

# Field operations



# Central Asia

## Centre in Ashgabad

◎ Centre in Ashgabad

*The boundaries and names on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the OSCE.*

*The Centre in Ashgabad continued to raise awareness about OSCE commitments and principles, and increasingly emphasized sharing experience on translating them into concrete policy. The Centre, together with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), followed the February presidential election, and developed its programme of support on elections-related issues and training courses on international human rights law. The Centre enhanced its activities aimed at strengthening border security and management with training events both in Turkmenistan and abroad. It also increased its co-operation with Turkmenistan's institutions of higher education, organizing events on human rights and economic development, and offered increased support to local organizations promoting education.*

### Politico-military dimension activities

**Strengthening border security and management.** The Centre organized a series of training courses to sharpen the professional skills of border security officers from throughout the country dealing with

trafficking in drugs and other contraband. Participants were trained in drug search and identification and learned how to detect contraband using the latest X-ray equipment and search techniques.

Several customs and border officials also took part in Centre-organized practical training courses in Germany on border management and on providing training to customs officials.

**Policing training.** The Centre organized a one-week course in community policing at the Turkish Police Academy in Ankara. Six police officials from Turkmenistan were trained in police ethics and accountability and methods of establishing confidence within communities.

**Confidence- and security-building.** The Centre organized a training trip to the Verification Centre of the German Armed Forces for six arms control officers from Turkmenistan. The training focused on OSCE confidence- and security-building measures, and included participation in a live inspection in Switzerland.

### Economic and environmental dimension activities

**Assisting Turkmenistan in integrating into the global economy.** The Centre organized lectures in Ashgabad on global financial markets and international finance. More than 150 students, professors and young professionals from Turkmenistan's financial agencies attended the lectures.

**Raising environmental awareness.** The Centre continued to support a successful series of camps on

### Specialized training on human rights in the politico-military dimension

*Applying international humanitarian law in armed conflict and internal security operations was the focus of a training course organized by the Centre in August for armed forces and law enforcement officers. The course also aimed to assist Turkmenistan's armed forces in integrating these principles into their training programmes.*

*In November, the Centre organized a training course for Turkmenistan's civil servants on applying international human rights standards while combating terrorism. The seminar focused on operational and technical aspects of counter-terrorism initiatives and challenges related to the protection of human rights in countering terrorism.*



ecology in the city of Khazar on the Caspian Sea, in which children learned about environmental problems and nature preservation during their school breaks.

**Support for the development of the tourism sector.** Upon invitation of the Centre, two experts from Kyrgyzstan delivered presentations on the concept of community-based tourism, held meetings with private tourism companies and visited tourist sites to identify potential for the development of community-based tourism in Turkmenistan.

**Seminar for women entrepreneurs.** Facilitating the development of small- and medium-sized enterprises was the objective of a seminar for women entrepreneurs organized by the Centre in the southeastern Mary region. The seminar focused on strategic planning and marketing and aimed to familiarize the participants with the tools needed to start a business.

## Human dimension activities

**Courses on international human rights law.** The Centre expanded its series of training courses for civil servants on incorporating international human rights norms into the national legal system. In 2007, the courses focused on human rights standards related to arrest, detention and the rights of the accused.

For the first time, the Centre organized a series of lectures on international human rights law for students of Turkmenistan's State University.

**Supporting legislative reform.** The Centre offered legal expertise and advice on best practices to support Turkmenistan's ongoing legislative reform. It provided more than 1,200 legal consultations to individual citizens. It organized a one-week study tour to Germany for four members of Turkmenistan's parliament, who exchanged experiences regarding parliamentary work and legislative processes and discussed issues of local self-governance with their German counterparts.

**Support for dialogue with ODIHR and activities related to the presidential election.** The Centre facilitated the activities of an Election Expert Support Team deployed by ODIHR at the invitation of Turkmenistan's authorities. The team helped the Centre to follow and report on the 11 February presidential election and collected information on the elections in order to identify possible areas for future co-operation.

The Centre facilitated the visit of the Director of ODIHR, Ambassador Christian Strohal, who agreed with Turkmenistan's authorities to develop co-operation in the country's legislative reform

process, specifically in the spheres of elections and criminal justice.

**Supporting Turkmenistan's implementation of OSCE commitments regarding democratic elections.** The Centre organized a seminar for more than 70 domestic election observers from throughout the country. The seminar gave an overview of OSCE commitments and other international standards for elections and introduced the methodology of ODIHR for election observation.

**Promoting gender equality.** To promote gender equality, the Centre supported the Tech Age Girls project, which provided young women the opportunity to develop their information technology skills and take leading roles in their communities. The Centre also organized a number of public presentations and training events on gender and domestic violence.

Head of Centre:

Ambassador Ibrahim Djikic

Approved budget: € 1,228,400

[www.osce.org/ashgabad/](http://www.osce.org/ashgabad/)



## Supporting youth development

*The Centre supported local organizations offering English and computer classes and other activities to help youth develop important skills and build co-operative relationships. During the school breaks, it facilitated a variety of camps and other events focusing on environmental protection, civic education and the prevention of drug abuse and HIV transmission. At its Information Unit, which also offered access to computers, the Internet and printed materials on OSCE-related issues, the Centre organized special events and training sessions for youth groups and youth leaders.*

↖ Turkmenistan border security officers at a practical course on using x-ray detection systems and metal detectors. (OSCE)

↗ Children work for a clean environment at an OSCE-sponsored summer camp. (Mingul Seitkazieva)

→ Professor Douwe Korff conducts a training course on human rights standards for civil servants in the city of Dashoguz. (OSCE/Evan Tracz)



## Human rights courses

*"It is very important that the topic of human rights is addressed within a specific legal context so that States have a concrete concept of how to translate international law into the national legal system," said Professor Douwe Korff, a human rights and comparative law specialist who has participated in OSCE-supported projects in Turkmenistan for the past four years. "Because we are more specific this year about how human rights principles are applied in the administration of justice, participants are better able to relate the concepts and legislation to their daily circumstances and work."*

## Centre in Astana

- ⊙ Centre in Astana
- Liaison Office

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*Fostering transparency in its activities, the Centre pursued a “triangular approach” that ensured the participation of official bodies, civil society and the OSCE in the implemented projects. The Centre promoted confidence- and security-building, better border management and the fight against terrorism. Promoting sustainable development and trans-boundary water management were also key activities. In the human dimension, the Centre paid particular attention to media developments, judicial and legal reform, the protection of religious minorities, gender issues and anti-trafficking. In June, by decision of the Permanent Council, the Centre was re-located to Astana from Almaty and renamed accordingly. A liaison office remains in Almaty.*

### Politico-military dimension activities

**Building confidence.** The Centre continued through training seminars to promote the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures in compliance with the *Vienna Document 1999*. The courses were organized jointly with the Ministry of Defence.

**Developing a modern police force.** In co-operation with police authorities, the Centre facilitated

roundtable discussions among law enforcement personnel and civil society representatives on public monitoring of police activities.

**Border management.** The Centre, in co-operation with the national authorities and other international organizations, offered training to Kazakhstani border guards, with the aim of enhancing border control by promoting international best practices.

**Combating terrorism and organized crime.** The Centre supported a four-month joint programme of the OSCE missions in Central Asia in which police dog handlers were trained in combating terrorism and organized crime.

**Parliamentary development.** The Centre co-operated with other international organizations to organize roundtables and training sessions for parliamentary deputies and government officials. The aim of these events was to prepare for the work of a special body to be established by Parliament to develop strategies for parliamentary development and to encourage broader participation of civil society in legislative processes.

**Election observation and voter education.** The Centre responded quickly to the calling of early parliamentary elections in August, offering training courses for local election observers. To raise future voters' awareness about elections, the Centre supported the publication and distribution of materials to youth throughout the country.



## Economic and environmental dimension activities

**Sustainable development.** The Centre assisted Kazakhstan in implementing its *Concept on Transition to Sustainable Development 2007-2024* by raising awareness among state officials and non-governmental organizations. Teenagers from the Aral Sea area attended this year's annual summer camp on sustainable development.

**Trans-boundary water management.** The Centre, together with the United Nations, organized regional events on trans-boundary co-operation in the management of groundwater resources. The Centre also assisted in developing the mandate of the bilateral water commission between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on the rivers Chu and Talas.

**Access to justice in environmental matters.** Together with Kazakhstani experts from the Supreme Court and members of the academic community, the Centre elaborated a manual for judges on access to justice in matters of environmental concern. The project forms part of a long-term programme to promote the implementation of the *Aarhus Convention* among governmental institutions and civil society.

## Human dimension activities

**Judicial and legal reforms.** The Centre continued to work in tandem with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to promote principles and best practices of criminal justice reforms, particularly regarding judicial authorization of arrest and the humanization of the penitentiary system. A landmark was the completion early this year of the two-year *Trial Monitoring Project* implemented by ODIHR in co-operation with the Centre. The Centre subsequently conducted a follow-up project to develop recommendations for applying court procedures, which are already being implemented.

**Human rights and democratization.** In meetings and roundtable debates on international legal standards and practices regarding freedom of religion or belief, held in co-operation with Kazakhstani authorities, non-governmental organizations and experts of the ODIHR Advisory Council on Freedom of Religion or Belief, the Centre focused on the rights of both majority and minority religions.

**Gender issues.** In connection with work on a proposed gender equality law, the Centre organized study visits to the Russian Federation and Lithuania for a group of parliamentary deputies, followed by a roundtable discussion of the best models for equality legislation.

**Anti-trafficking.** Together with the Strategic Police Matters Unit, the Centre conducted an intensive three-week training course for prosecutors and police on new investigative techniques. The Centre continued to train regional officials on international standards, including national referral mechanisms, with the help of an extra-budgetary contribution from Germany and experts provided by the ODIHR.

**Media developments.** The Centre facilitated the exchange of expert views on the ongoing process of improving media legislation. It continued to support journalistic education, including in the Kazakh language, with a special focus on the regions. Topics

included reporting on parliamentary activities, covering terrorism issues and media and labour legislation. Training was also offered to lawyers specializing in the media.

Head of Centre:

Ambassador Ivar Vikki

Approved budget: € 1,981,800

[www.osce.org/astana](http://www.osce.org/astana)



Participants from the Aral Sea region at a summer camp in Almaty on sustainable development on 14 July. The camp was organized by the Centre in Astana in partnership with the non-governmental organization National Forum for Radiological Protection and Ecology. (OSCE/Madina Ibrasheva)



← Rashida Naubetova, Chief Supervisor of the National Commission on Family Issues and Gender Policy under the President, gives an interview to journalists. (OSCE/Aidar Botagarov)



Journalists discuss media coverage of parliamentary activities in Kazakhstan during an OSCE-organized course on access to information in Astana on 15 October. (OSCE/Aidar Botagarov)

## Centre in Bishkek

- ⊙ Centre in Bishkek
- Field Office

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*The Centre supported the constitutional reform process, which dominated the political agenda in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2007 and was highly debated between the Government and the opposition. The process led to the adoption of the new constitution and pre-term parliamentary elections. The Centre provided assistance in the electoral field both to authorities and civil society.*

*The Centre continued with its long-term commitments to police reform, the OSCE Academy and media development in the regions. It also supported the host country in improving human rights, ecological security, the efficiency of political institutions and good governance both in the north and south of the country. It worked to enhance the legal framework in various areas such as the penitentiary system, economic development, migration, the fight against trafficking in human beings and domestic violence.*

→ Police cavalry with secondary school students during Police Open Day in Karakol in September (OSCE)

### Politico-military dimension activities

**Police programme.** The Centre focused on encouraging the police to take ownership of the reform process. It trained local investigators and forensic experts in analysis-based policing and responding to emergencies. It helped consolidate community policing throughout the country and worked to strengthen police management skills.

#### **Supporting the development of political institutions.**

The Centre provided training for representatives of political parties on improving organizational structures and conducting efficient campaigns. It gave southern branches of political parties the opportunity to voice their platforms on live radio and in television debates. It offered expert legal advice to the national





Parliament and offered training courses to local councils on oversight techniques.

**Preventing conflicts.** The Centre supported confidence-building measures and training to promote inter-ethnic tolerance in targeted communities in the north of the country. It helped create a pool of experts in conflict prevention made up of members of state institutions and civil society. In its work on migration, inter-ethnic tolerance and conflict prevention in the southern border areas, the Centre made an increased effort to engage local authorities and actors. It promoted a nation-wide debate on freedom of religion and conscience, which led to a high-level meeting of representatives of state agencies, various religious communities, non-governmental organizations and the media in Bishkek in September.

**Media development.** The Centre continued to support the provincial media resource centres in Talas, Karakol and Batken and assisted with the opening of a new one in Naryn. It continued to help provide legal consultation and mediation to local media outlets and trained a group of journalists on ethnic issues.

### Economic and environmental dimension activities

**Economic issues.** The Centre supported governmental reforms to improve Kyrgyzstan's investment and business climate, as advocated by business associations, legislative reform working groups and the arbitration court. It worked to increase the number of business opportunities available to members of vulnerable groups by providing training on running small- and

medium-sized enterprises and guiding tourists. It also provided youth with information on university business studies.

**Environmental issues.** Following the lead of the Spanish Chairmanship, the Centre made it a priority to prevent land degradation and manage water properly. It helped a technical working group attract the attention of potential donors to the problem of the legacy of uranium tailings. It promoted water conservation and proper irrigation methods and supported campaigns to discourage the pollution of rivers and lakes.

**Good governance.** The Centre continued to provide assistance to the National Agency for Corruption Prevention. In three southern provinces the Centre raised awareness about corruption in the distribution of social benefits. It promoted open budgetary hearings in universities, local government and the industrial sector.

### Human dimension activities

**Constitutional and legal reform.** The Centre supported the implementation of Kyrgyzstan's new constitution passed by the legislature on 30 December 2006, particularly insofar as it effectively abolished the death penalty and gave courts exclusive authority to sanction arrests. It supported public discussions in preparation for the national referendum on the new constitution and election code held on 21 October. When early parliamentary elections, the first to be conducted according to the proportional system of the new code, were called for 16 December, the Centre quickly mobilized its resources to educate



members of elections commissions, political parties and voters and to support independent domestic observers and television debates.

**Promoting adherence to international human rights standards.** Supporting Kyrgyzstan's national programme for penitentiary system reform, due to be completed by 2010, remained a priority. The Centre assisted with the implementation of the new law humanizing criminal legislation and with the improvement of the professional skills of prison personnel. It was instrumental in improving the treatment of detainees and the respect for human rights in temporary detention facilities in the provinces of Naryn, Talas, Osh and Jalalabat and at the Adaptation and Rehabilitation Centre for Juveniles of Bishkek.

The Centre continued to provide assistance to the Training Centre for Prosecutors and to facilitate the access of the indigent population to free legal aid. It also began to support strategic litigations regarding cases of torture.

**Promoting gender balance and fighting trafficking in human beings.** The Centre promoted the participation of women in the Osh local council elections in October. It worked to help prevent domestic violence in rural areas by supporting the establishment of women's self-help groups at the grass-roots level, training law enforcement and judicial officials and providing support to victims of domestic violence in shelters. In December, the Centre collaborated with the OSCE Secretariat and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime to help organize a roundtable on combating trafficking in human beings in the Central Asian region.

← Students supporting the community policing public event in Naryn in November (OSCE)

↓ Training on prevention of domestic violence mechanisms for women leaders and members of Aksakal courts in Osh (OSCE)

*Head of Centre:*  
*Ambassador Markus Mueller*  
*Approved budget: € 4,085,800*  
[www.osce.org/bishkek](http://www.osce.org/bishkek)



### OSCE Academy

*The class of 2007 celebrates its graduation from the OSCE Academy in October. Now in its fifth year, the OSCE Academy graduated 25 students with a Master of Arts in Political Science and recruited 23 Central Asian students. It enlarged its training programme and initiated a new research project, Oral History of Independent Tajikistan. (OSCE)*





## Centre in Dushanbe



*The Centre in Dushanbe continued its support for Tajikistan with a balanced and comprehensive approach to security in all three dimensions. In a high-level task force meeting and through an open call for ideas the Centre intensified its dialogue with the Government and civil society to jointly set the course for challenges in the areas of political dialogue, security, economic development, environmental protection, democratization, media development and gender equality.*

### Politico-military dimension activities

**Political dialogue and civic education.** In co-operation with the Public Council of Tajikistan, the Centre organized 10 meetings of the Social Partnership Club to stimulate dialogue on current issues among the government, political parties and civil society. Civic Education Summer Camps raised awareness about democratization and human rights among high school pupils and university students.

**Police assistance.** The Centre supported the dog training centre of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. During an OSCE fact-finding visit, agreement was reached with the Ministry that a joint needs assessment mission would examine police education and reform in 2008.

**Small arms and light weapons and conventional ammunition.** The Centre reached the second phase of its

programme to dispose of explosives, refurbish storage sites for small arms and light weapons and construct storage sites for conventional ammunition. It completed the disposal of all Surplus Rocket Boosters C-75.

The Centre supports nine manual mine clearance sections, 12 mine detector dog teams and one survey team in Tajikistan. Its partner for the implementation of demining, the Fondation Suisse de Deminage, cleared a record 635,000 square meters of land, destroyed more than 2,106 antipersonnel mines and three antitank mines. This total more than doubles the amount destroyed in 2006. In addition, 740 cluster munitions and unexploded ordnance were located and destroyed. The new OSCE pilot project for the resurvey of Tajikistan's mine-contaminated areas has resulted in the reclassification of 18 square kilometers of previously suspected mined land as land available for economic activities.

**Border security.** The Centre, together with the Secretariat Borders Unit, continued consultations with the Tajik Government on the development of border projects in response to the Government's July request for assistance in strengthening border management and security, with special emphasis on the Tajik-Afghan border. In November, three large projects were submitted to participating States for extra-budgetary funding, related to development of a national strategy for border management, a training programme on border patrol programming and leadership as well as customs assistance.



↑ An OSCE mine detector dog team undergoes refresher training. (OSCE/Alexander Sadikov)

↑ An OSCE mine clearer learns render safe procedures for a type PMN2 anti-personnel mine. (OSCE/Alexander Sadikov)

## Economic and environmental dimension activities

**Encouraging economic development.** In support of the host country's efforts to encourage the development of small and agricultural businesses, the Centre continued to assist a network of resource and training centres for small businesses and farms in 10 locations throughout Tajikistan. The International Finance Corporation provided some specialized training using the OSCE centres. The four regional resource centres for potential labour migrants expanded their services, adding job placement to their information and counseling activities. A network of information centres for entrepreneurs wanting to engage in trans-border trade was launched in late November with a Business Forum for Tajik and Afghan business people.

**Promoting the implementation of the Aarhus Convention.** The OSCE-established Aarhus Centre in Dushanbe continued to serve as a platform for co-operation on environmental issues and provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment Protection in finalizing the new domestic Law on Nature Protection and five by-laws.

**Assisting in developing environmental strategies.** The Centre helped the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment Protection to develop two sectoral environmental strategies addressing air and land degradation, respectively, and further supported efforts by the Government to improve its national environmental strategy.

**Environmental awareness raising.** The Centre helped reduce the negative human impact on Tajikistan's natural environment by supporting awareness-raising campaigns on national television, radio and other mass media with a potential target audience of nearly 51 per cent of the national population.

**National Green Patrols movement.** The Centre supported a campaign by 16,000 young people organized in so-called Green Patrols to raise environmental awareness among school children and university students. It also supported the Patrols' activities, including the planting of more than 70,000 trees to stop erosion.



## Human dimension activities

**Human rights and democratization.** The Centre organized several large roundtables on human rights and democratization, including the *Preparatory Human Dimension Implementation Meeting* and a meeting on the draft Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Unions. It held bi-monthly meetings of the penitentiary reform working group and attempted to engage the Government on access to prisons. Together with its main partner, the Bureau of Human Rights and Rule of Law, it implemented projects on property rights and offered specialized training in human rights for university students.

**Fostering the democratization of the media.** In two international conferences, the Centre advocated for a transparent and smooth licensing process for electronic media and for self-regulation of the media. It initiated research and analysis to better understand the outreach, profitability and quality problems of print media in the country. The Centre also continued to offer technical support to independent print media. Two independent newspapers in southern Tajikistan and one Uzbek language journal including its supplement for children improved their quality of print and their print runs rose more than two-and-one-half times as the Centre began to gradually introduce steps toward more sustainability and profitability.

**Gender.** The Centre initiated co-operation with the lower house of the Parliament to help draft gender-sensitive legislation and improve the mechanisms for implementing the gender-equality law.

The Centre assisted the State Employees Training Institute and the Teachers Training Institute to mainstream gender into the work of government employees and teachers.

It supported 10 women's resource centres in their provision of free psychological and legal support to victims of violence. Special attention was paid to empowering women, improving girls' literacy, building the capacity of lawyers and psychologists, strengthening the network of crisis centres and co-operating with the state-run crisis centres.

**Anti-trafficking.** The Centre helped to raise the awareness of youth about the risks and consequences of human trafficking and about the recruitment methods used by traffickers. It supported the participation of officials and non-governmental organizations in an international and an interregional conference on victims' protection and the role of the national rapporteur in fostering co-operation and capacity building.

*Head of Centre:*

*Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin from 15 June, succeeding Ambassador Alain Couanon whose mandate ended in September 2006*

*Approved budget: € 3,937,600*

[www.osce.org/dushanbe](http://www.osce.org/dushanbe)



↑ Social workers of the women's shelter Gulrukhsor counsel a victim of domestic violence. (Gulrukhsor women's shelter/ Nigina Mansurova)

↑ As the economy has grown, so have housing disputes. Here household possessions are forcibly removed by order of Dushanbe's City Court. (OSCE/Payam Foroughi)

← The OSCE supported the Tajik Government in its introduction of an ecological textbook for Tajikistan's secondary schools. (OSCE)



# Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan



*The Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan expanded its activities in a number of key areas. In the politico-military dimension, work focused on the fight against terrorism and efforts to provide support for democratization initiatives. The Project Co-ordinator launched a new initiative to contribute to improved police training in Uzbekistan. Economic and environmental activities were in support of the Government's efforts to develop commercial arbitration, reform the farming sector and improve environmental education in schools. In the human dimension, the Project Co-ordinator continued to provide assistance to the ombudsman institution and the National Association of Non-Governmental and Non-Commercial Organizations in Uzbekistan.*

## Politico-military dimension activities

### Activities against terrorism and organized crime.

As part of its programme to help the Government of Uzbekistan to address the threats of terrorism and organized crime, the Project Co-ordinator, in co-operation with the National Dog Training Centre, initiated a four-month regional training course aimed at improving police dog services in Central Asia.

The Project Co-ordinator also worked to improve national travel document security. The Office conducted a *National Workshop on Travel Document Security* in Tashkent in March and supported Uzbekistan's efforts to upgrade its travel documents in compliance with international standards.

**Policing reform.** The Project Co-ordinator launched a long-term project to help the Police Academy of Uzbekistan to improve police training in the country. The project focuses on contributing to the modernization of police education methodology and makes use of best practices in the OSCE region. The goal of the training is to create a police force that is truly able to ensure security and effectively preserve peace and public order in line with OSCE practices.

**Democratization.** To promote public awareness of the role of political parties, the Project Co-ordinator organized two international expert roundtables with the participation of all the registered political parties of Uzbekistan. The Co-ordinator commissioned the publication of a *Handbook on Political Parties* and a *Handbook on the Senate*, with the aim of improving citizens' access to information and supporting their participation in the democratic process.

## Economic and environmental dimension activities

### Economic activities

The Project Co-ordinator, in co-operation with the Chamber of Commerce and the Legal Problems Research Centre, a non-governmental organization,

➤ The technique of pursuit and arrest using a single dog is demonstrated at the closing ceremony of the regional dog handling training course on 28 August. (OSCE/Oleg Zaichenko)

➤ Demonstration of a new dog handling technique which enables dogs to work simultaneously without hindering each other during capture. (OSCE/Oleg Zaichenko)

➔ Trainers from the OSCE partner organization Farmers Association of Uzbekistan teach farmers new skills in a training event in Ferghana city in August. (OSCE/Anne Suotula)





### Combating organized crime and terrorism

*Twenty-two police dog handlers from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan participated in a four-month regional training course on combating organized crime and terrorism organized by the Project Co-ordinator with support from the OSCE Centres in Astana, Bishkek and Ashgabad and in co-operation with the Uzbekistan State Customs Committee's National Dog Training Centre. Each participant received a German shepherd dog and equipment to be used at their duty stations. Instructors from Austria and Russia led the sessions.*

conducted training sessions for judges and entrepreneurs in the regions of Uzbekistan to support the implementation of a newly adopted law on commercial arbitration.

The Project Co-ordinator launched a new multi-year project in support of social initiatives in Uzbekistan. This project provides training for social workers and contributes to increased awareness among the population of social protection activities in the country. The Project Co-ordinator also initiated a project to generate additional income in rural areas through the promotion of eco-tourism.

In the economic and environmental sphere, the Project Co-ordinator supported Uzbekistan's ongoing agricultural reform by assisting and training farmers on environmental protection and legal and financial matters. The Office developed a handbook on farming and distributed it to farmers throughout the country.

### Environmental activities

The Project Co-ordinator trained school teachers and assisted in developing a school curriculum on environmental protection and water conservation issues.

As a follow-up to the 15<sup>th</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, the Project Co-ordinator, with the support of the Spanish Chairmanship and the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, facilitated a conference on combating land degradation and soil contamination in the Central Asian region. The event, held in Tashkent in October, aimed at achieving practical results in the field by means of technology transfer in the future.

### Human dimension activities

**Assistance to the ombudsman institution.** The Project Co-ordinator continued to assist the ombudsman institution, helping to train personnel and raise public awareness of the institution. The Project Co-ordinator also facilitated a study tour to Spain and Russia to learn from international experiences and practices in this field.

**Support for legal education.** The Project Co-ordinator provided methodological and practical support to teachers and students of law. The Office organized a training course on OSCE and United Nations standards in the fields of human rights and the rule of law in May, paying special attention to OSCE principles and commitments. It also developed an Internet site on legal education in Uzbekistan.

**Assistance to the National Association of Non-governmental and Non-Commercial Organizations.** The Project Co-ordinator provided a series of training courses to the staff of the National Association of Non-Governmental and Non-Commercial Organizations of Uzbekistan, and organized a tour for the study of best practices in the development of non-governmental organizations in France and Slovakia. Together with the Association, the Project Co-ordinator examined the current state of the development of the non-governmental organization sector in Uzbekistan and considered its future perspectives. These efforts are part of the Project Co-ordinator's long-term strategy to support the development of civil society in Uzbekistan.

*Project Co-ordinator:  
Ambassador Istvan Venczel from December 27,  
succeeding Ambassador Miroslav Jenca whose mandate  
ended on 15 September  
Approved budget: € 1,611,500  
[www.osce.org/tashkent](http://www.osce.org/tashkent)*

