

**The OSCE, Neutral position and Mongolia:
Can Mongolia play the role of Finland in northeast Asia?**

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1. Introduction

Both Mongolia and Finland are neighbors of Russia (formerly the Soviet Union). However, Finland and Mongolia differ greatly in terms of their security situations.

The Europe was formerly divided into three camps: “the communist states of the East, the democratic states of the West, and the neutral states. However, this conflict disappeared after the Eastern European revolutions. In Asia, on the other hand, the conflict still exists, as seen in the tensions between South Korea and North Korea, between Japan and China, and between China and Taiwan, as well as in the problems of the South China Sea. In addition, there are historical problems such as those between South Korea, China and Japan regarding “comfort women.”

Under diplomatic pressure from the Soviet Union, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) was one of Finland’s most important attempts to reduce the political tensions between two opposing camps in Europe. The original idea for the CSCE was not Finland’s; the Soviet Union proposed it at a summit held in Geneva in 1954. In the late 1960s, Finland was focused on the idea of fostering East-West dialogue. It played an important role in the dialogue leading up to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, which was signed by thirty-five participating States including all European States, the USA and Canada except Albania at Finlandia Hall in Helsinki. During the Cold War, the CSCE played an important role in the dialogue among the East, the West and the neutral states.

The CSCE became the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 1995. China established Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2001 as a successor to the Shanghai Five, which had been founded in 1996. However, not all of the member states of the SCO are Asian states, so the SCO does not provide an easy

blueprint for becoming a regional international organization like the OSCE.

In this paper, I analyze Finland's role in the CSCE/OSCE and explain why Finland was able to play such an important role. I also explain the Asian perspective on the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Asia and Mongolia's role in it.

2. The CSCE, the OSCE and European security

The OSCE plays an important role in European security. The participating states are not just European states; they include CIS states, the United States, Canada and Mongolia. It consists of 57 participating states and 11 partnership states, such as Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Afghanistan, Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Australia.

The OSCE acts as a mediator and fosters dialogue. The Permanent Council, which meets weekly in Vienna, includes representatives of every participating state and partnership state. In this council, representatives from, for instance, Russia and Ukraine or Armenia and Azerbaijan, can meet and engage in dialogue. Although OSCE cannot play a role like military alliance, OSCE has a role of mediator in the conflict or confrontation situation. Roberto Dominguez pointed that security can be divided to two situations. One is "Hard Security" which is traditional militaristic security like NATO. The other is "Soft Security" which is non-militaristic and confidence-building-based security like OSCE¹.

In the Ukrainian conflict, the OSCE plays an important role as a mediator among the Ukrainian government, the pro-Russian Ukrainian militia, and the Russian government. The European Union on at the side of the Ukrainian government, and it has imposed economic sanctions against Russia, so it cannot act as a mediator of the conflict. The system of dialogue originated with the CSCE. In Europe, Finland has been one of the major actors in the CSCE's process².

¹ See, Roberto Dominguez(2014)*The OSCE Soft Security for a Hard World: Competing Theories for Understanding the OSCE*, Peter Lang Pub Inc.

² See, Fred Tanner(2016) *The OSCE and the Crisis in and around Ukraine: First Lessons for Crisis Management*, in Kurt P. Tudyka(2016) *OSCE Yearbook 2015*, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft: Baden-Baden,pp.241-250.

3. Finland's role in the CSCE

On August 1, 1975, 35 heads of delegations (almost all from Europe, the United States and Canada) signed the Helsinki Final Act. Before this, Finland's government had to mediate between two camps, the Warsaw Treaty Organization and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

From a geographical perspective, Finland's government has had to be aware of its neighbor state, formerly the Soviet Union and now the Russian Federation. The Soviet Union interfered in Finland's internal affairs, including in the Finnish Civil War, the Winter War and the Continuation War. This mediation between the East and the West was one of the primary duties of Finnish diplomats.

From 1968 to 1970, negotiations between Finland and the Soviet Union were held. The main purpose of this negotiation was to ratify Finland's neutral status, but these two nations could not do this on their own because of article 2 of Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (FCMA). However, Brezhnev, the head of the Soviet Union, recognized Finland's neutral status as a state of mediator on April 24, 1967³. By May 5, 1969, the Finnish Memorandum had been sent to all European states (including both German states), as well as the United States and Canada. In this memorandum, the Finnish government said that it was ready to serve as the host state for a preparatory meeting regarding multilateral talks. After that, the CSCE talks started. It was a great victory for the conference between the East and the West to be held in Helsinki. Finland was finally recognized for its neutral status and for acting as a mediator to both camps⁴.

After starting the CSCE process, the East and the West held follow-up meetings in Belgrade, Madrid and Vienna during the Cold War era, and Finland submitted some proposals about the security situation in Europe. During the Cold War era, the advance

³ Thomas Fischer(2009)*Neutral Power in- the CSCE: The N+N States and the Making of the Helsinki Accords 1975*, Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft,p.p.100-101.

⁴ See also John J.Maresca(2016) *Helsinki Revisited*, Ibidem-Verlag, Jessica Haunschild U Christian Scho; UK ed. Edition,pp.19-49.,Patric G.Vaughan(2008)Zbigniew Brzezinski and the Helsinki Final Act,in Leopoldo Nuti(2008)*The Crisis of Détente in Europe: From Helsinki to Gorbachev 1975-1985*, Routledge,pp.11-25.

of the CSCE process was one of the main diplomatic aims in maintaining the peaceful situation in Europe and preserving the good relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union. So almost all proposals submitted by Finland were related in the security situation or environmental situation, and not related in human rights or other issued Soviet Union did not want to dialog among states in the Conference (Figure 1).

However, the situation was dramatically changed after 1989, which was the year of East European Revolution. After the collapse of the communist government in East European States, and changing the foreign policy in Soviet Union, Eastern Camp did not escape from the human rights dialog⁵. After the collapse of Communist Camp, Finnish government widely made proposals not only security situation but also human rights, minority rights, and democracy(Figure2-4). The background of the changing attitude was the decline of the security threat from the Soviet Union and decrease of the risk of the war in the European Continent. Although Finnish government had to and have to be conscious about the Soviet, and the successor state Russian foreign and security policy, the flexibility of foreign and security policy in Finland could be wider than previous time.

Today, the OSCE (the successor of the CSCE) remains one of the most important diplomatic organizations in Finland⁶.

Proposal Number	YY/MM/DD	Proposal Title				
		States				
WT.15	concerning the further development of environmental protection					
	1987/2/3	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
WT.16	concerning further development of concerted measures against air pollution within the framework ECE					
	1987/2/3	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden

⁵ Speech by the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Amvrosievich Shevardnadze in the CSCE Vienna Follow-up Meeting opening ceremony(CSCE/WT /VR.3).See Stefan Lehne(1991)*The Vienna Meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, 1986-1989*, Boulder : Westview Press,p.127.

The response of the USA is Commission on security and co-operation in Europe, From Vienna to Helsinki:Reports on the inter-sessional meeting of the CSCE process, p.14.

⁶ In the Finnish view, see Klaus Krokfors(1986)Finland's activity in the CSCE, in Kari Möttölä (1986)*Ten Years After Helsinki:The Making of the European Security Regime*, Routledge,pp.147-166.

WT.17	Proposal submitted by the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden concerning further development of efforts to protect and enhance the marine environment against pollution					
	1987/2/3	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
WT.18	concerning precautionary measures to protect the ozone layer					
	1987/2/3	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
WT.44						
	1987/2/13	Austria	Cyprus	Finland	Liechtenstein	Malta
		San Marino	Sweden	Switzerland	Yugoslavia	
WT.98	Proposal submitted by the delegations of Finland and Hungary as well as those of Denmark, Greece, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Sweden and Turkey, Promotion of the translation, publication and dissemination of literature produced in less widely-spoken language					
	1987/2/27	Finland	Hungary	Denmark	Greece	Iceland
		Norway	Poland	Sweden	Turkey	
WT.110	Proposal submitted by the delegations of Austria, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland concerning dissemination of information about human rights and fundamental freedoms and remedies in the event of violations of such rights					
	1987/3/10	Austria	Finland	Sweden	Switzerland	
WT.125	Proposal submitted by the delegations of Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Liechtenstein, Malta, San Marino, Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia for the peaceful settlement of disputes					
	1987/4/10	Austria	Cyprus	Finland	Liechtenstein	Malta
		San Marino	Sweden	Switzerland	Yugoslavia	
WT.126	Proposal submitted by the delegations of Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Liechtenstein, Malta, San Marino, Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia on terrorism					
	1987/5/22	Austria	Cyprus	Finland	Liechtenstein	Malta
		San Marino	Sweden	Switzerland	Yugoslavia	
WT.128	Proposal submitted by the delegations of Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, Iceland, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden, Progressive elimination of capital punishment					
	1987/6/5	Austria	Denmark	Finland	FRG	Iceland
		Luxembourg	Norway	Portugal	Spain	Sweden
WT.135	Proposal submitted by the delegations of Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Liechtenstein, Malta, San Marino, Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia on the continuation of the work of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting					
	1988/3/4	Austria	Cyprus	Finland	Liechtenstein	Malta
		San Marino	Sweden	Switzerland	Yugoslavia	
WT.137	Proposal submitted by the delegations of Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Liechtenstein, Malta, San Marino, Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia, Draft Concluding Document of the Vienna Meeting 1986					
	1988/5/13	Austria	Cyprus	Finland	Liechtenstein	Malta
		San Marino	Sweden	Switzerland	Yugoslavia	

WT/H.4	Proposal submitted by the delegations of Hungary, Finland and the German Democratic Republic, Co-operation in the art education of youth					
	1987/2/23	Hungary	Finland	DDR		
WT/E.11	Proposal submitted by the delegations of Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Liechtenstein, Malta, San Marino, Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia					
	1987/6/25	Austria	Cyprus	Finland	Liechtenstein	Malta
		San Marino	Sweden	Switzerland	Yugoslavia	

Figure1. Proposals submitted by Finland in Vienna Follow-up Meeting(1986-1989)

Proposal Number	MM/DD	Proposal Title					
		States					
CHDC1	5-Jun	CHD mechanisms					
		Austria	Cyprus	Finland	Liechtenstein	Malta	
		San Marino	Sweden	Switzerland	Yugoslavia		
(Add.1)	19-Jun	Portugal					
CHDC13	8-Jun	Abolition of the death penalty					
		Austria	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Ireland	
		San Marino					
(Add.1)	15-Jun	Switzerland					
CHDC25	14-Jun	For an extraordinary CSCE meeting on national minorities in 1991					
		Switzerland	Finland	Hungary	Liechtenstein	Sweden	
		USSR	UK				
	(Add.1)	19-Jun	Malta	Yugoslavia			
	(Add.2)	27-Jun	Denmark				
CHDC30	15-Jun	Transfer of Sentenced Persons					
		Ireland/EC	CSFR	Finland	Norway	Poland	
		San Marino	Yugoslavia				
CHDC31	15-Jun	Rights of the child					
		Ireland/EC	Bulgaria	Canada	CSFR	Finland	
		DDR	Poland	San Marino	Sweden	Swiss	
		Turkey	USSR				
	(Add.1)	20-Jun	Yugoslavia				
	(Add.2)	20-Jun	Malta				
	(Add.3)	21-Jun	Hungary				
	(Add.4)	22-Jun	Romania				
	CHDC39	19-Jun	NGO and media				
			Belgium	Canada	France	Bulgaria	CSFR
Denmark			FRG	Ireland	Luxembroug	Netherlands	
Norway			Poland	Portugal	Romania	San Marino	

(Add.1)	22-Jun	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	USSR	UK
		Yugoslavia				
	(Add.2)	25-Jun	Hungary			
	(Add.3)	26-Jun	Italy			
	(Add.4)	27-Jun	Austria			
	(Add.5)	27-Jun	Malta			
CHDC43	27-Jun	Cyprus	Finland	DDR	Iceland	Liechtenstein
		Monaco	Turkey	USA		
		Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of theCHD of CSCE				
		Austria	Finland	Hungary	Switzerland	

Figure2. Proposals submitted by Finland in the Copenhagen Human Dimension Meeting(1990)

Proposal Number	MM/DD	Proposal Title					
		States					
CHDM.1	11-Sep	Human rights and fundamental freedoms curing a state of public emergency					
		USSR					
(Rev.1)	25-Sep	Estonia					
Rev.1/Add.1	27-Sep	Finland					
Rev.1/Add.2	30-Sep	Albania					
CHDM.7	19-Sep	On the expansion of the CSCE Human Dimension Mechanism					
		Norway	Albania	Austria	Bulgaria	CSFR	
		Estonia	Finland	Hungary	Iceland	Latvia	
		Liechtenstein	Lithuania	Poland	Romania	San Marino	
		Sweden	Swiss	USSR			
(Add.1)	23-Sep	Italy	Luxembourg				
(Add.2)	24-Sep	Denmark					
CHDM.13	20-Sep	Equality mem and women					
		Canada	CSFR	Denmark	Finland	Hungary	
		Iceland	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Spain	
		Sweden	Swiss	USSR			
	(Add.1)	25-Sep	Turkey				
	(Add.2)	26-Sep	Yugoslavia				
	(Add.3)	30-Sep	Albania				
CHDM.14	23-Sep	Rights of Indigenous People					
		Canada	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	
		Sweden	USSR				
(Add.1)	26-Sep	Greece					

CHDM.16 (Add.1)	24-Sep	The role of the independent Non Government Organizations in a Pluralistic, democratic society				
		Denmark	Finland	France	Norway	
	26-Sep	Yugoslavia				
CHDM.34	25-Sep	Abolition of the death penalty				
		Portugal	Sweden	Austria	Belgium	Cyprus
		CSFR	Denmark	Estonia	Finland	France
		Germany	Greece	Iceland	Italy	Latvia
		Luxembourg	Netherlands	Norway	Romania	San Marino
		Spain	Swiss	USSR		

Figure 3. Proposals submitted by Finland in the Moscow Human Dimension Meeting(1991)

Proposal Number	MM/DD	Proposal Title				
		States				
HM.1 (Add.1)	15-Apr	CSCE High Commissioner for Minorities				
		Netherland	Austria	Belgium	Denmark	Estonia
		Finland	Germany	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland
		Italy	Latvia	Liechtenstein	Luxembourg	Malta
		Norway	Poland	Russia	Sweden	
(Add.2)	5-Jun	Azerbaijan	Georgia			
(Add.3)	10-Jun	Swiss				
(Add.4)	16-Jun	Kyrgyzstan				
	22-Jun	Ukraine				
HM.4	8-Jun	Meaningful involvement of non-governmental organizations				
		Austria	CSFR	Finland	Hungary	Lithuania
		Norway	Russia	Sweden		
HM.7	3-Jul	Agenda for the CSCE Helsinki Summit Meeting 1992				
		Finland				
HM.8	3-Jul	organizational framework, work programme and other modalities				
		Finland				
HM/ WG1/1 (Add.1)	6-Apr	Peacekeeping under the auspices of the CSCE : an outline				
		Austria	Canada	CSFR	Denmark	Estonia
		Finland	Hungary	Iceland	Norway	Poland
		Slovenia	Sweden	Switzerland	Ukraine	
	16-Jun	Kyrgyzstan				
HM/ WG3/1	1-Apr	Rights of indigenous populations				
		Canada	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway
		Russia	Sweden			
HM/	21-May	Abolition of the death penalty				

WG3/3		Sweden	Austria	Croatia	Cyprus	CSFR	
		Denmark	Finland	Germany	Greece	Iceland	
		Italy	Liechtenstein	Luxembourg	Malta	Netherlands	
		Norway	Portugal	Romania	San Marino	Slovenia	
		Spain	Switzerland				
HM/ WG3/4	22-May	Co-operation between the ODIHR and the Council of Europe					
		Austria	Bulgaria	Finland	Liechtenstein	Moldova	
		Romania	Russia	Russia	Sweden	Switzerland	
		Turkey					
(Add.1)	5-Jun	Albania					
(Add.2)	5-Jun	Kyrgyzstan	Malta				
HM/ WG3/8	26-May	National Minorities					
		Austria	Czech-Slovakia	Finland	Hungary	Poland	
		Sweden	Swiss	Ukraine			
	(Add.1)	27-May	Georgia				
	(Add.2)	1-Jun	Norway				
	(Add.3)	8-Jun	Kyrgyzstan				
HM/ WG3/22	12-Jun	CSCE Seminar on "Education: Structures, Policies and Strategies in the CSCE Area"					
		Finland	Greece	Sweden	Switzerland		
(Add.1)	23-Jun	Denmark	Kyrgyzstan				
HM/ WG3/25	16-Jun	CSCE: Human Dimension Handbook					
		Austria	Denmark	Finland	Italy	Norway	
		Poland	Romania	Sweden	Switzerland	UK	
HM/ WG3/26	17-Jun	Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons belonging Romani and Traveller Communities					
		CSFR	Netherlands				
	(Add.1)	18-Jun	Norway				
	(Add.2)	22-Jun	Finland	Poland	Romania		
	(Add.3)	22-Jun	Bulgaria				
HM/ WG4/6	1-Jun	Economic Forum					
		Albania	Austria	Bulgaria	Canada	Croatia	
		Cyprus	Estonia	Finland	Georgia	Iceland	
		Kyrgyzstan	Latvia	Lithuania	Moldova	Norway	
		Portugal/EC	EC countries	Romania	Russia	Sweden	
		Switzerland	Turkey	Ukraine	USA		
	(Add.1)	11-Jun	Malta				

Figure4. Proposals submitted by Finland in the Helsinki Follow-up Meeting(1992)⁷

⁷ These figures(Figure 2-4) were created by Tamai from OSCE Documentation Centre in Prague(DCiP) .

4. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and northeast Asia

– Can we learn from Finland’s experiences in Europe?

The SCO was established in 1996 as the Shanghai Five, which consisted of five states: the People’s Republic of China, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan. Afterward, Uzbekistan (2001), India and Pakistan (2016) joined as member states; Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia became observer states; Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Turkey became dialogue partners; and ASEAN, the CIS and Turkmenistan were allowed to attend as guests. The SCO aims to foster dialogue about security issues such as terrorism among member states⁸.

Although this aim is similar to that of the OSCE, nations such as the United States, Japan and South Korea are not members or observer states of the SCO. The United States has three main alliances in this region, with Japan, the Republic of Korea and the Republic of China (Taiwan; unofficial). Because of the conflict between the United States and China in the Asia-Pacific region, the United States, Japan and the Republic of Korea might opt not to participate in the SCO, as it is led by China.

The security situations in Asia and in Europe are quite different. In the OSCE region, comprehensive security is a close relationship among democracy, human rights and security, as declared at the Istanbul summit of 1999. Although some participating states in the OSCE have been criticized for having nondemocratic regimes, none of these states oppose democracy. In northeast Asia, on the other hand, there are several types of regimes. Japan, the Republic of Korea and Mongolia are democratic states, the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea and the People’s Republic of China are communist states, and Russia is an authoritarian state. For this reason, it is not easy for the OSCE to establish a regional mechanism for the northeast Asian states.

The CSCE’s Helsinki Final Act was signed in 1975, during the Cold War. At that

⁸ Stephen GRAINGER(2012)Challenges and the future direction of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). *Annual International Conference on Business Strategy and Organizational Behaviour(Conference paper)*,pp.2-4.

time, the European continent was divided into the East, the West and the neutral states. These political regimes were all distinct, especially the East and the West. A similar situation applies today in northeast Asia.

Mongolia is the only state that maintains a good bilateral relationship with every other northeast Asian state, as Finland has done for Europe since the Cold War. Finland has long wanted to have good multilateral relationships with other camps because of its geographic circumstance. Mongolia is in a similar situation, and it is beneficial not only for Mongolia but for all the northeast Asian states for Mongolia to have these good multilateral relationships with its neighbor states in the fields of diplomacy, economics, ecology and security.

5. Conclusion

The security circumstances of the northeast Asian region are complex because of the security system. Unlike Europe, northeast Asia remains divided into two camps, as the Cold War has continued in this area. However, even as late as 1975, no one could have imagined the end of the Cold War in Europe. Now, Mongolia has a chance to establish the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Asia and become a leading diplomatic state, just as Finland was in Europe.

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