berlin Mechanism)	Limited use; effectiveness not well-documented.	Infrequently utilised.	Intended for crisis consultation and cooperation.	Potential applicability in crisis situations.	Raising awareness and encouraging use among participating states.
Vienna and Moscow Mechanisms	Occasionally invoked; effectiveness varies.	Utilised in specific human dimension issues.	Address human rights concerns and facilitate fact-finding.	Relevant to human rights-related conflicts.	Ensuring timely invocation and follow-up on findings.
OSCE Early Warning	Effective in identifying potential conflicts; and challenges in response.	Active monitoring for conflict in cross-dimensional areas	Provides timely alerts to prevent conflicts.	Applicable to emerging conflict situations.	Strengthening response mechanisms and resource allocation.
Secretary General (SG)	Effective in managing OSCE operations and facilitating diplomatic engagement; impact on political decision-making and conflict resolution limited by predominance of rotating CiO.	Across the board, including in institutional and programmatic coordination; diplomatic engagement and conflict resolution; and institutional reform and strategy.	Provides continuity across rotating Chairpersonships and smooth functioning of the Organisation.	Broadly relevant	Enhancing its political authority and decision-making role. Granting the ability to propose policy initiatives without full consensus.
Chairperson in Office (CiO)	Effective in agenda-setting, diplomatic mediation, and crisis response, yet its impact is often limited by consensus rule and short one-year term.	High-level political and diplomatic contexts, including conflict mediation, crisis response, political dialogue facilitation, and agenda-setting.	High-level political leadership, agility in diplomatic crisis management, and ability to set strategic priorities.	Broadly relevant	Reviewing the consensus rule; improving coordination with external diplomatic efforts and regional security organisations.
High Commissioner on National Minorities	Effective in conflict prevention; impact varies.	Active engagement in promoting the rights of minorities and making societies more cohesive.	Highly autonomous within its mandate.	Relevant to conflicts involving national minorities.	Ensuring political support and adequate resources.
Representative for Freedom of the Media	Active in monitoring and exposing violations of freedom of the speech; effectiveness limited by state cooperation.	Regular reporting and advocacy.	Able to talk directly to various stakeholders.	Relevant to conflicts involving media suppression.	Enhancing enforcement capabilities and state engagement.
Conflict Prevention Centre	Central role in OSCE's conflict prevention; effectiveness varies.	Coordinates various OSCE activities relating to conflict prevention (e.g. OSCE field presences); develops policy response.	Central 'hub' for conflict prevention, crisis management, and operational coordination.	Broad relevance to conflict prevention efforts.	Greater decision-making autonomy; increased human resources.
Network of OSCE Early Warning Focal Points in Executive Structures	Emerging effectiveness; still developing.	Monitors emerging security risks; facilitates information-sharing across OSCE structures; supports crisis response and preventive diplomacy; and provides insights for policy and decision-making.	Timely information sharing and cross-institutional coordination.	Broad relevance.	Strengthening data analytics and intelligence-sharing; expanding participation in early warning systems; developing crisis-response protocols.

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OSCE Parliamentary Assembly	Effective in promoting parliamentary dialogue and developing policy recommendations, but its influence on OSCE decision-making and implementation is limited due to primarily advisory role.	Used in the context of election observation missions, conflict resolution efforts, democratic institution-building, and security policy discussions.	Regular participation from national delegations. A platform for informal diplomacy and confidence-building among pS.	Broad relevance.	Enhancing coordination between the OSCE PA and other OSCE institutions.
Peace/Field Operations	Effectiveness varies across operations and dimensions.	Cross-dimensional sustained support for the implementation of OSCE commitments; early warning and post-conflict environment.	OSCE 'boots on the ground'.	Broad relevance to post-conflict and mediation efforts.	Enhanced funding; negotiated mandate.
Long-Term Programmatic Engagement and Quick Impact Projects	Highly effective in non-conflict contexts which need support with implementing OSCE commitments.	Help implement OSCE commitments in accordance with an agreed mandate.	OSCE presence on the ground.	Relevant to post-conflict contexts.	Enhancing OSCE positive visibility; robust mandate; and enhanced funding.
Peacekeeping	Effective only in its civil dimension. No capacity for military peacekeeping.	Few missions conducted under OSCE mandate.	Offers a framework for civilian peacekeeping operations.	Potentially relevant to various conflict zones.	Building consensus for deployment and enhancing operational capabilities.
Short-Term Deployments	Partly effective – depends on the mandate.	Used in some crisis response situations.	Allows rapid response and assessment capabilities.	Useful in sudden escalations requiring immediate action.	Stronger mandates and rapid deployment capabilities.
Expert and Fact-Finding Missions	Effective in gathering critical information and impartially evaluating it; impact depends on follow-up.	Frequently used in response to emerging conflicts or security concerns.	Provides verified data for policy-making.	Key in investigating human rights violations.	Maintaining credibility and timely response; ensuring an effective follow-up mechanism
General Tools	-	-	-	-	-
Special/Personal Representatives (of the CiO)	Effective in diplomatic engagement; results vary by case.	Used in various crisis conflict-resolution efforts.	Facilitates high-level diplomatic efforts and negotiations.	Relevant to political negotiations and mediation across the OSCE area.	Clearer mandates and enhanced political backing for their roles.
Groups of Friends	Effective in informal mediation; results vary by case.	Used in OSCE conflict resolution efforts.	Provides targeted diplomatic support.	Relevant to long-term conflict resolution.	Ensuring inclusivity and sustained commitment.
Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)	Highly effective in promoting OSCE commitments in the Human Dimension	Widely used in monitoring, assessing and implementing the OSCE Human Dimension commitments.	Strengthens democratic governance and rule of law.	Important in post-conflict democratisation and human rights monitoring.	Sustained funding and state cooperation
Monitoring and Observation	Effective in providing impartial reporting; impact varies.	Regularly conducted by OSCE institutions.	Enhances transparency and accountability.	Crucial for improving OSCE interventions.	Needs political support, resources and timely follow-ups.
Legal Opinions	Effective when leveraged; impact varies.	Provided by OSCE institutions and expert partner organisations in response to legal questions. Can be used by governments and civil society to improve pS's OSCE commitments.	Expert advice based on best international practices.	Relevant to cross-dimensional issues, but particularly to rule-of-law challenges and conflict resolution.	Political will and capacity by pS to implement legal recommendations.
Human Dimension Implementation Meeting/Warsaw Human Dimension Conference	Effective in assessing compliance with OSCE Human Dimension commitments by pS and highlighting areas for improvement.	Provides a platform for dialogue on the implementation of OSCE Human Dimension commitments between pS, civil society and international organisations.	Gives the floor to civil society, which might lack dialogue with a home government.	Relevant across the OSCE area.	Requires political support, broad participation, and actionable follow-ups
Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting (EEDIM)	Partly effective; engagement varies.	Provides platform for discussions on economic and environmental security.	Addresses economic drivers of conflict and environmental security risks.	Relevant to regions facing resource-based conflicts and climate-related instability.	Needs better integration with OSCE security strategies and increased participation.