

ANNUAL SECURITY CONFERENCE 2025

Coming of Age:

Central Asia and the OSCE in a Shifting Security Landscape

Date: 25–26 November 2025

Venue: OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Botanicheskiy pereulok 1A

About the Conference

Marking 50 years since its origins at the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), the OSCE carries a legacy shaped by both achievements and challenges in its unique mission to promote security and cooperation across dividing lines. On this anniversary, the OSCE Academy's Annual Security Conference 2025 provides a timely platform to examine the OSCE's promise and record, accomplishments and challenges, strengths and constraints, with a particular focus on Central Asia, the southeastern-most region within the world's largest regional security and cooperation organization.

Situated at the intersection of major geopolitical currents and key transregional connectivity routes, Central Asia faces rising environmental pressures while also showing encouraging trends in intra-regional peace and cooperation. Since the early 1990s, the OSCE has been a key international actor in the region, actively engaged in all five Central Asian states through initiatives spanning all dimensions of comprehensive security.

To mark the Helsinki Final Act's 50th anniversary, the OSCE Academy hosts a conference dedicated to critical reflection and forward-looking dialogue on international security, governance, regional cooperation, and sustainable development. Central Asia represents a key geographic space where these themes—central to the OSCE's mandate—intersect through both complex challenges and emerging opportunities.

The conference brings together researchers, academics, and practitioners for interdisciplinary exchange and policy-relevant discussion on multilateralism, institutional resilience, and regional strategies in the face of growing global uncertainty.

The OSCE Academy's Annual Security Conference is supported by the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) and organized in partnership with the University of Siena.

Organizers

The OSCE Academy in Bishkek is a public foundation that promotes regional cooperation, conflict prevention, and good governance in wider Central Asia through postgraduate education, professional training, and intellectual exchange. The Academy offers MA degree programmes in Economic Governance and Development, Politics and Security, Human Rights and Sustainability as well as a BA degree programme in Economics. The Academy provides expert training and conducts demand-driven research. More information is available at: www.osce-academy.net.

Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), established in 1959, is a leading independent research institute on international politics and areas of relevance to Norwegian foreign policy. Formally under the Ministry of Education and Research, NUPI nevertheless operates as an independent, non-political instance in all its professional activities. Research undertaken at NUPI ranges from short-term applied research to more long-term basic research.

The University of Siena (UNISI), established in 1240, awards first cycle, second cycle and single long cycle degrees in the following faculties: Political Science, Economics, Pharmacy, Law, Engineering, Arts and Humanities, Medicine and Surgery, Mathematical, Physical and Natural Sciences as well as several interfaculty degrees. Postgraduate education at the University of Siena is carried out in postgraduate schools, master's programmes, training, advanced training and refresher courses and summer schools, while postgraduate research is performed in the doctoral schools.

25 NOVEMBER 2025	
Venue: OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Botanicheskiy pereulok 1A	
9:30 – 10:00	Arrival at the OSCE Academy and Registration
10:00 – 10:30	OPENING REMARKS Pal Dunay , Director, OSCE Academy in Bishkek Ambassador Volker Frobarth , Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek Fabio Indeo , Research Fellow, University of Siena
10:30 – 11:00	KEYNOTE SPEECH Alexander Wolters , Visiting Lecturer and former Director, OSCE Academy in Bishkek <i>Filling the Void: Central Asian Agency and the OSCE</i>
11:00 – 11:10	Group Photo
11:10 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 – 12:30	Panel I – The OSCE at a Crossroads: Evolving Approaches to Security, Diplomacy, and Engagement in Central Asia Moderator: Shairbek Dzhuraev, OSCE Academy • Katerina Veljanovska Blazhevskaja, MIT University – Skopje (North Macedonia) <i>Adaptive Resilience: The OSCE's Evolving Role in Central Asia through the Context-Specific Engagement Strategy</i> • Dato Shakarishvili, Klaipeda University (Lithuania) <i>The OSCE at 50: Lessons Learned from Central Asia's Peacebuilding Efforts</i> • Tobias Kollakowski, German Institute for Defence and Strategic Studies (Germany) <i>Utilising the OSCE's Co-operative Approach to Security in Arms Control as a Way to Strengthen EU–Central Asia Security Relations</i> • Anna Sobko, Memorial Italia (Italy) <i>Diplomacy at the Edge: The Role of Embassies and International Legal Cooperation in OSCE Field Engagement</i>
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:30	Panel II – Regionalism, Afghanistan & Political Change Moderator: Eleonora Pennino, University of Siena • Sergei Golunov, Suleyman Demirel University (Kazakhstan) <i>Beyond Eurocentrism: Reimagining Central Asian Cross-Border Cooperation for Context-Sensitive Practice</i>

	• Dilmurod Ernazarov, Tashkent State University of Economics (Uzbekistan) <i>Construction of the Qosh Tepa Canal in Afghanistan: Worsening Water Crisis and Environmental Challenges in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan</i> • Michael Hilliard, The Oxus Society for Central Asian Affairs (USA) <i>Armed Forces Reform in Central Asia: Drivers, Patterns, and Implications for Regional Security</i> • Otabek Akromov, Australian National University (Australia) <i>Central Asian Regionalism Reimagined: Regionalism from Within?</i>
15:30 – 15:45	Coffee Break
15:45 – 17:45	Panel III – Connectivity, Competition, and Cooperation: Central Asia in the Evolving Eurasian Security Landscape Moderator: Sebastian Mayer, OSCE Academy • Hongyi Lien, National Chengchi University (Taiwan) <i>Power Competition in Central Asia: Russia's Practice of Asymmetric Competition</i> • Przemyslaw Ozierski, Central Asia Strategic Center for Analysis, Dialogue and Development (Kyrgyzstan) <i>The CKU Railway and Kyrgyzstan's Emerging Role in Eurasian Connectivity and Regional Stability</i> • Aziz Mirzaev, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (Uzbekistan) <i>Human Security and Regional Connectivity: The Role of Migration Resource Centres in Central Asia's Evolving OSCE Landscape</i> • Keshav Kumar, South Asian University (India) <i>Regional Cooperation through Border Economic Zones: A Case Study of the Khorgos International Centre of Boundary Cooperation</i>
17:45 – 18:00	Day 1 Highlights and Reflections Pal Dunay, OSCE Academy in Bishkek

26 NOVEMBER 2025	
Venue: OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Botanicheskiy pereulok 1A	
9:00 – 9:30	Arrival at the OSCE Academy and Registration
09:30 – 11:00	Panel IV – Water, Agriculture & Environmental Security in Central Asia Moderator: Emil Dzhuraev, OSCE Academy • Asel Murzakulova, University of Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan) <i>Transformation of the Regional Water Security Dilemma in Central Asia</i> • Kamilia Irgebaeva, The National Institute for Strategic Initiatives under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyzstan) <i>Rational Use of Natural Resources as a Basis for Environmental Security in Kyrgyzstan</i> • Manzura Asadova, Agricultural Enterprise "Dekhkan Farm" (Tajikistan) <i>Experiences of Dehkan Farm in Sustainable Agriculture, Inclusive Governance, Sustainable Livelihoods, and Inclusive Security in Rural Central Asia</i> • Igor Taranov, Department of Processing Industry and Organic Agriculture under the Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry (Kyrgyzstan) <i>Kyrgyz Agriculture in the Framework of Sustainability and Circular Economy</i>
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 – 13:00	Panel V – Human Rights, Security & Justice Moderator: Fabio Indeo, University of Siena • Najiba Mustafayeva, Bahçeşehir University (Turkiye) <i>The OSCE and the Right to a Healthy Environment: A New Pillar of Human Rights Regionalism</i> • Aijan Sharshenova, Riga Stradins University (Kyrgyzstan) <i>The Rise of Far-Right Movements in Europe: Implications for Central Asia's Relations With the EU</i> • Aizirek Erkebaeva, Project "Erkin Kyz Koomu" (Kyrgyzstan) <i>Is CEDAW Failing Incarcerated Women in Kyrgyzstan? Rethinking the Committee's Individual Complaints Mechanism and the Call for Abolition Feminism</i> • Durdonabonu Abdumutalova, University of World Economy and Diplomacy (Uzbekistan) <i>Gender Equality as a Pillar of Regional Security and Inclusive Development: Regional Approaches in Central Asia with Emphasis on Uzbekistan</i>

13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	Panel VI — Terrorism, Digital Borders & Hybrid Threats Moderator: Milena Marzovilla, University of Siena • Lijun Shang, London Metropolitan University (UK) <i>Analysis of the Gaps that Need to Be Closed in Global Biosecurity Education</i> • Elena Zhirukhina, Ca' Foscari University (Italy) <i>Navigating the Complexity: Repatriating and Prosecuting Foreign Terrorist Fighters</i> • Anna Romandash, Centre for International Governance Innovation (Canada) <i>Algorithmic Borders: Digital Infrastructures, Information Security, and the Future of Sovereignty in Central Asia and Beyond</i> • Fabio Indeo, University of Siena (Italy) <i>Central Asia's Security and Stability in the Context of Pragmatic Foreign Policies Toward the Taliban</i>
15:30 – 15:45	CLOSING REMARKS Pal Dunay, Director, OSCE Academy in Bishkek