

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe



The OSCE Istanbul Summit meets in Plenary Session.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Vienna Document 1999 4
- Adapted CFE Treaty 5
- Interview with Ambassador Eide 6
- Albania's path to democracy 8
- 'Way to Europe' campaign in BiH 11
- Staffing OSCE field activities 13
- News from the field 14
- Press profile 16
- News from the Secretariat 19
- Update from the ODIHR 19
- Report from the PA 24
- Report from the HCNM 27
- Report from the RFOM 28
- Recent OSCE Publications 30

OSCE Summit reaches accord in Istanbul

'Last great meeting of the century' ends with meaningful results

Leaders of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, convening in Istanbul, Turkey, for what was widely described as the last great Summit Meeting of the century, were able to achieve agreement on significant documents that will strengthen security and stability in the OSCE region over the coming years. The sixth OSCE Summit Meeting brought together Heads of State and Government and Foreign Ministers from 54 of the participating States, as well as representatives from the Governments of the OSCE Partners for Co-operation and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. The

Summit was also addressed by the United Nations Secretary-General, as well as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Secretary General and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

The meeting, held from 18 to 19 November in the Ciragan Place on the banks of the Bosphorus, ended in the emergence of three important documents: the Charter for European Security, the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Istanbul Summit Declaration.

In the Charter for European Security, the OSCE Heads of State and Government agree on a number of concrete steps

which will improve the operational capabilities of the OSCE. This will strengthen the Organization's ability to prevent conflicts as well as its capacity to settle conflicts and to rehabilitate societies ravaged by war and destruction. They commit themselves, *inter alia*, to intensify co-operation with other international organizations through a new instrument, the Platform for Co-operative Security; to develop the OSCE's role in peacekeeping operations; to create Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams and to expand OSCE police related activities. The Charter reaffirms the adherence of the OSCE participating States to the

The Charter for European Security at a glance

The Charter for European Security, signed on 19 November in Istanbul by 54 OSCE Heads of State and Government, aims at strengthening the Organization’s ability to prevent conflicts, to settle them and to rehabilitate societies ravaged by war and destruction.

“The last decade of the twentieth century has brought great achievements in the OSCE area, co-operation has replaced previous confrontation, but the danger of conflicts between States has not been eliminated... We are determined to learn from the dangers of confrontation and division between States as well as from tragedies of the last decade. Security and peace must be enhanced through an approach that combines two basic elements; we must build confidence among people within States and strengthen co-operation between States. Therefore, we will strengthen existing instruments and develop new ones to provide assistance and advice...

“We reaffirm our full adherence to the Charter of the United Nations, and to the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and all other OSCE documents to which we have agreed. These documents represent our common commitments and are the foundation for our work. They have helped us to bring about an end to the old confrontation in Europe and to foster a new era of democracy, peace and solidarity throughout the OSCE area. They established clear standards for participating States’ treatment of each other and of all individuals within their territories. All OSCE commitments,

without exception, apply equally to each participating State. Their implementation in good faith is essential for relations between States, between governments and their peoples, as well as between the organizations of which they are members. Participating States are accountable to their citizens and responsible to each other for their implementation of their OSCE commitments. We regard these commitments as our common achievement and therefore consider them to be matters of immediate and legitimate concern to all participating States.

“We reaffirm the OSCE as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and as a primary organization for the peaceful settlement of disputes within its region and as a key instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. The OSCE is the inclusive and comprehensive organization for consultation, decision-making and co-operation in its region.”

In the Charter the participating States recognize the common challenges they face – including international terrorism, violent extremism, organized crime and drug trafficking, economic problems and environmental degradation – and reaffirm their commitment to OSCE principles as the foundations for a common security space.

In order to address these challenges and uphold OSCE commitments, the Charter introduces specific measures to enhance the role of the OSCE as a key instrument for early warning, conflict

prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, including:

- 1 A Platform for Co-operative Security, in order to further strengthen co-operation between the OSCE and other international organizations and institutions on the basis of equality and in a spirit of partnership;
- 2 Developing the OSCE’s role in peacekeeping operations;
- 3 Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams (REACT), enabling the OSCE to rapidly respond to requests from participating States for civilian and police expertise in conflict situations. This will give the OSCE the ability to address problems before they become crises and to deploy quickly the civilian component of a peacekeeping operation when needed;
- 4 Expanding the OSCE’s ability to carry out police related activities. This includes police monitoring, police training and promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in general;
- 5 An Operation Centre at the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna in order to facilitate effective preparation and planning of rapid deployment of OSCE field operations;
- 6 Establishing a Preparatory Committee under the direction of the OSCE Permanent Council in order to strengthen the consultation process within the OSCE.

Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and all other OSCE documents that they have agreed to. These documents represent their common commitments and the foundation for their work.

The agreement on adaptation of the CFE Treaty of 1990 adjusts this disarmament agreement to post-Cold War realities and at the same time reduces armaments in Europe by a further 10 per cent (*see separate box*).

In the Istanbul Summit Declaration, the OSCE leaders commit themselves to intensify efforts to prevent conflicts in the OSCE area and to resolve existing conflicts peacefully: “We need the contribution of a strengthened OSCE to meet the risks and challenges facing the OSCE area, to improve human security and thereby to make a difference in the life of the individual, which is the aim of all our efforts,” it states (*all Summit documents can be viewed on the OSCE website: www.osce.org*).

The leaders also reaffirmed the human dimension as one of the foremost areas of responsibility for the OSCE: respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. This includes the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, children’s rights and full equality between men and women. The leaders also committed themselves to ensure the freedom of media, as well as free and fair elections in accordance with OSCE principles and commitments.

Finally, the Summit Declaration lists a number of issues of concern to the OSCE, including the situation in Kosovo, the democratic shortcomings in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the search for a solution to the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, and the necessity of removing the obstacles to a political dialogue in Belarus. In the Declaration, the



Top: Presidents Bill Clinton of the USA, Suleyman Demirel of Turkey and Eduard Shevardnaze of Georgia. Center: Presidents Jacques Chirac of France, Boris Yeltsin of Russia and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany, meeting during the Istanbul Summit. Bottom: Chairman in Office, Foreign Minister Knut Vollebaek of Norway (centre) chairs a press conference.

OSCE leaders also applauded the intensified dialogue between the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan, which has created opportunities to dynamize the process of finding a lasting and comprehensive solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and confirm that the OSCE Minsk Group stands ready to further advance the peace process. With regard to the conflict in North Caucasus, the Summit Declaration reaffirms the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation and condemns terrorism in all its forms. It also underscores the need to respect OSCE norms, states that a political solution to the conflict is essential and welcomes the agreement of the Russian Federation to a visit of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to the region.

The Istanbul Summit Meeting was not without some striking highlights. The situation in Chechnya was prominently mentioned in most of the statements of the Summit. The signing of the Security Charter was postponed to the final day because of last-minute negotiations on the text of the documents, adding a sense of drama to the atmosphere. This proved that, indeed, the work of the OSCE is closely connected to the current political situation.

Several other important meetings and events took place on the margins of the Istanbul Summit. These included a meeting on Regional Stability in South-Eastern Europe, which involved more than 40 Foreign Ministers, the Stability Pact Special Co-ordinator as well as high representatives of international organizations. At another event, a distinguished panel of high officials, politicians, lawmakers and citizen activists discussed ways to combat the human rights scourge of trafficking in women and children. Other events were organized by several of the more than 100 non-governmental organizations that were accredited to the Summit.



The Summit attracted intense media coverage.

There was also a meeting between the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and leaders of Opposition parties in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and one between the members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly with representatives of the Government and Opposition of Belarus.

In their interventions at the Summit, Heads of State and Government from the OSCE region commended the efforts of

the Government of Turkey in organizing a meeting on such a scale, only three months after a devastating earthquake.

Widespread coverage of the OSCE Summit was provided by a vast media operation, which involved more than 2,500 journalists from news agencies, newspapers, television and radio (*see Press Profile in this issue*).

Vienna Document 1999 increases military transparency

Meeting in Istanbul on 16 November, the OSCE Forum for Security adopted the Vienna Document 1999 on the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures. This document is an amended version of the Vienna Document 1994, and its adoption marks the successful completion of three years of intense diplomatic negotiations. It is seen as an important step towards increased transparency in military matters among OSCE participating States. The three-year negotiating process was itself an important review of OSCE confidence- and security-building measures.

The Vienna Document 1999 contains a significant number of changes and additions to the preceding document. Some of the confidence- and security-building measures of the 1994 Document have been improved upon and made more applicable to the changing military and technological environment. A major addition in the Vienna Document 1999 is the chapter on regional measures, which encourages the OSCE participating States to increase transparency and confidence in a bilateral, multilateral or regional context.

A guide to the adapted CFE Treaty

On the final day of the Istanbul Summit, 30 OSCE participating States signed the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (a.k.a. the adapted CFE Treaty). This ceremony symbolized the end of three years of negotiations on adjusting the original 1990 CFE Treaty, in order to reflect the changes brought about by the end of the Cold War, especially the disintegration of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (Warsaw Pact).

Signature of the first CFE Treaty, between the member States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the member States of the Warsaw Pact, was hailed as a landmark agreement, establishing a balance of conventional forces at dramatically lower levels than before. It was justly seen as being of considerable historical significance. During the Cold War, Europe had been an area of intense confrontation with a high concentration of weapons. With the signing of the CFE Treaty, the countries of the two opposing military alliances in Europe embarked upon a hitherto unprecedented disarmament process. The Treaty resulted in the destruction of more than 50,000 pieces of military equipment and introduced a far-reaching exchange of information as well as verification on a regular basis.

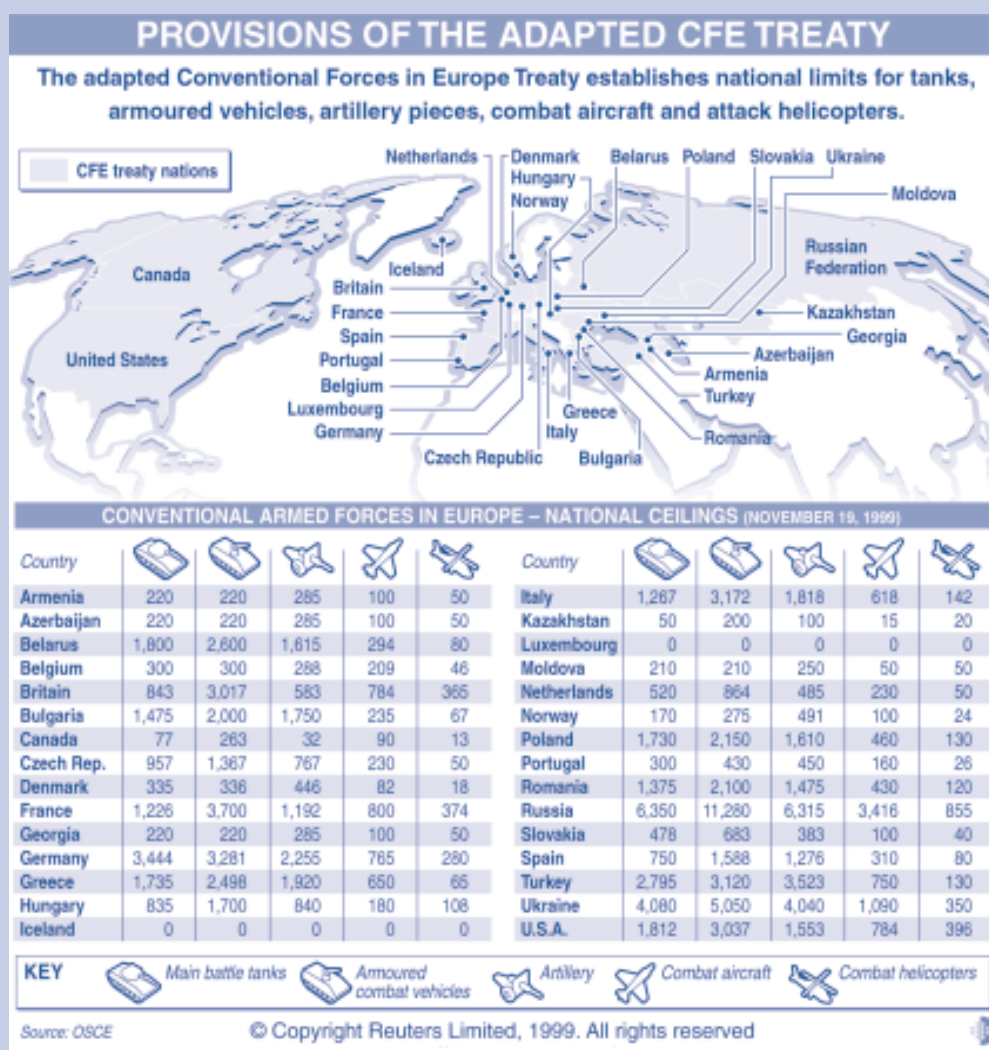
The adaptation of the CFE Treaty takes this process one

step further. It opens up the Treaty for accession by States that are not and have not been members of either NATO or the Warsaw Pact.

At the same time, it discards the division of Europe into two blocs, by giving each State individual ceilings for armaments on a national and territorial basis, instead of allocating ceilings on the basis of group levels. In the original CFE Treaty, the two groups of States – NATO and the Warsaw Pact – had collective ceilings within their own group. Now, the adapted Treaty allows a certain amount of armaments for a State Party at the national level, meaning a ceiling on

how many forces that country is allowed to deploy in the whole area covered by the Treaty, and a ceiling on the territorial level, meaning how many forces will be allowed on the territory of that State (including any foreign forces).

The new ceilings also constitute a further step in disarmament in Europe. Altogether 11,000 weapons systems – battle tanks, artillery pieces and fighter planes – will be dismantled. This will cut the number of conventional weapons in Europe by about 10 per cent. Implementation of the adapted CFE Treaty will only begin after ratification by the parliaments of all the States concerned.



Reflecting on a year of drama and progress

Approaching the end of the Norwegian Chairmanship of the OSCE, Ambassador Kai Eide, Chairman of the Permanent Council and Head of Norway's Permanent Delegation, takes the opportunity to review an eventful year, in which dramatic moments provided several highlights against a backdrop of steady progress in developing the role of the Organization. He gave this interview to the Newsletter on 9 December.

Newsletter: Looking back to the start of the period of Norwegian Chairmanship, what were the main aims you hoped to achieve?

Ambassador Eide: Our primary aim was, of course, to strengthen the Organization further. We knew that we had a strong set of field missions and they worked well. We also knew there were certain shortcomings. One was the Secretariat, which obviously needs additional resources. There is a good professional staff in the Secretariat, but in my view it lacks resources in certain critical areas. So we wanted to strengthen that. And then to increase the attractiveness of the Secretariat compared to other international organizations. I think we have taken some steps in that direction, but more remains to be done.

Also when Norway took over we were building up the Kosovo Verification Mission and one experience that I have, both from the OSCE and from the United Nations, is that it takes much too long to mobilize missions of the sort that we wanted. I well remember sitting with Milosevic, back in February, where he said with a certain smile: "I gave you the possibility of 2,000 members in the KVM. Now have you reached half of

that?" And that was after about four or five months.

It is obvious that we need to improve our ability to react quickly. I think that the Istanbul Summit took decisions which, hopefully, can help us to improve our ability in that respect. I must stress it is of critical importance for our credibility and also in order to reduce the suffering on the ground and to do the job we should.

NL: Do you feel that public perception of the OSCE has changed a lot over the course of this year?

That is hard to judge. I don't think public perception changes that quickly. What we did in Kosovo with the KVM was seen as something positive among the informed public of many participating States. Unfortunately, we had to withdraw, but I think what we are doing today in the Balkans is seen as being a very useful contribution. I do believe also that our reputation in other areas is improving, not that it has been bad, but our profile is becoming higher. That is, for instance, the case in Central Asia.

Overall, I think that we are a better known Organization than we were a year ago. I wish I could say that this is because of the Norwegian Chairmanship, but that is not the case. It is simply because we have had to deal with a series of difficult conflicts, problems and challenges. Most of them I would rather have been without, for the sake of the people affected. But I think that through our efforts at meeting these challenges we have become better known. However, I think that we still lack visibility and there is a lack of general knowledge about what the OSCE is all about. That does not come as a surprise to me; we are not a

military institution nor a financial one. We are a completely different kind of organization, and much of what we carry out does not make the daily headlines in the newspapers. But we saw, for instance, that the very thorough report we issued recently on the human rights situation in Kosovo got global coverage. I was in Amman, Jordan, at that time and it was on most of the local news channels there.

NL: How close is the link between raising the OSCE's profile and bolstering support for the Organization among participating States?

There's no doubt that the visibility of the OSCE affects the financial contributions. Much is based on budgets, but voluntary contributions are also important. The more visibility we have the more readiness there is among governments to provide the funds and voluntary contributions we need. Our visibility also affects the degree to which we are seen as attractive partners for other organizations. Some people have said, "Let's not worry about visibility this year; let's focus on getting the job done." But I don't think you can separate the two as easily as that.

NL: Are there lessons learned from this year in office that you will try to communicate to the next Chairmanship?

I am absolutely confident that the Austrian chairmanship is well prepared to take over and there is no need for me either publicly or privately to do that at this stage. We have had regular consultations, as well as working together within the Troika. We have been discussing a number of subjects throughout

the year and they have been closely involved, so I feel very confident in that respect.

NL: Do you think that the OSCE will have sufficient resources next year to cover new tasks agreed at Istanbul, such as the REACT concept of Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams?

Well of course we haven't been given resources yet but what will happen now is that the Secretariat, in cooperation with the new Chairmanship, will work on both the REACT concept and the Operations Centre. One cannot hide from the fact that it will require resources and say that we have to build only on existing resources. When you decide to do things then this has resource implications and we have to face that. If we don't accept that, then our Organization will suffer and we would lose credibility. Now we can sharpen our tools, so to speak, be more efficient and we should grasp that opportunity.

One other element that I am pleased about from the Istanbul Summit is that we managed to create a new committee under the Permanent Council to prepare our work better and to be more transparent, because transparency has been insufficient. There is a need for deliberations to be more open than we see in the Council and I hope that this new body will enable us to have such discussions, and thereby draw many more countries into the centre of our deliberations.

NL: Did you have any doubts during the course of the Summit, when to the outside world it looked in some danger of collapse?

I always felt that we were moving in the right direction although, of course, there we had the conflict with regard to Chechnya, which did cast a shadow over



Ambassador Kai Eide of Norway, Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council

the Summit. There was always the uncertainty as to how this would be reflected, and there was certainly a degree of nervousness there. And when you sleep for only an hour-and-a-half for three days in a row, then you do get rather tense. As some of my colleagues also discovered...

NL: As the decade ends, is the OSCE more relevant to the needs of the international community than it was when it began its transformation at the Paris Summit, almost 10 years ago?

Oh yes, I have no doubt about it. I have known the Organization since it was the CSCE in the late 1970s. It did a remarkable job at that time, but I always used to say that 60 per cent of the budget went to translators and interpreters. Today, 85 per cent goes to the field operations, which shows the transformation we've been going through. It takes time to define a new role. For instance, we have moved very far in developing field operations. Now we must strengthen the

Secretariat and Headquarters because these missions need to be given the right guidance through the Permanent Council and Chairmanship. We cannot just give birth to these big missions and then leave them on their own, so to speak. We must see to it that the Chairmanship and the Permanent Council, with the assistance of the Secretariat, is able to provide constant guidance and support to them.

We often talk about the flexibility of this Organization. I don't think everybody knows what they mean when they use this word, which has become almost a sort of mantra. I would urge caution when we praise the concept of flexibility. I see certain limits to flexibility, and I would like there to be more of a capability for the Headquarters here to provide more guidance to all the missions and to be more in touch with them. But for that we need a stronger Secretariat.

Let me also say that I believe that we are a little bit too much into finger-pointing exercises, which I think creates a situation where some countries feel that there is a stigma attached to having a mission in their countries. I think that we should become a little more mature and move slightly from the finger-pointing and more towards working together. I think that would make us more popular. To have an OSCE Mission in your country or to call on the OSCE should be seen as something positive in the international community, because it means that a country is aware of a problem and is saying, "Please can we work together in order to solve that problem", instead of the situation where some countries feel that it becomes something negative in the eyes of the international community. I think that here we have a long way to go, but we should try to make rapid progress.

NL: What are the qualities you have seen that set the OSCE apart from other organizations in its sphere of activity?

If you think, for instance, of the Council of Europe, then we have developed this large structure of field operations which is definitely a great strength for the OSCE and I think we have developed a partnership with the CoE such that we can draw on its expertise. This combination of our experience and field capacity with their expertise should be a major asset to the international community. What I should like to see in the years to come is similar partnerships developing with other institutions, for instance, the EU, as well as financial institutions. I do think that organizations which invest or lend money to countries would get more out of their money if, at the same time, we see to it that basic human rights standards are applied in those countries. So I think we can work together in a way that benefits all of these organizations.

There again, in Istanbul we adopted

what we call a “Platform for Co-operative Security”. It means an attempt to develop these kind of partnerships and I think we should really forge ahead in that direction. We have made tremendous progress over the last few years, working more closely together but there is a long way to go in using each other’s strengths to develop synergies which ultimately benefit all of us. I think we should use the year 2000 to define this more clearly.

NL: To end on a personal note, what was the most dramatic moment that you recall from this year?

That moment must be when the decision came to withdraw the KVM. At that time I had a number of Ambassadors in my home for what was to have been a routine lunch and discussion. We ended up never sitting down and never really

speaking to each other, because we were all on the phone to our respective capitals. I was on the phone to our Foreign Minister when that crucial decision was taken. To me that was a sad occasion, but it was a necessary decision because the circumstances didn’t allow us to stay.

But a moment I will remember with much more pleasure was the point when we were sitting in the negotiations in Istanbul and we finally reached agreement over the Charter and the Declaration. In the weeks beforehand, we had all been asking ourselves. “Will there be a Charter or any outcome at all? What would we achieve?”.

So that will be my best memory of the year, because I really felt then that through these decisions we took some important steps forward, and the Istanbul Summit ended in a result that went beyond what almost all of us had expected.

Albania’s path to democracy – new Law on Civil Service

By Giovanni Porta

When the first staff members from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe were sent to Albania in 1997, their task may have appeared almost impossible at the time. The country had just emerged from one of Eastern Europe’s harshest dictatorships and was immediately plunged into a new political crisis, leading to the virtual collapse of any remaining public structure. The civil disturbances that followed had levelled all local powers, and the Central State had, for all practical purposes, disappeared, leaving a dangerous void in its wake.

The international community then intervened and, with the help of a multinational military force, the situation was stabilized. New elections monitored by the OSCE were called, and the people chose a new Government. This, how-

ever, was only the beginning of an arduous path. The very fabric of a civil society had to be rebuilt in a country whose people had not only been artificially isolated from the external world for decades, but were also now profoundly disillusioned by their first taste of freedom. Moreover, the latest crisis had left deep-running scars within the national community, which was now divided between two party camps, each unwilling to talk to the other.

It became evident from an early stage that one of the keys to any process of democratic transformation would be the establishment of a functioning and impartial state structure. The achievement of this goal, together with an urgently needed crackdown on crime and illegal activities, were regarded by OSCE as a precondition to any further steps towards effective democratization and economic

recovery. Working therefore in close contact with the Council of Europe, the OSCE Presence assisted Albanian lawmakers in the drafting of a new Constitution, a process that was not in itself without political complications.

Once the Constitution had been approved by a national referendum at the end of 1998, the next step was the launching of a comprehensive package of reforms of the public administration, in order to de-politicize it so that it met European and international standards. This was the declared intention of the new Albanian leadership, who had their sights firmly fixed on the goal of Euro-Atlantic integration but, again, needed foreign expertise to pursue their reforms, and so turned to the international community for help.

In order to respond to this call, the ‘Friends of Albania’ (a grouping of



Ambassador Ahrens talking to some elderly inhabitants of Voskopoje village, during his recent visit to southern field offices of the Presence in Albania.

donor countries and international institutions, chaired in Tirana by the Head of the OSCE Presence) was tasked with providing the Albanian Government and Parliament with the technical assistance they required. A number of European Union and World Bank advisors were called in to work in co-operation with the relevant parliamentary commissions and the Government's Department of Public Administration. A series of working meetings of the 'Friends', at local and international levels, provided the political framework to facilitate the process.

One of the pillars of the reform process identified by foreign advisors was the need to draft a new Civil Service law, since the existing text, approved in 1996, was inadequate and had never been implemented. Indeed most Albanian civil servants, at all levels, were still politicized and many depended on party or personal allegiances to keep their posts and secure their careers. The first step

was to establish a core of basic principles, in the form of clear conditions and procedures to guarantee rights and define the duties of civil servants.

As stated in Article 3 of the draft law – prepared with the direct contribution of the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the World Bank and OSCE experts – the Civil Service had to be guided by 'professionalism, independence and integrity, political neutrality and transparency'. These principles were aimed at guaranteeing an efficient 'ser-



A panel at the seminar on Rural Women organized by the NGO Liaison Officer in the area of Vlora.

vice to the public, career continuity, accountability and correctness in the application of binding legislation'. Although such principles may be largely taken for granted in many other countries, for Albania in 1999 they still represented a very major step forward.

It is perhaps not surprising that such a major new development should have encountered initial obstacles and a degree of political resistance, although a clear majority of Albanian members of parliament were in favour of it from the outset. Again, in July this year, the OSCE and the 'Friends of Albania' stepped in. The Final Conclusions of the International Conference of the 'Friends', held in Brussels, urged the Albanian Government: 'to take all the necessary steps to ensure the passage' of the law. Over the succeeding two months, all remaining obstacles were overcome, due in large part to the determination shown by the new Government, led by Prime Minister Ilir Meta. In late October, the drafting of the Law on the Status of the Civil Servant was finally completed.

This document indicated the criteria for a clear classification of civil servants, dividing them into four categories. Transparent requirements for hiring, promotion and dismissal of personnel were also provided, and a probation period established for the 8,000 civil servants already employed at the time the law was being drafted. A detailed list of duties and rights was also compiled. To overview the whole process, the document established a new Civil Service Commission (CSC) as an independent body tasked with 'supervisory responsibility over the management' of the service,

and serving as an ‘administrative resort for appeals’. The creation of this new body, more than any other provision of the law, was considered by all the foreign experts involved as a major breakthrough in the direction of the desired de-politicization of the State structure. On 11 November, the Assembly of the Republic (i.e. the Parliament) passed the law, an event greeted with applause in

the Assembly itself, and saluted by public opinion as a major political achievement and a decisive turning point in the modernization of the country. The approved text will be a conduit for further reforms, since the process towards a new Albania cannot be considered concluded. The Law on the Status of the Civil Service will now have to be fully implemented with the issuing of sec-

ondary legislation, a demanding task of high priority to be fulfilled by the Council of Ministers and the Parliament. As always, the OSCE and Albania’s many other international friends have made it clear that they stand ready to give further assistance, if needed.

Mr. Porta is Spokesperson for the OSCE Presence in Albania.

Interview with Ambassador Ahrens

Ambassador Geert-Hinrich Ahrens, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania, gave this interview to the Newsletter when he visited Vienna to make his first address to the Permanent Council.

Newsletter: *What are your first impressions of the Presence’s activities?*

Ambassador Ahrens: The work of the Presence is very intense and our activities are extremely wide-ranging. I am still in a phase of assessing the Presence’s activities. With such a wide mandate, you have to concentrate your efforts and from time to time check whether your activities are really effective or whether you have to shift resources from one sector to another.

NL: *What specific priorities would you like to focus on?*

AA: The priorities are defined by the mandate, but within the mandate one could put the focus on one point or another. I personally feel that until now we have not focused enough on media development and one could do more in this respect. My impression, after a few weeks, is that there is a lot of goodwill, but know-how and efficiency is sometimes lacking. At press conferences, for instance, it is often difficult to get the message across clearly to the audience without being misunderstood. Furthermore, the media in Albania is normally



Ambassador Geert-Hinrich Ahrens, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania.

oriented towards one of the political parties and is often partial regarding reported events. But this is nothing terrible, and can be found in many other countries.

NL: *Apart from addressing these immediate media issues, what are your medium- or long-term goals?*

AA: When I talked about our mandate, I mentioned media development as one area where we have probably not done enough so far. This does not mean that media development is the most important

thing. I think the most important issue in Albania is to help the Albanians in creating good governance and democratic structures. In this key area, the wish to co-operate with us is very well developed. Many people, from the highest government officials down to the local police – people from all walks of life, – tell me that they are grateful for the presence of the OSCE in their country and that they would encourage us to play an active role. But an active role always means that we have to be careful not to be perceived as being patronising. This would not be the right approach.

The Albanians are a European nation with a long history and many admirable deeds in their past. The fact that, right now, they need assistance does not mean in anyway that Albania is inferior to other nations. This is something that I want to make very clear. I have been dealing with Albanians for quite a few years now. I was at the Yugoslavia conference and I dealt with Albanians, both in Kosovo and Macedonia, and I have high respect for them.

NL: *What are the strengths of the OSCE as opposed to other international actors/ organizations in Albania?*

AA: One strong point is that we have field offices in almost all parts of the country. We therefore have very good information on what is going on in the country and good contacts to the local authorities throughout. This makes it much easier to get a clear picture of any disturbance that might arise in the country. Even though this was before my time, I was nevertheless told that during the Kosovo refugee crisis the OSCE had the most accurate reports on border crossings by refugees. Sometimes this means having people working in rather difficult circumstances.

NL: How would you see OSCE efforts in Albania in the regional context?

AA: I have been dealing with Albania in

the context of the Yugoslav crisis for many years and I must say that Albanian foreign policy has been reasonable and measured – not this shrill nationalism that appears elsewhere sometimes. Of course, there are Albanians living in Kosovo, there are Albanians living in Macedonia, in Montenegro and also in southern Serbia, outside of Kosovo. These Albanians have their interests, but I must say we have always had a degree of reason in their policies.

NL: Any other issues relating to the Presence activities that you would like to strengthen and develop?

AA: I know that Ambassador Everts, for whom I have a great admiration, has done

a wonderful job, and when you know that the Presence has already worked well, you would be well advised to be cautious about changing things. On the other hand, the refugee crisis, which determined more or less the activities of the Presence until this summer, has put different demands on the Presence than we have today.

We have to adapt to this new situation, which is very much a return to normal, and in this respect I think we are on the right track. What we are trying to do is to expand the network of field offices, because it is one of the strong points the OSCE has in Albania. The Albanians want this – not only the central government, but also local authorities.

‘Way to Europe’ theme of OSCE BiH Mission’s electoral law campaign

By Peter Clarey

Since March this year, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has been running a full-scale, multi-media educational information campaign for the citizens of the country on the fundamentals of responsible government and on the draft Election Law. This is the most important law in the country after the constitution itself. One of the slogans featured prominently in the campaign is *Put u Europu* or the Way to Europe.

Three months earlier, in December 1998, the Madrid Peace Implementation Council had requested that the OSCE ‘develop a public outreach programme to introduce the permanent election law and aid in its passage through the BiH Parliamentary Assembly’.

To meet these objectives – introducing the law and assisting in its passage – the OSCE Mission to BiH implemented

a comprehensive public information project, the Election Law Information Campaign (ELIC). This has been engaging the citizens of BiH in a national dialogue about electoral systems and their country’s election law. Throughout the campaign, citizens of BiH have had a voice in the process, an opportunity to shape their country’s draft Election Law by providing feedback to the Election Law Working Group (ELWG), a group of international and national legal experts charged with drafting the Election Law.

Ms. Ane Jaksić, a member of the ELWG, has been closely involved in the law’s drafting and the ELIC. Before the 1992-1995 war, Ms. Jaksić served as the Deputy Director of the Office for Public Administration of BiH, working in the Election Department. In 1996, Ms. Jaksić joined the OSCE’s Provisional Election Commission (PEC), the body tasked with administering elections in



Ms. Ane Jaksić, Associate Director General of Elections

BiH until the adoption of an election law. Subsequently, Ms. Jaksić was promoted to Deputy Director General of Elections and, upon returning to the PEC in 1999 after a two-year hiatus, assumed the position of Associate General Director of Elections.

“It is important to know that the ELWG national members had a lot of influence during the drafting of the Election Law. The national members knew better than anybody that they had to

make a law which would give the voters a chance to choose moderate representatives, which will eventually lead to a final peace in BiH”, Ms. Jaksić explained. “The ELIC started in March of this year, and helped a great deal in finding out what the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina wanted in their Election Law. Citizens wanted more accountability from their elected representatives, and the introduction of the Open List system and electoral units will ensure this.”

The Campaign’s educational activities across BiH have included community meetings and other grassroots outreach activities, public opinion polling aimed at gauging the public mood on key electoral issues, and various other public activities geared towards generating awareness of, and public feedback on, key issues related to the country’s Election Law.

However, despite massive input from across BiH, the drafting of the Election Law was far from simple.

“The problem while drafting the Election Law was in the constitutional-legal field. In BiH there are 13 constitu-

tions – at the state, entity and cantonal levels. So it was very difficult to make a law that would fit all these constitutions without requiring major changes to any of them. As well, many people had vested interests in maintaining the current system”, said Ms. Jaksić.

“This Election Law has no preferences for anyone except for the voter.”

“Fortunately, changes in the constitutions of cantons and entities were possible, such as changing the number of elected representatives or the length of mandates, because the highest legal authority for elections in BiH resides with the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina.”

With the public release of the draft Election Law, continued citizen participation in this process is as important as

ever. As the BiH Parliamentary Assembly considers the draft law, the ELIC continues to involve the BiH public in an on-going debate about the law and its key provisions, through local roundtable discussions, brochures, billboards and television, radio and print advertising and informational programming. Many of these events feature members of the ELWG.

“Discussions that are being held on the draft Election Law by the ELIC are showing that there are huge differences in the thinking between BiH’s politicians and its people – differences in interpreting the Dayton Peace Accords, and differences in the perception of what Bosnia and Herzegovina should be”, Ms. Jaksić added. “After the draft Election Law was done, neither the ruling parties nor the opposition parties were satisfied with it. This Law has no preferences for anyone except for the voter.”

Mr. Clarey is a Public Information Officer in the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.



One of the election law information campaign posters, reading ‘The road to Europe depends on you.’

Staffing the OSCE field activities

The OSCE Secretariat is the principal institution responsible for supporting the Organization's operational activities. This includes providing the human resources for the more than 20 field activities, which the Organization has deployed. There are now over 1,000 international mission members in all OSCE field activities, and their number is constantly increasing.

The role of Mission Staffing

The process of staffing a mission begins with a Permanent Council decision on a mandate for a field activity. Then a staffing table is drawn up, based on the requirements of mandate implementation, and the profiles of the candidates needed to cover specific positions are identified. The Secretariat issues vacancy notices and invites national Delegations to propose candidates with the appropriate qualifications to work in the Mission on the terms of secondment. Mission staffing officers screen the incoming curricula vitae, with the aim of maintaining a high professional level while ensuring a national and gender balance among seconded mission members.

Once the mission staffing officers have identified a candidate for a given post, this candidate is proposed to the Head of the relevant mission. The Head of Mission reviews the candidacy and approves those who fit the needs of the Mission at that moment. The future mission member is then scheduled to participate in the Induction Course in Vienna, before being deployed to the mission. The candidates for which no position has been identified are put on 'stand by' for further position openings. In both cases, candidates receive notification through their Delegations. A particular challenge has been the staffing of the Mission in Kosovo, where around 700 international positions required to be filled. This meant adopting special procedures, and currently the OSCE has now over 450 international staff in position.

A Mission member is seconded by his or her nation. That means that s/he has to be nominated by his or her gov-



New Kosovo Mission members visiting the OSCE facilities in Vienna

ernment to the Secretariat in Vienna. The normal duration of an assignment is six months, with possible extensions for further periods of six months. For a small number of highly specialized administrative posts in the larger OSCE Missions, the OSCE offers fixed contracts for some administrative and finance positions, but those are the exception: 95 per cent of all OSCE Mission members are on secondment.

After deployment, the Mission Staffing Section will continue to assist all Mission members in all administrative and personal issues, such as insurance and travel arrangements.

Induction Course for new Mission members

All new Mission members attend an induction programme before their deployment to the field. The programme includes an overview of the Organization and its structures, background on the specific mission area, and issues regarding the pro-

fessional environment of the OSCE, including gender issues. Mission members of the three largest OSCE Missions – Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia – undergo further, mission-specific, training once deployed. Feedback from Mission members is used to improve aspects of the recruitment procedure and the induction programme.

Improving the Organization's capability to respond – the REACT concept

At the Istanbul Summit the participating States recognized the need to reduce the response time in reacting to potential or actual crises. Thus, they have agreed to create Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams (REACT).

REACT will allow OSCE bodies and institutions, acting in accordance with their respective procedures, to offer experts quickly to OSCE participating States to provide assistance, in compliance with OSCE norms, in conflict pre-

Continued on page 29



News from the field

The OSCE currently has Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kosovo (FRY), Latvia, Skopje (fYROM), Moldova, and Tajikistan, as well as an Assistance Group to Chechnya, a Presence in Albania, an Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus, and a Project Co-ordinator for the Ukraine. The following are highlights from the work of some of the field operations during the past month.

Skrunda radar station – correction

In the October issue of the OSCE Newsletter, two factual mistakes found their way into the article on the dismantling of the Skrunda radar station in Latvia. The total number of inspections of the site amounted to 12 (not seven), and the report on the completed switching off of the radar station was issued on 3 September, 1998 (not 1999). We regret any inconvenience that may have resulted from these mistakes.

Management of trans-boundary water resources discussed in Almaty

High-level officials from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan addressed the issue of trans-boundary water resources in Central Asia, from 9 to 11 November. The seminar, jointly organized by the OSCE Centre in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and the Regional Office of the United States Agency for International Development, focused on the issue of access to water resources in the region.

Delegates to the seminar examined the various international legal instruments that relate to the management of trans-boundary water resources in the region and discussed their respective national positions regarding these instruments.

The management of water resources is one of the fundamental environmental issues in the region. The drying up of the Aral Sea is one extreme example of water resources overuse and mismanagement that could have regional security repercussions. The Central Asian Republics have called on the OSCE to assist in addressing the environmental issues of

security in the region, particularly the question of water resources.

OSCE hosts Tajik fine arts exhibition

The OSCE Mission in Tajikistan opened on its premises the first of a series of Tajik fine arts exhibitions. On 8 November, representatives of the Tajik political and cultural establishment, the diplomatic community in Tajikistan, media and the public attended the exhibition at the OSCE Mission. The exhibition is meant to draw attention to the cultural development in Tajikistan and in Central Asia as a whole. The idea of a joint Central Asian arts exhibition, which would be displayed throughout the region, was also put forward.

'Helpline' for journalists set up in Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 11 November, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina announced the establishment of a 'helpline' to aid in the protection of journalists' rights. The help line will allow journalists who have been threatened, intimidated, harassed, or deprived of their rights, to contact the Mission directly by a telephone number or an e-mail address established specifically for this purpose.

Fourth round of grants to media distributed in BiH

In the fourth round of its Small Grants Programme, dedicated to promoting independent and pluralistic media, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina provided funding for two radio stations, Osvit from Zvornik and Best from Sipovo, as well as one maga-

zine, Povratak. The magazine addresses the cause of refugees and displaced persons from Banja Luka. Both radio stations will broadcast programmes focusing on key social issues, including privatization, the election law, freedom of the media and refugee return.

First of several NGO centres celebrates opening in Kosovo

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo opened its first NGO Centre in Peja/Pec on 19 November. The event was celebrated with a 10-kilometre Run For Democracy relay event, which attracted about 150 people, including teams from local school classes, KFOR and the OSCE.

Known as "Democracy Café", the new centre provides local NGOs with access to office and training facilities and resources. The aim is to create a favorable environment for NGO and civil society structures within Kosovo. By establishing NGO centres throughout Kosovo, the OSCE is contributing to the goal of building democratic institutions for individuals and organizations. The Peja/Pec centre has two rooms for meetings and conferences. Facilities such as computers, copying machines, phones and faxes will be available. Space for a reading room will be added soon.

There is currently a significant level of civil society activity in Kosovo. Many Kosovo NGOs operated prior to the international intervention in Kosovo. The remnants of many of these organizations continue to exist today but often in a disjointed manner, without any office space or resources. Therefore, this is fulfilling an immediate identifiable need



A Run for Democracy celebrated the opening of the first NGO Centre in Kosovo.

for local NGOs who have welcomed the opening of the NGO centres. The Mission in Kosovo, which will also use the premises for carrying out training programmes and to facilitate meetings, is in the process of setting up several other NGO Centers in Kosovo in the coming months.

OSCE provides legal training for women leaders in Uzbekistan

More than 100 women leaders working in local government, NGOs, media and political parties in Uzbekistan participated in legal training organized by the OSCE Central Asia Liaison Office (CALO). The series of workshops, held throughout the country from 2 to 12 November, concluded the 'Civic and Legal Education for Women programme, which the CALO has been implementing since August. The leadership training focused on presentation skills, public speaking, ability to communicate with the media, lobbying and networking tactics.

Aid worth \$80,000 provided to Kosovo Emergency Judicial System

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo has directed \$80,000 to provide immediate support to the Emergency Judicial System in Kosovo. The money will be used for purchasing computers, photocopying machines, typewriters and stationery for the district courts and prosecutors offices in the four main cities of Kosovo. Funds will also be used to buy furniture and fund emergency repairs of the courts.

The project is carried out in co-ordination with the United Nations Civil Administration. The funds were provided from a \$1.1 million grant received from the United States. It was decided to give immediate material aid to the courts because of a critical situation where courts do not have even basic stationery items, such as pencils and paper.

OSCE targets organized crime in South-Eastern Europe

The OSCE Mission in Croatia hosted a meeting on organized crime in South-Eastern Europe, held from 23 to 24 November in Zagreb. Participants discussed ways of countering the development of organized crime in the region, initially by enhancing co-operation between law

enforcement officials throughout South-Eastern Europe. The problem of organized crime in the region has continued to grow, undermining the rule of law and the development of democratic societies in the region. Given the international scale of the problem, an effective strategy needs to embrace all the affected countries in the region. The meeting aimed at laying the foundations for such a strategy. The results and conclusions of the meeting will be put forward to the governments in the region, with a view to gaining their active involvement. The conclusions of the meeting included developing working-level contacts between the national law enforcement agencies, and establishing task forces to focus on specific issues, such as the trafficking in human beings.

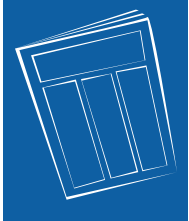
22 obstructionist public officials removed from office in BiH

In a joint statement, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Office of the High Representative (OHR) announced the removal of 22 elected officials for pursuing an "anti-Dayton, anti-peace, anti-reconciliation and extra-legal agenda." The officials will also be banned from running in the municipal election scheduled for 8 April 2000 and thereafter cannot apply to run for public office without the approval of the High Representative.

The OSCE and OHR principals noted that they removed the officials with "considerable regret", but were bound to do so as the officials had "consistently refused to take ownership of the laws of their own nation by refusing to obey the letter or the spirit of the law, regulation and court rulings."

Public reaction to the removals has been very positive. Opposition leaders have supported the decisions, and the reaction of the ruling parties has been muted.

PRESS PROFILE



The following are excerpts from international media on the OSCE and its activities over the preceding weeks.

Istanbul Summit

**Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,
3 November**

‘The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which as a matter of fact covers the area between Vancouver and Vladivostok, seldom makes itself heard in spite of its persistent efforts. The reason for this is that among the more than 50 member states (sic) there are quite a few pulling the brakes. When the leaders of these countries meet every fourth year, however, no-one wants to be seen as breaking the rules. This is probably the explanation for the astonishing noises that are coming out of Minsk and Moscow these days, immediately before one such Summit meeting, this time in Istanbul.’

Reuters, 9 November

‘The OSCE’s role changed in the 1990s. It has increasingly become involved in monitoring elections in former communist countries, promoting media freedom, setting standards and providing experts on minority rights and helping in conflict prevention and civilian crisis management. These unspectacular measures, along with the patient work of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoel, constitute the real added value of the Organization. “Provided we don’t overload expectations, the OSCE can do a modest amount of good in an imperfect world,” a British official said.’

Die Presse, 18 November

‘After nine years, four Balkan wars and several bloody conflicts on the territory of the former Soviet Union, disillusionment about “the new Europe” has set in – in many respects, it has remained the old, quarrelling, divided Europe. The CSCE has evolved into the OSCE: a bustling organization, busy as a crisis fire brigade in many Central European and Central Asian conflict areas – but only if the parties to the conflicts allow and if the missions have been given appropriate mandates. What these OSCE missions actually achieve in conflict management is difficult to judge. In any case, definitely useful in conflict prevention is the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities – it is only that his results are based on discreet diplomacy, which means his successes will be hard to sell to the public. The OSCE has also been helpful in building democratic structures in certain states... Basically, the same rule applies to the OSCE as to all international institutions: it can only be as strong as its member states (sic) will allow it to be. The OSCE diplomats in Vienna can draw up as grandiose plans for security, confidence building and conflict management in Europe as they wish, but if there are no possibilities for sanctions against violations, the issue remains toothless.’

Libération, 19 November

‘In the times of unlimited optimism immediately after the end of the Cold War, it appeared possible to harmoniously manage relations between ancient enemies on European soil. The OSCE was part of this new security architecture that was designed not only to heal conflicts, but to “prevent” them. Ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, this beautiful scheme is in a bad state... The OSCE never had the slightest chance to fulfil the ambitious conflict prevention

function with which it had been entrusted. However, the OSCE is not useless. It has missions in 20 countries, supervising elections or maintaining a semblance of monitoring fragile ceasefires, but without ever having sufficient muscle to make itself respected.’

Financial Times, 19 November

‘Every crisis provides an awkward reality check for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Yesterday at the Organization’s Istanbul Summit, it faced the challenge of measuring the “virtual” security charter and arms control treaty, which diplomats have spent years preparing, against the reality of Chechnya. And last night, it seemed the only outcome would be a fudge.’

Süddeutsche Zeitung, 19 November

‘The conflict in Chechnya shows clearly the limitations of the OSCE. In times of serious crises, it is too weak to be able to enforce its principles. At the same time, it is the only instrument that transcends the new demarcation lines of international security policy and exactly corresponds to the regions where the trouble spots of today’s world are situated. This is the dilemma facing the Heads of State and Heads of Government: if you want to carry the issue to the extreme, you will destroy the OSCE. If you want to preserve a small spark of hope and to continue using the well recognized achievements of the organization, you need to find the right mix of firmness and consideration.’

La Stampa, 20 November

‘The OSCE is an organization with great ambitions but little power to act. It is supposed to supervise security in Europe, human rights, the identity of minorities and the right of populations to make a democratic choice, but it lacks the instruments to implement these prin-

ciples without the co-operation of the states that are violating them.’

**Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,
20 November**

‘After tough negotiations with Russia over recognizing a humanitarian and political role for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in the Chechen conflict, the organization’s Summit meeting that ended on Friday turned out to be a moderate success.’

‘In any case, no strengthening of the OSCE took place. It is true that in the future, even more than is the case today, criticism of unruly members will have a contractual basis; however, as before, the mechanisms to implement this will be lacking.’

Süddeutsche Zeitung, 20 November

‘Clearly to be seen at the Istanbul OSCE Summit was a reduction of politics, *in absurdum*, as a matter of fact degenerating into a poker game at the highest level, with a dramaturgy that provided for more than one adrenaline shot. So much agitation and so little sleep has seldom been experienced before... The OSCE negotiation circus trekked to the conference site 10 days before the arrival of the Heads of State and their Ministers. Not a few diplomats are comparing the gathering with a commercial fair, where buyers and sellers are staying in neat hotels and doing their business deals in informal and often chummy circles.’

‘It would be, of course, too cheap to portray the whole Summit meeting as one big failure. The two-day meeting at the Bosphorus did achieve what it could achieve – no more, but also no less. The arms reduction treaty especially deserves praise. It can offer a solid basis for lessening tensions in the future. The OSCE might have failed elsewhere, but this is not the fault of the conference participants in Istanbul. It is something in-built

in the structure of the Organization... Such an institution cannot mobilize much striking power, and meetings of the super-organization usually do not carry much substance. But how could it be otherwise in a community of states that tries to bring countries as different as Uzbekistan and Hungary, Georgia and Greece, France, Latvia, the United States and Russia under the same roof. The interests and positions of these countries are so different and sometimes so contradictory that even the European Union, in comparison, looks like a firmly managed, monolithic institution with a clear and coherent policy.’

Izvestia, 20 November

‘The OSCE meeting in Istanbul will go down in history as “the Chechnya Summit”. That is not an exaggeration. Russia was at the centre of attention – Russia with the bleeding issue of Chechnya.’

Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 20 November

‘The failure of the OSCE in solving specific conflicts and especially the NATO aggression against Yugoslavia in 1999 has diminished the authority of the Organization in the world... The OSCE Summit meeting in Istanbul became a real test of the Organization’s efficiency.’

**Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,
22 November**

‘A “glorious” achievement... that is, indeed, not the right way to characterize the Istanbul Summit meeting of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. These gatherings of Heads of State and Heads of Government from 54 member states (sic), nowadays taking place every third year, have shown that the OSCE, like life itself, all the time has had to endure the tension between principles and reality. Since decisions can be taken only on a consensual basis, the result will be a compromise, often a

bad one... Ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the confrontation between two military alliances in the middle of Europe, the guiding principle of the CSCE process, which started almost 25 years ago in Helsinki, remains a beautiful vision: that democracy, rule of law and freedom for the individual are the best guarantees for a peaceful coexistence of nations, their common economic development and the establishment of a stable international order.

The optimism that dominated the Summit meeting in Paris in 1990 long ago gave way to disillusionment. The often violent and bloody conflicts of interest and nationality in the Balkans and in the Caucasus have shown that security in Europe can be endangered not only through the power ambitions of individual states, but also through group antagonisms within individual states. This realization is included as an important principle in the Charter for European Security that was approved by the Heads of State and Heads of Government in Istanbul. In practice, the OSCE has already long ago taken on these conflicts. It is active in almost all new states that appeared in the Balkans and on the territory of the dissolved Soviet Union.’

Le Monde, 26 November

‘Charged, as its name implies, with promoting security in Europe, (the OSCE) is showing a glaring lack of efficacy in the moment when the war between Russians and Chechens is threatening to destabilize the whole Caucasus... but there will be, one day, a price to be paid (for this indifference).’

Der Standard, 27 November

‘It would really be too cheap to make a laughing stock of the OSCE because of its obvious difficulties. Besides the truism that organizations only have the power to do what their members want

them to do, one has to admit that the OSCE, in principle, gets attention only when it has failed. The tedious, unspectacular work, for example, with NGOs in OSCE member states (sic), where democracy and civil society must be laboriously made to develop, is gratefully acknowledged by those involved who know that the people from the OSCE are the only ones interested in their fate... It remains, however, a fact that the governments of the member states... as a rule do not listen to the OSCE. In the current case of Russia and Chechnya, the OSCE is speaking with a very, very soft voice.'

Kosovo

The New York Times, 24 November

'More than five months after the withdrawal of Serbian forces, Kosovo still lacks basic water, electricity and sanitation services. With police scarce and courts non-existent, criminals control the streets while non-ethnic-Albanian residents, whether Serbs, Gypsies or Bosnian Muslims, are being burned out of their homes. European donors have been slow in following through on their pledges of financial help, and many countries have lagged in providing volunteers for the short-staffed international police. Officials from the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe spend too much time and money building up their rival bureaucratic empires and not enough

helping Kosovars create their own institutions... The United Nations and the OSCE seem intent on erecting bureaucratic structures for long-term international administration rather than on encouraging eventual self-government.'

The Washington Post, 25 November

'The UN administrators (of Kosovo) have to do better at basic tasks of rebuilding and restoring water and electricity. Other organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, have to stop squabbling and competing for power.'

Belarus

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 3 November

'The government of Belarus... has suddenly declared itself to be ready for a dialogue with the opposition, which should culminate in free parliamentary elections next year. In addition, the opposition would soon get access to state media... The Head of the OSCE Mission in Minsk, Wieck, has succeeded in getting the government and the opposition to start a negotiating process.'

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 5 November

'The fact that the preconditions for a roundtable dialogue between the government and the opposition now exist is the result of a tedious mediating process

in which the OSCE Mission to Belarus, the new opposition leaders and some members of the government of Belarus have played the main roles... Government and opposition have recognized each other as negotiating partners and have agreed that the OSCE participates as a mediator in the talks as well as provides technical support for them.'

Kazakhstan

Reuters, 5 November

'Kazakhstan's President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, has blasted the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe for criticizing national elections, saying its officials acted like communist-era party instructors... He said the OSCE's criticism amounted to interference in Kazakhstan's internal affairs.'

Uzbekistan

Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 20 November

'On the eve of the Istanbul Summit, the President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, criticized the OSCE for paying too much attention to legal questions and too little to security problems. He believes that terrorism is the main threat to security today... According to Islam Karimov, the OSCE should play a more active role in forming a system of regional security in the Central Asia region.'

Recent publications on the OSCE

Packer, John, The Role of the High Commissioner on National Minorities in the Former Yugoslavia, ambridge Review of International Relations, Volume XII, No. 2 spring/summer 1999, pp. 169-184.

Peace and Stability through Human and Minority Rights. Speeches by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. Edited by Wolfgang Zellner and Falk Lange, Baden-Baden, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1999.

NEWS

from the OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat

The OSCE Secretary is located at Kärntner Ring 5-7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria, tel.: (+43-1) 514 36 96, e-mail: pm@osce.org

Working visits

The OSCE Secretary General, Jan Kubis, and the OSCE Co-ordinator of Environmental and Economic Activities, Tom Price, attended the Central European Initiative (CEI) Summit held in Prague from 3 to 6 November. The Stability Pact was for South-Eastern Europe the main focus of the Forum and the Summit Meeting. Ambassador Kubis delivered a statement to the CEI Summit in which he noted that the CEI and the OSCE were being brought closer together by the Stability Pact. He also emphasized the degree to which co-operation between the OSCE and the CEI exists. Mr. Price contributed to the CEI Summit Economic Forum, which was held parallel to the Summit.

The Head of the Mission Liaison Section of the Conflict Prevention Center, Fredrik Schiller, attended the second Open Forum on the future of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on 21-22 November in Strasbourg, co-sponsored by

the Council of Europe and the East-West Institute. Political parties, Montenegrin governmental authorities, non-governmental organizations, local authorities and other organizations from Serbia and Montenegro came together at the forum.

Annual Mediterranean Seminar

Preparations continued during November for this year's Mediterranean Seminar, which was due to be held in Amman, Jordan, on 6-7 December. The theme of this meeting was to be 'Implementation of Human Dimension Commitments.' The Seminar will include sessions on risks and challenges of the human dimension, experiences gained in OSCE field operations, and the future of the OSCE Mediterranean dialogue.

International organizations and non-governmental organizations were invited to attend the Seminar with the OSCE Delegations. Since 1995, four Mediterranean Seminars have been held, cover-

ing topics ranging from confidence-building to the security model.

Summit activities

The month of November was especially marked by activities surrounding the OSCE Istanbul Summit. Ambassador Kubis addressed the Review Conference on 8-10 November, and participated in the Summit on 18-19 November. On the margins of the Summit he met several Heads of Delegations and Foreign Ministers. OSCE Secretariat staff from Conference Services, Language Services, Information Technology and Press and Public Information were focusing efforts on ensuring a smooth and efficient Summit in Istanbul. A number of Secretariat staff members arrived in Istanbul in advance to co-ordinate with the host country's organizing team. The organization of the Summit was considered a great success, and much appreciation was shown for the efforts of the Secretariat staff.

UPDATE

from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is located at Aleje Ujazdowskie 19, PL-00 557 Warsaw, Poland, tel.: (+48-22) 520 06 00, fax: (+48-22) 520 06 05, e-mail: office@odhr.osce.waw.pl

ELECTIONS



Parliamentary election in Georgia

An ODIHR election observation mission, headed by Nikolai Vulchanov, was established in Georgia on 23 September to observe the first round of the Georgian parliamentary election on 31 October and the second round on 14 November.

The mission found the election to be a step towards compliance with OSCE commitments, although during the second round they were marred by irregularities in some districts. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly also participated in observing the first round of the elections; Mr. Bruce George was appointed as Special Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office.

Presidential election in the FYROM

An ODIHR election observation mission was established in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at the end of September for the two rounds of the presidential election that took place on 31 October and 14 November. The mission was headed by Mark Stevens, seconded by the United Kingdom Government. Based on the overall findings from the



Counting the ballots at the second round of the elections in Ukraine.

two rounds, the ODIHR election observation mission concluded that the electoral process was generally carried out satisfactorily, and in general accordance with OSCE commitments. However, the observation mission urged the authorities to investigate a high voter turnout in some districts. Following the decision of the Supreme Court to cancel the results in a number of polling stations, the ODIHR decided to send Mr. Stevens back to the country to co-ordinate the observation of the repeat election, scheduled for 5 December.

Presidential election in Ukraine

In Ukraine, the ODIHR established an election observation mission, headed by Simon Osborn, seconded by the UK Government, on 15 September. The mission observed both rounds of the presidential election held on 31 October and 14 November. In post-election statements, the ODIHR observation mission concluded that the elections failed to meet a number of OSCE commitments. In particular, the electronic and State-

owned media comprehensively failed to live up to their legal obligation to provide balanced and unbiased reporting on the candidates and the campaign in the news coverage of both rounds. More significantly, the observation mission uncovered evidence that state institutions systematically campaigned for the incumbent during the second round.

Presidential election in Tajikistan

For the presidential election in Tajikistan on 6 November, one ODIHR expert was deployed in Dushanbe. The ODIHR declined to deploy an observation or assessment mission for the presidential election as a result of the authorities' failure to ensure a competitive election.

Parliamentary election in Uzbekistan

The ODIHR decided not to undertake a full observation of the 5 December parliamentary election in Uzbekistan. This decision was based on concerns that the broad electoral framework in Uzbekistan does not permit a truly pluralist, competitive election. Instead, the ODIHR de-

ployed a limited assessment mission, headed by Ambassador Madelaine Strojce-Wilkens of Sweden, in mid-November.

Parliamentary election in Turkmenistan

In November, the ODIHR decided not to observe the parliamentary election in Turkmenistan scheduled for 12 December. The decision was based on serious concerns that the election process under the existing legal framework and political atmosphere could not comply with any OSCE commitments.

Parliamentary election in the Russian Federation

The ODIHR election observation mission for the 19 December parliamentary elections in the Russian Federation, headed by Ambassador Edouard Brunner, was officially launched on 10 November. As of the end of November, the mission had opened 11 regional offices across the Russian Federation to monitor the election campaign and process.

DEMOCRATIZATION



ODIHR presents its action plan to combat trafficking in human beings

On the margins of the OSCE Istanbul Summit on 18-19 November, the ODIHR presented an action plan to combat trafficking in human beings. A special side meeting devoted to this issue was moderated by the OSCE Chairman, Norwegian Foreign Minister Knut Vollebaek. It was addressed by a number of Heads of State or Government and by the First Lady of

the United States, Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton. The ODIHR plan includes concrete recommendations to the participating States and the OSCE Institutions at all levels, and proposes actions to enhance prevention, prosecution of trafficking perpetrators, and protection of the rights of trafficked persons.

Specific priorities are:

- Strengthening the legal framework to better protect the rights of women and girls and to punish the traffickers;
- Increasing public awareness, including training officials on the human rights implications of trafficking;
- Assisting governments and NGOs to provide greater protection and assistance to victims of trafficking.

The plan builds on the preliminary recommendations contained in the ODIHR background paper, 'Trafficking in Human Beings: Implications for the OSCE', which was prepared in conjunction with the 1999 OSCE Review Conference in Vienna, in order to provide general background information on the problem of trafficking and to begin exploring the role of the OSCE. Both documents are also available in the news section of the ODIHR website:

<http://www.osce.org/odihr>

Workshops on human trafficking taking place in Poland

In November, La Strada, a Polish NGO, conducted the first of six ODIHR-sponsored regional training workshops in the Szczecin region of Poland on the problem of trafficking in women. Additional workshops will be taking place in various border regions of Poland until July 2000. The purpose of the project is to raise awareness of the problem of trafficking in women among relevant groups of professionals such as social workers, policemen, border guards, prosecutors, teachers, local government representatives and journalists.

The programme includes information on Poland as an important country of origin, transit and destination, taking into account the various legal, social, economic, and human rights aspects connected to trafficking. Participants are also trained in dealing with the victims of trafficking. The UK has provided financial support for this project.

Advisory panel on prevention of torture convenes in Istanbul

The third meeting of the ODIHR Advisory Panel for the Prevention of Torture took place on the margins of the OSCE Review Conference in Istanbul on 10 November. The panel members reviewed the implementation of current ODIHR projects relating to the prevention of torture, and provided important guidance and advice to improve the effectiveness of the ODIHR's approach. The experts also discussed projects planned for the year 2000. It was agreed that the panel should meet once every year. In future, the meeting will be extended by half a day to give more time for the discussion of strategic issues.

The meeting proved very valuable for the ODIHR in ensuring its activities do not duplicate the work of others and to verify and reflect its approach from different perspectives. The Advisory Panel's activities are supported by voluntary contributions from the UK Government.

Meetings held in Kazakhstan on prevention of torture

The ODIHR, in co-operation with the OSCE Centre in Almaty, the Kazakh Ministry of the Interior and the Kazakh Bureau for Human Rights and the Rule of Law, organized two meetings in November between Government officials and representatives of NGOs to discuss the prevention of torture. They were held under a civil society assistance programme that forms part of the Memo-

randum of Understanding signed with the Government of Kazakhstan, which is to be commended for its open approach to discussing potentially sensitive issues.

The meetings took place in the Atyrau and Karaganda regions and each brought together about 50 participants, including prison governors, NGO representatives and officials from the Ministry of the Interior. Senior experts on prison reform and rehabilitation of torture victims, from the UK and Estonia respectively, moderated both meetings. The meetings were divided into working groups, where the participants discussed the United Nations standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners, the establishment of a prison service training centre, and ideas for re-organizing the prison system.

The fact that participants were for the first time invited to discuss in working groups prompted a lively meeting with a very high volume of questions addressed to the international experts. The civil society assistance programme is part of the Joint ODIHR-European Commission Programme for Advancing Human Rights and Democratization in Central Asia. It is also supported by a voluntary contribution from the UK.

Review undertaken of Kazakh legislation against torture

Within the context of the Legislative Reform Assistance Project (which is part of the same ODIHR-EC joint programme mentioned above) the ODIHR expert, Bill Bowring, has prepared a report on compliance of Kazakh domestic legislation with the United Nations Convention against Torture. The report is based on an analysis of the most pertinent Kazakh legislation relating to the prevention of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment and on information gathered by the expert during the working group meetings also mentioned above. The report was officially submitted to members of

the working group, including the Secretary of the Human Rights Commission, Mr. Baikadamov, on 16 November. It was also sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The report sets out a number of recommendations on legislative reform in Kazakhstan. The expert concluded, *inter alia*, that the Kazakh criminal code does not contain a definition of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment that covers the full scope of the Convention. In addition, he pointed to inconsistencies in the scope of the prohibition in different legal texts, such as the code of criminal procedure, that should be rectified. The expert also addressed the lack of sufficient preventive safeguards under Kazakh law. His recommendations relate to the question of access to legal counsel at all stages and to the question of judicial control of detention.

ODIHR helps NGOs at the UNDP regional conference

The ODIHR supported and facilitated the participation of NGOs at the UNDP Regional Conference on Ombudsman and National Human Rights Institution, held in Almaty on 15-17 November, and sent representatives from Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine. The Conference dealt with the question of establishing benchmarks to judge the success of such institutions, their role in multi-ethnic societies and their relationship with NGOs and the media.

Women in Politics Project concludes in Kyrgyzstan

The final phase of the ODIHR's 'Women in Politics' project took place in Kyrgyzstan on 22-26 November, focusing on training for women candidates. Twelve candidates for parliamentary elections in 2000 underwent a five-day training course, together with their

campaign managers. The participants learned lobbying, debating, campaigning and issue-identifying skills through active participation in group work and practical training. The training also included basic knowledge of CEDAW (the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) and women's human rights.

The participants assessed the project as very useful; the first phase of the training had already contributed significantly to developing skills and building up confidence among participants, which then enabled them to engage more actively in public life and, in some cases, facilitated the decision to run for Parliament.

The training was co-organized with the OSCE Centre in Bishkek with assistance from the office of the National Democratic Institute. Training for the first and final stages was conducted by the Active Learning Centre, based in the UK.

Assistance given to establishing an Ombudsman office in Kazakhstan

Following a two-day seminar on the development of an Ombudsman office in Kazakhstan in early September, the ODIHR and other organizations involved – the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and UN Development Programme (UNDP) – provided expert advice to the ad hoc working group on Ombudsman legislation, which met on 12-15 November.

The ODIHR consultant, Dean Gottehrer, and those of the other organizations focused on the conceptual questions of the independence of such an institution, the transparency of the appointment process and the question of pluralism in its composition. Following the discussions, the working group presented a working draft to the UNDP Conference on Ombudsman in Almaty on 18 November.

As a next step the ODIHR expert will provide written comments on the present draft law to the working group. The ODIHR stands ready to assist Kazakhstan with the further elaboration and public discussion of a draft law. This assistance to the establishment of an Ombudsman office forms part of the same ODIHR-EC joint programme and is co-funded by the Government of Denmark.

Roundtable on Azeri election law held in Baku

High level representatives from the Government, the Office of the President, the Parliament, the Central Election Commission (CEC), opposition parties (Popular Front, Musavat and ANIP) and NGOs participated in a roundtable on the CEC Law, organized by the ODIHR in Baku on 16 November and co-chaired by Mr. Murtuz Aleskerov, Speaker of Parliament, and Ambassador Gérard Stoudmann, the ODIHR Director. The purpose of the roundtable, an initiative by the ODIHR following the 1998 presidential elections, was to re-establish a political dialogue on election issues among opposition and ruling parties following the last elections.

On the agenda was a discussion on the draft CEC Law, which was due to be presented for a second reading in late November. The ODIHR presented comments to this law in early November, recommending that the selection mechanism for CEC members should guarantee representation by the main political interests. Although no concrete proposal for modifying the selection mechanism for CEC members reached consensus, the roundtable discussions again emphasized the problem, and provided some ideas for its resolution. All participants evaluated the roundtable as an important and constructive development in relations between the opposition and the authorities.

ODIHR advises on Ombudsman law in Kyrgyzstan

On 19-20 November, the ODIHR together with consultants from other organizations (UNDP and UNHCHR) provided expert advice to the consultative group on Ombudsman legislation. The two-day meeting addressed various issues including the transparency of the appointment process, the scope of the mandate of an Ombudsman institution and its composition. The ODIHR expert, Dean Gottehrer, will provide further written advice on the present draft law and stands ready to comment on following draft versions. The project is co-funded by voluntary contributions from the Danish Government and the European Commission.

Workshop held on registration of permanent residents in Azerbaijan

On 4-5 November, a workshop on the registration of permanent residents in Azerbaijan was organized by the ODIHR in close co-operation with the Human Rights Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan and co-funded by the Governments of Norway and the United States. The project is part of the Memoranda of Understanding signed with the Governments of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

During the workshop, which was attended by representatives of a number of governmental agencies, international organizations and NGOs, ODIHR experts explained the incompatibility of the Soviet-style *propiska* system with international standards on freedom of movement and provided information on relevant reform efforts in other countries. The current practices of registration of permanent residents were presented by the Head of the Passport and Registra-

tion Department of the Ministry of Interior of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan's Parliament passed a Law on Registration which attempted to abolish many negative aspects of the *propiska* system in 1996. However, some restrictions on choice of residence still exist in the present law. One of the aspects that hampers the practical work of registration officials is the absence of by-laws and regulations on the implementation of the Registration Law.

Based on the discussions, the ODIHR experts recommended, *inter alia*, reviewing the Registration Law and the relevant provisions of other laws with a view to eliminating all restrictions on opportunities to register and to establish mechanisms for inter-ministerial consultations on registration issues, in order to raise awareness among the population of the benefits of registration.

ODIHR projects to raise awareness of human rights in the Caucasus

Three public awareness projects under the Memoranda of Understanding with Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan are now underway. The projects, which aim at explaining basic human rights and how these are protected by national legislation in the respective countries, are designed in the form of radio or TV programmes in the national languages. In Armenia, the last of six TV programmes for 1999, on the rights of soldiers, is under production and will be broadcast on State television.

In Georgia, the second radio programme, devoted to the rights of refugees and internally-displaced persons, was produced and aired in November on two different radio stations, in both the Georgian and Russian languages.

In Azerbaijan, the preparations for 16

radio magazines on various human rights issues, to be broadcast on a weekly basis from December, are being finalized in co-operation with the BBC World Service. The Government of Norway provided financial support.

Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues launches website

Information on the ODIHR's work on the Roma and Sinti is now available online from a new website developed by the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues. The website, launched on 17 November, provides information on the Contact Point's mandate as well as on ODIHR projects on the Roma and Sinti. It also contains a library of OSCE documents relating to the Roma and Sinti and a database of contact persons in other international organizations and NGOs is in preparation. The Contact Point's website can be found through a link from the main ODIHR internet site or directly under the address

<http://www.osce.org/odih/cprsi>

ODIHR appointed contact point for SE Europe Stability Pact

The ODIHR strengthened its capacity to contribute to the efforts of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe by creating a contact point for issues relating to the OSCE Regional Strategy and the Stability Pact. Since early November, Michael Meyer, who previously worked in the Rule of Law Unit, co-ordinates these issues in the office. He is also the contact point for the projects of the ODIHR Office in Montenegro and for ODIHR activities in Kosovo. Among his main tasks is exploring ways in which the ODIHR can best contribute in its fields of experience to the efforts under the Stability Pact for SE Europe.

REPORT from the Parliamentary Assembly

The Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is located at Rådhusstræde 1, DK-1466 Copenhagen K, Denmark, tel.: (+45-33) 32 94 00, fax: (+45-33) 32 55 05, e-mail: osce@oscepa.dk

OSCE PA activities at the Istanbul Summit

President Helle Degn addresses Summit

In her address to the OSCE Summit on 18 November, Mrs. Helle Degn, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, congratulated the Norwegian Chairmanship and stated that the OSCE should seriously reconsider its decision-making process, as advocated by the Parliamentary Assembly since 1993. "It is hardly democratic when a single country can block the common will of 53 others and can prevent essential and timely action when it is needed. We have consistently advocated a modest change in the decision-making process which would mean no single country vetoes", said Mrs. Degn.

The President also reminded the Summit that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly still lacks formal status in the decision-making process of the Organization. Many important decisions, such as the approval of the budget or appointment of senior officials are taken without any involvement or consultation of the Assembly, which represents "an obvious democratic deficit in the OSCE".

According to Mrs. Degn, a Danish MP, "democratically elected parliamentarians have to stand up for the development of democracy in their own international organizations and should play a crucial role as guardians of democracy, transparency, accountability, the rule of law and respect for human rights at the national, regional and international level."

She emphasized the invaluable role of parliamentary "democracy teams" in helping to build democracy, promote

national reconciliation and support democratic institutions in transition countries. In particular she mentioned the established Democracy Teams on Kosovo, on the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, as well as the Democracy Team on Moldova, whose mandate is to facilitate a solution of the Transdniestrian conflict.

Finally, Mrs. Degn drew attention to the gender issue. While paying tribute to the efforts of the Norwegian Chairmanship, she added: "The current gender imbalance in the political concept and among the staff of the OSCE must not be allowed to continue. However, we should not limit our focus on international matters of our Organization. We must strive to promote equality for the women of all our countries and, in particular, those struck by instability."

President Degn participates in panel on combating trafficking in human beings

On 18 November, President Helle Degn participated in the panel on the role of the OSCE in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The panel, led by Chairman-in-Office Knut Vollebaek, was held on the margins of the Istanbul Summit and included presentations by Ms. Ruth Dreifuss, President of the Swiss Confederation, Mr. Andris Skele, Prime Minister of Latvia, Ms Tarja Halonen, Foreign Minister of Finland, Ambassador Gérard Stoudmann, Director of ODIHR, Ms. Stana Buchowska, representing the La Strada Foundation against Trafficking in Women, and Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton, First Lady of the United States.

President Degn focused her presen-

tation on the role of parliamentarians and recalled that during its Eighth Annual Session last July in St. Petersburg, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly unanimously adopted a Resolution condemning trafficking in women and children. "By adopting this Resolution," she said, "the Parliamentary Assembly has contributed to the visibility of this issue, while in addition the Resolution can also serve as a point of reference for discussion in parliaments and for NGOs throughout the OSCE area."

Mrs. Degn emphasized the special role that parliamentarians have to play in combating trafficking in human beings. Not only can they pass or even initiate the necessary legislative steps, but they can also alert the public. Moreover, parliamentarians can work to establish special parliamentary committees that advise legislative and administrative authorities, control the implementation of measures against criminality and allocate governmental funds for the combat of organized international crime, including the trafficking in people. According to President Degn the issue of trafficking in people needs more attention on both the national and international political scenes.

"I intend to follow up on the Resolution adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly this year by putting this item high on the agenda of our next Annual Session in the year 2000. I also encourage all my colleagues to debate this issue in their national parliaments and to demand action", said Mrs. Degn.

The President's bilateral meetings

On the occasion of the OSCE Istanbul Summit, Mrs. Helle Degn, met with



OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Helle Degn addresses the Istanbul Summit.

President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia, President Askar Akaev of Kyrgyzstan, and President Heidar Aliiev of Azerbaijan, in order to discuss recent events in their countries and the future plans of the Parliamentary Assembly. President Degn also met with Croatian Prime Minister Zlatko Matesa and Armenian Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanian.

While meeting with President Shevardnadze, Mrs. Degn stressed her satisfaction with the generally positive report of the recent mission to the parliamentary elections in Georgia headed by OSCE PA Vice President, Bruce George. She also discussed ways that the Assembly hopes to follow up on the election observation, including a return visit by some Delegation members in the near future.

In her meetings with Presidents Akaev and Aliiev, along with discussing regional developments, President Degn explained the role that the Parliamentary Assembly expects to play in the forthcoming Kyrgyzstani and Azerbaijani parliamentary elections in 2000. She discussed plans for the Croatian parliamentary elections with Croatian Prime Min-

ister Matesa, and also mentioned her plans for a visit to the Caucasus in spring 2000 to President Aliiev and to Foreign Minister Oskanian.

President Degn officially extended the condolences of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to the Armenian Foreign Minister for the country's losses from the October massacre in the Armenian Parliament.

Meeting of the Expanded Bureau

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held a meeting of the Expanded Bureau on 17 November, in conjunction with the OSCE Summit in Istanbul. The Expanded Bureau, comprised of the Bureau Members and the Officers of the three General Committees, was addressed by the Speaker of the Turkish Parliament, Mr. Yildirim Akbulut, and by Ambassador Kim Traavik, representing the Chairman-in-Office.

The agenda of the meeting included a review of the Annual Session held in St. Petersburg last July as well as consideration of the follow-up to the Declaration adopted by women parliamentarians at the Copenhagen Annual Session in 1998. The Expanded Bureau members

discussed a report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Election Monitoring. President Degn announced the appointment of the Democracy Teams on Kosovo, Moldova and the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. The work of the Democracy Team on Belarus was highly appreciated. The members exchanged views regarding a common theme for the next Annual Session to be held in Bucharest next July. Observation of the Russian elections and elections in Croatia was also high on the agenda of the meeting.

The next meeting of the Standing Committee of the OSCE PA takes place on 13-14 January 2000 in Vienna. The next meeting of the Expanded Bureau will be held in April 2000 in Antalya in conjunction with the Parliamentary Seminar on 'New Risks and Challenges: Minorities in the 21st Century'. Cyprus will be the venue for the Expanded Bureau Meeting in autumn 2000, in conjunction with a Parliamentary Seminar, the theme of which will be decided later.

Democracy Team in Belarus meets with Government and Opposition

After the Assembly's Expanded

Bureau Meeting and during the Istanbul Summit, members of the OSCE PA Working Group on Belarus met with the governmental and opposition team-members of the forthcoming roundtable talks on creating conditions for free, fair and recognizable elections in Belarus in 2000.

Headed by the former Foreign Minister of Romania, Mr. Adrian Severin MP (Romania), the Assembly's Democracy Team held extensive meetings with the team of three representatives from the Belarus Government, as well as with the ten-member Opposition team of political party leaders. They discussed issues which each side regards as necessary to resolve before talks on elections can be initiated. The Democracy Team also met with the Head of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Minsk, Ambassador Hans-Georg Wiecek.

Meeting of the Ad hoc Committee on Election Monitoring

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Ad hoc Committee on Election Monitoring met in Istanbul on 17 November. The meeting was chaired by the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Mrs. Helle Degn. The Ad hoc Committee was established last spring and is composed of six senior parliamentarians. It has concentrated on developing a follow-up mechanism for the OSCE's election monitoring reports. The meeting in Istanbul was also attended by Ambassador Gérard Stoudmann and other representatives of the ODIHR.

The Committee received short reports from the recent elections in Kazakhstan and Georgia and discussed the monitoring of the forthcoming elections in Russia and Croatia. The main focus, however, was on the establishment of a follow-up mechanism. It was agreed that after issuing the final report of elections,



Bilateral meeting in Istanbul with President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia.

monitored by the OSCE PA and ODIHR, a follow-up will be decided upon. In general, the Head of the PA's Delegation, together with representatives of the ODIHR and other appropriate persons, will visit the country concerned and discuss with the proper authorities the report, its findings, recommendations and follow-up. The modalities of the follow-up will be decided country by country. Other major international organizations will be invited to join the follow-up delegations in cases where they have cooperated with the OSCE in monitoring those elections. The first country where the new mechanism will be put into practice will be Georgia.

OSCE Parliamentarians monitor elections

Georgia

Bruce George MP (United Kingdom), Vice-President of the OSCE Par-

liamentary Assembly and Chair of the Defence Committee of the House of Commons, was appointed Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office to lead the OSCE Election Observation Mission to the Parliamentary Elections in Georgia on 31 October 1999 and to issue the preliminary election statement for the OSCE.

The OSCE Parliamentary Observer Delegation consisted of 23 parliamentarians from OSCE countries, including Armenia, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. The team also included representatives from the North Atlantic Parliamentary Assembly and the US Congressional Helsinki Commission.

While in Tblisi, Mr. Bruce George and his delegation met with high-level Georgian officials. The delegation also held meetings with representatives of

political parties, the mass media and NGOs. On election day, members of the Delegation visited numerous polling stations and were present at the opening and closing of the vote. The day after polling, Mr. George issued a preliminary statement in conjunction with Nikolai Vulchanov, Head of the ODIHR Long-term Election Observation Mission.

According to the OSCE statement, the conduct of the 1999 parliamentary election represents a step towards Georgia's compliance with OSCE commitments. "Despite some irregularities", Mr. George said, "it appears that Georgian voters were generally able to express their will. Regrettably, voting could not take place in Abkhazia and parts of South Ossetia."

Russian Federation

President Helle Degn is the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office with the task of leading the OSCE short-term election observation mission to the parliamentary elections in Russia on 19 December and to deliver the post-election statement. The mission to Russia comprises some hundred OSCE parliamentarians representing Armenia, Austria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

The team also includes representatives of other international parliaments including the Nordic Council and the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference.

Prior to election day, the parliamentarians will attend an extensive briefing programme organized by the International Secretariat in close co-operation with the Russian State Duma and ODIHR. On election day, the OSCE PA will deploy observer teams to several areas including Moscow, St. Petersburg, Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk, Murmansk, Nizhny Novgorod and Yaroslavl.

Croatia

President Degn is also expected to be the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office for the OSCE short-term election observation mission to the parliamentary elections in Croatia on 3 January 1999 and to deliver the preliminary election statement.

NEWS from the High Commissioner on National Minorities

The Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) is located at Prinsessegracht 22, NL-2514 AP The Hague, The Netherlands, tel.: (+31-70) 312 55 00, fax: (+31-70) 363 59 10, e-mail: hcnm@hcnm.org

High Commissioner pays visit to Croatia

From 10 to 13 November the High Commissioner on National Minorities visited Croatia. He paid particular attention to the situation of the Serb minority in the area of Eastern Slavonia. He joined a team of the Article 11 Commission, that monitors compliance with the Erdut Agreement of 1995 which is designed to encourage the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia.

In separate meetings with senior government officials (including the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Justice) he raised concerns about the treatment of the Serb population and encouraged the revision of several laws which he cited as discriminating against the Serbs.

Van der Stoel re-appointed as HCNM

At the Istanbul Summit, Mr. Max van der Stoel was reappointed as the OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities. The decision of the OSCE Heads of States or Government reads: "We express our gratitude to the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr. Max van der Stoel, for his willingness to continue in his position until a new High Commissioner on National Minorities has been appointed, at the latest, at the OSCE Ministerial Meeting in Vienna in November/December 2000." Mr. van der Stoel has held the post since its creation in 1992.

HCNM discusses situation of Hungarian minorities

On 23 and 24 November, the High

Commissioner visited Hungary, where he met the Foreign Minister, Janos Martonyi, and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Zsolt Nemeth. Among the subjects discussed were Working Table 1 on Democratization and Human Rights of the Stability Pact (of which Mr. van der Stoel is the Chairman until 31 December 1999), as well as the situation of Hungarian minorities in Romania, Slovakia and Vojvodina in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The High Commissioner also met the President of the Slovak self-government in Hungary and the President of the Office of National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary. He discussed the right of minorities to be represented in the National Assembly and how this could be implemented (pursuant to an act of 1993 on the Right of National and Eth-

nic Minorities). In Budapest, Mr. van der Stoel was awarded an honorary doctorate in law by the Pazmany Peter Catholic University.

Multi-culturalism in Romania

From 28 November to 1 December the High Commissioner visited Romania together with three education experts from Belgium, Canada and the United Kingdom. The purpose of the visit was to work with Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca (Transylvania) on further

developing the concept of multi-culturalism at the University. Based on their observations from the visit, the High Commissioner and the experts will draft a series of recommendations that will be submitted to the University. The goal is to come up with a satisfactory solution to what has often been a contentious issue – the possibilities for tertiary education in Hungarian in Romania.

In Bucharest, the High Commissioner discussed his observations with the Minister of Education (and former

rector of Babes-Bolyai University), Andrei Marga. He also met the President of the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania (UDMR) to discuss the Babes-Bolyai project and the proposed development of a private ecumenical Hungarian language university in Romania.

The High Commissioner also met Foreign Minister Plesu and discussed a number of minority related issues, including the Roma and the Romanian minority in Ukraine.

REPORT from the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

The Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media is located at Kärtner Ring 5-7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria, tel.: (+43-1) 512 21 45-0, fax: (+43-1) 512 21 45-9, e-mail: pm-fom@osce.org

European Security Charter on Free Media

Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, took part in the OSCE Summit in Istanbul on 18-19 November. On the first day, he held a press conference in Istanbul on media and conflict prevention. Speaking at the OSCE Permanent Council on 25 November, Mr. Duve noted his satisfaction with the commitments in the Summit documents. In particular, he referred to the positive commitment in the European Security Charter on Free Media “to take all necessary steps to ensure the basic conditions for free and independent media and unimpeded transborder and intra-State flow of information.”

Meeting with Belarus Government and Opposition Members

In Istanbul, Freimut Duve met with a number of participants, including the Foreign Minister of Belarus and other government officials, as well as with representatives of the Opposition in Belarus. He welcomed the beginning of a dia-

logue between the Government and Opposition in Minsk, under the auspices of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group. The dialogue had led, in early November, to the renewal of licences revoked earlier under the Press Law, as well as to a promising first agreement on the access of Opposition to state-controlled media. However, the OSCE Representative was concerned that this agreement was again threatened by President Luka-shenko’s apparently negative attitude towards the opening of the state media to the Opposition. The Opposition, conversely viewed this agreement as a conciliatory ploy by the Government prior to the Summit. M. Duve urged those involved in the political dialogue and in particular the Government to pursue this issue in an open and public debate instead of hindering the process.

Media covering the conflict in Chechnya

On 4 November, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media raised a number of alleged cases of harassment

of journalists covering the war in Chechnya in writing to the Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov. The Foreign Ministry replied on 17 November, stressing that all the cases dealt with “underground trips by journalists to the region”. According to Mr. Duve, this highlighted a dilemma: journalists would try to enter the area any way they could, eventually disregarding the formal requirements for such visits. Given the present situation, he believed that formalities should not be the first priority of the Russian authorities, but rather the security of the journalists.

International mechanisms for Promoting Freedom of Expression

On 26 November, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media met for the first time with Abid Hussain, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, as well as with Santiago Canton, the Organization of American States’ Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression. The meeting was held in London under

the auspices of the NGO, Article 19. The participants signed a Joint Declaration on International Mechanisms for Promoting Freedom of Expression, that stated, among other things: “Certain states have continued to exert and allow impermissible pressure on the media in their respective countries. The levels of harassment might be different but the general aim is the same: to suppress pluralism and open debate on issues of concern to citizens.”

Editor prosecuted in Turkey

Speaking at the OSCE Permanent Council on 25 November, Freimut Duve raised the case of the Turkish book entitled *Mehmedin Kitabı*. The book contained interviews with soldiers who

Continuation from page 13

vention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. This rapidly deployable capability will cover a wide range of civilian expertise. It will provide

fought in the south-east of the country. It had been well received by the public. However, the book was banned in June upon request from the Turkish Armed Forces. The editor, Nadire Mater, went on trial on 26 November for “insulting the military”, according to Article 159 of the Turkish Penal Code, and faced one to six years in prison. Mr. Duve believed that this was not a right step in a process of reconciliation.

‘Traitor Syndrome’ danger in RS

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media continued to be concerned with attacks against journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, specifically in the Republika Srpska (RS). On 22 October, Zeljko Kopanja, the editor of the in-

the ability to address problems before they become crises and to deploy quickly the civilian component of a peacekeeping operation when needed. These Teams could also be used as surge capacity to

dependent newspaper *Nezavisne Novine*, was seriously injured in a bomb attack and lost both legs. His newspaper recently published a series of articles on war crimes committed by Serbs against Bosniaks. In November, the Office of the High Representative, supported by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, organized Kopanja’s treatment in a rehabilitation clinic. On 3 November, another journalist Mirko Srdic, was attacked by the Mayor of Doboje, Mirko Stojcinovic. The attack followed the broadcast of a report by Srdic on local corruption. Both journalists were de-scribed by some politicians as “traitors”. Mr. Duve believed that the “traitor syndrome” was the greatest danger to courageous and professional journalists.

assist the OSCE with the rapid deployment of large-scale or specialized operations. At present a task force is being established at the Secretariat to develop the REACT programme.

How to become a member of an OSCE mission

If you feel encouraged to apply for any of the more than 20 missions and field activities of the OSCE and for many of which there are currently vacancies, please read the information in this box. There is no ‘prototype’ of mission member, but there are basic requirements that are common to all posts in our field activities. A working knowledge of the English language is essential, as it is the working language for all missions. This enables our workforce of over 40 nationalities to communicate not only in their day-to-day work, but also in case of emergency. In addition, for some of the missions, a working knowledge of the another OSCE working language, Russian, is essential too.

Good interpersonal skills and an aptitude to work in a multicultural environ-

ment are very important qualities. In many missions, members have to cope with the lack of reliable telephone or mail services, and with difficult, even sometimes dangerous living conditions. In addition, a mission member always needs to be in possession of a valid car driver’s licence.

Age is not an obstacle. There are currently members from 24 to 74 years of age in our missions. Ambassadors and former senior members of other international organizations work alongside young people who just graduated. Mission members serve on average between one to two years, depending on the conditions in the mission area.

Those interested in becoming mission members must contact their Ministry of Foreign Affairs to enquire about

the procedures for nomination. Each seconding nation has its own requirements and procedures to nominate their candidates. The would-be Mission member is requested to send a detailed CV, preferably using the OSCE guidelines distributed to all Ministries of Foreign Affairs. Those guidelines can also be found on the Organization’s website (www.osce.org), together with other useful information and links to some of the missions and national Delegations, as well as vacancy notices.

Applications cannot be accepted unless they come from the national Delegation to the OSCE of the candidate. As soon as the Mission Staffing Section receives a nomination from the Delegation, it will go through the process explained above.

LIST OF PUBLIC INFORMATION MATERIALS

available upon request at the Prague or Vienna Office of the OSCE Secretariat

(as of November 1999)

Publications	Publisher/ Editor	Language(s)
<p>CD-ROM Compilation of documents 1973-1997 Includes documents from Summit Meetings, Follow-up and Review Conferences, Ministerial Councils, Senior and Permanent Council, Forum for Security Co-operation, Expert Meetings, OSCE Newsletters, Secretary General Annual Reports, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and ODIHR publications, Seminars, public releases and speeches from the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and much more <i>First Edition</i></p>	OSCE Secretariat, Prague Office	contains the documents in all 6 OSCE workinglanguages*
<p>OSCE Newsletter (monthly) - Volume VI (1999), Volume V (1998), - Volume IV (1997), Volume III (1996), - Volume II (1995), Volume I (1994)</p>	OSCE Secretariat	since 1. 1.1998 in all six OSCE workinglanguages* 1994-97 in English and Russian
<p>Fact Sheet(revised October 1999) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■What is the OSCE? ■The OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat ■Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights ■Representative on Freedom of the Media ■High Commissioner on National Minorities ■OSCE Parliamentary Assembly ■Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina¹ ■Mission to Croatia¹ ■Mission in Kosovo¹ ■Presence in Albania¹ </p>	OSCE Secretariat	English versions available in November. Translations into all six OSCE working languages available shortly. ¹ Also available in local languages.
<p>OSCE Handbook general information on OSCE, Third Edition (March 1999)</p>	OSCE Secretariat	English
<p>Survey of OSCE Long-Term Missions and other OSCE Field Activities</p>	OSCE Secretariat/ Conflict Prevention Centre	English

Publications	Publisher/ Editor	Sprache(n)
The Secretary General’s Annual Report on OSCE Activities (1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999 ²)	OSCE Secretariat	In all six OSCE workinglanguages ² <i>English only</i>
ODIHR Semi-annual Reports	ODIHR	English and Russian
From CSCE to OSCE Statements and Speeches by Dr. Wilhelm Höynck, Secretary General of the OSCE (1993-1996)	OSCE Secretariat	English
Bibliography on the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities: Documents, Speeches, Related Publications. <i>Third Edition</i>	Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations The Hague March 1997	English
The Role of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in OSCE Conflict Prevention – An Introduction	Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations The Hague, June 1997	Englisch
The Oslo Recommendations Regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities and Explanatory Note	The Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations, The Hague February 1998	English and Russian
Chronological Review from 1973 to 1998 of CSCE/OSCE official publications <i>List of bound versions of documents issued at the conclusion of a review, follow-up and other major CSCE/OSCE events including the Negotiations on Confidence and Building Measures</i>	Prague Office	Englisch
Reference Manual – Decisions Compilation 1993-94, 1995,1996,1997, and 1998	OSCE Secretariat	Englisch
Summary of Meetings, Decisions, Missions and Documents <i>Volume V (1998), Volume IV (1997), Volume III (1996), Volume II (1995), Volume I (1990-1994)</i>	Prague Office	Englisch



OSCE
NEWSLETTER

The OSCE **NEWSLETTER** is published monthly by the Secretariat of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Kärntner Ring 5-7
A-1010 Vienna, Austria
Tel.: (+43-1) 514 36-196
Fax: (+43-1) 514 36-105
E-mail: info@osce.org

For more information on the OSCE
see the OSCE Website:
<http://www.osce.org>