

C.A. & T. Newsletter
Central Asia and Transcaucasia Newsletter

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EDITORIAL

OSCE/ODIHR would like to express its desire to participate more actively in the process of introducing democratic principles and building civil societies in Central Asian and Trans-Caucasian region. To further the development of this process and inform the governments and NGOs of Central Asian and Trans-Caucasian countries about ODIHR's activities our Information Unit was asked to publish a newsletter devoted specifically to these issues. This publication will be distributed, free of charge, to Non-governmental organisations interested in the problems of Central Asia and Trans-Caucasian region, International organisations and Governments of the OSCE participating States.

Our newsletter aims to:

- **report on the work of the OSCE/ODIHR in the area;**
- **record Central Asia and Transcaucasia related events e.g., seminars, meetings and conferences, which are of importance to the democratic development of these countries;**
- **inform the readers about all the activities of our correspondents;**

We strongly encourage you to write to us and provide us with information which could contribute to the publishing of this newsletter.

FOREWORD BY AMBASSADOR AUDREY F. GLOVER

It is with great pleasure that the ODIHR is launching the Central Asia and Trans-Caucasian Newsletter. We have produced this newsletter because it fulfils a need. I was stuck last year, during the seminar, which we held on NGOs, by a comment that people in Central Asia and Caucasus regions felt cut off from what was happening in the OSCE area. We are hoping this newsletter may help to redress that. We would like it to act as a clearing house for activities in the OSCE area. We particularly would like to learn about programmes in the Central Asian and Trans-Caucasian States so that they can receive as much support as possible. I should be grateful if you could send all the relevant information to Ilya Belkin who has master-minded this newsletter. We would also like to receive any suggestions which you might have for improving it. We look forward to hearing from you. Happy reading.

THE ODIHR: A TOOL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY

As it strengthens and widens its activities, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) - the institution primarily charged with the "human dimension" within the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) - has the potential to make an important contribution to preventive diplomacy, and thus to the creation of a peaceful and stable society. Preventive diplomacy is employed to forestall policies that create political and social tension. These might include violations of an individual's freedom of expression and of his or her right to a fair trial, and discrimination against people on the grounds of ethnic, linguistic or religious identity or political belief. But the ability of the ODIHR to work effectively depends on the determination of the OSCE's 53 member States to insist that commitments undertaken in the field of human rights and democracy are honoured.

The ODIHR's Activities

In April 1991, the ODIHR began helping the new European democracies to establish a tradition of free elections, to assist in electoral administration and in writing electoral codes. It co-operated with various institutions and established assistance programmes in countries holding elections or referenda on constitutional and other political issues. It has organised seminars for local and national election officials in many countries, including Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Russia, and republics of the former Yugoslavia. It had helped establish an association of professional electoral experts for Central and Eastern Europe. So that their guidance can be as thorough as possible, and so that they can form a better impression of the conditions under which the election is to be held, the ODIHR's staff plans to spend more time in a country before polling takes place and also, afterwards, to follow up complaints.

In 1994, the Office organised an international round table in Ukraine on election law and practices. It now plans to hold further seminars in advance of elections, to offer advice to local election officials on how to monitor and report on elections both to assist local politicians and to inform the international community about the manner in which they were held.

In order to bring together Governments and NGOs, the ODIHR organises seminars on various other human dimension issues. The OSCE Permanent Council (formerly Committee) draws up the yearly schedule of seminars, in consultation with the ODIHR and the HCNM. The Budapest Summit in 1994 agreed that only two large scale seminars would normally be held every year, and that in future emphasis should be given to regional seminars and to improving Follow-up action on them. Seminar subjects so far have included the free media, national minorities, tolerance, migrant workers, local democracy and the situation of Roma and Sinti (Gypsies). A Judicial Symposium, held in Warsaw in 1994 for public prosecutors and members of the judiciary, was attended by 63 participants from 18 countries. It has become an annual event.

Another series of meetings, tailored for civil servants, the information media, students, the general public and NGOs, are designed to implement the CSCE Programme of Co-ordinated Support for Recently Admitted CSCE States. Topics have included constitutional law, citizenship and language laws, freedom of association, and the citizen and the courts.

The rule of law is an important concern of the ODIHR. The Office seeks to help to strengthen the independence of the judiciary in the emerging democracies, to provide human and documentary resources, to analyse Constitutions and to assist in drafting legislation on human rights, electoral and related subjects. Its training programmes gather in jurists, lawyers, journalists and the public.

The ODIHR Collaborates with bodies such as the Council of Europe (CoE), the European Commission for Democracy through Law, universities and law associations, UN Human Rights Centre, UNHCR, ICRC and UNESCO. It is also in constant contact with OSCE missions in Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Moldova, Tajikistan and Ukraine, and in Sarajevo; and it assists them in various ways - for instance, by organising programmes for NGOs, for the police and for prison officials.

There is a dearth of legal texts in some countries. The ODIHR has published a book which sets out in Russian the texts of the major international human rights instruments and the corresponding CSCE/OSCE texts. It has also begun translating OSCE Human Dimension commitments into other languages.

The ODIHR also proposes to act as a clearing house for information on issues relating to Roma and Sinti, with the aim of facilitating contacts between such groups and with international organisations. The ODIHR also has an early warning function by which it informs the Chairman in Office of situations which could become potential conflict areas.

Election Unit

The procedure for compliance with election rights, as envisaged in various OSCE declarations, resulted in the creation of the OSCE Office for Free Elections (OFE) in Warsaw, in April 1991. In January 1992, the OFE was given an increased mandate and was renamed the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

Since the Budapest Summit Declaration of December 1994, which strengthened ODIHR's mandate and has increased the ODIHR's presence before, during and after an election. It was also given the task of enhancing election monitoring and as a result of this it is now producing a OSCE handbook for election observers. In addition, ODIHR was also asked to assess the conditions for the free and the independent functioning of the media and to improve co-ordination between the various international, regional and non-governmental organisations involved in election monitoring.

In the process of updating the ODIHR's original mandate with respect to free elections, the ODIHR Election unit has been working on an "Election monitoring framework for co-ordination". This paper outlines how the ODIHR will carry out a more in-depth approach to election monitoring operations. It includes the established of an enlarged Electoral Unit in Warsaw, which will continue to act as a supporting and co-ordinating office. A new Electoral Task Force will be formed out of a non-permanent group of electoral experts. The Task Force is responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring on *site* election activities and is made up of seconded persons from the OSCE participating States.

The ODIHR Election Unit in Central Asia and the Caucasus

A first attempt at the new approach outlined above, was conducted in Armenia on the occasion of a joint OSCE/United Nations operation for the observation of the July 1995 Parliamentary Elections. Similar operations were also conducted in Georgia, for the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in November 1995. In Azerbaijan, another Joint operation was mounted with the UN to observe the Parliamentary Elections in this country during November. At the end of 1995, a similar operation was launched in Kyrgyzstan for the Presidential Elections held on December 24, 1995.

1995 has seen a great deal of ODIHR electoral activity in the region of Central Asia and the Caucasus, this will be followed up next year by a workshop on Elections in Tashkent, organised by UNDP in which the ODIHR plans to play an active role.

Conference Service Unit

The two large-scale human dimension seminars organised by our unit were decided for 1995. First one, on Building Blocks for Civic Society: Freedom of Association and NGOs took place on 4-7 April in Warsaw and was attended by 286 participants, which is a highest number since seminars were initiated in 1992. A half of participants were representatives of all together 123 non-governmental organisations. The discussion concentrated on the administrative, legal and financial aspects of practical implementation of the right to association; and how to build successful NGO programmes that may attract public support and influence governments.

The second Seminar on the Rule of Law took place on 28 November - 1 December also in Warsaw. The objective of the meeting was two fold: to discuss the constitutional foundations of the rule of law and to examine implementation and practical measures.

It should be noted that as a result of special arrangements offered by the ODIHR, the two seminars were broadly attended by representatives of the recently admitted participating States, from the former USSR.

The report on how to increase the effectiveness of human dimension seminars was prepared, as recommended in the CSCE Budapest Document 1994, and presented at the Permanent Council Meeting in May.

The ODIHR was also actively involved in preparation and running of the International Seminar on Tolerance, organised jointly by the OSCE and the CoE in co-operation with UNESCO on 23-26 May in Bucharest.

The Seminar on Drafting Human Rights Legislation dedicated to the participating States from Central Asia was organised on 19-21 September in Ashgabat. It was very positively evaluated by participants who pinpointed a decisive role of legislation in building of human rights institutions in their respective countries.

The ODIHR in co-operation with the CRCI organised Regional Seminar on International Humanitarian Law in November in Riga, which was attended by representatives of all the three Baltic republics.

Human Rights Unit

The Human Rights Unit of the ODIHR is dealing with several practical aspects of the human dimension. One of them concerns support to OSCE Missions which have been established in some participating States. Of the existing eight Missions, one is located in Tajikistan and one in Georgia. There is also an Assistance Group to Chechnya and a Liaison Office in Uzbekistan. Many of the Missions have a mandate to monitor human rights or provide assistance within this field. Therefore, the Human Rights Unit organises training courses for members of the Missions, prepares manuals on human rights and, upon request, evaluates draft legislation. On the basis of the biweekly mission reports, and other information, the ODIHR may issue an early warning to the OSCE Chairman-in-Office in cases of serious violations of human rights.

The Human Rights Unit also advises governments on the setting up of independent national institutions for the protection of human rights and Ombudsmen. The institution of Ombudsman is still a relatively new phenomena - both in Western and Eastern Europe. It enables individuals to file complaints on human rights violations with a mediator, rather than an institution of the judicial system. This mechanism has proved to be useful for persons who cannot or do not wish to address a regular judicial body (such as a Court). Furthermore, the Ombudsman acts in a flexible manner and is therefore more suitable to deal with certain cases. The ODIHR has evaluated the Draft Ombudsman Law of Tajikistan and will be assisting the country in establishing such an institution. Similar proposals have been tabled in Georgia and other participating States of the OSCE.

Another important activity relates to dissemination of information on human rights by preparing compilations of human dimension commitments, guidelines for human rights activists, giving briefings for journalists, lectures at universities and conferences. Moreover, the Human Rights Unit is maintaining contacts between the OSCE/ODIHR and other international organisations concerned with the protection of human rights. It is currently preparing the future CIS Migration Conference in close co-operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). The Conference, which is scheduled to take place in mid-1996, will adopt a Declaration of Principles and a Programme of Action aimed at addressing problems of population displacement; catalysing regional co-operation on migration and refugee matters; reviewing all population movements taking place in the CIS region; and devising an integrated strategy for the region.

Contacts with NGOs

The main institutional channel for contacts between the OSCE and NGOs is the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. Within the Office an NGO Liaison Advisor is exclusively designated to work with NGOs.

Of particular importance is NGO involvement in Human Dimension seminars. NGOs can participate in other ODIHR programmes: in ODIHR election observation missions, in the activities of the Contact Point for Roma Issues, and through NGO materials submitted to the ODIHR (reports, analyses, communications, etc.). The ODIHR has also been tasked with collecting information from NGOs on media issues (Budapest Document 1994: VIII, 10).

Human Dimension Seminars and Meetings

The Human Dimension Seminars organised by the ODIHR in Warsaw, beginning with "Tolerance" in November 1992, have provided NGOs with new opportunities for establishing contact with OSCE delegations and engaging in free and open dialogue and debate on States' commitments to Human Dimension principles. A format similar to the one established for NGO participation in Human Dimension Seminars was adopted for use in the Implementation Meetings on Human Dimension Issues of 1993 and 1995 in Warsaw.

These seminars and meetings have provided NGOs with broad access not only to State delegations, but also to the various OSCE institutions and other international and intergovernmental organisations. The number of NGOs participating in them has grown from 17 at the 1992 Seminar on Tolerance to 123 at the Seminar on Civic Society in April 1995.

The growing interest shown by NGOs in OSCE activities was also reflected by their contributions to the Budapest Review Conference in 1995. From the 305 NGO representatives who registered, 57 written presentations were submitted to the delegations.

Other Seminars and Meetings

NGOs also have been included in the OSCE regional seminars in Central Asia. The Seminar on Human Dimension Issues in Central Asia, organised in Almaty (April 1994) as well as the Tashkent Seminar on General CSCE Issues (September 1994), provided opportunities for local and regional NGOs to meet directly with government representatives and to discuss Human Dimension Issues.

The Seminar on Early Warning and Preventive Diplomacy (January 1994) provided NGOs an occasion to discuss their specific roles in early warning and conflict prevention. This seminar led to an initiative of one NGO which, in co-sponsorship with the OSCE Secretariat, brought together in Stadtschlaining, Austria, (September 1994) "conflict prevention NGOs" and OSCE officials and delegates.

Election Observation

From its very inception, the Warsaw Office, first as the Office for Free Elections and later as the ODIHR, has included national and international NGOs in its election observation activities. NGOs such as the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, the Norwegian Helsinki Committee and the British Helsinki Human Rights Group have exchanged views with the Office on election practices and have participated jointly in briefings and press conferences with the ODIHR. Very often these NGOs have spent a significant amount of time in the country well in advance of elections and have thus provided the ODIHR with valued political analysis. This tradition has recently been strengthened by co-operation with organisations engaged in analysis of pre-election media practice [e.g. the European Institute for the Media, the Centre for Mass Media in Minsk, the Centres for Independent Journalism (Bratislava and Prague) and the Association of Non-Governmental TV and Radio Stations of Ukraine].

Non-OSCE Conferences, Seminars, Points of Contact

The NGO Liaison Advisor and other ODIHR staff have visited all participating States in Central/Eastern Europe, the Baltics and the former Soviet Union, attending conferences, seminars and workshops, and maintaining contact with NGOs. Great efforts are taken to provide NGOs with OSCE documents and to assist them in building networks among themselves. The NGO/Human Dimension contact points in OSCE Missions, OSCE desk officers and NGO liaison officers in Ministries of Foreign Affairs all provide the ODIHR with useful information on developments within their respective NGO sectors.

NGO Documents

The ODIHR receives a constant flow of information from NGOs on human rights issues in the participating States. A new system has been developed within the ODIHR for documenting these materials. The resulting register (a database) serves as a record of "complaints" which may contribute to revealing patterns that could alert the Chairman-in-Office, who has been asked "to inform the Permanent Council of serious cases of alleged non-implementation of human dimension commitments, ... on the basis of information from the ODIHR" (Budapest Document 1994: VIII, 5).

ODIHR's In-House NGO/Research Institution Database

NGOs and Research Institutions in contact with the ODIHR are recorded in a database that now numbers approximately 1,000 organisations. This database serves as a useful in-house tool, as well as a valued source of information for outside agencies and institutions which often request specific lists from the ODIHR. Since NGO communities are constantly in flux, the database is not meant to be either exhaustive or comprehensive. Also, the database does not function as a list of the OSCE's "approved" or "accredited" NGOs, since no such status exists within the OSCE.

ODIHR Contact Point for Roma Issues (CPRI)

One of the CPRI's tasks is the compilation of a comprehensive list of Roma NGOs, as well as governmental institutions, research and cultural centres, media and individual experts dealing with Roma. An additional project aims to collect and disseminate lists of non-governmental legal assistance programmes that include Roma among their clients. Furthermore, ODIHR staff are preparing studies, and planning and co-ordinating training programmes and workshops for Roma NGOs.

Capacity-Building Workshops - Training for NGO Leadership

The ODIHR has committed itself to holding a series of training workshops for NGOs on organisational, communication and management skills. These workshops will be conducted in several OSCE regions. The first programme took place in Vilnius and included NGO representatives from Estonia, Latvia and

Lithuania. A second workshop ran concurrently with the HD Seminar on Rule of Law, providing NGOs in attendance an opportunity to put new information and skills presented in the workshop to immediate practice within the Seminar. The third capacity-building workshop is planned for Tbilisi in the Spring.

In spite of the broad range and growing number of NGOs that are in contact with the ODIHR, there are no selection criteria beyond the "terrorism" paragraph (Helsinki Document 1992: IV,16). The organisation remains open and flexible enough to accommodate the views and suggestions of a vast range of NGOs, ranging from nascent grass-roots groups in the new democracies to those in older democratic societies with a greater depth of experience.

Information Unit

Realising the important role of the press particularly in countries in the period of transition our information officer has started a series of workshops entitled "Management of Print Media". To make it more focused and effective it is being held in different places. The first was in Moldova and the second in Kyrgyzstan. We plan to have more.

In response to the need for publications, we have edited and indexed the book we have produced in Russian which contains United Nations' and Council of Europe's conventions on human rights and also OSCE commitments. We also produce compilation of commitments by subject. Travel, election, women, etc.

We, of course, are continuing with the Bulletin which we are always trying to improve. We are now going to translate it into Russian. We also have plans to produce a newsletter in Russian for the Central Asian States, who at times might feel out as to what is happening in Central and Western Europe.

Realising the need for States to have the OSCE commitments set out in their own language we have started a project for translating them. Our goal is to cover all the languages of the OSCE participating States.

Information Clearing House

The Warsaw Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights was established in 1990, as an Office for Free Election, mainly for the purpose of exchanging of the information on elections within participating States.

*"...The Office will compile information, including information provided by the competent authorities of the participating States, on the dates, procedures and official results of scheduled national elections within participating States, as well as reports of election observations, and provide these on request to governments, parliaments and interested private organisations.
(Charter of Paris for a New Europe, Paris 1990)*

Year of 1992 brought big changes to the Office of Free Elections. During the Prague meeting of Ministers, the name of the Office was changed to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and, what's more important, the ODIHR has become responsible for sharing and exchanging information not only on the election issues, but also on available technical assistance, expertise, and national and international programmes aimed at assisting the new democracies in their institution-building.

The 1993 Rome Council of Ministers meeting charged the ODIHR with the responsibility of serving as a point of contact for information provided by participating States in accordance with CSCE commitments; and disseminating general information on the human dimension, and international humanitarian law. Additional task given to the ODIHR during the Review Conference in

Budapest in 1994 were to provide information to the participating States on implementation issues and to act as a clearing house also on media issues.

*6. They [participating States] encourage the Chairman-in-Office to inform the Permanent Council of serious cases of alleged non-implementation of human dimension commitments, **including on the basis of information from the ODIHR**, reports and recommendations of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), or reports of the head of a CSCE mission and information from the State concerned.(...)*

8. The ODIHR, as the main institution of the human dimension, in consultation with the Chairman-in-Office, will, acting in an advisory capacity, participate in discussions of the Senior Council and the Permanent Council, by reporting at regular intervals on its activities and providing information on implementation issues.(...)

(Toward a Genuine Partnership in a New Era, Budapest 1994)

ODIHR collects and actively seeks information regarding the alleged non-compliance with the commitments of participating States in the human dimension areas, working with the OSCE Missions and other international organisations, mostly Council of Europe and United Nations. All of the data collected is stored in a database.

ODIHR provides on a regular basis reports of its findings in particular areas of implementation to the Chairman-in-Office, with recommendations as to the next steps, for possibly further distribution to the Permanent Council. In addition the ODIHR is be ready to provide States with material for discussion of particular issues in the Permanent Council, as it was the case with the problems in the area of elections and free media. The ODIHR also maintains its traditional role of providing information on the human dimension issues by responding to the requests for information. With the assistance of the Missions ODIHR gives early warning of potential crises.

Media Issues

Elections: The original mandate of the ODIHR calls for assistance to the new European democracies in establishing a tradition of free elections and electoral administration. Openness and diversity media, and adherence to the rules formally established for the media coverage during election process, have always been an important part of services ODIHR provided in the field of election observing.

Recognising the role an independent media play in building democratic societies, the ODIHR now plans to launch a new policy regarding the implementation of the election monitoring mandate, which will also address the issues of access to media and freedom of speech during elections.

Seminars: In the decisions of the Rome Council Meeting, the Ministers underscored the role played by free media in the maintenance of fundamental rights in democratic societies. As a result of it the Committee of Senior Officials requested the ODIHR to organise in co-operation with relevant international organisations, as a follow-up to the CSCE Seminar of Free Media a workshop concerning business techniques related to journalism.

To fulfil this mandate and in order to further the work of the OSCE in the area of free media, the ODIHR plans to organise in 1995 a series three seminars on Print Media Management in different regions of OSCE, on the business of operating a newspaper. In addition, media issues will be the main topic of the debates of one of the discussion groups during the International Seminar on Tolerance, organised by ODIHR with close co-operation with the Council of Europe and the Government of Romania, which will be held in May 1995 in Bucharest.

Clearing House: To develop further OSCE work in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms, a provision dedicated to the topic of free media has been adopted during the CSCE Budapest Summit (5-6 December 1994):

(10) The participating States decide to task the ODIHR to act as a clearing house for the exchange of information on media issues in the region, and encourage governments, journalists and NGOs to provide the ODIHR with information on the situation of the media.

(Towards a Genuine Partnership in a New Era, Budapest Document 1994)

To fulfil this mandate ODIHR plans to collect and provide upon request the reports on the implementation of Human Dimension commitments with relation to media in the OSCE participating States, as well as information on national legislation on media. ODIHR will also continue to maintain close contacts with various organisations working in the media field.

ODIHR invites now all interested organisations and individuals: international organisations; NGOs; universities; private researches and government officials in the Central Asia and Trans Caucasian region, to provide us with information on the media issues in the OSCE participating States, so that we could distribute it through . The contact point' person within ODIHR is Paulina Merino.

Rule Of Law Unit

The Warsaw-based ODIHR office assists countries of the former Soviet Union and neighbouring states with writing constitutions, modernising judicial systems and law codes, and writing human rights legislation. In consultation with jurists from Central Asia, Transcaucasia, the Baltic States, and elsewhere in the former Soviet Union, ODIHR organised several Rule of Law Conferences in 1995.

ODIHR co-sponsors its programmes with other international organisations, foundations, bar associations, and non-governmental organisations. Several of the 1995 events are co-sponsored with the European Commission for Democracy Through Law, known as the Venice Commission, with which ODIHR has conducted collaborative programs in the past.

Conferences usually last three-four days and are designed so participants can freely share experiences from several countries, with ample time for interaction and comment. Discussion leaders represent various professional viewpoints and juridical backgrounds. Informal contact and substantive attention to issues raised by representatives of emerging states are hallmarks of these events, which are held in numerous countries of Central Europe and the former Soviet Union. During the past year CSCE\ODIHR organised conferences in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Poland, Romania, and elsewhere.

The Rule of Law programme also helps countries writing constitutions, criminal and civil codes, media, citizenship, minority rights, electoral and other laws with human rights-human dimension aspects.

Seminar On Constitution Of Tajikistan, June 14-15, 1995

The seminar was jointly sponsored by the Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan and the ODIHR. It was designed for the parliamentarians and jurists and held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. More than fifty persons, jurists, journalists, parliamentarians in the Majlisi Oli, members of opposition and government political parties, and NGO representatives met for two intensive days of discussions on Separation of Powers, an Independent Judiciary, and International Human Rights Norms at Dushanbe's Institute for Strategic Studies auditorium.

Prof. Frowein provided a detailed commentary on the Tajikistan constitution, offering several suggestions about how language could be clarified to make separation of powers more evident, strengthen judicial independence, and provide justifiable human rights norms.

Following the conference, the delegation met with Mrs. R. Musaeva, head of the Majlisi Oli's parliamentary committee responsible for constitutional issues, the Committee on State Building, and other officials for a detailed discussion on constitutional reform. The President's Principal Adviser, Abdulrahman Dostoyev, also met with the delegation for substantive talks.

Second Annual Warsaw Judicial Symposium, 5-10 June, 1995

Sixty jurists from nineteen of central and eastern European and Central Asian countries debated legal reform issues at the second Annual Warsaw Judicial Symposium, June 5 - 10, 1995. Focused explorations of specific topics, case studies, a mock trial and evening gatherings of small groups probing issues with resource leaders were symposium features. The gathering was organised by the Organisation on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; Warsaw, Poland. At the Director's reception, special awards were presented to the Constitutional Court of Kazakhstan (for courage), to the Supreme Court of Georgia (for judicial excellence) and to the Supreme Court of Estonia (for excellence in judicial education).

Topics included: Separation of Powers and an Independent Judiciary; How independent can a judiciary be ? Why does it matter? The Judicial Conference (USA) and the National Council on the Judiciary (Poland) as ways of preserving judicial independence; Standards of professional judicial conduct; Judicial discipline Prosecutor and Judge, Friend or Foe?; Constitutional, Supreme, Administrative, High Courts of Arbitration, their contribution to an independent Judiciary; Human Rights and the European Convention; The OSCE and Human Rights.

The Changing Role Of The Judiciary, Georgia, May 29-30, 1995

More than 50 Georgian Supreme and district court judges, law professors, and attorneys held two days of intensive discussions on "The Judiciary in a Changing World," in Tbilisi's historic Supreme Court building. Topics included: An Independent Judiciary, its Relations with the Executive and Legislative Branches; Relations with the Ministry of Justice, Procurator, Investigating Authorities, Attorneys; Judicial Ethics, Judicial Discipline; International Human Rights Norms, Their Applicability to National Law and Local Judges; Issues in Judicial Administration, Relations Among Courts, What is the Most Effective Way to Organise Courts?

There was considerable discussion of the question of foreigners' and citizens' rights under the European Convention, the relationship of international human rights conventions and their implementation by domestic courts, the changing role of the procurator in various countries of the former Soviet Union, and habeas corpus standards, especially in political and emergency cases; conflicts of state and national constitutions, protection and immunities of judges, judicial salaries and emoluments.

The OSCE/ODIHR Implementation Meeting, October 2-21, 1995

During the Implementation Although not exclusively a Rule of Law activity, many countries reported both progress and problems concerning the development of a state governed by the Rule of Law. Consequently, the Meeting was of great assistance as a tool to develop the 1996 Rule of Law Programme agenda.

Of principle concern to countries were the effects of organised crime, citizenship laws , freedom of the press issues and questions relating to the treatment of prisoners and prison conditions. Other issues States considered important were activities designed to define the rights of women, the rights of children and the rights of disabled people.

Rule Of Law Seminar, November 28 - December 1, 1995

The Human Dimension Seminar on the Rule of Law was held in Warsaw on November 28 - December 1 and two objectives: to discuss the constitutional foundations of the Rule of Law and to examine implementation and practical measures.

The Seminar was attended by 166 participants from 38 participating states and two non-participating states: Egypt and Tunisia. The event was also attended by 25 NGOs and several international organisations including the Council of Europe, the International Committee of Red Cross, and the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

The seminar also incorporated two parallel events. The first was a special training program for the Ombudsman of the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina and the second was a special training seminar for new Rule of Law NGOs.

ODIHR Publications

ON THE OCCASION OF 20TH ANNIVERSARY

In 1995 the ODIHR published two books: *Human Rights and the Judiciary - collection of documents*, edited by Fred Quinn and Andrzej Rzeplinski, and *OSCE Human Dimension Documents*, edited by Dr Dominick McGoldrick. In the foreword to these books it was mentioned that they were issued on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act.

In addition, the ODIHR has produced the 20th Anniversary poster, also available in a postcard size, and distributed it to the Delegations in Vienna, to the Missions and to those organisations which requested them.

The ODIHR has published also the ODIHR pamphlet, which contains also the updated description of the ODIHR mandate, to include Roma and Sinti Contact Point and Media Clearing House.

ODIHR Bulletin

As in previous years, the ODIHR will produce four issues of the OSCE ODIHR Bulletin. At the end of 1994, the Office has decided to introduce some changes to its publications. In order to fulfil the role of the Bulletin (which was outlined in the first issue) we decided to broaden the "News" section, to include the "NGO pages" and "ODIHR Mandate" (description of our mandate in various fields). The changes reflect the change of the overall policy of the OSCE to bring the non-governmental organisations closer to the OSCE process, as an invaluable source of information about the implementation of the Human Dimension commitments. In our Bulletin we want to inform the broad audience what is the role and the functions of our Office, and keep it up-to-date with the ODIHR activities, also with respect to NGO Liaison activities.

Spreading Awareness Of Human Dimension Issues

In 1995 the ODIHR made a serious effort in order to spread awareness on Human Dimension commitments, problems, unsolved issues. This was a year of 20th Anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act and the Office decided to mark this year with several activities aiming to bring the Human Dimension issues to the public attention.

Translation of OSCE Documents: In addition to publishing the English version of the OSCE Human Dimension Documents in book form, the Office co-ordinated the translation of several key OSCE Documents into non-OSCE languages: Latvian, and Estonian. Projects are currently underway for translations into Tajik and Georgian.

If the 1996 budget allows we intend to continue this activity and - in addition to issuing the OSCE Human Dimension Documents book in Russian - we intend to translate main OSCE Documents into the languages of at least 5 countries of the Newly Emerging States

Compilations of OSCE Documents: Since CSCE/OSCE documents address a wide range of issues, it is often difficult for the individual to understand the full significance of specific human rights. This is why the ODIHR has undertaken to compile commitments related to themes such as: media, migrant workers, refugees, national minorities, non-governmental organisations, human contacts, ethnic and religious discrimination, sex discrimination, Roma and Sinti.

In this manner we wish to contribute to the fulfilment of the recommendation made by the participating States in the Helsinki Decisions of 1992 : “the drawing up of compilations of existing CSCE Human Dimension commitments in order to promote greater understanding of the implementation of these commitments” (Chapter VI, paragraph 60).

Essay competition: In Spring 1995 the ODIHR announced the essay competition among Warsaw secondary schools. The essay was to be written in one of the OSCE languages and consist of 2-6 pages. The topic was: Human Rights - Tolerance. Two best works were published in the Autumn issue of the OSCE ODIHR Bulletin.