

ISSUE 4, 2014

SECURITY COMMUNITY

THE OSCE MAGAZINE



Keyholes: From Basel to Belgrade

Ministerial decisions | Chairmanship priorities | Mission to Serbia

Overview >>



1 Basel, Switzerland The city hosted its biggest-ever international event as a record number of ministers and delegates met for the culminating meeting of Switzerland's OSCE Chairmanship, the annual Ministerial Council. _p.04

2 Serbia The Chairmanship of the OSCE goes to this South-European country in 2015. Ivica Dačić, Serbian Foreign Minister and incoming Chairperson-in-Office talks about his plans for the year. _p.08

3 Jordan HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal explains how water is at the centre of the problem of ensuring human security in the present day and can be part of the solution. _p.13

4 Odessa, Ukraine Mediators met for a three-day meeting to exchange ideas for resolving "the triangle of misunderstanding between business, politics and civil society", as one participant put it. _p.28

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Cover Image

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The image is from the poster
announcing the OSCE Café in
Odessa on 9 December 2014.
A series of OSCE Cafés are
planned throughout Ukraine
in 2015 under an extra-
budgetary project. The
events inform interested
members of the public about
the work of the OSCE in an
informal, social setting. For
more information write
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NOT BUSINESS AS USUAL

MINISTERIAL COUNCIL IN BASEL

“We are all aware that this year has not been business as usual for the OSCE,” said Secretary General Lamberto Zannier in his address to the 21st OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel, Switzerland on 4 and 5 December 2014. Heated debate on the crisis in and around Ukraine and the future of European security dominated the meeting, with a record attendance by 53 ministers and around 1,300 delegates.

At the same time, the 57 participating States were able to take important decisions on their future work in a variety of areas. “Even if this year’s Ministerial Council has not been business as usual, we should also do some good business as usual,” OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Swiss Foreign Minister and President of the Confederation Didier Burkhalter said.

Final Decisions and Declarations

The following documents were adopted at the 2014 OSCE Ministerial Council:

- Declaration on further steps in the Helsinki+40 Process
- Ministerial statement on the negotiations on the Transdniestrian Settlement Process in the "5+2" format
- Declaration on youth
- Declaration on the transfer of ownership to the parties to the Agreement on Sub-regional Arms Control, Annex 1B, Article IV of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Declaration on the OSCE role in countering the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters in the context of the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014)
- Declaration on the OSCE role in countering kidnapping and hostage-taking committed by terrorist groups in the context of the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2133 (2014)
- Decision on the prevention of corruption
- Decision on enhancing disaster risk reduction
- Decision on preventing and combating violence against women
- Decision on an addendum to the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality
- Ministerial Commemorative Declaration on the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War
- Declaration on enhancing efforts to combat anti-Semitism
- Declaration on co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners
- Ministerial Declaration on co-operation with the Asian Partners
- Decision on small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition
- Commemorative Declaration on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security
- Decision on the time and place of the next meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council
- Decision on the OSCE Chairmanship in the Year 2016 [Germany]
- Decision on the OSCE Chairmanship in the Year 2017 [Austria]
- Decision on the appointment of the Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights [Michael Georg Link from 1 July 2014]
- Decision on the extension of the appointment of the OSCE Secretary General

See links to the texts of all decisions at www.osce.org/mc



HIGHLIGHTS

Fighting Violence against Women

The good news is that participating States reached consensus on updating a very important section of the OSCE Gender Action Plan, on fighting violence against women. (However, they failed to reach consensus in Basel on the text of a much-needed comprehensive addendum to the ten-year-old document, limiting themselves to confirming the need for one.)

With the decision, the OSCE aligns itself with the new international standard for defining violence against women and policies to combat and prevent it. In particular, it takes note of the Istanbul Convention, which is pioneering in that it recognizes all forms of violence against women, sexual, physical, psychological and economic, and also – importantly for a security organization like the OSCE – its trans-border impact.

The decision calls for improved data collection. The current low levels of reporting cases of violence against women – even in EU member states, as revealed in a recent survey conducted among more than 40,000 women by the Fundamental Rights Agency – seriously hamper progress. The OSCE will replicate this survey in South-Eastern Europe, Turkey, Eastern Europe and South Caucasus in 2015 and 2016.

“Ultimately, we are only treating symptoms of violence against women until we address and combat the behaviours and attitudes in society that underlie the problem,” says Ana Lukatela of the OSCE Secretariat’s Gender Section.

With the new decision, participating States have resolved to work with both perpetrators and victims and to engage men in combating violence against women.

Renewed Commitment against Corruption

Participating States confirmed their resolve to prevent corruption, and renewed their support for work being undertaken by the OSCE Secretariat and field operations together with partner organizations.

Shortly before the Basel meeting, on 19 November, Yurdakul Yigitgüden, the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, testified on combating corruption before the United States Helsinki Commission in Washington, D.C. . He listed results achieved by the OSCE in 2014, including in Tajikistan, where it has been selected to head the newly established Anti-Corruption Working Group, and Ukraine, where it is working with the country’s financial monitoring service to design and launch a national system for money laundering risk assessment.

“I would say there are two ways to fight corruption,” he said. “One is to work closely with countries to train prosecutors, financial intelligence units, Interior Ministry officials and so on. The other is to make legislation simple and understandable for every citizen.” See his testimony on the Helsinki Commission’s website at: www.csce.gov

On 16 and 17 December the OSCE’s anti-corruption work continued with a regional seminar for anti-corruption officials from the South Caucasus and Eastern Europe in Batumi, Georgia.

See details at www.osce.org/secretariat/132056

On Kidnapping for Ransom and Foreign Terrorist Fighters

The Ministerial Council adopted two declarations focused on the implementation of recent UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs), aimed at denying the payment of ransom to terrorists (UNSCR 2133) and responding to the threat of foreign terrorist fighters (UNSCR 2178). These declarations will further the OSCE’s support the fight against terrorism under the UN’s leadership. These are topical and challenging issues that can only be solved if participating States work together and in co-operation with civil society and the private sector.

Mission Accomplished

In a signing ceremony on 4 December with the foreign ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia and Serbia, the four parties to the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control under the Dayton Accords took over full responsibility for military stability in their region.

“Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, and Serbia proved they can establish a stable military balance, at lowest levels of armaments, reducing the risk of a new escalation of the conflict. Our mission has been accomplished,” said Major General Michele Torres, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for Article IV of Annex 1-B of the Dayton Peace Accords.

See the story and interview with Major General Torres at: www.osce.org/cio/126754

PRESENTATIONS AND COMMEMORATIONS

Democratic Control of the Armed Forces

Chairperson-in-Office Didier Burkhalter presented a publication marking 20 years of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security to Secretary General Lamberto Zannier at a commemorative event on 5 December. The publication pays tribute to the unique and remarkable history, development, achievements and outreach of the OSCE's key document for the democratic control of the armed forces and the security sector.

See the publication at www.osce.org/node/128961

Youth Action Plan

At the Ministerial Council's opening ceremony, the 57 youth ambassadors

of the Model OSCE established by the Swiss Chairmanship presented their Youth Action Plan, which they negotiated during three simulated rounds of negotiations in 2014.

See the Youth Action Plan here: model-osce.ch/model-osce/youth-action-plan

Parallel Civil Society Conference

Civil society organizations from across the OSCE region met in Basel prior to the Ministerial Council, on 2 and 3 December, following a practice that started at the OSCE Summit in Astana in 2010. They handed their recommendations for the OSCE's work in the human dimension and a separate "Basel Declaration" on intolerance, discrimination and hate propaganda to Chairperson-in-Office Didier Burkhalter and a representative of the Serbian Chairmanship.

See the recommendations at: www.civicsolidarity.org

Options for OSCE Field Operations

At a side event during the Parallel Civil Society Conference, the OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions presented its latest study, "The Future of OSCE Field Operations (Options)". The authors identify possible new formats for work in the field, such as status-neutral field missions, small sub-regional thematic co-ordination offices or field offices in participating States to the west of Vienna.

See the study at: www.osce.org/networks/129791

For Indefatigable Service

Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk was honoured during the Ministerial Council on 5 December with awards from the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, and the United States Secretary of State, John Kerry, for his ongoing services for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.





Ambassador Kasprzyk is the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference. His mandate is to assist the Chairperson-in-Office and the Co-chairs of the Minsk Group in achieving a cessation of the armed conflict, creating conditions for the deployment of an OSCE peace-keeping operation and facilitating a lasting political settlement. His office provides a permanent presence on the ground, conducts regular visits to the frontline to monitor the cease-fire, and provides regular reports and information. The Personal Representative is also invited to participate in the rounds of negotiations. The high-level contacts and intimate knowledge of the region that he has built up over the past 18 years are invaluable for conducting negotiations consistent with the reality on the ground.

Receiving the awards, he said: “My commitment to supporting the peaceful resolution of this conflict will continue, as will the work of my office. These awards are a reminder for me that our collective efforts are both needed and appreciated. I accept them with gratitude and humility, for myself as well as for everyone whose work they reflect.”

PROCESS

Participating States adopted a declaration in which they vowed to continue the Helsinki +40 Process to determine future directions for the OSCE as it marks the 40th anniversary of the

Helsinki Final Act in 1975. The current crisis has brought the question of the OSCE’s future onto the agenda with an urgency not anticipated when the Helsinki +40 Process was launched in 2012.

“The crisis in and around Ukraine has generated an institutional crisis: What can the OSCE do to monitor, to defuse, to mediate?” asked OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Ilkka Kanerva of Finland, encouraging Foreign Ministers to consider the recommendations generated by the Assembly’s ongoing Helsinki +40 project.

“Areas of common interest continue to exist and should be explored to the greatest extent possible,” said Ivica Dačić, Foreign Minister of Serbia, vowing that the Serbian Chairmanship would to continue to use the Helsinki +40 platform for this purpose in 2015.

Broad support was expressed at the Ministerial Council for the Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security as a Common Project launched by the Swiss Chairmanship, in close co-operation with Serbia and Germany. “This independent panel is expected to come up with proposals on how to rebuild trust, re-establish respect for the Helsinki principles and improve implementation of the OSCE commitments, and quite generally on how to reconsolidate European security as a common project,” said Chairperson-in-Office Didier Burkhalter in his concluding statement. ■



Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk receives a Tribute of Appreciation from Ambassador James Warlick, United States Co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (top), and a Medal in Recognition of Valuable Contribution to International Co-operation from Ambassador Igor Popov, Russian Federation Co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (bottom), Basel, 5 December 2014.



Meet the Chairperson-in-Office

Interview with Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE for 2015

Serbia has assumed the OSCE Chairmanship in the second year of a two-year tandem arrangement with Switzerland. How is the partnership with the 2014 Swiss Chairmanship going to be continued in 2015?

We have been very pleased with our co-operation with Switzerland and we will continue to pursue close co-operation, both on the political level and between our respective OSCE delegations in Vienna and task forces in Belgrade and Bern. The Swiss-Serbian consecutive Chairmanship and the Joint Workplan represent a new practice in the OSCE. We see them as a positive example that contributes to the effectiveness of the Organization and the predictability and continuity of its activities.

The crisis in Ukraine has dominated the OSCE agenda in 2014 and will continue to do so in 2015. What will be your approach to promoting its resolution?

When we presented our candidature for the OSCE Chairmanship three years ago, we could not anticipate that in 2014, the OSCE area would be facing one of the biggest crises since the end of the Cold War. The situation in eastern Ukraine continues to be highly complex, having a negative impact also on the broader context of European and global security.

In our capacity as Chair, we will continue efforts to strengthen all OSCE executive structures in Ukraine, particularly the Special Monitoring Mission headed by Ambassador Ertuğrul

Apakan. We will also continue to support the work of the Trilateral Contact Group comprising Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE, represented by Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, whose work we highly appreciate. The Contact Group has contributed immeasurably to the de-escalation of the situation in Ukraine. It is essential to implement the agreements signed in Minsk.

We are concerned about the grave humanitarian situation in Ukraine and during our Chairmanship we will work to address the humanitarian challenges posed by the crisis.

We will endeavour to engage actively in working for the de-escalation of the Ukrainian crisis, in an unbiased and balanced manner. Our efforts will also be focused on strengthening the political dialogue to which there is no alternative. Furthermore, we plan to intensify our communication with the Government in Kyiv, as well as the Russian Federation and other OSCE participating States in order to calm the situation. I believe that only our joint efforts will lead to stabilizing the situation in Ukraine.

With your Chairmanship, the lead of the Organization passes to a country of the South-Eastern European region, which has undergone much suffering in the past. Will you work during your Chairmanship to maintain and improve stability and promote reconciliation in the region?

We have designated the improvement of stability and the promotion of reconciliation, particularly in the Western Balkans, as important aspects of our Chairmanship. We worked closely with Switzerland along these lines already in 2014, with the involvement of the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the Western Balkans, Ambassador Gerard Stoudman, who will serve in that capacity next year as well.

The signing of the Declaration on Missing Persons by the Presidents of Serbia, Montenegro,

Croatia and the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Mostar on 29 August 2014, confirming their common commitment to the search for persons gone missing in armed conflict, is a concrete achievement of the efforts of the Swiss Chairmanship. We plan to work on this and similar issues in 2015 to further build confidence and promote co-operation among the states in our region.

The OSCE mandate for negotiation and implementation of the Sub-regional Arms Control Agreement concluded in 2014 and responsibility was handed over to the parties, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia, at the Ministerial Conference in Basel. What is the significance of this? How will the arms control regime continue and will the OSCE play a role?

The signing of amendments to the Sub-regional Arms Control Agreement relating to the termination of the office of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for Article IV put an end to one of the phases of co-operation between the parties and the OSCE, according to which the Personal Representative assisted the parties in fulfilling their obligations under the Agreement – first in the negotiation process and subsequently during its implementation. The assistance provided to the parties by the successive Personal Representatives – there were six, out of which five were from Italy – was truly valuable and beneficial, for which I take this opportunity to thank them all once again.

The agreement reached in Basel is a confirmation that the parties to the Sub-regional Arms Control Agreement have reached a level of co-operation, trust, transparency and expertise such as to be able to continue the implementation of the Agreement on their own, just as successfully and appropriately as they have been doing so far with OSCE assistance.

Co-operation between the parties and the OSCE will continue. The parties will continue, through

periodic reports, to keep the participating States abreast of the activities they undertake to implement the Agreement. Furthermore, they are ready, in co-operation with the OSCE, to offer advice and training to states in other regions, also beyond the OSCE area, interested in benefiting from the experiences they have gained.

Will the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue in which you are currently engaged have an effect on your Chairmanship?

The dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina is a process conducted at the highest level with the facilitation of the EU. It is unrelated to Serbia's OSCE Chairmanship, which, as a separate process, will be pursued on another track. Following the deadlock after the elections in the Province, Serbia is looking forward to the resumption of the dialogue and the full implementation of the 2013 Brussels Agreement, which will have a bearing on the further course of Serbia's integration with the European family of nations.

We see our 2015 OSCE Chairmanship as a demonstration of the participating States' confidence in our country's ability to lead the Organization in difficult and unpredictable circumstances. Our success and our accomplishments, in addition to making an undoubted contribution to strengthening Serbia's international reputation, will certainly have a positive effect on its further European integration process.

What will you do about the protracted conflicts in the OSCE area? What role do you foresee for Special Representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office?

In accordance with the Joint Workplan of Switzerland and Serbia, Special Representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office have for the first time a two-year mandate, which, in our opinion, gives a new quality to their engagement. Ambassador Radojko Bogojević, OSCE Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for the Transnistrian Settlement Process in the 5

+ 2 format, Ambassador Angelo Gnaedinger, OSCE Special Representative for the South Caucasus and Co-Chair of the Geneva talks, as well as Ambassador Kasprzyk, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, will continue to perform their functions during our Chairmanship. Serbia is satisfied with their work and will extend its full support to their further activities.

In my capacity as OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, I will visit all the regions affected by the so-called "protracted conflicts", in order to encourage all parties involved to engage constructively and to support the Special Representatives and the OSCE presence in these regions.

Addressing the OSCE delegations in Vienna last summer, you said that you planned to visit all of the OSCE field operations in your region, including the one in Kosovo. What in your view is the importance and potential of the field missions and their possibilities for horizontal co-operation?

The promotion of co-operation in the Western Balkans, as already mentioned, is one of the priorities of our Chairmanship. Accordingly, as you said, visits to the OSCE missions in this region will be among my first as OSCE Chairperson-in-Office.

The work of the OSCE missions contributes significantly to reform processes, democratization, respect for human rights and progress in other areas of OSCE engagement. The successful partnership between Serbia and the OSCE's mission in Belgrade provides a good example of the results which can be achieved. Serbia also supports the work of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, which, with its status-neutral approach to the implementation of activities, endeavors to contribute to the improvement of the situation on the ground. Given our positive experience, we support such activities and horizontal co-operation among the OSCE missions, based, of course,

on the mandates entrusted to them by the Organization.

Which thematic areas in the three security dimensions of the OSCE do you intend to prioritize in 2015?

In the military-political dimension of security, we will pay special attention to cyber security, the fight against terrorism and the management and reform of the security sector.

In the economic and environmental dimension, as a matter of priority, we will address water management issues, reduction of natural disaster risks and the fight against corruption.

In the human dimension, our focus will be on national institutions for the protection of human rights, e-democracy, protection of national minorities, freedom of assembly and association and countering hate crimes.

With regard to so-called “cross-dimensional” themes, we will devote attention to youth activities. We are considering putting forward an action plan on youth and security in the course of 2015, thus giving young people a stronger voice within the OSCE. Strengthening co-operation with civil society is also one of our top priorities.

Serbia, as the incoming Chairmanship country, chaired the Mediterranean Contact Group in 2014. Which topics do you consider particularly relevant for the OSCE’s relationship with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation?

The fight against terrorism was featured as one of the main agenda items at the annual Mediterranean Conference which took place in Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on 27 and 28 October. On the basis of the outcomes of that conference, the Serbian Chairmanship drafted a perception paper for the further consideration of this issue within the OSCE. This perception paper and the Declaration on co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners adopted by the OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel condemn all

forms and manifestations of terrorism and point to the need for fostering a continuous dialogue among the OSCE participating States and Mediterranean partners.

Are you planning special conferences or events during your Chairmanship?

The consecutive Swiss-Serbian Chairmanship affords us the opportunity to continue with some of the activities initiated in 2014. For example, following the 2014 Counter-Terrorism Conference held in Interlaken, we will organize events on this topic in 2015 as well.

I would particularly like to emphasize that we will pay special attention to the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, as well as the end of World War II.

We have planned a number of special events in each of the three OSCE dimensions of security, chosen for their relevance and added value. With regard to the politico-military dimension, we have foreseen a conference on security sector reform, as well as a seminar on the implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

The annual meeting of police experts will focus on the fight against organized crime and trafficking in human beings, with special attention to the relationship between organized crime and illegal migration.

As the Ministerial Council in Basel adopted a declaration on the role of the OSCE in the fight against foreign terrorist groups in the context of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2133 (2014), we intend to organize a meeting of experts devoted to this phenomenon. We also plan an anti-drug conference to prevent the spread of drugs among young people. In view of the growing importance of cyber security as an indispensable aspect of security in the modern world, we are also planning to hold an event on this issue.

In the economic and environmental dimension, we have determined the theme of the 23rd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum to be “Water management in the OSCE area: Strengthening security and stability through co-operation”. The topic is of great importance for Serbia, as a country that has recently been affected by massive floods.

We will hold several special meetings in the human dimension, devoted to freedom of assembly and association, the contribution of the OSCE to the protection of national minorities, e-democracy and the role of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. We also plan to hold seminars on national institutions for human rights protection. Furthermore, Belgrade will be the venue of an NGO conference organized as a side-event to the Ministerial Council in December.

In our role as the OSCE Chairmanship country, we will try to deepen co-operation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe, for example by implementing joint projects with Belgium and Bosnia and Herzegovina, who will chair the Council of Europe next year.

The 40th anniversary of the Organization will be celebrated during your Chairmanship and Serbia has the difficult task of concluding the Helsinki +40 process of charting the Organization’s future direction. How do you see the OSCE’s role for assuring European security in the future?

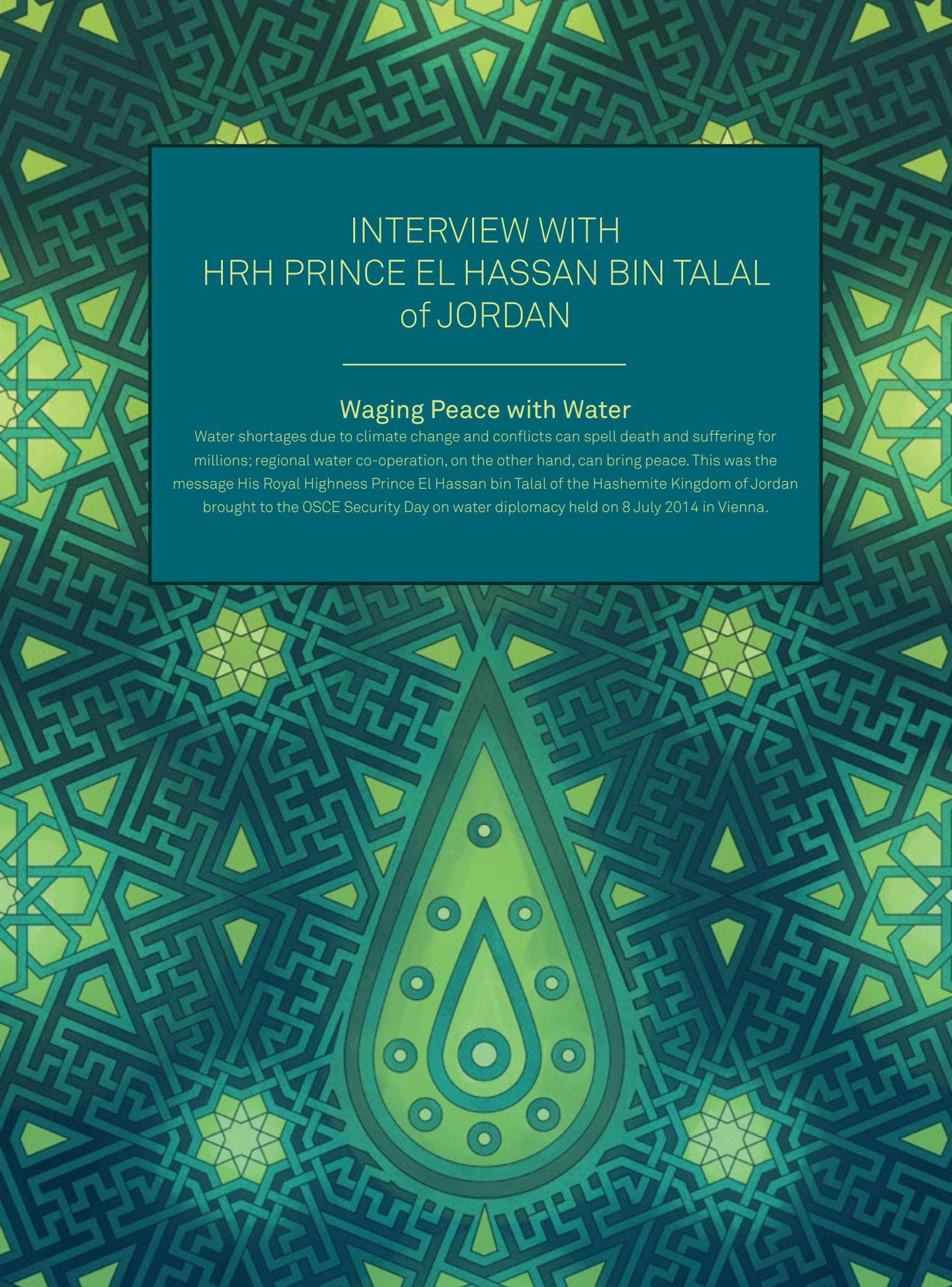
The 1975 Helsinki Final Act represents the most important foundation of the present international order after the United Nations Charter. We will mark this anniversary in a dignified manner. The event should also be used to reflect seriously upon the OSCE’s future role, despite the current difficult circumstances.

By reaffirming the decisions to pursue the Helsinki +40 process taken at the Ministerial Councils in Dublin in 2012 and Kyiv in 2013, the

participating States demonstrated in Basel that the process still remains a relevant platform for considering the future direction of reforms of our Organization, which would, of course, be based on the re-affirmation of its core principles.

At the Basel Ministerial Council, we supported, in partnership with Germany, the decision of the Swiss Chairmanship to establish a Panel of Eminent Persons. The panel is charged with re-thinking the future of European security in the current climate of deep mistrust among the OSCE participating States. Of course, the political complexity of the current circumstances requires, first and foremost, strengthened and sustained efforts by the governments. Still, the panel might make a precious contribution to reviewing Europe’s security architecture and laying down the groundwork for rebuilding confidence and trust.

As the country holding the OSCE Chairmanship, we are contemplating, should consensus be reached among the participating States, to convene in July 2015 a high-level event to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, and possibly to discuss the broader context of European security. ■



INTERVIEW WITH HRH PRINCE EL HASSAN BIN TALAL of JORDAN

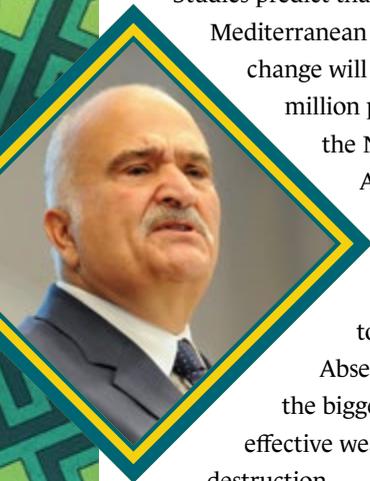
Waging Peace with Water

Water shortages due to climate change and conflicts can spell death and suffering for millions; regional water co-operation, on the other hand, can bring peace. This was the message His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan brought to the OSCE Security Day on water diplomacy held on 8 July 2014 in Vienna.

You have been a champion of co-operation on water management for many years. Why do we need to pay attention to water?

Water is life, in many respects. And if water gives us life, then destroying the systems that deliver water and give stability to populations can take life away from them.

The World Health Organization estimates that every person needs a minimum of 1,000 cubic metres of water a year. Jordan and the West Bank have 100 cubic metres per person per year; Israel has 300, and Sweden 20,000 cubic metres.



Studies predict that the rise of the Mediterranean due to climate change will displace 45 million people from the Nile Delta. Another 45 million will leave Iran due to drought. Absence of water is the biggest and most effective weapon of mass destruction.

In light of these figures, ensuring human security seems an almost impossible task, particularly if we consider the present state of multilateralism, running in parallel lines and never meeting at a given point.

How can we begin to ensure adequate water for all?

Water security is not just a question of the availability of water or its absence. Water is also human dignity,

which people are only just beginning to understand.

It is very important that we develop a citizen's advice approach to vital questions like water.

We need to enable people to be part of the solution to the problems that concern them. And how can they be involved if as human beings they are not empowered to understand the issues? This is not democracy of the ballot box we are talking about, it is democracy of citizenship.

There needs to be a knowledge base and it needs to be accessible to all. That is why I would like to see a process-based hydrological model developed for our Middle Eastern region, which takes into consideration surface runoff, sub surface flows, evaporation and transpiration of water. And this water model needs to be simplified and owned by the general public. Only then can we arrive at truly sustainable solutions.

Joint ownership of water by the residents that live along the Danube, or the three nations that border Lake Constance – 300 towns in Germany, Austria and Switzerland own the water of the lake – these are examples that I think are worthy of being followed.

What about the connection between water and migration?

In recent years millions have been displaced in their countries or over the borders of countries due to violence or the effects of climate change. Before the uprising in Syria, a shortage of water forced many people off their land and caused

tensions to fester in large segments of the population. Today, the armed conflict has forced tens of thousands to flee across the border, where water shortage is again acute.

Currently the Zaatari camp for Syrian refugees in Jordan requires 4,000 cubic metres of water a day. Every day, more than 270 tankers deliver water to refugees living in the camps. There is little point in thinking of this as a Syrian problem. Recent studies indicate that refugees are displaced for an average of 17 to 20 years. Given the extended time, can we afford to keep thinking of them as Syrians or Egyptians or Iraqis? How about thinking of them as Arab citizens? At least give them some kind of recognition and regional citizenship. I don't think that any pocket handkerchief sized country in the region is going to be able to resolve the issue of forced migration on its own.

What is the way forward for a regional approach in the Middle East?

In contrast to Europe, no comprehensive programme of intra-regional co-operation has been launched within the Middle East. The absence of an internally generated vision has been conspicuous. That is why I feel so privileged to be chairing the High Level Forum for the Blue Peace Middle East Plan.

Together with the Mumbai-based Strategic Foresight Group we have developed the Blue Peace approach, in a process supported by the Swiss and Swedish governments over the past three and a half years. It entails the development of a community of

political leaders, parliamentarians, government officials, media leaders and experts from regions facing political discord – we have 10,000 interested persons in terms of e-contacts. The focus on the region is in keeping with the vision many of us have cherished for a while: institutional self-determination of potential partners in conflict.

In the immediate future we will identify vulnerable segments of society in West Asian countries that are deprived of water due to violence, migration, climate change and other factors and map precise localities and communities that are facing a shortage of water, before moving on to propose water inclusion policies for the countries in the region.

Do we need a new approach to diplomacy to deal with the question of water effectively?

In my humble opinion, multilateralism has to be rethought, in the sense that regional problems have to be

presented by the respective regions. Southeast Asia, South Asia, West Asia, Central Asia: each has to be called upon to present its priorities to the international debate. Finding solutions to water scarcity should be largely the work of authentic voices coming from the countries and people directly involved with those problems.

When the international debate takes what I call a generic approach to water, it is not developing the kind of partnership that is required for meaningful co-operation on water. What is required is an organic, incremental, step by step process: policy, not politics.

I believe the OSCE as a regional organization has a unique opportunity to play a significant role in establishing a platform for ownership of the water sector.

I think it is a question of responsibility that makes water such an important issue – in security terms,

in democratic terms, in citizens' rights terms, and basically, in regional terms.

Can co-operation on water promote peace?

Our thoughts have become chained to the old way of doing things, which place more emphasis on economic growth and political power than the furthering of human dignity and human wellbeing. Even as we come up with new ways to stumble into messy wars, we seem to have forgotten the path of peace. The concept of Blue Peace is to convert water from a source of crisis to an instrument of co-operation, to use water to wage peace. Because it is so important, it can also be an instrument of peace to speak about water. ■

HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan was Chairman of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation from 2013 to 2014 and currently chairs the High Level Forum for the Blue Peace Middle East Plan.



READ MORE!

Water Cooperation for a Secure World: Focus on the Middle East (Strategic Foresight Group, 2013)
The Blue Peace: Rethinking Middle East Water (Strategic Foresight Group, 2011)

STILL RELEVANT:

Winning the Human Race? The Report of the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues (Zed Books, 1988) Co-authored by HRH Prince El Hassan and presented to the United Nations, the report outlines global issues such as population, poverty and the environment and provides recommendations for a global humanitarian order that remain valid today.

SECURITY DAYS

For information on the Security Day on Water Diplomacy on 8 July 2014 visit www.osce.org/event/securitydays2014 OSCE Security Days are hosted regularly by Secretary General Lamberto Zannier to stimulate debate among participating States and experts on security issues relevant to the OSCE. Watch out for the upcoming discussion, "Contemporary Challenges to Euro-Atlantic Security: Strategies for Co-operation and Joint Solutions", to be held in Washington, D.C. in co-operation with the Wilson Centre on 17 March 2015.

WATER TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM IN 2015

Serbia has determined "Water governance in the OSCE area – increasing security and stability through co-operation" as the theme of the Economic and Environmental Forum in 2015. Every year, the theme of the Forum is chosen by the country that holds the Chairmanship.

Save The Date:

26-27 January 2015, Vienna: First Preparatory Meeting of the 23rd Economic and Environmental Forum. The Second Preparatory Meeting will be held in Serbia in May and the concluding meeting in Prague in September.



The View from Belgrade: Heads of the OSCE Mission

IN A MODERN OFFICE BUILDING IN NEW BELGRADE on the left bank of the Sava River, a pool of OSCE experts – around 30 international staff from places as diverse as France or Sweden together with more than 100 local staff – is dedicated to advancing Serbia's agenda for implementing reforms of the police, the judiciary and the media and for improving the lives of minorities including Roma. The OSCE Mission to Serbia provides a model of the kind of constructive partnership a long-term field presence can establish with a host country. How has it developed since it was established in 2001 to help a young, enthusiastic but inexperienced government with rebooting the country after the devastating war in Kosovo?

We asked five successive leaders of the Mission to Serbia one question:

What were the main tasks for the Mission to Serbia during the time you led it and what was your strategy for fulfilling them?

Stefano Sannino

Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia from 2001 to 2003



Back on the radar screen

When I reached Belgrade in January 2001 as Head of the OSCE Mission, a small team of barely ten people, they set us up in a room at the Hotel Continental, which became our initial headquarters in a vibrant and forward-looking capital. The Djindjic government was driven by a democratic vision for Serbia and keen to start with the reforms the country so badly needed.

The point was to put the OSCE back on the radar screen and overcome the resentment of society, which associated it with the bombing of Kosovo. In that task I was helped by the men and women in the government and the public administration, the same people who had been opposing the regime during my time as Deputy Chief of Mission of the Italian Embassy in Belgrade from 1993 to 1996.

This paved the way for intense and constructive co-operation. OSCE became in many ways the back office of the government, advising on the areas most in need of urgent democratic reforms, such as the economy, rule of law and fundamental rights. The new law on broadcasting passed in 2002 and the reform of police forces initiated on the basis of our 2001 assessment study are two major initiatives that immediately come to mind.

The extent of the trust that the government placed in both me and my team became clear when I began leading the negotiations with the Albanian insurgents in South Serbia.

“There were guns on the table as I tried to explain the role of the OSCE as a mediator during the first tense dialogues.”

[Ethnic-Albanian rebels of the Liberation Army of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja engaged in armed conflict with Serbia’s security forces during 2000 and 2001.] It took us a good year and a half of weekly meetings to turn the crisis into a set of national reforms. There were guns on the table as I tried to explain the role of the OSCE as a mediator during the first tense dialogues. By the time the militia corps were merged with the national police and both sides had agreed on a system of local representation in the national elections, coffee cups had replaced the guns.

I spent two years in Serbia heading the OSCE mission. The excitement of the first few days petered out eventually, and daily work bristled with highly sensitive political and social issues. Constant dialogue was the key to our shared achievements. By the time I left, I was comforted by the thought that the struggling relationship between the OSCE and the host country had been set on a steady course of co-operation and mutual respect.

Stefano Sannino is currently the Permanent Representative of Italy to the European Union.

Maurizio Massari

Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia from 2003 to 2006

Managing polarization

I arrived in Belgrade in January 2003. Only two months later, the then Prime Minister of Serbia, Zoran Djindjic, was brutally assassinated. He fell victim to a plot orchestrated by Serbian ultranationalists. Djindjic wanted to accelerate the full re-integration of a democratic Serbia into the international community and, in particular, the Euro-Atlantic community. He knew that to achieve this Serbia had to face head-on all the pending issues related to its most recent past, namely: full collaboration with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the status of Kosovo, transitional justice, reconciliation within Serbian society and relations with its neighbors.

The assassination of Djindjic was followed by a period in which the state of emergency was imposed and polarization between different political factions reached its peak. This polarization and institutional stalemate, in turn, exacerbated tensions in ethnically divided regions such as South Serbia and was reflected also within Montenegro, where the rivalry between the pro-independence government and the pro-union opposition became increasingly acute.

The task of the OSCE Mission was two-fold. First, to facilitate inclusive political dialogue among the different components of Serbian and Montenegrin society, to defuse tensions and manage polarization. Second, it was deeply engaged in promoting, through its programmes, the consolidation of democratic institutions and rule of law in a variety of areas: the police, the judiciary, the Serbian and Montenegrin parliaments, the media and the protection of human rights and the rights of minorities (including Roma).

We were also active in institutionally supporting the fight against corruption and the fight against human trafficking. Our goal was to shape Serbian and Montenegrin institutions and legislation according to international and European standards. The OSCE Mission, more than any other institution, possessed

the technical and human capability to engage daily with local authorities and people and to involve them in the implementation of its programmes as equal partners without patronizing them. This spirit of genuine co-operation made the OSCE accepted and appreciated and resulted in the successful implementation of most of our programmes and activities.

The work conducted by the OSCE in Southern Serbia, where tensions between Serbia's central authorities and the Albanian-populated areas of Presevo and Bujanovac erupted regularly, deserves a special mention. Through the Mission headquarters in Belgrade and its field office in Bujanovac, the OSCE became the main international point of reference and reassurance for all constituencies. We negotiated an important agreement between Serbs and Albanians to create the Co-ordination Body, a platform for inclusive decision-making, and implemented tension-defusing programmes for economic and social inclusion and in sensitive areas such as community policing.

Maurizio Massari is currently Ambassador of Italy to Egypt.





Hans Ola Urstad

Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia from 2006 to 2009

An excellent working environment

I was Head of the Mission to Serbia for close to four years, from early 2006 until late 2009. Prior to that, I was Norwegian Ambassador to Serbia and Montenegro for close to five years. Serbia was undergoing tremendous changes during this period. The political, judicial and economical systems had to be totally renewed. In fact, all sectors of society had to be turned upside down and inside out.

The new and relatively young democrats who had taken over the government were idealistic, hardworking and very dedicated to change, but at the same time unexperienced in managing such gigantic tasks. I believe that the Mission, with about 50 international experts and 150 local employees, was of great help to the new young leaders of Serbia.

“Serbia was undergoing tremendous changes during this period. The political, judicial and economical systems had to be totally renewed. In fact, all sectors of society had to be turned upside down and inside out.”

First of all, I always listened very carefully to their ideas and suggestions. A very important part of our strategy was to work as closely as possible with them, making good use of our extensive expertise to give the best possible advice. Some of the main areas in which we did this were the totally new legal system that had to be set up, the complete turnaround and renewal of the police and establishing integrity and good governance procedures and new media laws.

Second, after my first year there we developed a mission strategy, with clear-cut main aims and goals for the Mission, both in the short (one-year) and the longer term. These had to be realistic, doable and always within the framework of the Serbian government's policies.

Third, since the OSCE Mission is a knowledge-based organization, an important part of my

strategy was to try to recruit international and national experts of the highest possible calibre.

But perhaps even more important than that, it was always a top priority for me to create and secure an excellent working environment. This was not only to keep people happy at work, but also because I strongly believe that if a working environment is good, then everyone, including myself, produces much better results.

I had an extremely interesting and good time at the OSCE Mission to Serbia, and I often think about my many dear friends at the Mission.

Hans Ola Urstad is currently Norwegian Ambassador to Malaysia and Brunei.



Dimitrios Kypreos

Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia from 2009 to 2012

Meeting international standards

In the period from 2009-2012, when I had the opportunity to head the OSCE Mission to Serbia, our task, according to our mandate, was to assist the Serbian authorities in bringing the country into line with the most advanced standards of international society. The basic strategy we adopted was to work in partnership and close co-operation with the government, political forces, civil society and distinguished individuals. The celebration of the Mission's tenth anniversary in May 2011, in which Serbian politicians and members of society participated in large numbers, gave proof to its widespread acceptance.

Our activity was mainly concentrated in four fields: democratic institutions and human rights, rule of law, law enforcement and media. Let me explain briefly the kind of assistance and expertise we provided:

The Mission co-operated closely and continuously with the Serbian parliament. The amendment of the Law on Election of National Deputies was a major step towards the modernization of the Serbian electoral system. Our contribution to the first direct elections for National Minority Councils in 2010 was widely recognized. The support of the young independent institutions of the country, including that of the Ombudsman, was also widely appreciated.

Judicial reform, a Herculean task undertaken already in 2009, was supported by the Mission in co-operation with other members of the international community, the Serbian Ministry of Justice, high-ranking members of the judiciary and the representative bodies of judges and prosecutors.

We worked systematically to introduce the most advanced methods for building a modern and democratic police service in close co-operation with the Ministry of the Interior.

Our assistance in the field of media was crucial for the acceptance of the National Media Strategy, a framework law redefining the media charter of the country, after a long deliberation with all parties concerned.

We worked for stability in the southern part of the country. In South Serbia, we mainly tried – successfully, I think – to promote education offering equal opportunities to all Serbian citizens, irrespective of ethnicity. In South-West Serbia, we campaigned for encouraging more economic growth, in continuous engagement with other members of the international community.

The Mission pioneered in launching, together with the Mission in Kosovo, a civic dialogue between journalists and women in Belgrade and Pristina.

In 2012, the European Union accepted Serbia's bid for candidate status, largely on the basis of its fulfillment of OSCE commitments.

Let me close this very brief outline with two remarks: in all these activities the Mission worked closely with the authorities and with other members of the international community in a spirit of collegial co-operation. After the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2012, it continued working in the same spirit of partnership with the new political leadership of the host country.

Dimitrios Kypreos is a Greek Ambassador.

Peter Burkhard

Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia since 2013

Long-term returns

Drawing from my experience at the helm of the OSCE Mission to Serbia over the past two years, I can say that today our assistance mandate remains just as pertinent as the day it was enacted 13 years ago.

Reforming a country is not a unidirectional process. Even when based on OSCE commitments, the host country's best efforts can produce collateral effects and unforeseen consequences when implemented in the real world and impacted by the situation on the ground. Reform is evolutionary; it requires a steady partnership between the host country and experts with long on-site experience, as exemplified by our co-operation with Serbian institutions and civil society. Returns on investments, in our case, are seen in the longer run.

Further lessons can be drawn from the implementation of progressive pieces of legislation introduced by Serbia. Some laws have resulted in certain shortcomings that were not foreseen at the time of adoption. A case in point is the legislation in the field of minority protection. A provision allowing national minorities to be educated completely in their mother tongue, intended to guarantee their language rights and promote tolerance, has proven to have the potential to prioritize identity over social cohesion and economic participation. The Mission, in this instance, is encouraging an approach that will contribute to integration and stability, rather than segregation.



Helping the country establish a stable and efficient judicial system characterized by independence and impartiality also remains a central element of our work. Mission experts supported the development of Serbia's National Judicial Reform Strategy and Action Plan for reforms over the next five years.

An important example of where the Mission's continuous presence on the ground has yielded results is South Serbia. Over the last 18 months, the Mission facilitated dialogue between the host government and the ethnic Albanian community on priorities for the region's development. In an important display of political maturity, this community rejected calls by some of its own political leaders to boycott the recent elections, went to the polls and secured increased representation in the National Assembly.

The Mission's expertise will continue to play an important role in assisting Serbia with reforms. Independence of the judiciary and the media, stronger democratic institutions, police reform and the fight against organized crime and corruption continue to top the agenda. Helping the country to build an open and tolerant society through the elimination of hate speech and the inclusion of its numerous minority communities remains essential.

As Serbia prepares to assume the 2015 OSCE Chairmanship, I am confident that it will seize this opportunity to maintain its renewed foreign policy engagement and advance its implementation of OSCE commitments. ■



Mission to Serbia

A HAPPY ALLIANCE

Aleksandra Stepanović, Head of the Serbian Prison Administration's Department for Protection of Human Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty, was named Person of the Year for 2014 by the OSCE Mission to Serbia. "When you consider that all over the world prisons are among the most conservative places, she was really very open to innovative approaches," says Natasa Novaković, National Legal Officer at the Mission.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MISSION TO SERBIA and Aleksandra

Stepanović began in 2005. The Mission's prison reform team had already been working several years to get its programme up and running; Stepanović had joined the Serbian Prison Administration as a newly graduated lawyer and was passionate about improving the living conditions for people behind bars. Together they provided input to the drafting of a new law on enforcement of criminal sanctions. It was to be the first step in an enormous collaborative effort of legal reform – with laws on probation and a special imprisonment regime for organized crime, a total of more than 20 by-laws, two national strategies and an action plan – that has completely modernized the Serbian criminal justice system.

Alternative sanctions and post-penal care of released prisoners are one area in which Serbia now takes a forward-looking approach. Instead of sentencing first-time offenders and committers of petty crimes to prison terms that are costly and often do more harm than good, judges can now prescribe constructive community work or house arrest with electronic tagging.

The administration of penitentiaries is another area where Serbia has made advances. A crucial step taken this past year was the appointment of an enforcement judge – something that even Western democracies only began doing in recent decades, with Italy pioneering in the 1980s. This enables prisoners whose human rights concerns are not being heard can complain directly to the courts.

This recourse caps the three-tier

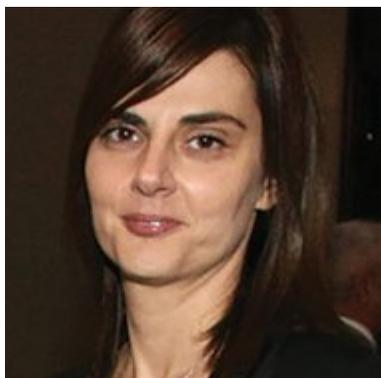
system for handling prisoner complaints which Stepanović was able to install in 2008. It was a breakthrough at the time that earned the praise of the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture. A prisoner who has a concern can request a remedy on three successive levels: write to a prison staff member, file an official complaint to the prison administration and, as a third step, complain to the prison governor or head of prison administration. If all of this leaves the problem unresolved, he or she can appeal to the enforcement judge.

The reform has swept away the cobwebs that previously made prison oversight an arbitrary affair that left too much to chance or the personality of individual prison officers. There is certainly room for improvement in Serbia's prisons – most of the concerns expressed have

to do with overcrowding and with the quality of healthcare, especially in the maximum security facilities – but at least prisoners can count on receiving responses to their complaints according to a transparent procedure within strict timeframes.

Even the best system of internal oversight needs to be complemented by external observation. Stepanović has maintained an open-door policy for prisons, not only for governmental agencies but also for civil society groups wishing to visit. Prisoners who feel their human rights are being abused can address the Ombudsperson (called “Protector of Citizens” in Serbia), with whom the Mission to Serbia has also worked closely. The Ombudsperson, whose office also administers the National Preventive Mechanism under the United Nations Convention against Torture, works mostly preventively, visiting and recommending improvements in prisons but also police stations and psychiatric institutions.

The Mission to Serbia also assists with a third channel of prison oversight, a parliamentary commission comprising five members of parliament elected by the National Assembly for each government term – the current commission is the third. Parliamentary oversight alerts parliamentarians to what is going on in prisons so that they can make informed decisions. The Mission



provides the commission with professional advice and accompanies it the first time it visits a prison. On 15 December, for instance, it organized a visit to the correctional facility for juveniles in Krusevac.

This year, the Mission’s decade-long co-operation with Stepanović on

legislative reform came full circle, when the parliament passed a new law on enforcement of criminal sanctions to replace the one of 2005. It was a good moment to recognize her work.

In a ceremony in Belgrade on 9 December, the Mission presented Stepanović with its Person of the Year award that recognizes Serbian citizens who promote OSCE values. She received the award together with the former Supreme Court Judge Vida Petrović Škero – another outstanding Serbian woman, who was recognized for her dedication to the independence of the judiciary.

“I wish to express my profound appreciation to officials of the OSCE Mission and my colleagues from the Prison Administration, as we have managed, through joint effort, to improve the status of persons deprived of liberty,” Stepanović said.

Based on information provided by Natasa Novaković, National Legal Officer at the OSCE Mission to Serbia.

THE PALIĆ PROCESS FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

The vast majority of war crimes cases prosecuted in countries of the former Yugoslavia have a transnational component. Crime sites, victims, witnesses and defendants are often scattered over two or more countries in the region. That is why the Palić Process is so important.

JUST OVER TEN YEARS AGO, in November 2004, the OSCE Mission to Serbia invited prosecutors from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro to the town of Palić to explore how they could strengthen their mutual assistance in investigating, prosecuting and trying those responsible for crimes committed during the wars which devastated the territory of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

They agreed that co-operation was indispensable and initiated the Palić Process.

Judges and prosecutors from the four countries began meeting regularly to discuss cases and share views. They signed bilateral protocols opening up channels for exchange of evidence and expertise among the judiciaries. Bosnia and Herzegovina, which did not participate in

the original wave of protocols, joined recently, signing agreements with the Serbian authorities in January 2013 and with Croatia and Montenegro in June 2013 and January 2014, respectively.

On 5 December 2014, a year-long joint investigation resulted in the simultaneous arrest of ten people in Bosnia and five in Serbia in connection with a mass kidnapping and murder in Strpci during the Bosnian war. The teamwork would have been unthinkable without the Palić Process.

The arrests came on the heels of a conference the OSCE Mission to Serbia co-organized on 2 December in Palić to mark the tenth anniversary of the

co-operation it initiated. True to its role, the Mission provided further impetus, in the form of a concept paper, with suggestions for improving the process as it enters its second decade (see note below).

One of the proposals, to establish liaison officers between prosecution offices in the region, came to fruition at the conference, when the United Nations Development Programme announced the creation of a Joint Commission in Sarajevo for the analysis and review of war crimes cases with a transnational component. The first meeting among prosecutors of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia to further discuss the initiative took place on 17 December 2014 in Sarajevo.

WAYS TO MAKE THE PALIĆ PROCESS EVEN BETTER

- Joint investigative teams, now organized on an ad hoc basis, could be further discussed and regulated.
- Transfer of evidence between prosecutors can, under some of the current protocols, be blocked by victims. Ways could be found to respect their concerns yet allow investigations to move forward.
- Cases which are ready for trial could be systematically transferred to the country where the defendant is located, in view of the fact that all countries ban extradition of their nationals for war crimes.
- Serbian war crimes prosecutors could formalize their co-operation with their counterparts in Kosovo, similarly to the way the Serbian police has done with EULEX police.

Information for this story was provided by Alberto Pasquero, Project Co-ordinator at the OSCE Mission to Serbia.



Roma Inclusion

We Are Here Together – European Support for Roma Inclusion is the name of a €4.8 million EU-funded project that the Mission to Serbia is implementing from 2013 to 2015. Five hundred and twenty-five secondary school students won scholarships under the project in 2014, which include a stipend of €35 a month and a mentorship programme.

“Five hundred were chosen initially, out of more than 1,000 applicants.

Twenty-five were added from the flooded regions,” explains Maja Milenković, the spokesperson for the project. Roma communities were among those most affected by the devastating floods that hit much of the country last spring.

The students will have a chance to win a scholarship again next year, when another 500 will be awarded.

In addition to educational support, the project is assisting Roma communities with access to basic services, mobile health and employment advice, training for civil society organizations, technical plans for improved housing and sustainable employment.

It builds on more than ten years of work by the Mission to integrate the Roma national minority.

The Mission has trained 181 pedagogical assistants, 75 health mediators and 30 municipal co-ordinators in support of Serbia’s Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of Roma.

READ MORE!

About the project:

In Serbian: www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs

On Facebook: www.facebook.com/inkluzijaroma



About the Mission to Serbia’s work for Roma “Serbian models for Roma inclusion” in OSCE Magazine 3/2012. Online at www.osce.org/serbia/104277

Information for this story was provided by Maja Milenković and Ivana Milatović of the OSCE Mission to Serbia.



Walk and Talk

- Two hundred women – young professionals at the beginning of their careers and prominent leaders – walked together through the streets of Belgrade on 28 November 2014, in the fifth annual Mentoring Walk, part of a mentoring programme organized by the OSCE Mission to Serbia, the United States Embassy and Erste Bank.

- Encouraging full participation of women in social and political life is a tradition at the Mission to Serbia.

The so-called Budva Process has been gathering prominent women from government, academia, civil society and media from Belgrade and Prishtinë/Priština for direct dialogue since 2012. The fourth meeting was held in Belgrade on 15 and 16 December 2014. The Budva Process is organized by the Mission to Serbia together with the Mission in Kosovo.



READ MORE!

Find out more about how the Mission to Serbia works for gender equality and in many other areas, notably police reform and media reform, at www.osce.org/serbia

m e a s u r i n g p e a c e ?

By Claus Neukirch

THEY SAY ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS. Sometimes, doing can also be easier than documenting. For the OSCE, assessing the work it does to consolidate peace can be a challenge. How does one measure peace?

The OSCE's many field operations and the Conflict Prevention Centre that supports them are incontestably strong peacebuilding tools. The field missions primarily work by strengthening the performance of state institutions and building a resilient, inclusive civil society with an emphasis on plurality. The Conflict Prevention Centre provides methodological guidance, for instance by systematizing early warning or using conflict analysis to plan projects. Yet often, the progress achieved is difficult to gauge.

The difficulty begins with defining the goal. Does the OSCE have a notion of stable peace? From the body of commitments and principles which the OSCE participating States have agreed over the past 40 years, one could certainly distill one. But any attempt to do so in concrete terms would trigger a controversial debate among participating States.

All 57 participating States do agree that the OSCE's notion of security is comprehensive, that stable peace can only be ensured by achieving security in the politico-military, economic and environmental and human dimensions. However, there is constant debate about the relative importance of one or the other security dimension, and the OSCE's efforts in the different

areas change with the priorities of the annually rotating Chairmanship.

The same can be said regarding benchmarks for assessing how far the goal is achieved. We do have multi-year objectives and outcomes, which we measure through key performance indicators. However, these remain to this date an internal management tool. Measuring success in peace consolidation can be a contested matter, especially for the OSCE. A given indicator might be adequate in objective terms, but at the same time be politically sensitive. Using indicators for internal purposes is one thing, making them public is a totally different issue. Indicators for field operations, for instance, might be perceived as a ranking of the respective host countries. The crux of the matter is that pressure to make internal indicators public further increases the resistance within the Organization to collecting data on indicators at all. Objectives stated in budget documents often need to be vague and generic to broker consensus.

Frankly speaking, this then results in a disconnect between the results-based system of budget reporting, which the OSCE has been employing for the past seven years, and the reality on the ground. From my earlier experience in the field, I can say that in some places the OSCE's performance-based budget process is largely seen as an artificial exercise not connected to reality. Unfortunately, this disconnect hinders the Organization from better gauging the real impact of its peacebuilding work.

Bridging the gap

In spite of the political difficulties in measuring progress, seven years of budgeting based on expected achievements has taught the OSCE a few useful lessons.

Firstly, measuring progress requires continuity. A field operation with a monitoring mandate can provide quantitative indicators and qualitative analysis from its host country with respect to governance, critical trends and risks. Secondly, having a mandate is not enough. Operational capacity is needed, meaning financial and human resources. Without them, setting up the monitoring systems required for measuring results is not possible.

To illustrate these lessons, let me give you two examples. On one end of the spectrum, we have Project Co-ordinators, with tiny budgets and few international staff. This type of field operation is only able to provide fragmented results. Our main aim in these cases is to maintain engagement and try to increase the impact of our work.

On the other end, we have field operations like the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its budget is €11.45 million (2015) and it has almost 400 staff members to monitor and catalyse reforms. The Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina introduced a results-orientated framework four years before the OSCE did so collectively. It built a bottom-up monitoring process to oversee progress across 60 municipalities and entities and deployed a “traffic light” reporting mechanism to benchmark results across the country. It was also the first field operation to systematically use conflict analysis for its strategic programme planning.

When all is said and done, however, serious doubts remain regarding the extent to which complex political and social processes, which to

various degrees depend on internal developments, geo-political factors and personalities, can be subject to measurement and attribution.

At the Conflict Prevention Centre, experience has shown us that, all other things being equal, the personality of the head of a field operation can make a significant difference to performance. At the same time, geo-political dynamics can confine us to a very small margin of manoeuvre, irrespective of the strategies we try. Bringing sustainable change needed for peace consolidation or conflict resolution with regard to very complex factors requiring long-term internal reform processes also represents a challenge.

The decisiveness of our impact often depends on factors outside of our control. I think we should understand that there are limits to our efforts and remain modest in achieving as much as possible within the given margins.

The OSCE has no blueprint for measuring the consolidation of peace, and its budget planning oriented on results must necessarily be pragmatic and flexible. It is important to manage expectations of donors regarding the extent to which assessing peace or measuring impact is feasible. There is a need to regulate pressures for tangible results before rushing to discontinue or diminish financial support.

To genuinely take the measure of peace consolidation, long-term engagement is required. Volatility in that engagement – including changes to the mandate, the scale of multilateral assistance and the diplomatic engagement – cannot produce results. Achieving change can take years and sometimes decades. ■

Claus Neukirch is Deputy Director for Operations Service in the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre in Vienna.

For a Plurilogue in Ukraine



Skilful mediation creates a “plurilogue”, to use the term coined by Ursula Caser, one of the experts participating in three days of brainstorming among Ukrainian mediators, international experts and OSCE officials at a conference in Odessa co-organized by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine and the Odessa Mediation Group from 10 to 12 December 2014. Get a taste of what she and others had to say below.

“The main goal of this event is to establish a dialogue inside the country. In my opinion, any reform has to go hand in hand with the education of civil society. What is lacking at the moment is a dialogue that includes the government and other representatives of society. They have to reach inner consensus on how to establish reforms and transform the country. We believe that educating people to work in this field professionally in different parts of the country will help. If you look at the participants list of today’s conference, you will see that there are people who have worked in Northern Ireland, Bosnia, the Middle East and the Balkans, who have experience and expertise in this complex field.”

– Vaidotas Verba
OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine

“Odessa is a very good place for this because it’s traditionally a city that is very diverse and it was also the place that was hit by the tragic events on 2 May. There is now a group of “others” who don’t feel at ease, yet they exist and they are here. Therefore, Odessa is a good place to start this dialogue.”

– Inna Tereshenko
Head of the Odessa Regional Mediation Group

“We have to work on two tracks. One is to achieve peace and stability and normalization. The second track is to work for a resilient society, to build on the foundation and the institutions the country has in order to empower civil society and to increase the

connectivity between the political agenda and the civil agenda.”

– Ertuğrul Apakan
Chief Monitor, OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

“Ukraine has a lot of natural resources and a lot was expected of it, but we were unable to learn our lessons properly and we made many mistakes. Now we have to correct them and make the right choices. This has to be done through a process that begins with education in schools, continues with university students and uses the results for the reformation and transformation of our country. That is, to be more precise: through the establishment of a communication culture among businesses, government and communities.”

– Diana Protsenko
Mediator, lawyer, National University Kyiv-Mohila Academy

“We have many different groups conducting dialogue in Ukraine now, but not much chance to exchange information. The OSCE can be a platform for local Ukrainian initiatives to share experiences and also to benefit from international experts. We hope to develop a strategy and maybe an action plan to unite our efforts to make the dialogue process more effective and more efficient in Ukraine.”

– Vlada Kanevska
Executive Director, National Association of Ukrainian Mediators, Kyiv

“Business, politics and civil society form a triangle of misunderstanding. If they can’t come to an agreement, all the reform ideas must fail. My impression is that the role of facilitators is crucial, because they can help each one of these groups to reach their goals and furthermore to make them come together and agree on important issues that concern all Ukrainian citizens.”

– Svetlana Chebakova
Mediator, Ukraine Mediation Centre, Kyiv

“It is so important to get dialogue right. When people have participated in dialogue that has failed, it is hard to get them back around the table. One way to do that is to build a very good team, whom the people around the table will trust. There are many kinds of skills that you need in order to be able to facilitate a good process. So make sure you have the right people in your team, also as a backup for yourself.”

– Kirsi Joenpolvi
Mediation Support Officer, OSCE Secretariat

“We have been working with displaced people, adults and children, since 2 June. We try not only to feed them and provide a roof over their heads, but also to teach them to talk, in order to be able to get out of the conflict situation that we have at the moment in our country. Because we are all one. No matter what language we speak, our home is Ukraine and we want to keep living in Ukraine. We want to have peace; we want the war to stop so that our country can finally be prosperous.”

– Natalia Bilik
Chairperson of the NGO Family Protection, Donetsk

“We just heard Natalia’s story from Donesk. I actually didn’t even know where Dobropolje is located, but now I know about the problems there, about individual people we can help. So Natalya and I are going to work together. The Christmas and the New Year’s festivities are coming, and the children are expecting to have a party, but they lack even the basic things there at the moment. So we will try to help – heart to heart.”

– Antonina Pozanova
Psychologist, Research Institute for Medicine Transportation, Odessa

“The most important challenge is to get all the different stakeholders to join in creating a common language, a plurilogue – to help everybody to come with his or her specific knowledge and make it fruitful for the process, work on it without looking for solutions in the first instance. The idea is to try to get understanding for each other, voice one’s interests and collaborate to find a common solution.”

– Ursula Caser
Facilitator and conflict mediator, Portugal

“We try to create an unconditional space for the participants who come to the Nansen Centre in Lillehammer, and I think that taking them out of their environment enables them to think and speak freely, in a place far away from home and from the conflict as well as from the political and economic situation they are in.”

– Inngun Trosholm
Nansen Centre for Peace and Dialogue, Norway

“I usually mediate multi-party, multi-issue disputes in Israel and also abroad. In mediation, sometimes you can work one day, a week, two weeks, and you think nothing will happen. And then, suddenly, there is an agreement. Even one day before, you cannot imagine that there is going to be an agreement the day after.”

– Moti Mironi
Professor of Law, University of Haifa, Israel

Peace won’t come easily to a country where there has been war. It will be necessary to support, defend and help it grow. Dialogue is a very important tool in this process. Dialogue is not simple. It needs effort from the conflicting parties. Once communication has been disturbed, returning to a simple dialogue is very difficult. We as mediators and facilitators can play this important role of helping people involved in the conflict on both sides to reach an understanding.”

– Galia Kadyrbekova
Independent mediator, Kyiv

Prepared by Elisabeth Minkow, Intern at the Communication and Media Relations Section of the OSCE Secretariat.

A Mark of Hospitality

Mint tea is served all through North Africa as a drink of hospitality, traditionally prepared by the head of the family and served to guests three times, as described in the Maghrebi proverb:

The first glass is as gentle as life,
the second glass is as strong as love,
the third glass is as bitter as death.

A significant development in the relationship between the OSCE and its Mediterranean neighbours was the decision adopted at the Budapest Summit in December 1994 to establish an informal, open-ended Contact Group at the level of experts within the framework of the Permanent Council. Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Israel became Mediterranean Partners in 1995 and Jordan joined in 1998.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the Mediterranean Contact Group, the OSCE Secretariat launched a commemorative publication, which provides an overview of the OSCE's co-operation with its Mediterranean Partners and includes all procedural texts and arrangements. The delegation of Morocco offered mint tea to the guests during the celebration at the Hofburg Congress Centre in Vienna on 18 December 2014, which was accompanied with Mediterranean pastries offered by other Partners.

The OSCE Mediterranean Partnership for Co-operation: a Compilation of Relevant Documents and Information. Published by the External Co-operation Section, OSCE Secretariat (English). View the PDF at: www.osce.org/networks/132176





Snow

The photo shows one of the cars of the Tbilisi-based team of the the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference. (For information on the recognition during the Ministerial Council in Basel of the services rendered by the Personal Representative, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, see page 6.)

Snowfall, it would appear, is still abundant in Georgia, where this picture was taken, but the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has evidence to the contrary. Its 5th Assessment Report issued in January 2014 notes that spring snow cover in the Northern Hemisphere has decreased.

Seasonal snow is an important part of the earth's climate system. It reflects solar energy back into space, helping to cool the planet. It also acts as an insulating blanket, protecting the soil and the organisms beneath it. And once it melts in the spring, the water fills rivers and reservoirs.



Read the IPCC's 5th Assessment Report here: www.ipcc.ch

Watch an animated map of changing snow cover in Europe and Asia here:

www.ncdc.noaa.gov/snow-and-ice/snow-cover/

