



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Chairman-in-Office strengthens OSCE fight against terrorism

Former Danish Minister named Personal Representative of CiO

The Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Portugal's Foreign Minister Jaime Gama, has appointed a former Danish Minister of Defence, Jan Troejborg, to be his Personal Representative to co-ordinate OSCE activities in the fight against terrorism. Mr. Troejborg will be responsible for implementing the initiatives set out in the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism, adopted at the OSCE Ministerial Council on 4 December last year, as well as the follow-up Programme of Action adopted on 14 December at a conference in Bishkek.

In an interview with the *OSCE Newsletter* following his appointment on 29 January, Mr. Troejborg stated: "The OSCE has a clear role to play in adding value to United Nations initiatives on the fight against terrorism." He was pleased that the Chairman-in-Office was assigning priority to the fight against terrorism: "First of all, we have to establish the support of the 55 OSCE participating States for the United Nations resolutions and international instruments", he said.

The Personal Representative said that his role focused not only on exploiting the OSCE's experience in conflict prevention, but also on making the best

use of its "three important tools". He described these "tools" as the missions in the field, the way the OSCE addressed the root causes of instability and the Organization's police expertise.

Although Mr. Troejborg did not see the OSCE as having a lead role in the fight against terrorism, he stressed that "the OSCE and other relevant organizations must, each through its own specific instruments, complement each other in support of an international strategy."



He defined his role as that of a co-ordinator of activities, who would promote the debate in the OSCE that would lay the groundwork for an OSCE policy on preventing and combating terrorism.

"Such a policy, which reinforces the political will of the OSCE and its participating States in relation to this action, could help pave the way for guidelines and principles for combating and preventing terrorism", he said, stressing at the same time that both OSCE's policy and its actions would always recognize the leading role of the United Nations.

He noted that achieving co-ordination among the OSCE institutions and with other international organizations would be an important task. In doing this, he said, "I will use the Plan of Action and the Programme of Action as a basis and will take them further." He also emphasized that the OSCE's work in the three "dimensions" was crucial to an effective fight against terrorism. These covered social issues, such as fostering a cultural dialogue, tolerance between religious and ethnic groups and human rights; economic issues, such as good governance; and military issues, such as the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the work on small arms and light weapons.

Jan Troejborg, 46, an engineer before entering politics, was elected to the Danish parliament (*Folketinget*) in September 1987. He served in several

ministerial posts from 1993, including those of trade, transport, industry and development co-operation. In December 2000, he was appointed Minister of

Defence, a position that he left in November 2001, following the general elections in Denmark, which resulted in a change of government.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is focus of first Chairman-in-Office field visit

Gama 'hopeful' about progress in stabilizing fragile peace

Immediately after his inaugural speech to the Permanent Council of the OSCE on 17 January in which he outlined priorities for 2002, Portugal's Foreign Minister Jaime Gama flew to Skopje on his first visit as OSCE Chairman-in-Office to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The significance of an early trip to the small Balkan country is linked to the fact that the Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje is the Organization's oldest continuous field activity as well as its fastest-growing, with around 300 international staff due to be deployed at its peak this year.

Over two days, the Chairman-in-Office (CiO) held a number of key meetings with the Government, representatives of the main political parties, and the principals of partner international bodies — including the European Union and NATO — that are working to stabilize the fragile peace which has prevailed in the country since summer last year.

Foreign Minister Gama also took the opportunity to visit the headquarters of the Mission to Skopje, established in 1992, and to see one of the six field offices that have been engaged in police monitoring and confidence-building work between the ethnic communities since the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 13 August 2001.

The joint meeting with President Boris Trajkovski and Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski provided the occasion to discuss progress on the implementation of the peace process. The CiO also met other politicians in Skopje, including Slobodan Casule, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Stojan Andov, the President of the parliament.

He indicated at a press conference that his visit had made him hopeful about the way in which events were moving, especially progress on a package of leg-

islation dealing with the self-governing powers of local government. This optimism proved fully justified, as the address by Foreign Minister Casule to the Permanent Council showed a week later (see page 4), when parliament duly passed the law.

The CiO also told reporters, including a group of leading Portuguese journalists and commentators, that he was happy with the co-operation of the authorities in fulfilling the OSCE's tasks. "At my meeting with the President and the Prime Minister, I heard very positive appreciation of the role of the Organization, particularly in assisting with the redeployment of the police", he said. "The fact that there is consensus to go on operating with the OSCE and its partners, the EU and NATO, signals to me that we are working in the right direction."

Visiting the headquarters of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, as well as the local field office there, he was briefed by the Head of Mission, Craig Jenness, and several colleagues on the progress being made by the OSCE in fulfilling its mandate. The mission is currently heavily involved in monitoring and assisting with the redeployment of a multi-ethnic police presence. The Minister warmly praised the work of its "young, dedicated, international team".

The journalists from Portugal were later able to see more of the work being done on the ground by the OSCE Mission, visiting the field office in the town of Tetovo and checking conditions in two nearby villages where the OSCE has been active with teams of confidence-building monitors and police advisors, supported by NATO's Task Force Fox.

In Tearce, an ethnically-mixed village, the group interviewed the Deputy Leader of the Local Community Council, Pavle Todorovski, an ethnic Macedonian who praised the role of the OSCE –

which established a presence there in March last year – in maintaining the bridge between ethnic groups in such communities. The leader of the council is an Albanian, while the second deputy is from the Turkish minority.

Unfortunately, a week after giving the interview, Mr. Todorovski was badly beaten by a group of armed men, dressed

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Chairman-in-Office Jaime Gama (left) is welcomed by Henry Bolton, Head of the OSCE Field Office in Skopje, and Craig Jenness, Head of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje

in black and wearing masks. According to witnesses, the attackers spoke Macedonian and denounced him as a “Mace-

donian traitor”. The brutal attack, which left the victim with over 20 stitches in head wounds, was strongly condemned

by the OSCE Mission to Skopje. Such terrorizing incidents are viewed not only as personal intimidation but also as attempts to undermine the whole process of local confidence-building.

In the village of Lesok, the journalists witnessed the aftermath of another unclaimed attack that took place last summer, when an Orthodox church was destroyed just days after the signing of the Ohrid Agreement.

However, encouraging news has emerged from the country since then, with the CiO congratulating the Government on passing the law reform and a report on 31 January that Prime Minister Georgievski would ask experts to start working on an amnesty law.

On the ground, the Mission was able to report another small but significant success story, with the restoration of a direct bus link from the capital to the town of Kumanovo (see box below), after a gap of almost a year caused by the outbreak of armed attacks.

Witnessing the aftermath of war ...



OSCE/Keith Jinks

In Lesok, a largely Macedonian village near Tetovo, Portuguese journalists were shown the Orthodox church of Saint Atanasij by Neven Sikic, an OSCE Border Monitor based in Tetovo. Dating back to the mid-14th century, the church was shelled and destroyed on 21 August 2001, just days after the signing of the Ohrid Agreement to restore peace to the country. No one has ever claimed responsibility for the act of desecration.

The journalists were in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to cover the visit of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Foreign Minister Jaime Gama, and the Organization’s work on the ground.

... and confidence-building in the community

After a ten-month break, a direct bus link between the town of Kumanovo and the capital, Skopje, was restored in January, thanks in part to strenuous efforts by the OSCE to find a bus company prepared to take on the job. The reopening of the route was marked by offering free

rides for villagers, local administration officials, international representatives and the media.

Mayor Slobodan Kovacevski of Kumanovo was among those who boarded the bus and travelled the whole 40 or so kilometres into Skopje, just to emphasize the major significance of this event. “With this bus line we are building confidence among the people of all ethnic groups. This will continue as long as the bus line continues”, he said.

But freedom of movement is only one of several major benefits brought about by the restoration of the bus link. This popular service may also reopen opportunities for villagers once again to take jobs in Skopje, Kumanovo and other larger towns. It is also perceived as a great confidence-building measure, bringing together people of all ethnic groups on a daily basis.

Exemplary co-operation between monitors of the OSCE field office in Kumanovo and the local administration was a key factor in the reopening of the service.

‘OSCE concept of security must be pursued more vigorously’

“All our good will and efforts will not yield results unless we seriously address the real problems present in the region as a consequence of ten years of wars and instability”, said the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Slobodan Casule, in his address to the OSCE Permanent Council on 24 January. Later meeting the international Austrian-based press, he described the situation in his country as “stable but fragile”, adding: “But we are going to continue pursuing political solutions. In order to guarantee the generation of stability, I have asked the OSCE to be instrumental in it.” He also said that by continuing to contribute to the speedy, co-ordinated, and orderly return of the police, the OSCE Mission, and the Portuguese Chair for that matter, were actively helping his country, inter alia, in restoring its sovereignty and territorial integrity, re-establishing the rule of law throughout the country, and returning the refugees to their homes. Excerpts from the Foreign Minister’s speech to the Permanent Council follow.

We hope that the redeployment process will be completed as planned, by mid-March. As you know, the Macedonian authorities are planning and implementing the police redeployment plan in close consultations with the international community, particularly the OSCE, NATO and the EU...

All our good will and efforts will not yield results unless we seriously address the real problems present in the region as a consequence of ten years of wars and instability, that is to say various criminal activities, which were not properly dealt with thus far. Organized crime, various



Slobodan Casule, the Foreign Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, briefs the press after addressing the Permanent Council

forms of trafficking in drugs, arms, and human beings ... which most often spur terrorism, were not adequately taken into account before and during the Macedonian crisis. Now it is high time to address these phenomena properly. Having in mind that these phenomena transcend borders, joint action of the countries from the region with the involvement and support by the international community, is indispensable...

The OSCE Mission in Skopje will have a lot of important tasks to perform during this year. Besides the police redeployment, which is of vital importance for the restoration of law and order in the former crisis areas, monitoring, police training and other projects are of no less importance. Here I would like to underline that the Mission’s activities and personnel have been tailored in accordance with the need on the ground, in close

consultations with the Government. This is a model expected to give appropriate results. In this context, we hope that the Mission’s budget will be approved soon.

The Missions are very useful tools the OSCE is proud of, and rightly so. The issue of missions, as we all know, is very topical these days. There are different views on their future improvement in order to enhance their contribution and make the authorities of host countries satisfied with the achieved results. Our view in this respect is already known to all of you: we prefer the missions to function on the principle of concrete time-limited projects and programmes. We are glad that the Mission in Skopje has been evolving in that direction...

The full speech of Foreign Minister Slobodan Casule is available at:

www.osce.org/press_rel/documents/2002-019-fyrom-speech.pdf

Visit the OSCE website: www.osce.org

Ministerial Troika meeting in Lisbon focuses on counter-terrorism moves

The OSCE Ministerial Troika, meeting on 21 January in Lisbon, has supported new measures by the Organization to enhance its efforts to tackle the roots of terrorism. At the same time, the Troika urged the 55 participating States of the OSCE to safeguard traditional human rights and not to allow the fight against terrorism to be used as a cover for repressing legitimate dissent.

The three Ministers from Portugal, the Netherlands and Romania discussed the role of the new OSCE Personal Representative, Jan Troejoborg, in coordinating the counter-terrorism Action Plan that was agreed in Bucharest on 4 December last year (see lead article).

The new Portuguese Chairmanship told the Troika that it hoped to organize a meeting between the secretaries general of the main organizations involved in the fight against terrorism. Portugal was also hoping to develop a draft proposal for a possible OSCE Charter on Terrorism.

The Troika, which assists and supports the OSCE Chairmanship during its one-year term, was chaired by the current office-holder, Portugal's Foreign Minister Jaime Gama. This first meeting also included Jozijs van Aartsen, Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, which will take over the Chair in 2003, and the

State Secretary for Multilateral Affairs, Mihnea Ioan Motoc, representing Romania, last year's Chair.

The Ministers also focused on current issues of concern to the OSCE across the region. They agreed that closure of the missions in Estonia and

Chairman-in-Office, among them proposals to balance all three of the OSCE's dimensions of security – the human, politico-military, and economic and environmental dimensions – which underpin its comprehensive approach. Greater emphasis would be placed on

expanding the role of the economic and environmental dimension, especially in Central Asia, working in closer co-ordination with other international organizations and financial institutions.

The Ministers praised and supported the human dimension work of OSCE's specialized institutions – the ODIHR and the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media – as well as the human dimension aspects of the HCNM, which has its primary role in conflict prevention. They also acknowledged the contribution of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in this area.

Also participating in the meeting were the Secretary General of the OSCE, Jan Kubis, the

Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Gerard Stoudmann, and the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Rolf Ekeus. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media was represented by Jutta Wolke, Senior Adviser. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly was represented by its President, Adrian Severin.



Jaime Gama, Portugal's Foreign Minister and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office for 2002

Latvia did not signal the end of interest by the Organization, but that the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) would continue to monitor the situation of the Russian minorities in these states.

The Ministers discussed other elements of the 2002 programme of the

The Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (Institut für Friedensforschung und Sicherheitspolitik an der Universität Hamburg) is pleased to announce that the German edition of the OSCE Yearbook 2001 is now available. The English edition will be published in spring 2002.

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Ekeus: Diplomacy and discretion are bedrock of conflict prevention mandate

High Commissioner shares his views on how protecting national minorities contributes to peace and prosperity

Swedish diplomat Rolf Ekeus assumed the position of OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) in July 2001, taking over from Max van der Stoep of the Netherlands who held the post for more than eight years. During his 40-year career with his country's diplomatic service, he served in Bonn, Nairobi and New York, and most recently was Ambassador to the United States. He headed the Swedish delegation to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) from 1988 to 1992 and played a key role in drafting the Charter of Paris for a New Europe (1990). To learn more about how he sees the intricacies of his new role as "an instrument of conflict prevention at the earliest possible stage", the OSCE Newsletter spoke recently with Mr. Ekeus.



Rolf Ekeus at the OSCE conference in Bishkek on combating terrorism

You inherited the mantle of “quiet diplomacy” from the first OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. Will you continue with this approach or do you feel this is no longer appropriate to the task of the HCNM?

As a career diplomat, I am used to such an approach. Furthermore, the mandate prescribes it. Of course, people say, “How do we know what you are doing if you are so discreet?” But there are enough mechanisms built into the reporting procedures to ensure that the appropriate parties – particularly the Chairman-in-Office – are informed about my activities. And it is my impression that my interlocutors are grateful for the discretion, which has already been helpful in certain situations.

What has taken me a little longer to get used to is the level of intrusiveness that the mandate allows. As a diplomat, I have always been taught not to ruffle feathers. But in this job, it is sometimes

necessary to stick one's nose in where it may not be welcome. I intend to use the full parameters afforded by the mandate, but in such a way that is most effective for preventing conflict. And to my mind, a key aspect of the High Commissioner's strength is his discretion.

Can the judicious involvement of the media assist the HCNM in carrying out his mandate?

One certainly cannot avoid the media. I think that the OSCE as a whole could benefit from more media attention. In my work, I welcome any opportunity to explain the merits of conflict prevention, the importance of protecting national minorities, and the common benefits of fostering inter-ethnic integration. But I am not so keen on press coverage when it comes to sensitive issues. In such cases, media involvement sometimes runs the risk of either mispre-

senting positions or sensationalizing issues. Referring back to your previous question, this is another argument in favour of quiet diplomacy.

This is not to say that the media has no role to play. It is a powerful tool and can be a force for good when it comes to public information, particularly in the promotion of tolerance. Hatred and distrust often stem from ignorance and prejudice. The media can play an important educative role in building better understanding between communities.

How will the emphasis on countering terrorism and the two references to the HCNM in the Bucharest Action Plan be reflected in the High Commissioner's “road map”?

My mandate is clear on the limitations of my work when it comes to terrorism. It states that “The High Commissioner will not consider national

minority issues in situations involving organized acts of terrorism” and even stipulates that the High Commissioner will not communicate with and will not acknowledge communications from any party – whether person or organization – that practices or publicly condones terrorism or violence. I believe that it was the intention of those States that insisted on these limitations that the High Commissioner should not legitimize the activities of those who resort to violence to forward their aims. I support this view.

‘The better we are at creating an environment in which people’s rights are protected, in which they feel they have a voice, and in which they do not feel isolated, then the greater the chances that we can ensure peace and prosperity and prevent conflict.’

That being said, the mandate obliges me to focus on the prevention of violent conflict. In fulfilling this task, I must address discrimination, injustice or exclusion – either real or perceived. The persistence of such conditions can breed extremism and sometimes terrorism. I am not suggesting that every situation I am engaged in could lead to conflict; nor am I implying that inter-ethnic issues inevitably spawn violence, or even terrorism. But the better we are at creating an environment in which people’s rights are protected, in which they feel they have a voice, and in which they do not feel isolated, then the greater the chances that we can ensure peace and prosperity and prevent conflict. So if terrorism is at the extreme tip of the conflict scale, efforts to prevent conflict (which we, as an Organization make every day) can,

indirectly, reduce the long-term prospects of problems exploding into dangerous and violent crises.

How has the HCNM balanced the seeming contradiction in the commitment of the Organization [as contained in its founding document, the 1975 Helsinki Final Act], to territorial integrity and sovereignty on the one hand and the right to self-determination on the other?

The twentieth century was defined, in large part, by the clash of these principles. But I do not think that they are contradictory. Self-determination does not necessarily mean secession. A national group does not have to be independent, in its own nation-state, to have control over its own fate. If it did, Europe would look a lot different than it does now and there would be protracted, violent conflicts in a misguided and vain attempt to create ethnically pure nation-states. My job is to find ways of allowing national groups to represent their interests and enjoy their cultural identity within states. I advocate diversity and integration rather than forced assimilation.

When it comes to looking at issues of political participation, including autonomy and self-government, there are useful guidelines which may be of interest to your readers. These are the ‘Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life’ which were drawn up in 1999 by a group of international experts under the auspices of the High Commissioner. These recommendations show how much scope there is for “internal” self-determination without breaking up states.

What special emphasis will you be placing on Latvia and Estonia in the period ahead, given the recent closure of the two OSCE Missions in these countries with sizeable Russian minority populations?

Latvia and Estonia remain two of my higher priorities at the moment. Although the closure of the missions has some practical implications for the work of my office, including gathering information, facilitating contacts and orga-

nizing visits, it has no substantive ones. It was not the High Commissioner’s decision to open or close the missions, and their closure has no formal bearing on my work. However, because the mandates of the missions related a great deal to minority issues, their closure would suggest that the Governments of those countries have taken important steps forward concerning the protection of persons belonging to national minorities over the past years. But it does not mean that there are no significant issues left to be addressed. It is my impression, from frequent high-level contacts, that the Governments of Latvia and Estonia recognize this, which is why they have expressed their willingness to continue to work with me.

The Hungarian ‘Status Law’ has been taking up much of your attention. What has been your role and how do you see the current situation?

One of my first official visits as High Commissioner was to Budapest and Bucharest in July 2001; I have been in close contact with the Hungarian and Romanian Governments ever since. Recently I was in the Slovak Republic which is also affected by the ‘Law on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries’ [designed to provide support to some three million ethnic Hungarians in Croatia, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia]. My position has been clear from the beginning: that the protection of minority rights is the obligation of the State where the minority resides. That is what I said in my statement of 26 October [on ‘Sovereignty, Responsibility and National Minorities’], and that is what I have repeated in conversations with all those concerned. I have also been stressing that the resolution of the current disagreements should be found bilaterally. I was therefore encouraged by the Memorandum of Understanding that was signed between Romania and Hungary on 22 December. I am hopeful that a bilateral declaration will soon be made between Hungary and Slovakia.

What have been the major issues confronting you over the first six months?

We have already discussed some of them: the situations in Latvia and Estonia and the relations between Hungary and its neighbours. I have also been to Kyrgyzstan, where we are looking at legislative matters concerning minorities as well as minority education issues, and Moldova, where the main focus is on linguistic issues. I have been engaged in the

Balkans as well, particularly concerning legislative reform in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In early February, I visited Ukraine and Georgia where we are becoming increasingly involved in issues on language and minority rights, especially at the regional level within these countries. I have also

been introducing myself to the OSCE community and international partners.

This is a complex and to some extent a unique job and every day brings up something new and interesting. I have quickly learned that it is not a desk job. It requires a great deal of travel in order to orient and engage myself fully on the spot.

Round tables on electoral process in Kazakhstan end in spirit of dialogue

Working together under OSCE auspices, major players in Kazakh society have overcome animosity and suspicion to design proposals for an improved Election Code

By Nicolas Kaczorowski

An atmosphere of respect and dialogue permeated the plenary hall of the parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan as representatives of political parties, the Government and civil society met for the last of four round tables on how to improve the country's electoral framework. This was in marked contrast to the climate of distrust at the first round table in September 2000, arising out of the flawed 1999 parliamentary elections.

The round tables, which concluded on 29 January, were organized by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the OSCE Centre in Almaty and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, in close co-operation with the Government of Kazakhstan and the Central Election Commission (CEC).

The series resulted in the development of 120 proposed amendments to the Electoral Code, which were handed over as a comprehensive package to the Vice-Chairman of the Senate, Omirbek Baigeldi, by the round-table moderator, Ihor Ostash, a Vice President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Praising the proceedings and the sense of common achievement shared by the participants, Senator Baigeldi said: "Much work has been achieved and we are on the right track." Zagipa Balieva, Chair-



Perseverance and participation kept the electoral round-table process on track

person of the CEC, observed that the full range of suggestions and recommendations relating to the legislative framework for the elections from all the participating parties had been reflected in the proposals.

The round tables brought together elements of Kazakh society that had been separated by deep political divisions. "For the first time ever, political opponents sat around the table and dis-

cussed elections in a constructive manner", remarked Hrair Balian, Head of the ODIHR Election Section. "I hope that this trend will continue", said Heinrich Haupt, Head of the OSCE Centre in Almaty.

The idea of holding the round tables surfaced in February 2000, at a meeting between the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbaev, and the ODIHR Director, Gerard Stoudmann. Partici-

pants at the first round table reflected on the painful lessons of the parliamentary elections in an attempt to look forward. Progress was slow initially, but a consensus emerged on the urgency of improving the election legislation in order to restore public confidence in the political process.

Subsequent round tables examined every aspect of the electoral process: the independence of election commissions, tabulation procedures and the transparency of the vote count, complaints and appeals procedures, sanctions for violations of the election law and the role of the mass media in election campaigns.

The road travelled by the round-table process was often difficult. Some political parties remained mired in the past and

could not work with others to improve the legislation before the next round of elections. A few parties did not submit proposals, favouring a boycott. “Although their grievances may have been legitimate, their methods were hardly constructive”, commented ODIHR’s Hrair Balian.

The round tables were marred by incidents of harassment and pressure on opposition party activists, which were condemned by the moderator, Ihor Ostash, as “unacceptable in a democracy”.

At one point, the unilateral introduction in the parliament of amendments to the Electoral Code by one political party could have derailed the process. Wisely, these were withdrawn. Despite its diffi-

cult and unpredictable moments, the process remained on track because of the hard work, perseverance, patience and participation of the Government, the parliament, the CEC, political parties, civil society and the OSCE institutions.

The round-table exercise will have been completed once the parliament has reviewed all the proposals from political parties and a new, amended Election Code – one that is in accordance with OSCE commitments and international standards – has been adopted. It is now up to the parliament to transform the accomplishment of the round tables into a shining example for other OSCE participating States to follow.

Nicolas Kaczorowski is an ODIHR Election Officer.

Radio Television Serbia: the road to reform

Making waves on the air in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

By Jovan Kovacic and Stella Ronner

When the OSCE started its Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in early 2001, restructuring the country’s media landscape was one of its core tasks. This turned out to be a huge undertaking, involving support for professional, objective and self-sustaining media outlets that perform according to internationally accepted professional standards. The biggest challenge has been to transform Radio Television of Serbia (RTS), the main propaganda tool of the former regime, into a public broadcasting service.

When Radio Television Serbia requested the OSCE to serve as the umbrella organization to co-ordinate all foreign assistance towards its restructuring, the Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia found an operation that was tottering on the brink of bankruptcy. But the Mission welcomed the challenge, knowing that although professional standards were low and its technology was obsolete, RTS still played an extremely influential



Ground-breaking broadcasts on Radio Television Serbia have been earning the appreciation of the viewing public

role in shaping public opinion in the country.

“The problems we were confronted with seemed almost insurmountable”, recalls the OSCE Head of Mission, Stefano Sannino. “With 7,000 employees, RTS was clearly over-sized. We embarked on the task in a climate of mistrust and disinterest among the RTS staff. Having worked for years in an opinionated and biased environment, employees initially appeared to resist any changes. Because of the outdated labour law, laying off employees hired by the old regime to spread its propaganda proved difficult, if not impossible.”

Ambassador Sannino and his staff knew they had to act urgently “to give staff the feeling that we were there to support them and to show that at least something was changing.” Wasting no time, they immediately started the process of lobbying and consulting political, media and business leaders to muster support

for the transformation of RTS into a public broadcasting service – clearly a lengthy and costly undertaking.

A turning point came in the summer of 2001, when the Serbian Government appointed a new Board of Governors for RTS, made up of independent professionals from various sectors of society. They are committed individuals, investing their energies and staking their reputations in a courageous vision: the total transformation of RTS. The Board has appointed Aleksandar Crkvenjakov, a respected television journalist, as the general director of RTS; he, in turn, has nominated Bojana Lekic, another well-known television journalist, to the post of editor-in-chief. Other appointments of journalists followed, all of whom had earned their spurs in the profession.

Once the new management and staff were in place, the focus turned to the main evening news programme of RTS, which continues to be the highest-rated in Serbia. RTS reporting of events in the past few months reflects a shift in its editorial policy, causing an uproar among hard-line politicians and conservative audiences, but also drawing the interest and earning the appreciation of the majority of the viewing public.

Ground-breaking broadcasts have included the BBC's explosive feature on Srebrenica, coverage of the excavation of mass graves in Serbia and the now-

standard live transmission of the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. Perhaps the biggest coup of all was the three-minute silence observed by Channel 1, the RTS main radio station, to pay tribute to the victims of terrorism in the United States in September.

On the domestic scene, RTS coverage of the latest rift between the two major parties in the DOS government coalition has been praised as balanced, comprehensive, informative and moderate in tone. On Christmas Eve, RTS crossed a watershed of ethnic and religious tolerance: for the first time ever, it broadcast a message by the Catholic Archbishop in Belgrade and carried a live coverage of the Catholic Christmas mass – two weeks before the mostly-Orthodox Serbs were to celebrate their own Christmas.

Also in December, RTS Radio 202 inaugurated an overnight programme devoted to marginalized and neglected groups. Aside from addressing the problems of visually impaired and handicapped people, the programme has featured AIDS victims, alcoholics and drug addicts. The radio station has also dealt with issues confronting homosexuals in Serbia in an effort to promote tolerance towards people who are "different".

To make it easier for the OSCE to have hands-on involvement in the transformation process, the Mission has

opened an office right in the RTS headquarters in the heart of Belgrade. This will facilitate the Organization's efforts to carry out a three-phased approach: in the short-term, to overhaul the news room and auxiliary production facilities; in the medium-term, to implement an international audit of the entire RTS operation in order to streamline it; and, in the long-term, to lobby political structures in Serbia to encourage the early adoption of the Law on Broadcasting, which would legally transform RTS into a public broadcasting service.

Mr. Sannino is of the opinion that "the timely transformation of RTS is critical to building public support for Serbia's transition to democracy and economic modernization and its integration into Europe." This requires the provision of technical expertise from the international community and, to a certain extent, support in kind. "This is a relatively modest investment", he adds, "when one considers that the net returns for Serbia's modernization and regional stability will certainly far exceed the amount of funds and efforts committed."

This is the first of a two-part series on Radio Television Serbia. Jovan Kovacic is the News Programming Adviser, Media Department, OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Stella Ronner is the Spokesperson for the Mission.

A spark of hope for the youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina has started a campaign designed to engage young people's interest in the future of their country. The overriding goal: to reverse a worrying trend among the younger generation to abandon the country of their birth.

By Emir Salihovic and Alexander Nitzsche

Bosnia and Herzegovina is losing its young people. More than six years after the end of the war, a majority of the country's young people still have trouble seeing any future for

themselves in their home country. A survey conducted in 2000 showed that, given the opportunity, over 60 per cent of them would leave. Since then the trend has continued. Many have left for other

European countries, the United States, or wherever they feel the opportunities look better for them.

This damaging exodus has been recognized by the OSCE Mission as consti-

tuting a serious brain drain, threatening to deprive the country of its next generation of decision-makers. Last September, it started an intensive, proactive advocacy programme, *Mi To Mozemo* ('We can do it!'), to motivate young people to become more involved in the country's social, political and economic life. In short: to make Bosnia and Herzegovina a place that offers a future.

The campaign has recruited people like Marijana Mikic, a 19-year-old girl from Sarajevo. Since 1995, four of her best friends have already left the country. Why did she decide to stay?

"I was always sitting at home, waiting for somebody to do something for me", she says. "The only thing I wanted was to get far away from here, as soon as possible."

But then she joined the International Red Cross as a volunteer, and this changed her world. "I stood up and found happiness in volunteer work", Marijana says. Today, she is also one of the three main promoters of the OSCE's youth campaign. She compares it to a spark that could light a flame of optimism and determination among the country's youth.

When she joined the campaign, Marijana met Samir Omerefendic, 25, from Sarajevo, and Vlatka Simanic, 24, from Trnovo. Both share her enthusiasm and feel that things need to be changed in order to make Bosnia and Herzegovina attractive once more for their generation – and that young people like themselves should help bring about the necessary changes.

"Our situation has not changed for the past five years", says Samir. "I think we have to help ourselves and set an example for others so we can motivate people. The greatest satisfaction for me is learning how to assert myself and acquiring experience, developing skills that will perhaps help me to build my own career."

"The campaign encourages young people to meet", says Vlatka. "It brought the three of us together like this and we hope it will also connect other young people."

One major achievement of the campaign, which includes public meetings,

radio shows and round tables, has been to introduce young people to the current decision-makers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in the educational and cultural sector.

A highlight of recent activities was a school congress in December that drew together 50 students from 11 high schools throughout the country. This provided the backdrop for lively debates on democracy, human rights, respect for diversity and youth activism. One concrete result of the congress, which will be holding a sec-

gles of the past. They are fed up with old-style political attitudes that emphasize differences at the expense of common goals and interests. At the same time, the country's young people make up a huge percentage of the electorate, making them a rather influential group."

Only a small number of Bosnia and Herzegovina's young people, however, are actively participating in the country's economic, political and social life. Mr. Beecroft thinks that a change is overdue. While several attempts have been made



'Young people define the world: We can do it!'

ond session in April, has been the creation of a students' association.

Perhaps the most popular feature of the youth campaign was a contest for the best song, essay, photograph and cartoon, entitled 'My World – My BiH'. More than 150 youngsters submitted entries, in which they articulated their ideas for a future in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Richest resource

The Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Robert Beecroft, stands fully behind the campaign. "Youth is the richest resource of a country", he says. "Most young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina want to look ahead, not to be obsessed with the strug-

to increase the participation of young people in the electoral process, the rate remains far too low.

"Twenty years from now, the country will depend on today's youth... This is their opportunity. They must take the initiative now – by lobbying, questioning, provoking and getting involved at every level", Ambassador Beecroft adds.

What Marijana, Samir and Vlatka have in common is the desire to become involved and play an active role in the world around them. Before joining the OSCE youth campaign, Samir was involved in a network of youth organizations called *Nesto Vise* ('Something more'). Vlatka was one of the founders of the Trnovo Youth Organization, a

group that initiated the renewal of social and cultural life in a small town divided between the two entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Samir, Vlatka and Marijana do not see themselves as role models. They say they are not special, just ordinary young people who realize they have to take a more active role in order to ensure a better future for themselves.

“We want to motivate young people to stand up and show what they are capable

of achieving”, Vlatka says. “Other youngsters could have done this as well”, adds Samir. “But somebody had to be first.”

A serious concern among young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina is that they are marginalized. They say that their voices are not being heard, and that established politicians pay little attention to the wishes and needs of the younger generation.

“One thing is certain”, underscores the Head of the OSCE Mission, “If youth

is not listened to, this country may as well sign off on its future.”

Emir Salihovic is Press Officer at the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Alexander Nitzsche is Public Information Officer at the OSCE Secretariat and former Deputy Spokesperson of the Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Looking for a way out: women as ‘modern-day slaves’

How the OSCE is helping trafficking victims in Kosovo expand their options

By Claire Trevena

Recent global studies estimate that about 700,000 women and children are sold into domestic or sexual slavery every year. Hundreds of women are being trafficked annually into Kosovo alone, most of them coming from the poorest OSCE participating States. Moldova is a prime, but not exclusive, recruiting ground. Russia, Ukraine, Romania and Bulgaria also supply the insatiable market with women. Recently the OSCE has been seeing more women being trafficked from Serbia proper, and now from within Kosovo itself.

Irena, a 17-year-old mother of two, was planning her future. Sitting in the crowded safe house set up by the OSCE and its partners, she was waiting to go home. A widow whose husband died in Chechnya, she had been trafficked to Kosovo from Moldova. She was among the few hundred women who had taken advantage of the repatriation programme for trafficked women in Kosovo that was being carried out by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) jointly with the OSCE.

Sabena’s eyes were full of pain. The process of repatriation was laid out for her by an anti-trafficking specialist in the

OSCE Mission in Kosovo: a ticket home, on a plane, not a bus. Travel papers provided. Someone to meet her. Someone to help her re-establish her life. She had three children in the Romanian town she came from whom she missed passionately. But fear and desperation prevailed. If she went back she would be faced with possible revenge from the trafficking gangs and with continued poverty. She said she would stay.

“A typical story is that of Katerina, a nurse from Moldova who is earning 10 euros a month”, says Robin Lerner, former Gender and Trafficking Adviser in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. “She sees an ad in the paper to be a waitress in Italy and she goes for it. She is taken through Romania, through Serbia. She’s taken to an apartment where there are other women. She is moved to another location, walking for hours at night. She finds herself not in Italy but in a brothel in Kosovo.”

Conditions in the estimated 85 brothels in Kosovo vary. In some, the women are beaten. Sometimes they are raped by the men who bought them. Sometimes they are drugged. Those who can go out face an isolated environment. As speakers of Slavic languages, they cannot

communicate with the mostly-Albanian population and endanger their lives if they do so.

Not all trafficked women are forced into prostitution, although they make up the majority. Some work in bars, others are in menial jobs, forced to work in conditions to which they had not consented. Often their passports are taken from them and they receive little or no payment for their work. They are contemporary European slaves.

Some do eventually earn some money – and it is this that encourages some to stay. “The women first have to pay off the debt they incurred to leave home”, said Ms. Lerner. “This can mean a pimp forcing a woman to work ten times a night. If she can earn 150 euros here in a month, she thinks it is better than earning nothing at home.”

The options for trafficked women are limited. If they get out of the environment in which they are held, they find themselves in an unknown and often hostile territory. If they have escaped, there is the question of where to go, whether they are brave enough to go to the police, and whether they know about the IOM repatriation programme and that there is an OSCE-sponsored safe house.

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo has been supporting a safe house run by an international non-governmental organization for some of the women who do break out from the trafficking ring. But this is only for those who have chosen to be repatriated. It provides temporary shelter for 15 people; right now there are 20, with some sleeping on the floor. The only alternative place to house them is the women's prison in Lipjan/Lipljan near Pristina and this is a limited option.

If their place of work has been raided, the women are still vulnerable, possibly facing charges of prostitution or of illegal entry into Kosovo. Their papers will have been taken by those who trafficked

them. If their legal case does involve trafficking charges, they have to have the courage to face their former captors in the courtroom and accuse them of kidnapping or trafficking. Right now, there is almost no protection for women who do reach the courts or for those who return home. Women who testify in open court are publicly accusing the criminals; if they return home, they could face those criminals who organized their move in the first place.

The main problem is the huge role played by organized crime in the trafficking of women. A current priority of the OSCE in Kosovo is to develop a witness protection programme. However,

this is not only expensive but also complicated. Those who qualify are usually involved in political cases, not cases where people have been trafficked.

Few women are as lucky as Tanja, a young Serb woman who escaped from her traffickers and found protection and temporary work with the Kosovo Stabilization Force (KFOR), the NATO troops in Kosovo. In an exceptional procedure, she was moved from there to another country under another name. Tanja has been able to start a new life.

Claire Trevena was the Spokesperson and Head of Press and Public Information in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

Victim advocacy in Kosovo: a long way to go

By John Clayton

Early in 2002, the Human Rights Division of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMiK) set up a Victim Advocacy and Support Section with eight professional and six support staff.

Even before it was officially established, however, the section had already organized and hosted a conference in Pristina from 1 to 3 December 2001 focusing on advocacy for victims of

crime, with special attention to victims of trafficking and other vulnerable groups.

The gathering featured international and local speakers who presented various models and approaches used in victim advocacy, covering legislative and policy reform and the different types of services. About 250 participants – mostly judges, prosecutors, police, legal experts, social workers and representatives of NGOs – shared experiences aimed at developing a response network tailored to the needs of victims of crime in Kosovo.

The conference resulted in a *Victim Advocacy Introductory Manual: working with victims of crime*, which will serve as an indispensable tool for advocates for victims of trafficking, domestic violence and other crimes, including those with mental disabilities. The resource manual covers concerns such as legal and psycho-social support to ensure that victims are not traumatized a second time in the process of seeking justice.

The OSCE is drafting an administrative directive addressing the problems encountered in implementing the ground-breaking Regulation 2001/4 that was signed in January 2001, 'On the Prohibition of Trafficking in Per-

sons in Kosovo'. The directive will be issued by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who is the head of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMiK).

The Organization is also assisting in setting up the Victim Advocacy and Assistance Unit in the Department of Justice, under UNMiK, as a mechanism providing support to victims. The recruitment of core staff is under way.

Despite commendable progress, all these initiatives are at an early stage of development and considerable work remains to be done before victims of trafficking receive the support they need.

To find out more about OSCE activities to combat trafficking in human beings and assist victims, please look up www.osce.org/odihr/democratization/trafficking and www.osce.org/kosovo, as well as links to other OSCE Missions. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) also chairs the Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, under the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

John Clayton is Senior Human Rights Officer, Victim Advocacy and Support Section, OMiK.





News from the field

The OSCE currently has Missions or other field activities in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo (Yugoslavia), Skopje (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Yugoslavia.

Freedom of information in Armenia is focus of workshop

A workshop in Yerevan on 24 and 25 January examined the importance of adopting special legislation on freedom of information in Armenia to guarantee the constitutional right of citizens to information and to establish appropriate access mechanisms. About 120 participants examined the existing laws on accessing materials such as court decisions and information from regional and local self-governing bodies.

Practical examples of court cases dealing with violations against the right of access to information, and the work of the Freedom of Information Centre were discussed. Henrik Danielian, Chairman of the Court of Cassation, expressed concern over the lack of legal awareness among the public, while Government representatives pointed to the financial, legislative and human constraints to the provision of information. The use of information technology was also discussed.

At a panel presentation, representatives from the United States, Bulgaria, the Council of Europe, and the Constitutional and Legal Policy Institute (COLPI) in Budapest, shared their expertise, introduced basic international principles in the area of freedom of information and commented on the new draft law on freedom of information that had been initiated by two members of parliament and four non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The workshop was jointly organized by the OSCE Office in Yerevan, the Freedom of Information Centre/Association of Investigative Journalists, the Central and East European Law Initiative of the American Bar Association, and the USAID.

Workshops held in BiH to help implement property law

The OSCE has launched a series of

17 workshops in support of the Property Law Implementation Plan in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the first of which was held in Tuzla on 16 January. Taking place nationwide, the workshops are discussing recently adopted amendments to property legislation and other laws dealing with the return and privatization of property. The sessions provide small groups of legal professionals with an opportunity to arrive at a better understanding and interpretation of the laws. The participants include municipal housing authorities from the two entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina – the Federation and Republika Srpska – and the Brcko District. Representatives of NGOs and the UNHCR network of Legal Aid and Information Centres are also taking part. Attendance of the sessions so far has been much greater than expected. The OSCE Mission expects the workshops to accelerate implementation of the property law, allowing larger numbers of refugees and displaced persons to repossess their pre-war homes.

Activities of judicial training centre in FRY approved

The Head of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Stefano Sannino, signed a document on 4 February, laying the basis for the activities of the Judicial Centre for Professional Education and Advanced Training of Judges and Prosecutors. The document was also signed by the Serbian Minister of Justice Vladan Batic; Omer Hazdiomerovic, the President of the Serbian Association of Judges; Leposava Karamarkovic, the President of the Serbian Supreme Court; and Francis O'Donnell of the United Nations Development Programme. The Centre will serve as the focal point for training and educational programmes for judges and prosecutors and their support staff. The OSCE Mission served as the co-

ordinator for the establishment of the Centre.

OSCE Mission in Kosovo streamlines field presence

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo announced on 9 January that it had undergone a comprehensive restructuring in the light of developments in Kosovo, including the Assembly election of 17 November 2001. The changes reflect the Mission's progress in establishing and developing local institutions, and in promoting the participation by all local communities in the democratic governance of Kosovo. Over the past two years, 21 field offices and regional centres were opened across Kosovo. These have now been streamlined into nine offices, each covering a number of municipalities, as well as a satellite office in Dragash/Dragas. The choice of locations has been carefully considered to ensure that the work of OSCE with the people of Kosovo will continue. The OSCE-initiated community centres will continue to offer services to local initiatives. In regions where there is no longer an OSCE presence, OSCE contact points will be set up, although not on a full-time basis.

Anti-trafficking project is launched in Tajikistan

The OSCE Mission to Tajikistan has launched a three-month pilot project aimed at raising awareness of the problem of human trafficking among law enforcement officials in the city of Khujand in northern Tajikistan. The Mission's field office in Khujand, in cooperation with the NGO *Modar*, conducted the first of a series of seminars for senior members of law enforcement bodies from 26 to 28 December 2001. Six similar seminars to be held in the next few months are expected to improve the skills and capabilities of trainers, enabling them to organize

courses for other law enforcement officials in Khujand. Project activities will include a round table with representatives of civil society and law enforcement bodies in Khujand.

Tajikistan holds round table on freedom of religion and belief

Participants in a round table on 1 February in Dushanbe expressed general satisfaction with the current level of freedom of religion in Tajikistan. The religious communities commended the quality of interaction with the Consultative Council of the Committee on Religious Affairs, aimed at facilitating cooperation and settling disputes. Participants called for simplified registration procedures for religious communities and for awareness-raising among law enforcement bodies and local authorities relating to freedom of religion. The role of the Islamic Revival Party was seen as a safeguard to peace and stability in the post-conflict situation. Tajikistan is the only country in Central Asia where such a party exists and is protected by the Constitution.

The round table attracted a large audience including more than 40 government representatives and heads of 17 religious communities. It was jointly organized by the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Committee on Religious Affairs of the Tajik Government. Its conclusions were later presented at the conference on freedom of religion and belief in Jalal-Abad, Kyrgyzstan.

OSCE conference in Central Asia calls for inter-faith tolerance

An OSCE conference on freedom of

belief and expression in Central Asia has stressed the need for more tolerance and called for respect for human rights in the campaign against terrorism. “One of the main areas of consensus ... was the need for greater dialogue between authorities and religious communities in the region, and the necessity of inter-faith tolerance to maintain stability”, said Kathleen Samuel, Political/Human Dimension Officer at the OSCE field office in Osh. The conference was held in Jalal-Abad, southern Kyrgyzstan, on 15 and 16 February and brought together leaders of religious groups and NGOs, government representatives, and diplomats and

participants emphasized that the ability to express one’s religious beliefs was a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of democratic society, and, therefore, a prerequisite for lasting stability. “This conference presented a valuable opportunity for a candid exchange of opinions between governments and civil society. Although they often disagreed, it was important that they were able to express their viewpoints”, said Jeremy Gunn, member of the ODIHR Advisory Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief.

The conference was jointly organized by the OSCE Centre in Bishkek,



Evening prayers in a mosque in Tajikistan

academics from Central Asian and other OSCE participating States.

Acknowledging the importance of the struggle against terrorism, including violence motivated by religion, the par-

the ODIHR, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and the State Committee for Religious Affairs in Kyrgyzstan, with financial support from the United Kingdom Foreign Office.



Jorma Inki of Finland assumed the position of **Head of the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya** in February, succeeding Alexandru Cornea. Mr.

Inki, who holds a master’s degree in



political science from the University of Turku, joined his country’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1968, and had postings in Madrid, Mexico, Moscow and Bonn. From 1988, he served as Ambassador in Belgrade until his return to the Ministry in 1991 as Director Gen-

eral for Administrative Affairs. From 1993 to 1999, he was Finland’s Ambassador to Norway, after which he was asked to take charge of the country’s preparations for the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. During the Finnish presidency of the European Union in the second half of 1999, he headed the European Community Moni-

tor Mission stationed in Sarajevo. In December 2000, he was appointed political analyst of the election supervisory team in Belgrade, within the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. On his return to the Ministry's Political Department, he was responsible for conflict prevention.



Peter Burkhard of Switzerland has taken over as **Head of the OSCE Office in Baku, Azerbaijan**, from Alexander Cornellisen, after

serving as the OSCE Project Co-ordinator for Ukraine since October 1999. Prior to his OSCE appointments, from 1996, he was chief of staff on the Swiss Government's task force responsible for coordinating action concerning assets transferred to Switzerland during World War II. Ambassador Burkhard started his diplomatic career in 1987, and had postings in The Hague, Bonn and Moscow. During the Swiss Chairmanship of the OSCE in 1996, he was head of the Policy and Planning Unit of the Swiss Foreign Ministry Co-ordination Unit. Mr. Burkhard, 46, holds a master's degree in physical chemistry and a doctorate from the University of Zurich. He spent a period at the USSR Academy of Sciences in Novosibirsk under a post-doctoral fellowship.



Peter Semneby of Sweden took up his new post in January as **Head of the OSCE Mission to Croatia**, succeeding Bernard Poncet. He has

carried out several assignments with the Organization. In 1992-1993, he was a member of the CSCE Mission to Georgia, and from 2000 until the end of 2001, he headed the OSCE Mission to Latvia. A career diplomat since 1986, he has had postings in Moscow, Kiev and Bonn. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Stockholm, he was Desk Officer for the USSR (later the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States) in the Trade Department in the early 1990s, and was Head of Office in the Depart-

ment for European Security Policy from 1997 to 2000. Ambassador Semneby, 43, holds a master of science degree from the Stockholm School of Economics. He also studied Russian and political science at the Uppsala and Stockholm Universities.



David H. Swartz of the United States, 60, was appointed **Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova** on 30 December, succeeding William

Hill. He joined the U.S. Foreign Service in 1967, and had postings in Rotterdam, London, Moscow, Kiev and Zurich. On his return to Washington from Warsaw in 1988, he became the first staff director of the U.S. Nuclear Risk Reduction Center. In 1991, he travelled to Tirana, Albania, to re-establish diplomatic relations between the United States and Albania, which had been severed shortly after World War II, and to observe the first multiparty elections in the country since the war. In 1992, he was appointed as the first U.S. ambassador to the Republic of Belarus, and served in Minsk until 1994. On his retirement from the U.S. Foreign Service in 1995, he established and headed the European Humanities University Foundation, Inc., to support a private university in Minsk. He is a board member of the University's Center for European and Transatlantic Studies, established at the joint initiative of the OSCE and the European Union. Born in Chicago, Illinois, he holds a B.A. degree in history and political science and a master's degree in Soviet and East European area studies.



Aydin Idil of Turkey was appointed **Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan**, in November 2001, replacing Jerzy Wieclaw. From

1996 to 2000, he was his country's Ambassador to Tajikistan. Prior to his OSCE appointment, he was Turkey's representative to the Organization for Joint Administration of Turkish Culture and Arts, and was the Co-ordinator of the

Turkish Cultural Centres and Cultural Heritage. Since joining his country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1966, he has served in various positions in Bonn, Bangkok, Brussels and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, including that of Consul-General in Rhodes, Greece, and Munich, Germany. His assignments at the Foreign Ministry in Ankara have included Chief of Section of the Department for United Nations Economic Agencies and Head of the Information Department. From 1982 to 1986, he was with the International Secretariat of NATO, serving as an Administrator in the Political Division. Ambassador Idil, 60, is a graduate in political science of the University of Ankara and holds a master's degree in public administration from Gazi University, in Ankara.



Paraschiva Badescu of Romania was appointed **Head of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabad, Turkmenistan**, on 14 January. She

served as Senior Adviser during the OSCE Romanian Chairmanship and, as Head of the Political, Military and Institutional Section, dealt with the political and military aspects of security relations with other Euro-Atlantic institutions, OSCE Partners for Co-operation, and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. A career diplomat, Ms. Badescu was assigned to the Permanent Mission of Romania to the OSCE in Vienna in 1993, where she served as Counsellor and later as Deputy Head of Mission and Alternate Representative. In 1997, she served as *Chargé d'Affaires* of her country's Permanent Mission to the OSCE and other international organizations in Vienna. She was Acting Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization, and the United Nations Office at Vienna. Ambassador Badescu holds a master's degree in philology from the Institute for Slavic Languages, Bucharest University.

Liviu Bota awarded the OSCE Medal

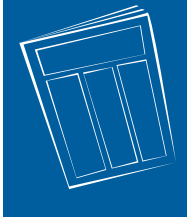
Liviu Bota, Head of the Permanent Mission of Romania to the OSCE and Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council in 2001, has been awarded the OSCE Medal for his contribution to the Organization's activities and achievements. At a ceremony on 6 February at the Hofburg, Joao de Lima Pimentel, the current Chairman of the Permanent Council and Head of the Portuguese OSCE Delegation, said that Ambassador Bota had "played a very successful role during the Romanian Chairmanship of the OSCE, in chairing the OSCE Permanent Council and by his essential contribution to the results of the Bucharest Minis-



OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis (left) presents Ambassador Liviu Bota, Chairman of the Permanent Council in 2001, with the OSCE medal

terial Council." He also praised Mr. Bota's "professional devotion to matters ultimately related to the defence and promotion of peace and human rights at the service of the United Nations and of the OSCE." Minted in 1997, the OSCE Medal has been awarded to three individuals in recognition of their distinguished contribution to the OSCE: Franz Vranitzky, in 1997, for his service in Albania as the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office, Jan Kubis, in 1998, as the former Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, and Max van der Stoep in 2000, as the High Commissioner on National Minorities.

PRESS PROFILE



Excerpts from international media coverage of the OSCE and its activities in January

PORTUGUESE CHAIRMANSHIP

Most reports on the take-over of the OSCE Chairmanship by Portugal noted that the fight against terrorism figured prominently on its agenda. 'Portugal wants to focus on the reasons for terrorism', *Der Standard* wrote (17 January). *Die Presse* (18 January) stated that the new Chairman-in-Office, Portuguese Foreign Minister Jaime Gama, 'wants to appoint a special representative whose task is the implementation of the OSCE Action Plan and the co-operation with other international organizations in the fight against terrorism. Furthermore, the Portuguese are working out a draft OSCE charter on terrorism. Conflict prevention, peaceful settlement of conflicts and crisis management continue to be

the priorities of the OSCE.'

Novosti (21 January) quoted a spokesman of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Alexander Yakovenko, as saying that the primary tasks facing Portugal would be 'to implement the plan of anti-terrorist activities that was adopted during last year's summit meeting of OSCE foreign ministers in Bucharest, work out a collective strategy against the risks and challenges of the 21st century, deepen the political dialogue between the OSCE member states [sic] on security and co-operation in Europe, and effect an institutional reform of the organization...'

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

On the discussion regarding the follow-up to the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (26 January) wrote: 'Before the final decision in February, more sceptical [EU] member states will push for the EU to get in touch with the OSCE, which, due to its mandate, is an equally good candidate for taking over the tasks of the IPTF.' The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (28 January) added: 'An alternative is to give the assignment

to the OSCE... not only because the OSCE has taken over similar tasks in Kosovo and Macedonia, but also because the United States would be further included in the project.'

A *Reuters* report (10 January) described how NATO Secretary-General George Robertson, during a visit to Lisbon, honored the OSCE and other multinational organizations for their efforts in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Robertson, said *Reuters*, praised the collaboration as having 'undoubtedly helped to prevent a civil war; not just an ordinary civil war but one that would have been bloody and terrible and would not have been restricted to one country.'

CAUCASUS

Der Standard (25 January) wrote that the Russian Government had agreed to the appointment of the Finnish Ambassador Jorma Inki as head of the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya. A *Reuters* report (14 January) quoted Nikolai Britvin, Russian President Putin's deputy representative for Southern Russia as saying: 'Those people, including the OSCE, who are talking today about the necessity for political dialogue with the

insurgent leaders are either short-sighted or have ulterior motives.’

Nezavisimaya Gazeta (29 January) quoted Rudolf Perina, the American Co-Chair of the Minsk Conference, as warning that ‘the window for the peaceful settlement of the conflict might close down...’ The paper also noted that OSCE Chairman-in-Office Jaime Gama considered Nagorno Karabakh as being among the regions where the OSCE intended to strengthen its activities in the field of peaceful settlement of disputes and post-conflict rehabilitation.

EASTERN EUROPE

A *Reuters* dispatch from Minsk (14 January) focused on a letter from the United Civil Party of Belarus to the OSCE on developments in Belarus. *Reuters* reported that the letter said President Lukashenko had ‘repressed’ Belarus’s opposition movement since his re-election last year. The party was asking for political and economic sanctions on Belarus because of what it called ‘the systematic violations of human and political rights’.

On the role of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (28 January) wrote that Belarus threatened to close down the OSCE office if the mission’s mandate was not limited: ‘Minsk accuses OSCE representatives of taking a too-active role in the politics of the country... The leadership seems to overlook that part of the OSCE’s mandate is to advise democratic institutions during their development and to encourage civil society development.’

In an interview with *Interfax* (8 January), Mikhail Khvostov, Belarus Foreign Minister, said he believed that human rights ‘are certainly key issues in the work of any organization, but it should not and cannot be the primary concern of the work of such an organization as the OSCE.’

Reuters (21 January) quoted OSCE Chairman-in-Office Jaime Gama as condemning the authorities in Transnistria for keeping an OSCE team from inspecting a new round of Russian arms withdrawals. In another report (24 January) it

said the OSCE ‘urged Moldova to renew talks with its breakaway region... to help resolve their decade-long conflict’. It quoted David Swartz, Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, as warning that ‘the process can develop in an unknown direction, which is dangerous’.

Swartz was also cited in an article of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (31 January): ‘He accused the Transnistrian leadership of undermining Russia’s efforts to empty weapon depots in due time. And the leadership is obviously succeeding – while Moscow fulfilled its obligations according to the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty last year, it again lags behind schedule, says Swartz.’

BALTICS

The closure of the OSCE Missions in Estonia and Latvia continued to attract press coverage. In an interview with *Novosti* (21 January), Alexander Yakovenko, spokesman of the Russian Foreign Ministry, emphasized Moscow’s stand on the issue: ‘Russia intends to draw attention... to the necessity of more actively involving the OSCE mechanisms, primarily the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, in the continuation of the tough monitoring of the humanitarian situation... of our compatriots in the Baltic countries.’

Reporting on the OSCE Ministerial Troika meeting in Lisbon [Romania, Portugal and the Netherlands], *Reuters* (21 January) wrote that the ‘Dutch Foreign Minister, Jozias van Aartsen, said the OSCE’s High Commissioner on National Minorities would keep monitoring Latvia’s treatment of its Russian-speaking minority.’ Another *Reuters* report (25 January) said: ‘The OSCE left Latvia with a promise to continue to monitor Riga’s stance on the language issue. But politicians facing a general election by October have been reluctant to irk Latvian national feelings by boosting rights for Russian speakers.’

CENTRAL ASIA

On the referendum in Uzbekistan for an extended presidential term, *Reuters*

(28 January), cited an OSCE statement which assumed the extended term ‘would come into effect after the next presidential elections, in accordance with the best practices recognized throughout the OSCE region’.

Die Presse (26 January) wrote that, according to the Austrian Foreign Minister, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, ‘the OSCE can be a major contributor to the economic and political security of Europe... She appealed to the EU to commit itself more to the countries of Central Asia. Besides Afghanistan, one should not forget Uzbekistan or Tajikistan.’

OSCE INSTITUTIONS

On 30 January, *Reuters* reported that Ambassador Gerard Stoudmann, the Director of the OSCE’s Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, ‘urged the United States... to apply the Geneva Conventions to Taliban and al Qaeda fighters being detained at a U.S. naval base in Cuba... He warned Washington it risked jeopardizing the global anti-terrorism coalition forged after September 11 attacks on U.S. cities if it abandoned the moral high ground and failed to adhere fully to international law.’ It also said Stoudman called the plans to try terrorist suspects who were not U.S. citizens in special military courts a ‘violation of a basic and fundamental principle of rule of law, which is equality before the law’.

Reuters followed this up (31 January) with a response from Ambassador Stephan Minikes, head of the U.S. Mission to the OSCE, who said that the legal status of the detainees was under review and asked Washington’s partners in the OSCE for patience.

On the first six months of Rolf Ekeus’ term as the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, *Der Standard* (24 January) wrote that the Commissioner saw as a first success of his mandate the provisional understanding between Hungary and Romania on the controversial ‘status law’ adopted by the Hungarian Parliament. *Die Presse* (24 January) quoted Ekeus as saying: ‘Many are shocked when they realize where the HCNM can poke his nose in.’

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ODIHR discusses projects and funding with donors

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) hosted a series of consultation meetings with some of its major donors in January to discuss the Office's project activities and prospects for future funding. Participants included delegations from the Governments of Canada, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. Several delegations expressed interest in moving towards a more long-term co-operation and funding framework. One of the first multiple-year agreements, the 'Strategic Partnership on Central Asia Civil Society Support', was concluded last year with the Danish Stability and Reconciliation Fund. Other donors, such as the Governments of Norway and the United Kingdom, also contribute regularly to ODIHR activities in a number of OSCE regions.

DEMOCRATIZATION



Tajik prison personnel trained in human rights

The ODIHR held eight human-rights training seminars in the Sughd region in northern Tajikistan, from 25 January to 2 February. All 240 prison personnel of two correctional colonies and two pre-trial detention centres participated. Using an interactive methodology, the training imparted a basic knowledge of human rights of specific relevance to detention facilities. The curriculum focused on the application of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and the UN Convention Against Torture.

The seminars were carried out in the second phase of the ODIHR's Prison-Service Training Project, which is covered by the Memorandum of Under-

standing between ODIHR and the Tajik government. They were jointly implemented with the Presidential Executive Office and the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan. The trainers included experts from the ODIHR, the Presidential Executive Office and a local non-governmental organization (NGO).

Referral mechanism for trafficked persons initiated in the FRY

Through its Anti-Trafficking Fund, the ODIHR supported the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by organizing two training workshops for participants from all over Serbia. The workshops were conducted by two trainers from the German NGO *Kobra* and the State Criminal Police-Hannover.

The aim was to set up a national referral mechanism for trafficked persons by enhancing the co-operation between law enforcement agencies and social institutions in the governmental and non-governmental sectors. The sessions sought to clarify the responsibilities and tasks of all the actors involved in human trafficking cases and to take the first steps towards establishing a well-functioning national referral mechanism. Participants were made aware that co-operating and sharing information with one another was essential to effective victim assistance and the successful prosecution of traffickers. Several immediate and concrete steps for action were identified and will be implemented in the coming weeks by the participants.

Central Asia and southern Caucasus benefit from training in human rights monitoring and reporting

Together with OSCE offices and the Polish Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, the ODIHR is completing the third phase of its training programme on human rights monitoring and reporting,

covering Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. During this phase, the NGOs participating in the training will submit their monitoring reports to the ODIHR. As a next step, NGO-government round tables will be organized to enable NGOs to submit their reports to, and share their findings with, the relevant government sectors. As the programme has proved to be popular, the ODIHR will continue it in 2002, and expand it to include Georgia and Tajikistan.

Human rights report on Kosovo translated into Serbian

The ODIHR has supported the Serbian translation and publication of a major OSCE report on human rights in Kosovo covering the period from October 1998 to October 1999. Published by the Humanitarian Law Centre in Belgrade in December 2001, the Serbian edition of *As Seen, As Told* will be made available to governmental and non-governmental organizations in Serbia and Kosovo. The two-volume report was published in English by the ODIHR and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo in 1999.



Roma refugee support centre established in Shuto Orizari, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Supported by the ODIHR Contact Point, a communication and support centre for Roma refugees from Kosovo was established in Shuto Orizari, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The centre will facilitate communication with other refugee groups in south-eastern Europe and will serve as a clearing house between the local refugee community and the authorities and international organizations. The ODIHR Contact Point supports similar initiatives in other countries of the region.

Roma women share expertise in organizing NGOs

The ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues organized a training workshop in Belgrade from 19 to 23 January for NGOs dealing with Roma women in post-conflict areas in south-eastern Europe. Six senior Roma women activists conducted the training and passed on their experience to Roma representatives of newly established NGOs. Over the next six months, the trainers will serve as mentors, providing advice to the trainees and assisting them to establish their NGOs.



OSCE/Labomir Kocik

Three generations of Roma in Kosovo

Round table on confidence-building held in Piatra Neamt

Following the highly publicized controversy surrounding plans of the mayor of Piatra Neamt, Romania, to set up an enclosed compound housing the town's Roma families, the ODIHR organized a round table on 8 January designed to improve relations and restore trust and confidence between the local Roma community and the municipal authorities. Tensions had risen to dangerous levels between the municipality's Roma and non-Roma communities following the mayor's statement in October.

The round table was part of a long-term engagement of the ODIHR Contact

Point aimed at easing tensions in the community. In October, the Contact Point brokered an agreement between the municipality, representatives of the regional and central governments and two Roma NGOs to monitor the situation to prevent potential residential segregation and any other form of discrimination based on race or ethnicity.

In January, the Contact Point hired a local monitor to document the access of Roma families to housing and to serve as a clearing house for the partners involved in the agreement. An international expert has been assigned to

develop appropriate research tools to document forms of discriminatory treatment of residents in housing and other public services. The documentation and monitoring tools are to be applied in other municipalities where housing-related issues are potential sources of tensions between different communities.

Guidelines for Roma social workers being developed

The ODIHR and the NGO *Romani CRISS* organized a workshop from 11 to 13 January to prepare guidelines for Roma community social workers. Under its programme to improve the living conditions of Roma in Romania, the Government has

recently decided to appoint more than 200 Roma social workers in municipalities with Roma residents to improve their access to social services.

The ODIHR Contact Point concluded an agreement with the Ministry of Health in September 2001, assigning the Contact Point with responsibility for training the social workers. The Guidelines, to be used as a training tool, are being finalized by an editorial team. The workshop was jointly organized with officials from the Ministry of Health and Family, local authorities and NGOs in Sinaia, Romania.

NEWS

from the High Commissioner on National Minorities

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Minority issues in Slovak Republic and 'Status Law' discussed

The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Rolf Ekeus, visited the Slovak Republic on 24 and 25 January to discuss the training of minority-language teachers, the Slovak Government's minority policy, and the reaction of the Government to the 'Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Coun-

tries'. In Nitra, he met with the academic faculty of Constantine the Philosopher University to discuss measures being taken to improve opportunities for minorities to study in their mother tongue, especially in pedagogy. He expressed optimism that a new faculty, which would address the needs of minorities, would soon be approved by the University Senate.

In Bratislava, the High Commissioner met with senior Government officials and minority representatives to assess the situation of national and ethnic minorities in Slovakia. He noted the significant progress made in the protection of minority rights, minority-related mechanisms and in the inter-ethnic dialogue during the three years the current Government coalition has been in power.

The High Commissioner was briefed by Foreign Minister Eduard Kukan and State Secretary Jaroslav Chlebo regard-

ing the Slovak Government's position on the 'Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries' and the status of

negotiations with Hungary on a possible bilateral declaration. Mr. Ekeus is continuing to follow this issue closely.

REPORT from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

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Former OSCE PA Treasurer Bill Graham appointed Foreign Minister

The former OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) Treasurer, Bill Graham, was appointed Foreign Minister of Canada on January 15, following a reshuffle of the Government. He was an active member of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, serving as a Vice-President from 1997 to 1999, and as Treasurer from 1999 until the Paris Session in 2001. A Professor of Law, Mr. Graham was elected to the Canadian Parliament in 1993 and served as Chair of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee for seven years. Commenting on his appointment, the weekly magazine *The Economist*, stated: "Not since 1948 has Canada tapped such a well prepared foreign minister."

Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability meets in D.C.

The *Ad Hoc* Committee on Transparency and Accountability met in Washington, D.C., on 21 January under the chairmanship of U.S. Congressman Steny Hoyer, to discuss ways of strengthening relations with the governmental side of the OSCE. Members of the Committee emphasized that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, as one of the most important OSCE institutions, needed to be more closely involved in the Organization and that more regular consultations should take place at both the political and the executive levels. The Committee also noted the importance of opening a small OSCE PA liaison office in Vienna to ensure better contact and flow of information between the parliamentary and governmental branches of the Organization.

Members of the Committee highlighted the need for the governmental side to further practice what it preached by adhering to democratic working methods, including openness, transparency and accountability, as well as providing directly elected parliamentarians with full and complete information on decision-making in the OSCE.

The Committee agreed to seek the support of the participating governments for the recommendations made by the OSCE PA through the engagement of all national OSCE PA delegations. The *Ad Hoc* Committee was preparing for direct discussions with members of the Permanent Council at a retreat, planned for 23 and 24 February in Salzburg.

Election Code in Kazakhstan (see story on page 8). Participants included representatives from the Central Election Commission, the Kazakh parliament and political party representatives.

At the conclusion of the round table, Mr. Ostash submitted the results of the four round tables to the Kazakh parliament, in the form of a comprehensive table of recommendations to improve the electoral law. Summing up the process, Mr. Ostash said: "Despite some difficulties and uncertainties, the round-table process succeeded in encouraging and promoting a political dialogue between all the segments of civil society, in particular between opposition political parties and the Government."



Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability meeting in Washington, D.C. (l to r): Vice-President A. Tan, MP (Turkey), U. Ahlin, MP (Sweden) and Vice-President B. George, MP (UK)

PA Vice-President Ihor Ostash moderates round table in Kazakhstan

On 29 January, Vice-President Ihor Ostash, MP (Ukraine), moderated the fourth and final round table on the

work of the OSCE in the field. In December, nine members of the OSCE PA took part in a visit to Latvia and Estonia. The delegation met with Peter Burkhard, the OSCE Project Co-ordina-

OSCE PA visits Ukraine

A delegation of ten members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, headed by Mihai Stanisoara, MP (Romania), visited the office of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine from 31 January to 1 February. This was the second PA visit aimed at becoming better acquainted with

tor, as well as with senior Government and parliamentary representatives.

Working group on Belarus visits Minsk

Three members of the OSCE PA *ad hoc* working group on Belarus, Uta Zapf, MP (Germany), who chairs the group, Urban Ahlin, MP (Sweden), and Helena Demakova, MP (Latvia), visited Minsk from 3 to 5 February. Their goal was to continue discussions begun during the group's visit in November on ways to reinvigorate the dialogue with the Belarusian authorities and with other political and social forces in the country.

The delegation met with representatives of the two chambers of the National Assembly as well as with the Foreign Minister, the Head of the Presidential Administration and the Minister of Information. The delegation also met with representatives of pro-Government and opposition political parties, research institutes, civic organizations and trade unions, and with family members of disappeared and imprisoned opposition politicians.

Activities of the PA President

OSCE Troika and Heads of Missions Meetings

Parliamentary Assembly President Adrian Severin participated in the meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Troika on 21 January in Lisbon, along with OSCE PA Deputy Secretary General Pentti Vaananen and the heads of the other

OSCE institutions. Following the Troika meeting, Mr. Severin attended the meeting of the heads of missions of the OSCE. In his address, the President informed the heads about the activities of the Parliamentary Assembly and offered concrete support to the missions in their work, pointing out that there were several projects through which the Assembly was already co-operating closely with the missions.

Address to Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly

Mr. Severin delivered an address to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (CoE) on 23 January, focusing on areas where the Parliamentary Assemblies of the OSCE and the CoE co-operate, such as combating terrorism and promoting democracy and stability in Belarus. During his visit, Mr. Severin met with a number of high-level representatives of the CoE, including the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Peter Schieder, and the Secretary-General of the CoE, Walter Schwimmer. He also met with the Secretary-General of the CoE Parliamentary Assembly, Bruno Haller, and the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Michail Krotov, to discuss the parliamentary conference on combating terrorism, to be held in St. Petersburg in March 2002.

Visit to Norway

PA President Severin paid an official visit to Norway on 28 and 29 January,

where he had an audience with the King of Norway and meetings with the Speaker of the Parliament, Joergen Kosmo; the Prime Minister, Kjell Magne Bondevik; the Foreign Minister, Jan Petersen; and the OSCE PA delegation. The programme included a discussion with the President and members of the Nordic Council. Throughout his visit, Mr. Severin stressed the role of the OSCE parliamentarians in the work of the OSCE and the need for more openness in the Organization.

Fourth working visit to International Secretariat

Mr. Severin paid his fourth working visit to the International Secretariat in Copenhagen from 6 to 9 February. Secretary General Spencer Oliver convened a meeting of the Secretariat staff to discuss the forthcoming activities of the Assembly. In Copenhagen, Mr. Severin met with the Head of the Danish delegation, Pia Larsen, and with Jan Troejborg, the newly appointed Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office.

He also held meetings with the Japanese and Korean Ambassadors to Denmark, as well as with the Minister Counselor of the Royal Thai Embassy, to discuss a further strengthening of relations with the three Partners for Co-operation (Japan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand) and the possibility of organizing a trans-Asian forum. The Secretary General hosted a working lunch with President Severin and the Ambassadors of Portugal and the Netherlands.

OSCE AGENDA

4 to 6 March, Vienna. Vienna Document annual implementation assessment meeting. OSCE participating States to discuss implementation of Confidence- and Security-Building Measures laid out in Vienna Document.

25-26 March, Paris. Seminar on the socio-economic impact of disarmament. Macro-economic effects of disarmament, conversion problems posed by disarmament and environmental risks stemming from uncontrolled disarmament. Organized by OSCE Chairmanship, French Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Office of Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities.

31 March: Observation of parliamentary elections in Ukraine. OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission to monitor elections.

23-25 April, Warsaw. Human Dimension seminar on judicial system and human rights. Organized by ODIHR and OSCE Chairmanship.

28-31 May, Prague. Tenth meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum. Co-operation for sustainable use and protection of quality of water. Organized by Portuguese OSCE Chairmanship and Office of Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities.

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Newspaper stopped from printing in Kyrgyzstan

On 19 January, the State-owned publishing house, Uchkun, refused to print the independent newspaper, *Moya Stolitsa-Novosti*, despite an advance payment for the print run. On 22 January, Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, asked the Kyrgyz Foreign Minister, Muratbek Imanaliev, for further information on how the Government would deal with this case in the light of its OSCE commitments.

Concern over media developments in Russia

On 24 January, Freimut Duve issued a written statement to the OSCE Permanent Council concerning three recent developments relating to the media in Russia. He stressed that all the cases were "very serious", raising questions about Russia's commitment to free and pluralistic media. He has asked the Russian Government for clarification.

Grigory Pasko, a military journalist, was convicted of treason by a military court in Vladivostok in late December and sentenced to four years in prison for providing a Japanese television company with footage of the Russian navy dumping nuclear waste into the Pacific Ocean. Pasko was appealing his sentence. However, the Prosecutor's Office was also appealing, asking for a longer prison term.

The case was significant as it could set a standard for journalists reporting on ecological matters, stressed Freimut Duve.

Also in December, in Belgorod, a local court sentenced Olga Kitova, a reporter for *Belgorodskaya Pravda*, to a suspended sentence of two and a half years for libel and for using force against Government representatives. Ms. Kitova, who was actively investigating corruption in her region, planned to

appeal. The OSCE Representative said that hers could be described as a "watershed" case; the results of the appeal might have an impact on other journalists in Russia who were investigating corruption.

In early January, the Presidium of the Highest Arbitration Court in Russia upheld the liquidation of the Moscow Independent Broadcasting Company (MNVK), the parent company of Russia's only independent, nationwide television channel, TV-6.

The suit was originally lodged in September 2001 by the LUKoil-Garant pension fund, a minority shareholder in TV-6. LUKoil-Garant is a subsidiary of the LUKoil Corporation, which owns 15 percent of TV-6. After the hostile takeover of the NTV management by Gazprom, TV-6 became the only independent television voice in the country. Now it was out of business, Mr. Duve noted. On 22 January, the television station's electric power, Internet and telephone lines had been cut off and a sports channel had replaced it on the same frequency.

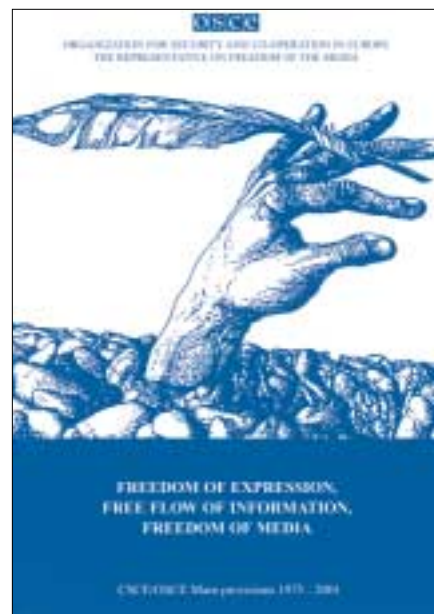
Journalist sentenced for libel in Belgrade

In January, the Belgrade First Municipal Court sentenced *NIN* Editor-in-Chief Stevan Niksic to a suspended five-month jail term for libel. He had been sued by Aleksa Djilas over a letter published in the magazine regarding Djilas' father, Yugoslav communist official Milovan Djilas. The OSCE Representative has received a statement from the respected Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM), pointing out that the criminal libel charge was unacceptable. The OSCE Mission to the FRY was also involved in the case and had made its views public.

"I would like to once again underline that it is my fundamental belief that no

journalist should go to prison or be sentenced to a prison term, even a suspended one, for performing his/her professional duties", Mr. Duve stated in a letter addressed to Yugoslav Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic. "Any cases of libel should be dealt with by a civil court and should not under any circumstances involve imprisonment."

Brochure on OSCE commitments is published



The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media has published a brochure on *Freedom of Expression, Free Flow of Information, Freedom of the Media: OSCE/OSCE Main Provisions, 1975-2001*.

The brochure outlines the commitments of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in this area, spanning the period from the Helsinki Final Act to the OSCE Istanbul Summit. Published in Russian and English, it is being distributed to OSCE field offices and missions. Copies can be requested from the Representative's Office.

REPORT

from the OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat

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SG attends Ministerial Troika and Heads of Missions Meetings

Secretary General Jan Kubis attended the Ministerial Troika Meeting in Lisbon and the Heads of Missions Meeting on 21 and 22 January. Besides providing an opportunity for an exchange of views with the Chairman-in-Office and with the heads of institutions, the Heads of Missions Meeting facilitated brainstorming sessions relating to the different regions. At the suggestion of the Chairmanship, the following topics were discussed: the role of missions in the economic and environmental area, the contribution of missions to the implementation of the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism and the Bishkek Programme of Action, the interaction between OSCE missions and representatives of international organizations, and ways of strengthening the role of missions.

EU-OSCE Ministerial Troika meets

For the first time, the European Union's Ministerial Troika met with the Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General of the OSCE to discuss enhanced co-operation between the EU and the OSCE at the ministerial level. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain, Pique i Camps, chaired the meeting on 29 January. The agenda dealt with the contribution of the EU and the OSCE



OSCE/Michal Olejárník

OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan reviewed OSCE-UN co-operation in Vienna, on 30 January

to the fight against terrorism, regional issues in Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chechnya, Moldova, Nagorno Karabakh and Central Asia, and the OSCE Economic Forum.

The EU and OSCE representatives shared the same positions on the issues and expressed the need and willingness to co-operate more closely. They devoted special attention to the future of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, saying that it afforded new possibilities for co-operation. However, they agreed that for the Task Force to be effective, there

should be no duplication of efforts and action should be centralized. Follow-up contacts were arranged for further interaction between the two organizations and their secretariats.

On 30 January, OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis met with United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who was on a visit to Austria. They reviewed co-operation between the United Nations and the OSCE, primarily in the field. In a discussion on the new threats and challenges to security in and around Afghanistan, the important role of the OSCE in Central Asia was underlined. Also discussed were issues dealing with the future division of responsibilities for the IPTF in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the situation in Nagorno Karabakh and the fight against terrorism.



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