

THE OSCE'S PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY IN CENTRAL ASIA AND THE SOUTH CAUCASUS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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This paper begins by defining the terms “transgovernmentalism”, “parliamentary diplomacy” and “international parliamentary institution” (IPI). These definitions clarify the relevance of those terms and concepts to understanding the particular characteristics of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE-PA) and the phenomenon that it represents. With those terms of reference set, the paper proceeds to discuss the OSCE-PA as an IPI, briefly recounting its institutional history and establishing the bases for comparing it with other IPIs. Next, the paper sets out the activity of the OSCE’s parliamentary diplomacy, through its Parliamentary Assembly, in Central Asia and the South Caucasus. It then sets out the similar activity of other Euro-regional IPIs in order to provide comparative perspective. Subsequently it examines the OSCE-PA’s institutional development also in this same comparative perspective. It concludes by taking note of the most recent developments of OSCE-PA’s activity in Central Asia and the South Caucasus, and also the most recent developments in Central Asia and the South Caucasus pertinent to that activity. The final remarks include some general considerations about IPIs in the world today, relating them to the OSCE-PA’s present, past and potential future activity.

1. PROBLEMATIZATION AND DEFINITION

International parliamentary institutions are a manifestation of parliamentary diplomacy, itself in turn a phenomenon of transgovernmentalism arising from out of two fundamental trends in the world today, democratization and transnationalization. In this short paper, it should not be necessary to explicate democratization and transnationalization.

1.1. Transgovernmentalism and Interparliamentary Associations

Transgovernmentalism refers to the “intensive and continuous consultation process” by which subunits national governments form international coalitions

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across national boundaries.¹ If this definition were interpreted strictly, it would apply only to IPIs where the national parliaments (or their constituent administrative units) have corporate representation. It would then exclude many other constellations of interest, for example those where the national parliamentarians act as individuals in their official capacity. The latter arrangements would not necessarily be “transnational advocacy networks” (TANs) because they are not dedicated to single or well-defined issues or issue-areas.² In practice, it is useful to extend the concept of transgovernmentalism to include bodies established by intergovernmental agreement. IPIs as defined below then become transgovernmental phenomena in a strict sense.

By way of contrast, there exist numerous inter-parliamentarian associations (as distinct from interparliamentary associations) that are TANs or that represent an organizational cluster or focus within a TAN. One interesting and unique example is the evolving Consultative Assembly of Parliamentarians for the International Criminal Court and the Rule of Law (CAP-ICC). This is an outgrowth of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, which is itself highly animated by the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) along with many higher-profile NGOs including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. PGA is, in turn, a voluntary association of national parliamentarians acting not as individuals in their official capacity but rather as individuals taking private initiative, but who happen to be national parliamentarians and then translate that activity into parliamentary functions within their national legislatures.

The CAP-ICC is thus not an IPI according to the definition provided below but rather a transnational parliamentary-societal network. Another example of this type is the Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Co-operation. Still other types are indeed international institutions rather than transnational networks: examples include such semi-formal parliamentary groupings as exist in the European Parliament, and mixed organizations of a special historical character

¹ Robert O. KEOHANE and Joseph S. NYE, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston, Addison Wesley, 1977), p. 25; cf. 3rd ed. (Boston, Pearson Addison Wesley, 2000). Recently on transgovernmentalism, see Anne-Marie SLAUGHTER, *The Real New World Order*, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 76, no. 5 (September/October 1997), pp. 183–97; William WALLACE, *Regional Integration: The West European Experience* (Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution, 1994). For a critical view, see José E. ALVAREZ, *Do Liberal States Behave Better?: A Critique of Slaughter's Liberal Theory*, *European Journal of International Law*, vol. 21, No. 2, 2001, pp. 183–247.

² On TANs, see Margaret E. KECK and Kathryn SIKKINK, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, 1998); called “international solidarity networks” by Peter WATERMAN, *Globalisation, Social Movements and the New Internationalisms* (London, Cassell, 1998). See also Anthony JUDGE, *Transnational Associations and Their Functions*, in *Functionalism, Theory and Practice in International Relations*, A.J.R. GROOM and Paul TAYLOR (eds.), (London, University of London Press, 1975), pp. 190–224; and Ronnie D. LIPSCHUTZ (with Judith MAYER), *Global Civil Society and Global Environmental Governance: The Politics of Nature from Place to Planet* (Albany, N.Y., SUNY Press, 1996).

such as the Socialist International. Although these latter types are not a focus of the present paper, they are numerous and significant enough to deserve their own acronym for future reference: IPSIs, for “international parliamentary-societal institutions”.³

Attention to transnational social movements often emphasizes their influence upon state policy. Yet many regional IPIs (considered in the strict definitional sense, i.e., as established through intergovernmental agreement) are themselves foci of TANs or generate them. This fact manifests a generally under-appreciated phenomenon: IPIs catalyze the self-generation of NGOs and inter-NGO networks, and such formations frequently become IPSIs. Not only have IPIs sometimes launched initiatives explicitly creating NGOs and IPSIs (e.g. networks around women’s issues in Africa by the Union of African Parliaments), but also several newer IPIs —such as the Baltic Assembly and Central American Parliament — were launched by inter-NGO networks that themselves subsequently became IPI-focused IPSIs.⁴

³ See Robert M. CUTLER, The Emergence of International Parliamentary Institutions: New Networks of Influence in World Society, in Gordon S. SMITH and Daniel WOLFISH (eds.), *Who Is Afraid of the State?* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp. 201–229. For the transnational/international distinction, see Samuel P. HUNTINGTON, Transnational Organization in World Politics, *World Politics* vol. 25, no. 3 (April 1973), pp. 333–68.

⁴ For purposes of research, it would therefore seem useful later to introduce a distinction between “transgovernmental corporatism” and “transsocietal corporatism” in world society, by analogy to the distinction between state and societal corporatism, in the domestic context, made by Philippe C. SCHMITTER, Still the Century of Corporatism?, *Review of Politics*, vol. 36, no. 1 (January 1974), pp. 85–131. For a seminal work showing how the EU autonomously catalyzed the formation and aggregation of transnational and transgovernmental interests, organizations and networks, see Tanja A. BÖRZEL, “What’s So Special About Policy Networks? — An Exploration of the Concept and Its Usefulness in Studying European Governance, *European Integration online Papers*, vol. 1, no. 16, 1997: <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/1997-016a.htm>, accessed 23 May 2004; also Sidney Tarrow, Transnational Contention, in S. Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995), chap. 11.

1.2. Parliamentary Diplomacy and International Parliamentary Institutions

In this newly networked context of world society a form of diplomacy has proliferated, called “parliamentary diplomacy”.⁵ This term has no agreed standard definition.⁶ However, Vera Squarcialupi cogently explains how it “covers both institutional links of a traditional kind as well as those formed spontaneously and then institutionalized, thus enabling parliamentarians, acting within their remit, to tackle major problems which transcend national borders.”⁷ Parliamentary diplomacy thus represents an important middle ground between the traditional level

⁵ It is frequently thought that the first example of parliamentary diplomacy in the modern age is the creation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in 1889; however, Irwin ABRAMS, *A History of European Peace Societies, 1867-1899* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1938), chap. 1, traces the phenomenon back to the International League of Peace and Freedom. It is an historical curiosity that the first recorded use of the term “parliamentary diplomacy” appears to be Stalin’s early-1920s denunciation of the pre-1914 policy of the Socialist International: “Instead of a revolutionary policy, there was flabby philistinism and sordid political bargaining, parliamentary diplomacy and parliamentary scheming.” J.V. STALIN, *Foundations of Leninism* (New York, International Publishers, 1939), p. 21.

⁶ Compare, for example: Victor-Yves GHEBALI *The Conferences of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on European Co-Operation and Security 1973-1991: The Contribution of Parliamentary Diplomacy to East-West Detente* (Aldershot, Dartmouth, 1993), who limits it to interactions at a single international nongovernmental organization seeming to claim a monopoly; Mario DI NAPOLI, who conceives it as relations amongst parliaments taken as institutions, in *La diplomatie parlementaire: les relations extérieures entre parlements dans une perspective historique et mondiale*, paper presented to the International Commission for the History of Representative and Parliamentary Institutions, 19th International Congress of Historical Sciences, Oslo, August 2000; and Louis HENKIN, *How Nations Behave: Law and Foreign Policy*, 2nd ed. (New York, Columbia University Press, 1979), esp. pp. 176-81, who implicitly employs the more traditional but outdated reference to exchanges at the United Nations as originated by Philip C. JESSUP, *Parliamentary Diplomacy: An Examination of the Legal Quality of the Rules of Procedure of Organs of the United Nations* (Leyden, A.W. Sijthoff, 1956). Of especial interest to the middle ground amongst these extremes is Emmanuel DECAUX, *La CSCE au lendemain du Conseil de Rome: un bilan de la transition institutionnelle*, *European Journal of International Law*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1994, pp. 267-84.

⁷ As Rapporteur in 2000 for the Committee for Parliamentary and Public Relations of the Assembly of West European Union (A-WEU), she continues: “The objective is to launch initiatives designed to influence political decisions by the executive and pave the way for practical solutions. Having recourse to more direct, less formal methods of communication in the form of exchanges of views among parliamentarians is one way of achieving this objective.” See *Parliamentary Diplomacy: The Role of International Assemblies*, Doc. A/1685, 6 June 2000. Compare the study of the parliamentary dimension of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, which includes worthwhile reflections on conception and definition: Stelios STAVRIDIS, “*Parliamentary Diplomacy*”: *Some Preliminary Findings*, Jean Monnet Working Papers 48 ([Catania], University of Catania, Department of Political Studies, November 2002).

of interstate diplomacy and the new level of transnational co-operation amongst grassroots non-governmental organizations (NGOs).⁸

An IPI may be defined as an international institution that (1) is a regular forum for multilateral deliberations on an established basis of an either legislative or consultative nature, (2) either attached to an international organization or itself constituting one, (3) in which at least three states or transgovernmental units are represented by parliamentarians, (4) who are either selected by national legislatures in a self-determined manner or popularly elected by electorates of the member states.⁹ Of particular relevance to the South Caucasus and Central Asia, IPIs also establish ongoing transgovernmental relationships that restrain old power politics. Unlike the general case with transgovernmentalism amongst national parliaments, transgovernmentalism in IPIs can be especially important where civil society and NGOs are underdeveloped and politically constrained, thus preparing a middle ground for interstate co-operation. The phenomenon of IPIs manifests the transformation of parliamentary diplomacy into a societal mechanism for oversight on traditional executive-based diplomacy.

2. THE OSCE-PA AS AN INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTION

It is generally accepted that the OSCE-PA's primary task is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue, although this does not explicitly appear in the official

⁸ However, there appears to be a tendency amongst national parliamentarians to conceive parliamentary diplomacy mainly in terms of relations amongst parliaments and parliamentarians. See, e.g., Sénat et l'Assemblée nationale, *La diplomatie parlementaire: Mercredi 23 mai 2001*, Les colloques du Sénat: les actes 1295-6694 (Paris, Sénat, [2001]); *Parliamentary Diplomacy*, Occasional Papers on Parliamentary Government 16 (Ottawa, Parliamentary Centre, May 2003); *Parliamentary Diplomacy*, special issue of *Romanian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1995.

⁹ Definition adapted from R. CUTLER, *The Emergence of International Parliamentary Institutions*, *op. cit.* A definitional criterion based upon the U.N. Charter's reference to "regional arrangements" (Chapter VIII) would exclude some IPIs that qualify under the above definition but would include still others. See the three-year-old survey of such European forums alone — surely they have multiplied further since then — to be found in the Reports of the A-WEU's Committee for Parliamentary and Public Relations: *Sub-regional organisations in Europe and their parliamentary dimension – Part I: Central and Southern Europe*, Doc. A/1724, 7 December 2000; and *Sub-regional organisations and their parliamentary dimension – Part II: Northern Europe*, Doc. A/1739, 19 June 2001.

list of its responsibilities and objectives.¹⁰ IPIs vary in the degree to which they demonstrate an openness to world society or, by contrast, remain within inter-governmentally established frameworks. The OSCE-PA is specifically permitted to “develop permanent cooperation, as deemed appropriate, with the agreement of the Standing Committee, with Non-Governmental Organizations in OSCE participating States, which are active in promoting the aims and principles of the OSCE.”¹¹ IPIs worldwide have widely varying origins, prerogatives and capabilities. To take two extremes along the continuum of authority, for example, the EP (which began life as the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community) has co-decisional power with the political executive of its regional integration organization, while the NATO-PA (born under the name North Atlantic Assembly) actually lacks a formal relationship to NATO.

TABLE 1.
INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTIONS OF EURO-REGIONAL
CO-OPERATION/INTEGRATION AND SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS
THAT ARE CONCERNED WITH CENTRAL ASIA AND THE SOUTH CAUCASUS¹²

European

European Parliament (EP)
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

Euratlantic

NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO-PA)

Eurasian

Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation
(PABSEC)
Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent
States (IPA-CIS)

¹⁰ The OSCE-PA's responsibilities and objectives are to “(a) assess the implementation of the objectives of the OSCE; (b) discuss subjects addressed during meetings of the Ministerial Council and the summits of Heads of State or Government; (c) develop and promote mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts; (d) support the strengthening and consolidation of democratic institutions in the OSCE participating states; (e) contribute to the development of the institutional structures of the OSCE and of relations and cooperation between the existing OSCE institutions.” OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, *Rules of Procedure*, ([Copenhagen], OSCE-PA, 19 February 2004), p. 4 (Rule 2).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 22 (Rule 43).

¹² Regional classification is based upon the geographic position of the IPI's members. For the purpose of PACE, Russia is considered an exclusively European rather than a Eurasian country. Omitted from the Table are two non-European formations unconnected with a separate regional international co-operation/integration or security organization: the Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace (which counts the parliaments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan as members) and the Parliamentary Union of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Members (which counts the parliaments of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan as members).

Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Eurasian Economic Community
(IPA-EURASEC)

Eurasiatlantic

Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE-PA)

At the end of the twentieth century there were nearly two dozen IPIs in the world. That number has probably grown to approximately thirty the last several years. In the sociology of world society, IPIs are concentrated most densely in Europe. A number of European IPIs have nothing to do with the Central Asia or South Caucasus: for example, the Baltic Council, the Benelux Interparliamentary Consultative Council and the Assembly of West European Union (A-WEU, which recently acquired the subtitle “The Interparliamentary European Security and Defence Assembly” and so may acquire such concerns in the future). Still, including those IPIs of which the Central Asian and/or South Caucasus countries are member, there are no fewer than seven Euro-regional IPIs (i.e., regional IPIs including European members, but not necessarily to the exclusion of others) that are directly concerned with either or both of those regions in the former Soviet areas. They are listed in Table 1.

3. THE OSCE’S PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY IN CENTRAL ASIA AND THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe is the only regional IPI that includes representatives from Europe, Asia and North America. It was created pursuant to the November 1990 Charter of Paris and the April 1991 Madrid Declaration. (Tajikistan and Turkmenistan are not signatories of the Charter of Paris.) It held its first formal session in Budapest in July 1992, following which its secretariat was established in Copenhagen. Later that year, methods of co-ordination and dialogue between the Chairman-in-Office and the Assembly were set up. (The Chairman-in-Office reports to the Assembly, answers members’ questions and takes note of their views for transmission to the Ministerial Council.) OSCE-PA’s participation in this manner has been reaffirmed at the Budapest (1994) and Istanbul (1999) Summits, which mandated the institutionalization of these contacts. OSCE-PA deputies are selected by members of national parliaments from amongst their own numbers. Of the OSCE-PA’s 317 deputies, six each are from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and three each from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

There is a rough if inexact correspondence between the issue-area clusters denoted in the OSCE-PA’s three General Committees (democracy, human rights and humanitarian questions; economic affairs, science, technology and the environment; and political affairs and security) on the one hand and, on the other hand, the complex issue-area clusters that matter here. The OSCE-PA’s concerns in Central Asia and the South Caucasus fall mainly within the purview of its

Standing Committee on Political Affairs and Security and Standing Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. The OSCE-PA also maintains an Ad Hoc Committee on Abkhazia, which has been unable to play a significant role due to the Abkhazian side's refusal to enter into communication. It has a Special Representative on the Nagorno Karabakh Conflict, who works closely with the OSCE Minsk Group and its Co-chairmanship, as well as with the Chairman-in-Office's Personal Representative on the Conflict Dealt With by the Minsk Group.

The OSCE-PA sends parliamentarians to OSCE field presences, to support and observe the work carried out there by the OSCE itself. Since 2001, such field visits have been conducted to Uzbekistan (April 2002), Armenia (May 2002), Georgia (May 2003), Azerbaijan (November 2002) and Kyrgyzstan (December 2002). Working with the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), it has regularly sent election monitoring teams throughout the region, most recently to Georgia.

Fall Meetings and occasional Seminars organized by the OSCE-PA have included "Electoral Legislation in Georgia" (Tbilisi, July 1995), "Regional Security and Political, Economic, Social and Humanitarian Issues in Central Asia and the Caucasus" (Tashkent, September 1997) and "Conflict Resolution and Democratic Development in the Caucasus" (Tbilisi, October 1998). In June 2003 the OSCE-PA held a Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum in Astana. Also it organizes a Conference on Sub-regional Economic Co-operation; the next meeting in this series will be held in Norway in 2005.

The PACE, NATO-PA, EP and IPA-CIS all have official observer status at OSCE-PA (as do A-WEU and the Inter-Parliamentary Union as well). The OSCE-PA co-operates with PABSEC and the Nordic Council. Perhaps most interesting, the OSCE-PA has partnered with the EP and PACE in a so-called "Parliamentary Troika" so as to co-ordinate better and to strengthen various international parliamentary projects. However, none of the "troika" projects at present concerns Central Asia or the South Caucasus.

4. THE OSCE-PA IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

This section sets out the parliamentary diplomacy of the OSCE-PA's peer organizations, these being the other six IPIs of Euro-regional co-operation/integration and security organizations concerned with the three countries of the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) and/or the five of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan). It then discusses the OSCE-PA's institutional development in comparison with those other IPIs, within a framework of analysis previously established in the scientific literature.

4.1. Parliamentary Diplomacy of Other Euro-regional IPis in Central Asia and the South Caucasus

European Parliament

No country from Central Asia or the South Caucasus is represented in the EP, whose members are directly elected by voters in the states members of the European Union. The EP organizes bilateral Parliamentary Co-operation Committees (PCCs) with the national parliaments of each of the countries in Central Asia and the South Caucasus individually, with the exception of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, which two are together organized under a single delegation “for relations with” the countries themselves (plus Mongolia) and not with their national parliaments. In practice, one identical EP delegation attends all three bilateral PCCs with each of the South Caucasus countries; and a second EP delegation attends the bilateral PCCs with each of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, being at the same time the “Delegation for Relations with” the other two Central Asian countries (together with Mongolia). The delegations for the PCCs with the South Caucasus countries are considered as part of the European division of the EP’s interparliamentary delegations. Since 1999, bilateral yearly meetings with each of the South Caucasus countries and with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan individually have taken place within the framework of the corresponding Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA), alternating annually between the region itself and Brussels. Since September 2003 there is a PCC with Tajikistan, with which the EU looks forward likewise to signing and implementing a PCA. The EP delegations discuss wide ranges of issues with their counterparts in connection with and addition to the specific implementation of the respective PCAs. To take only a few examples, for Armenia these include Karabakh, economic reform and foreign policy; for Azerbaijan they include energy development and freedom of expression; for Georgia they include internal conflicts, corruption and institutional reform. Certain standing committees of the EP also have the opportunity to address affairs in Central Asia and the South Caucasus through their regular review of EU policies and associated budgetary questions (for example, the funding of the TACIS program). The Committees on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy; on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy; and on Development and Co-operation are especially noteworthy in this connection.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

All three South Caucasus countries are members of PACE: Georgia since 1999, Armenia and Azerbaijan since 2001. (Formally, it is the national parliaments that have membership of PACE.) None of the five Central Asian countries appears to have an even indirect relation with PACE. Indeed, a search of titles of texts adopted by PACE appears to suggest that concern Central Asia is studiously eschewed even though, incongruously, a number of texts nevertheless address situations in Southeast Asia, Central America and other regions of the world.

NATO Parliamentary Assembly

None of the Central Asian or South Caucasus countries is a member of NATO-PA. (As with PACE, formally it is the national parliaments that would have membership.) However, the three South Caucasus countries are Associate Members. This means that they are eligible to participate in all Rose-Roth seminars, nearly all Committee and Sub-Committee activities (where they can also serve as Special Associate Rapporteurs) and all Plenary Sessions (where they can also present resolutions and amendments to resolutions); but they cannot vote on reports, resolutions or Assembly leadership, and they do not contribute to the Assembly's budget. A large number of the NATO-PA's Committee Reports and other publications address wide ranges of South Caucasus affairs, but Central Asia less so.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation.

The three South Caucasus countries are founding members (1993) of PABSEC, which has three committees: (1) Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs; (2) Legal and Political Affairs; and (3) Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs. The issues that they address range widely so as to include the rule of law, harmonization of legal systems, promotion of small and medium enterprise, tariff and visa regulations, banking and financing, the fight against organized crime and corruption, and not excluding the role of the mass media in society, public health and environmental issues. Members of PABSEC are drawn from the national parliaments of the participating countries.

Inter-parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States

All five Central Asian and all three South Caucasus states are members of IPA-CIS. It is therefore natural that many of its Acts (including normative declarations and model laws and codes), Recommendations and other adopted documents directly address relevant concerns of those countries. Several of the nine IPA-CIS Permanent Committees address relevant concerns: in particular those on social policy and human rights; on defence and security issues; on culture, science, education and information; and on foreign policy. Through its Interparliamentary Peace-keeping Groups, the IPA-CIS is strongly involved in efforts at peacemaking and has worked with the UN, OSCE and CIS Heads of State in Azerbaijan (Mountainous Karabakh), Georgia (Abkhazia) and Tajikistan. Perhaps most notably, the May 1994 Bishkek Protocol, the only legal document ensuring the ceasefire in Mountainous Karabakh, was a result of the IPA-CIS's efforts.

Inter-parliamentary Assembly of the Eurasian Economic Community

The members of IPA-EURASEC include Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The roots of EURASEC as a regional integration organization are traceable back to the Russia-Belarus rapprochement in the early 1990s, which a few years later added Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to become the “Group of Four”. EURASEC now also includes Tajikistan, and it is expected that Moldova may become an observer. IPA-EURASEC focuses on harmonizing the legislative agenda and acts of the organization’s member states. At present a significant focus appears to be co-ordination of their accession to the WTO. As such, IPA-EURASEC is not concerned directly with issues of migration, human rights, development aid or conflict management. In its earlier incarnation under the Group of Four, quadripartite interparliamentary meetings took place in St.-Petersburg in the margins of regular IPA-CIS sessions. They now take place separately from IPA-CIS and alternate between that city and Astana.

4.2. The OSCE-PA’s Institutional Development in Comparative Transgovernmental Perspective

Although the OSCE-PA’s own budget is independent of the organization generally and the Assembly may take unilateral and independent initiatives, nevertheless it gained a role in the consideration of the OSCE budget only in 2002 when, for the first time, the OSCE Secretary General briefed the PA Standing Committee (comprising Heads of National Delegations to the OSCE-PA, Members of the Bureau and the Chairs of the three General Committees) and gave the Assembly the chance to comment on the draft budget. In terms of institutional development of rights and responsibilities, the OSCE-PA has reached approximately the stage occupied by the European Parliament a third of a century ago. Indeed, given the Assembly’s formalized high-level working relationships with other OSCE institutions, it is perhaps slightly more advanced than the EP was back then.¹³ Table 2 indicates the relative institutional development of the seven IPIs enumerated in Table 1.

¹³ On the stages of the EP’s institutional development according to this analytical framework, see Robert M. CUTLER and Alexander VON LINGEN, *The European Parliament and the European Union’s Security and Defence Policy*, *European Security*, vol. 12, no. 2 (Summer 2003), pp. 1-20.

TABLE 2.
DEFINITION AND CLASSIFICATION OF STAGES OF INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
OF EURO-REGIONAL INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTIONS¹⁴

Institutional level (with type of world- societal group)	Stage of institutional development	Description of stage of institutional development	Classification of IPIs' level of development
4 (institutionalized transnational- authoritative)	« Legislature »	Compellent legislative authority over IO bodies or members with which the IPI may be affiliated, or similar «other-directed» authority if there is no IO	EP
3.5	«Parliament» plus Spillover	<i>Operational activities</i>	
3 (institutionalized transnational- deliberative)	« Parliament »	Deterrent oversight over IO bodies (or members) with which the IPI may be affiliated, or similar other-directed oversight if there is no such IO	IPA-EURASEC
2.7	«Assembly» plus Takeoff Stage 2b	<i>Rule-supervisory activities (advisory oversight of other institutional bodies)</i>	OSCE-PA
2.5	«Assembly» plus Takeoff Stage 2a	<i>Rule-supervisory activities (advisory oversight of own self)</i>	NATO-PA, PACE IPA-CIS, PABSEC
2.2	«Assembly» plus Takeoff Stage 1	<i>Rule-creating activities</i>	
2 (associational)	« Assembly »	First regularized meeting following establishment of permanent/standing secretariat	
1.5	«Congress» plus Initiation Stage 2	<i>Normative activities</i>	
1.2	«Congress» plus Initiation Stage 1	<i>Informational activities</i>	

¹⁴ For all definitions and criteria, see Robert M. CUTLER, *The Emergence of International Parliamentary Institutions: New Networks of Influence in World Society*, in Gordon S. SMITH and Daniel WOLFISH (eds.), *Who Is Afraid of the State?* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp. 201–229. The (heuristic) numerical scale and the division of “‘Assembly’ plus Takeoff Stage 2” into 2a and 2b are here made explicit for the first time.

1 (non-associational)	«Congress»	First meeting where members come together to establish IPI or organization later becoming IPI, whether affiliated with any antecedent IO or not	
0 (anomic)	«Pre-Congress»	First preliminary or preparatory meeting generating the organization later evolving into IPI, or foundation of antecedent regional IO with which it may (eventually) be affiliated	

Still it is to be remarked that, on the OSCE's own organizational diagram, the Assembly is portrayed as an "island" institution unconnected with any others either in degree of responsibility or in respect of provision of support. As noted above, the OSCE-PA co-operates with other OSCE institutions (e.g., ODIHR and the administration of the Minsk Group) but it appears to have no formal oversight or powers of review with respect to other OSCE bodies. Perhaps it has neither the budget nor the human resources to do so, or perhaps this reflects the OSCE's organizational culture as a whole; yet such activities are regular undertakings of national parliaments. The OSCE-PA has recently opened a Liaison Office in Vienna.

5. CONCLUSION

OSCE-PA looks to be the Euro-regional IPI most interested in Central Asia. Its level of involvement is possibly matched only by the IPA-CIS, but the latter's activity differs qualitatively. In recent years, PACE has significantly increased its attention to the South Caucasus, especially since the three countries in the region gained membership, but it does not treat Central Asian matters. Likewise, NATO-PA does studies on South Caucasus affairs but appears studiously to avoid becoming concerned with Central Asia. IPA-EURASEC is potentially very significant for the future of economic integration, but its membership excludes Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in Central Asia, and no South Caucasus country is a member. The EP deals widely with both Central Asia and the South Caucasus through a variety of instruments, but these regions remain nevertheless peripheral to its principal concerns, which are mainly captured within the EU system as a whole and certainly for the medium-term future will be directed towards managing the institutional follow-on to the most recent enlargement.

IPIs that are striving towards the "Parliament" level of institutional development (see Table 2), and the OSCE-PA in particular, promote moves towards regional confidence building, leading to co-operative security; and they bring new issues onto the international agenda, influencing how that agenda is set. Over the last few years, the OSCE has intensified these activities with respect to Central Asia. In 2002, seeking to use environmental concerns as a means to strengthen good

governance and to reduce tensions, the OSCE launched the program Environment Agenda for Security and Co-operation in Europe (ENVSEC) together with UNDP and UNEP, with Central Asia as one of its two regional foci for which an environmental security assessment has already been produced. (The other is Southeast Europe.) The OSCE-PA has an especially important role, in the context of this program, to ensure that economic and environmental issues are fully linked to security.¹⁵

In 2003 the Netherlands as Chairman-in-Office identified co-operation with Central Asia as one of the organization's priorities. Also ODIHR has been active in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan over the past several years, with positive results.¹⁶ The OSCE's increasing emphasis on regional security co-operation in Central Asia could possibly catalyze further improvements in the co-operation between the OSCE-PA and other structures through which OSCE is itself governed. In this context, if the OSCE-PA were to seek to provide assistance in finding solutions to security threats outside of the OSCE region (as suggested at TAPF by parliamentarians from Partner for Co-operation states), then this could overstress the organization in the near term beyond its still developing capacity.

It is nevertheless clear that a Central Asian focus will continue to receive important attention from OSCE in the future, and that its parliamentary component will likewise continue strongly to manifest its activity. As the OSCE-PA President said in his closing remarks in Almaty: "the discussions we have undertaken ... can be continued at the Second Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum."¹⁷ By this mechanism, OSCE-PA may continue one of the traditional functions of IPIs, *viz.*, to introduce national elites from countries that are not yet fully democratized to ranges of views and perspectives, particularly from democratic oppositions in other regimes.

¹⁵ The current ENVSEC agenda clusters around the assessment and monitoring of environmental vulnerability, the development and implementation of policy, and capacity building and institutional development. Like much literature related to sustainable development until recently, ENVSEC seems to minimize the direct connections between environmental security and energy security policies. Compare Robert M. CUTLER, *Cooperative Energy Security in the Caspian Region: A New Paradigm for Sustainable Development?*, *Global Governance*, vol. 5, no. 2 (April-June 1999), pp. 251-71; see also R. CUTLER, *The New Concept of Cooperative Energy Security: A Focus for Synthesizing Environmental and Energy Agendas through Local Participation under Sustainable Development*, Occasional Paper (New York, International Foundation for Research and Development, April 2000).

¹⁶ For details, see Christian STROHAL, Director of the OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, [Report of Speech], in *Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum — The Trans-Asian Dimension of the OSCE: A Vital Security Link; Almaty, Kazakhstan, 7-9 June 2003* (Copenhagen, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, [2003]), p. 17.

¹⁷ Bruce GEORGE, Final Statement by the President, in *Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum*, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

Already in world society, regional IPIs have begun to co-ordinate interregional consultation and to consolidate interregional co-operation. A forerunner of this phenomenon has been the established relationship between the Baltic Assembly and the Nordic Council in the 1990s. The remarkable aspect of this interregional co-operation is that each regional organization has organizationally mixed parliamentary–executive structures. Such institutional formations increase the efficacy of transgovernmental co-ordination on, for example, environmental and educational issues. In view of this, it is of interest that Armenia has recently requested of the Baltic countries that they share their recent experience in regional international co-operation, with a view towards determining which of its aspects may ameliorate the situation in the South Caucasus.