

OSCE

NEWSLETTER

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe



The new CiO, Foreign Minister Geoana (centre), with the Head of Romania's OSCE Delegation, Livi Bota (left), and deputy, Traian Chebeleu, at the Permanent Council

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Romanian Chairman-in-Office outlines OSCE priorities for 2001

Minister places renewed emphasis on individual human rights

The incoming Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Romania's Foreign Minister, Mircea Dan Geoana, used his inaugural address to the first Permanent Council of 2001 to outline his country's priorities for its period of office. His speech to the permanent representatives of the 55 participating States, delivered on 11 January, stressed the need to make a greater collective effort on behalf of the individual, without neglecting the traditional OSCE pri-

orities of conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation.

"We must work to promote open and tolerant societies, to eliminate threats to the safety of our citizens... we intend to focus attention on issues such as trafficking in human beings, children in armed conflict, the integration of refugees and displaced persons", he said.

The Foreign Minister, whose appearance in Vienna marked his first engagement outside Romania since joining the

new Government, said he was well aware of the huge task ahead in pushing forward with the OSCE's heavy agenda.

He paid a fulsome tribute to his immediate predecessor as CiO, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. He praised her clear and resolute leadership and welcomed her participation in the OSCE Ministerial Troika, comprised of past, present and future CiOs and which provides advice and support to the incumbent Chairman.

He also welcomed Portugal, which

assumes the Chairmanship in 2002, into the Troika, and thanked Norway, as it leaves the Troika, for its contribution to the OSCE over the past three years.

Looking to the period ahead, Foreign Minister Geoana said that under Romania's Chairmanship, new ideas for strengthening political dialogue between OSCE States would be developed to put political will to the test in practical ways.

"We want the OSCE to be known as the Organization which produces concrete results, not only resolutions. Results which could impact in a positive way on people's lives. Let's not just talk about co-operation and partnership. Let's do something about it. Let's see a real effort to implement OSCE commitments."

He added: "We want to speed up the OSCE's response to nascent conflict situations. We want to improve the efficiency of our crisis management capability. We want to ensure consistency in post-conflict rehabilitation. There are a number of regions where the OSCE needs to continue its ongoing activities; others where new activity is called for; yet others where we must be imaginative in looking for new solutions to old problems."

He singled out the return of Yugoslavia to the OSCE family, sealed at the Ministerial Council on 27 November last year, as a major breakthrough for democracy, providing a continuous space of security and stability in South-east Europe.

Remaining tasks

Nevertheless, the CiO recognized that much remained to be done in the Balkans: for example on Kosovo, in line with the UN Security Council Resolution 1244. At the same time, Bosnia and Herzegovina needed continuing help with creating the right conditions to assume responsibility for its own national institutions.

The OSCE would also support Croa-

tia's progress in meeting its international commitments and achieving its goal of becoming a model for the region, in terms of building democratic institutions, respect for human rights and good neighbourliness.

Implementation of Articles II and IV of Annex 1-B of the Dayton/Paris Peace Accords would be furthered, alongside successful negotiations on regional stability under Article V. Increased intra-regional co-operation, important for the consolidation of political and economic stability in the region, would be pursued through the Stability Pact.

Turning from the Balkans to unresolved problems in other parts of the OSCE area, he said the Chairmanship would entrust Portugal, as a Troika member, with the responsibility for seeking a political settlement of the situation in the Transdniestrian region of Moldova, while Romania would retain overall responsibility for ensuring that OSCE commitments are met in full, including those agreed at Istanbul.

**More information
about the activities
and programme of the
Chairmanship can
be found on the
OSCE website:**

www.osce.org/cio

The CiO would press for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Georgia, also in accordance with the Istanbul decisions, and would continue the step-by-step approach with regard to the situation in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

He looked forward to a political solution to the Chechen conflict, and intended to appoint a Romanian ambassador to head the Assistance Group to Chechnya. To the south in the Caucasus, he hoped to find a way to stimulate the

peace process in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Chairmanship's goals for the five participating States of Central Asia were to work together to enhance the development of the rule of law, civil society and the rights of the individual; to promote economic prosperity and environmental security, and to explore the most appropriate ways to ensure security of borders against external threats.

In Belarus, the CiO wanted the OSCE to make a real contribution to the democratization of the country, and he planned a visit to discuss a framework for future co-operation between the Belarus authorities, the Head of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group, and OSCE Institutions.

Strengthening security

Reflecting on the OSCE's approach to security, he offered support for the Organization's role in the economic and environmental dimension, acting as a political catalyst to identify potential economic or environmental trouble-spots and mobilizing states and other organizations into taking concrete action.

But he tempered expectations by emphasizing that the OSCE's ability to respond to crises and potential conflicts depended on the mechanisms and tools available to it:

"We must strengthen our operational capability. Our field missions need resources to be effective. Let's get REACT up and running as soon as possible. Let's see more participating States contributing personnel to OSCE missions."

At the same time, he stressed that strengthening co-operation with the OSCE's international partners, at the State and the organizational level, would remain of major importance. The OSCE would also need to work in tandem with the NGO (or non-governmental organization) community, whom it regarded as valuable partners.

“Making a difference”

The new Chairman-in-Office wants to bring the Organization closer to the daily lives of the citizens in its participating States

At his Press Conference on 11 January, the Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, elaborated on his earlier statement to the OSCE Permanent Council, telling journalists that at the start of new Millennium, the Organization had a unique opportunity to become a more visible and useful player in the Euro-Atlantic architecture.

“But it also has to adapt to the new realities of today’s world of globalization and new threats to our common interests and aspirations.”

The key words for the Chairmanship would be “pragmatism” and “efficiency”, he said.

He also singled out for mention the economic dimension of the OSCE: “We realize that democracy without prosperity is not always granted. We really need to do something about organized crime, about transparency in governance, we have to find new ways to respond to the evils of today’s and tomorrow’s world,” he said.

The Foreign Minister expressed his strong belief that there were ways to make the Organization more efficient, more transparent, and closer to the citizens and the media:

“Something which will be a major task for us – in trying to prove that the OSCE is really up the ambitions of the

Chairmanship, of the Troika members and of the member States – is the entering into the operational phase of REACT” (Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams).



Foreign Minister Geoana, the new CiO, and his representative, Ambassador Constantin Ene (left), outline to the press Romania’s priorities for the OSCE in 2001

“This will really become a new instrument in implementing what the OSCE is best prepared for doing: early warning, crisis prevention, and post-conflict rehabilitation.”

Information deficit

Looking at ways of improving information, he said that the Organization possessed complex and unique quali-

ties, of which only OSCE pundits and specialists in the media were aware.

“Unfortunately, this is not the case for the public. Unfortunately, this is not the case for the media. And we want to

use our presidency, we hope in a professional, active, transparent dialogue with the media – international media, local media, national media – to show that the OSCE is really an instrument that you can count upon, and the taxpayers of our participating States should be relaxed that we are spending their money with efficiency and transparency.”

In response to questions, he stressed the desirability of showing that the Organization could make a difference to the lives of the citizens in participating States.

“When it comes to freedom of expression, when it comes to personal safety, when it comes to other threats to his or her daily life, we really want

to bring the OSCE closer to the citizen, and try to see how we can do something less abstract and mathematical in the language of our resolutions.”

“My personal feeling,” he added, “is that we are moving in the right direction, and I hope that in Bucharest at the end of the year, we’ll have the Organization again reaching consensual decisions about the future of our institutions”.

“A light in the darkness of repression”

Extracts from the address¹ by Mircea Dan Geoana, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania and OSCE Chairman-in-Office, to the Permanent Council, 11 January 2001

“The OSCE has come a long way in the last 25 years. The list of its achievements is impressive. It has become a respected and necessary player on the European political and security scene. It has shown that it can react quickly to fast-moving events in Europe. It can respond to the needs of its members. Of course the OSCE also has its critics. But let us ask ourselves: what could replace its very special and unique nature? Its flexibility; its comprehensive geographical coverage; the many-faceted faces of security which it aims to promote; its quiet diplomacy; most importantly, the spirit of co-operation between its members which guides all its activities.

And let us not forget the OSCE is not some faceless body of bureaucracy. It is our countries, our governments, our peoples, and us.

The nature of the OSCE has changed significantly with the development of our conflict prevention role and the exploration of new avenues of co-operation. This is right. Europe has changed. Democracy has taken root where it was once forbidden to grow. The CSCE's² contribution to that process should not be underestimated. Where would many of our countries, our citizens, be now, my own included, without the Helsinki Final Act? For many individuals it was a beacon which provided a small light in the darkness of repression. For some, it was a protective shield.

We should not forget that. We, the participating States, our governments, must make a greater collective effort on behalf of the individual: to respect that

individual's human rights, to encourage access to prosperity, social justice and equal opportunity, to open a path away from violence arising from ethnic hatred or organized crime. We shall not allow intolerance to flourish. This requires a political commitment from all OSCE States and a readiness to face up to difficult decisions.

My country has experienced firsthand many of the problems now facing some OSCE States. We lived under a repressive regime for half a century. We have struggled with the introduction of democratic values and a market economy. We know what it is like. But we are laying the ghosts of our past and focusing our energy on building a brighter and better future and confronting the perils of tomorrow. We believe our experiences will be directly relevant to solving problems elsewhere in the OSCE region.

New ideas for dialogue

Under our Chairmanship, we want to develop new ideas for strengthening political dialogue between OSCE States; to put political will to the test in practical ways. We want the OSCE to be known as the Organization which produces concrete results, not only resolutions. Results which could impact in a positive way on people's lives. Let's not just talk about co-operation and partnership. Let's do something about it. Let's see a real effort to implement OSCE commitments. Let's see more constructive dialogue leading to action...

We acknowledge that OSCE alone is not going to find solutions to these issues. We need to work in tandem with other

organizations, and with the NGO community, valuable partners whose experience and views will be of enormous benefit to our work. There is room for improvement in our co-operation with the NGO community...

And we need to make maximum use of the rich resource available to us in the form of the OSCE Institutions: the Secretary General and his staff, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Economic Coordinator, the Representative on Freedom of the Media, not to mention the OSCE Missions. All of them perform important tasks. They work towards a common goal. But there is scope for more concerted action...

I welcome the contribution of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, especially in the promotion of parliamentary democracy and civil society... We will contemplate further co-operation with this important body, with the aim of strengthening the OSCE as a whole.

We must improve co-operation between the OSCE and other European and Euro-Atlantic institutions, according to the Platform for Co-operative Security, in our noble pursuit of a peaceful, prosperous and undivided Europe. The OSCE should be pragmatic, concrete and ready to explore new avenues in this respect. Complementarity, compatibility and synergy should be our guide.”

¹ The full text of this speech and a curriculum vitae of the Minister can be found on the OSCE website: www.osce.org/cio

² Editor's note: the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, as the OSCE was known before 1995.

Yugoslavia Mission poses first major task for restructured Conflict Prevention Centre

Last June's Permanent Council decision is now close to full implementation

These are hectic days for the staff of the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC). Not only is the team busy with filling the last remaining open positions – which means an endless trail of job interviews and evaluation discussions – but it also faces its first serious challenge of the new year – the establishment of the new Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Budget lines and staffing plans are being drafted, memoranda drawn up and sent around for review and approval, and finally a team has been travelling to Belgrade to assess the needs on the ground and to facilitate the smooth launch of this latest OSCE presence.

“This is the first big task for our team since its re-organization”, says Marton Krasznai, Director of the CPC, “and it will show very clearly the important role the CPC plays in the efficient and timely planning and establishment of new missions and field activities”.

Operation Centre

It was just over six months ago, at the end of June 2000, that the Permanent Council adopted Decision 364, calling for a restructuring of the OSCE Secretariat to enable it ‘to be better prepared to meet the number of challenges likely to confront the Organization in the coming years’, in the words of the decision (see *OSCE Newsletter* 9/2000).

One of the main structural changes within the Secretariat was aimed at significantly improving the Organization's rapid reaction capacity, and this specifically required some new operational formula for the CPC.

“Three main areas were affected by this decision”, says Ambassador Krasznai: “an Operation Centre needed to be set up, and changes had to be made in the former Mission Liaison Section and in the Situation/Communication Room”.

The idea of an Operation Centre

on 4 September. Its mandate encompasses three distinct tasks:

- to help identify crisis areas by closely liaising with other international agencies involved in crisis-management and conflict-prevention activities ;
- to serve as a planning cell for future missions and field operations ;
- and to act as the co-ordination point during the initial mobilization and subsequent deployment of any future field operations mandated by the OSCE Permanent Council.



A morning briefing in the Situation Room of the CPC

within the OSCE Secretariat was first launched at the Istanbul Summit in November 1999. In the aftermath of the Kosovo crisis and the subsequent establishment of the second Mission in Kosovo, it was recognized that the OSCE needed to considerably improve its capability to deal with the timely and efficient planning and deployment of new field operations.

After a preparation phase, the Operation Centre, also called “OpsCen” in CPC-speak, was finally up and running

It is especially this latter task that the CPC is fulfilling these days – drawing up a finely-tuned plan for the deployment of the new OSCE Mission to Yugoslavia.

“Now, with the appointment in December of the new head of the OpsCen, Tim Isles (who had already initiated the work of the Centre during a four-month secondment in 2000), we shall be soon at full strength”, says

Fredrik Schiller, Deputy Director of the CPC: “A total of five persons will work in the Centre: a head of centre and planner, a military liaison officer, a resources planner, a police advisor and a secretary”.

Beyond its function as focal point for new field activities, the OpsCen also fulfils the important mandate of deepening interaction with other international organizations, as called for in the Istanbul-mandated Platform for Co-operative security.

“Our team is an instrument of the OSCE to liaise more directly and more regularly with those international agencies that have an operational mandate, such as the United Nations, the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization”, explains Mr. Schiller. “This will enable it to carry out another of the functions that was given to it at the Istanbul Summit – to improve the Organization’s early warning capabilities”.

Mission Programme Section

Following its restructuring and renaming during 2000, the Mission Programme Section (MPS) has assumed its role as primary point of contact on all OSCE matters related to missions and field activities within the Secretariat. The MPS was tasked with overseeing and ensuring focused follow-up efforts in respect of all Secretariat activities in support of the implementation of Missions’ mandates.

Furthermore, at the request of the Chairmanship, MPS staff have also assisted with technical support to political consultations and discussions on Mission mandate issues.

According to Mr. Schiller, the Mission Programme Officers – in accordance with the renaming of the Section previously known as Mission Liaison – fulfil a double function: “to support the missions in implementing their mandate” and “to support the CiO”. With this, they now entirely fill their added mandate of being the single point of contact for co-ordination.

Strengthened by the addition of three junior mission programme officers, the Section has successfully assisted in these tasks, inter alia, by actively participating in the work of Secretariat task forces on Kosovo, the Caucasus and Central Asia, by taking an active role in the programme budget process and by carrying out several

visits to Missions and field activities.

The Section has also taken an active part in backstopping the co-ordination of regional initiatives and co-operation between Missions themselves. The MPOs have, for example, organized and ensured follow-up to regional Heads of Mission meetings and co-ordinated task forces set up on specific areas, such as those for Central Asia and for the Caucasus.

These task forces usually include representatives from the OSCE’s Mission Support and Mission Staffing sections, as well as the legal advisor, representatives from communications, press and public information, and the Chairmanship Delegation, whenever appropriate.

They also involve the Senior Security Co-ordinator, who has the role of ensuring the integrity of the Mission’s own security. During 2000, he was fully engaged in harmonizing security procedures in all Missions, proposing additional security measures in many of them. He has now visited the majority of the Missions, including all those covered by war-risk insurance.

Situation Room

Another aspect of the CPC that was affected by last year’s changes was the Situation and Communication Room (Sit/Com), which experienced a strengthening in its capacities. The Sit/Com room underpins the CPC and Secretariat-wide communication links with the Missions (*see OSCE Newsletter 10/2000*) by being available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including monitoring elections and the media.

One of its main tasks is to provide an emergency response capability, as demonstrated by its active assistance in a dozen medical evacuations from field activities during the year.

“The Sit/Com Room is the emergency backstopping for the work of the

missions”, says Mr. Schiller. “In 2000, its staff assisted with 16 medical evacuations from the missions and field activities, mostly from Kosovo and Bosnia & Herzegovina. This clearly demonstrates that the Sit/Com Room team has proven its value.”

Monitoring events

The Sit/Com Room also supports the MPS by acting as a point of distribution of reports to the Chairmanship, the OSCE Troika, etc. In addition, it plays a valuable role in the monitoring of events, especially during emergencies, in the collection of background information and in the provision of assistance in the preparation and holding of focused briefings in the CPC.

In this, the Sit/Com Room directly assists the Operation Centre whenever required. This is operationally important during the build-up of a new Mission. The CPC is currently in the process of hiring contracted Duty Officers for the Room.

Another important role of the Sit/Com Room is linking up with its counterparts in other partner organizations of the OSCE, such as the United Nations Department for Peacekeeping in New York, the Situation Centre in the General Secretariat of the European Union and its counterpart in the NATO HQ, near Brussels.

Finally, although not subject to last year’s restructuring, mention should be made of the important role that the Support Unit for the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Confidence and Security Building Measures was playing in 2000, says the Director of the CPC, Ambassador Krasznai.

“The best recent example of these tasks in the framework of security co-operation is the paper on small arms and light weapons which was prepared throughout 2000 with the intensive assistance of an expert in our section.”

Bringing a measure of democracy to prisons

How the ODIHR helps to advance reforms in the prison system by training prison officials

By Jens-Hagen Eschenbaecher

“Show me your prisons and I shall say in which society you live.” Linking the conditions in prisons with democracy, this quote by Winston Churchill could be the motto of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights’ work in the field of prison reform.

“Prisoners belong to the most vulnerable groups in a society”, says Michael Meyer, an ODIHR Adviser co-ordinating the Office’s prison reform programme in South-Eastern Europe. “In prisons you have maximum influence of the state on the individual with only limited control mechanisms.”

Reforming prison systems also contributes to conflict prevention. In particular, in fragile transition countries, crisis situations in prisons such as hunger strikes or riots can easily turn into a general political crisis and instability. However, due to limited resources prison reform programmes are rarely among the policy priorities in transition countries.

The ODIHR carries out prison reform projects in a number of OSCE countries. South-eastern Europe is a regional focus of the ODIHR’s work in this field. In Croatia, for instance, the ODIHR has recently concluded a prison reform programme which included assistance in the establishment of a national training college for prison personnel and a series of training workshops for the teachers

at the college and for prison officials.

The new prison college in the Croatian town of Lipovica, opened in October 1999, has been very successful in



A Croatian journalist conducts a mock interview with a prison governor at a training workshop for prison personnel

training a new generation of prison officials. All newly recruited prison personnel go through a three-month training programme which includes courses on the human rights of prisoners as well as mechanisms for dealing with crisis situations.

In Croatia, the prison system has reached such a high standard that the ODIHR now increasingly focuses on using the Croatian experiences with reforming the prison system as a model for similar reform programmes in other transition countries within the OSCE area.

“In line with the ODIHR’s general policy of identifying best practices in transition countries and making them

available to others, we have already organized training visits for prison officials from other states of South-Eastern Europe to Croatia”, said Mr. Meyer.

“Training of prison staff is absolutely crucial”, says Peer Colliander, a former prison governor from Sweden who works for the ODIHR as an expert. “Prison officers have enormous power vis-à-vis the prisoners in their daily work. It is our experience that well-trained officers are likely to treat prisoners well and respect their human rights.

They also tend to create a positive working atmosphere among themselves which in turn has very positive effects on the prison conditions as a whole.”

The ODIHR advised on the curriculum and administrative issues, and conducted training for the college’s trainers.

“We learn here how to cope with all the problems we will face in our daily work in the prisons and how to communicate with the prisoners”, said Mirela Lizacić-Mundjer, a social worker and future

prison official participating in the current training programme. “What I particularly like here is the friendly atmosphere and the team spirit among the trainees.”

Better relations with the public

Increasing the transparency of prisons is another focus of the ODIHR assistance projects. In many transition countries, prisons had been completely closed off from the public. Consequently, both the prison management and the media have little experience with dealing with each other, and often there is an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion between both sides.

“It is in the interest of the prisons

themselves to improve their relations with the media”, Mr. Colliander told an ODIHR training workshop in Zagreb, held in December. One day of the workshop was entirely given over to this topic.

“Prison governors often complain about the aggressiveness of journalists and a lack of objectivity in media reports about prisons. After this workshop I think they understand better that it is the legitimate role of the media to inquire and to present views that are not necessarily the views of the prison management. Often behind the alleged lack of objectivity is not bad will but simply lack of knowledge on the part of the journalists.”

As a result of the workshop, the prison governors, who represented 22 out of 24 prisons in Croatia, agreed to improve their relations with the media in an attempt to increase the transparency of their prisons.

Another regional focus of the ODIHR’s work in the field is in Central Asia. Earlier in 2000, the ODIHR organized a similar seminar as part of its prison reform project in Kazakhstan, which brought together Kazakh prison officials and journalists for the first time. It was very successful in establishing lines of communication between the prison system and the media.

“The seminar was characterized by an openness between the two sides that seemed to surprise even themselves”, said Donald Bisson, the ODIHR Adviser in charge of the Office’s prison reform project in Kazakhstan. “Both sides were encouraged by the discussion and are eager to continue the dialogue.”

During the seminar, the journalists were allowed to visit a prison, and the prison authorities promised that they would grant the media greater access to prisons and prisoners in the future.

Jens-Hagen Eschenbaecher is Public Affairs Officer with the ODIHR

Burg Schlaining to host more mission preparation training for the OSCE

After a successful pilot course in co-operation with the OSCE Training Section, a programme of similar courses in 2001 has been agreed with the ASPR

By Gudrun Steinacker

For two weeks in October, the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution (ASPR) in Stadtschlaining held a pilot course for Mission Preparation Training for the OSCE, organized in close co-operation with the Organization’s Training Section. It was the first such course in the ASPR, housed in Burg Schlaining, which has a long record for generic and specialized mission preparation training only for the OSCE.

It followed the concept of Mission Preparation Training of the OSCE according to the Training Standards for Preparation of OSCE Mission Staff (available at www.osce.org/training) developed in the framework of REACT (the Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams concept). As laid out in Training Standards, issues covered provided an overview of

OSCE Institutions and field activities, human rights, democratization, cultural awareness, fieldwork techniques and safety and security issues.

Additional topics included co-operation with other international organizations, NGOs, the police and military, and mine awareness. Skill-oriented training sessions and role-plays in the afternoons succeeded lectures in the mornings. The 28 participants from OSCE participating States, including 11 national professional staff members from OSCE Missions and field operations, ensured a highly professional auditorium as well as a profound feedback.

Basic training

The evaluation of the course proved it as very useful and recommendable for further mission preparation training. With

some changes and adjustments, as proposed by the participants and organizers, this successful pilot course could serve as an excellent basic training for (future) OSCE mission members.

The ASPR has therefore agreed with the Training Section of the OSCE to offer two more basic courses in June and September 2001. The first specialized course, most likely on project management, has already been planned. A detailed report on the pilot course has been published by the ASPR. The report and the programme for 2001 can be found under www.aspr.ac.at or ordered by e-mail at aspr@aspr.ac.at.

Gudrun Steinacker is Co-ordinator of Training and Capacity Building at the OSCE

OSCE hosts field mission internship programme for Central Asian citizens

Seven young Central Asian interns visited the Secretariat and an OSCE mission recently to gain valuable practical experience

By Marina Bartl

“The duties of OSCE mission members working in the field are very difficult. There are so many questions to answer,” said Burkhan Mamatkulov, a junior diplomat from Uzbekistan, referring to the work of OSCE human rights officers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is one of the “lessons learned” that a group of seven young Central Asian participants in the OSCE Human Rights Training Course and Field Mission Internship Programme identified after the seven-week course.

This newly-developed human rights training and mission internship programme, funded by Norway, provided citizens of Central Asian states the opportunity to gain theoretical and practical experience in the field of human rights. The central aim of the programme, organized by the OSCE and the Norwegian Institute of Human Rights, was to qualify young citizens from Central Asia for future assignments with OSCE Missions.

A five-day human rights training course held in Vienna covered theoretical material, such as international human rights laws and methodology for monitoring. The interns then spent six weeks working with human rights officers of

the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina at Field Offices and Regional Centres throughout the country to gain

election procedures and the involvement of the international community.

The host human rights officers in the field offices and regional centres of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina assigned specific tasks to the interns. Some of the programme participants were able to accompany the human rights officers to meetings with local authorities and on duty in the field for a thorough impression of the activities involved in human rights work. Several were able to attend meetings of the property commission and listen first-hand to the cases and problems of internally displaced persons.

One intern, Agadjan Burbanov, a lawyer from Turkmenistan working with the OSCE Office in Ashgabat, even reviewed the law in Bosnia and Herzegovina for protection from domestic violence during his stay at the Tuzla Regional Centre.

Election observers

The group of interns for Central Asia arrived in Bosnia and Herzegovina a week before the 11 November general elections were held. A number of interns worked as elections observers or visited polling stations on election day. “It was useful to observe the counting process in Bosnia, to see how elections are conducted in a different country, in com-



Tatyana Lee (right) and Mukhit Yeleuov, two of the interns from Central Asia, review their trip to BiH

practical experience.

After spending six weeks in the field, the interns felt an understanding for the issues and problems in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mukhit Yeleuov from Kazakhstan said, “it was useful to see that a new political system was being born, and interesting to speak with the international staff working there.” Intense discussions about the nature of the political situation in Bosnia and the role of the international community ensued after the interns completed the programme.

All participants of the course demonstrated a real understanding of the problems faced by the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, human rights work, the

parison to the procedures at home,” said Mukhit Yeleuov.

Nadira Tuliaganova from Uzbekistan reported that she particularly appreciated the experiences gained related to women’s issues. The programmes of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina on women and policy, and women and education were an important part of her internship. “It was useful to learn about such projects in OSCE Missions, and to see specifically what they do,” said Nadira.

Many of the interns reported about the nature of their Central Asian – Balkan cross-cultural experiences. Tatyana Lee, a young Korean from Kyrgyzstan, said she became somewhat of a local celebrity during her stay at the Travnik Field Office. Soon, everyone in the town knew that she was working with the OSCE, and showed recognition instead of surprise while passing by on the street. Another intern smiled while remembering that local children in Bosnia asked if he could demonstrate *karate* or *tai-kwon-*

do. Working with the international staff and interacting with locals in Bosnia and Herzegovina proved to be a valuable cross-cultural experience for the participants of the programme, as well as for those who had never met people from Central Asia before.

The OSCE will carefully evaluate the success of the programme and then decide on a continuation next year.

Marina Bartl worked in the OSCE Press and Public Information Section.

OSCE helps Estonian educators study German multilingual education

Trip supports development of practical measures and methods

For six days in November, a group of eight Estonian education specialists had the opportunity to study German multilingual education systems for minorities on a field-trip, organized by the OSCE Mission to Estonia and the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung. The short trip,

financed by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, allowed participants from the Estonian Education Ministry, the Office of the Minister of Ethnic Affairs, and higher education institutions, along with school and kindergarten directors



Members of the group of Estonian educators during their visit to Germany to study examples of multilingual education practice

from the country’s Russian-speaking areas, to gain first-hand practical and theoretical knowledge of multilingual education methodologies applied in several different locations in Germany.

Although there has been a good deal

of progress in recent years in this field in Estonia, there is a widely-shared understanding among educators that the practical measures and methods to be employed need to be further developed. The trip was designed to support this understanding by studying exam-

ples of how bi- and multi-lingual education models are working in other parts of Europe.

The group visited multilingual schools of the Danish minority in the German-Danish border area, Turkish

and other immigrant minorities schools in Berlin, and Sorb kindergarten in Cottbus near the Polish border. They were able to visit kindergartens and schools using both the official state language and a minority language as languages of instruction. In each place they also met teachers, academics and representatives of minorities' and parents' associations.

Experimental schools

According to the participants, one of the most interesting experiences was the visit to experimental Turkish-German schools, where both Turkish and German pupils receive alphabetization simultaneously in two languages by two different native teachers. Some schools had also the practise of involving the mothers actively into the schooling and integration process of the children by offering them language and other courses in schools.

In the meetings with teachers and representatives, multilingual teaching methodologies were explained as systems where minorities have the opportunity to retain studies in their mother tongue while at the same time learning the official language of the country. These meetings resulted in lively discussions where both the merits and demerits of multilingual education were debated. One aspect of these debates revealed that, as the teaching methods are relatively new, there has been limited research conducted on their success. The debates also often drew parallels to the Estonian education system.

Estonian law providing for multilingual education, the amended Law on Basic and Upper-secondary Schools Act, was discussed often. This allows for a multilingual model of education to be developed by the year 2007, where the language of instruction in 60 per cent of

courses is to be Estonian, while the rest of the courses offered use other languages as the language of instruction. Another topic of discussion between the Estonians and their German counterparts was the Estonian State Integration Programme, adopted in March of last year, of which education is one of the main elements.

Follow-up meeting

In the near future, the Mission will organize a follow-up meeting for the participants in co-operation with the Education Ministry. There the participants will have the possibility to compare their experiences with other educators who have gained knowledge from other countries. This will help to use the information in a more productive way to evaluate what Estonia may have to offer with its own experiences to other European states.



News from the field

The OSCE currently has Missions or other field activities in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), Latvia, Skopje (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The following brief reports reflect some of the recent work which these field operations have undertaken.

OSCE commemorates five years work in Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 18 December, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) commemorated five years of successful work in the country. The mission has been working in BiH since December 1995 to assist the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace (the "Dayton Accords"), and has made considerable efforts to foster the country's transition to democracy and to promote human rights. "Having spent nearly two years in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I am

heartened by the progress," said Deputy Head of Mission Dieter Woltmann. "I look forward to the day when there will no longer be a need for an OSCE Mission here, but that day has not yet come, and will remain a distant prospect in the absence of commitment by local authorities to real reform." Among other tasks, the Mission has overseen six elections since 1995, undertaken programmes to foster an independent and pluralistic media, promoted respect for human rights, and implemented arms control and confidence-building measures.

OHR and OSCE Mission to BiH launch property information campaign

The OSCE Mission to BiH, in co-operation with the Office of the High Representative (OHR), has launched a new property information campaign, following up the 'Postovanje/Respect' campaign that ran from March to June last year. The new slogan, *Dosta Je/It's Enough*, was developed as a reaction to the problematic state of affairs one year after the imposition of property laws by the High Representative. The campaign is designed to reflect the frustration felt by

displaced persons, who see the same patterns of obstruction to property law implementation on a daily basis, and targets key groups of occupants, such as people with the means to rent or access to family homes. The campaign is also aimed at problem areas in the current implementation of the property laws, such as the illegal 'privatization' or 'sale' of socially-owned property.

OSCE BiH holds conference on municipal finance programme

Two years after the start of the OSCE's Municipal Infrastructure Finance and Implementation (MIFI) programme in BiH in December 1998, the OSCE Mission held a conference in Sarajevo to review the work of the municipalities in the past 12 months. The event, which took place on 8 and 9 December, highlighted the achievements of the municipalities in the MIFI programme, with particular focus on elements of good governance necessary to public administration in BiH, as well as best-practice examples for the participating municipalities.

Over the course of two years, the MIFI programme has engaged 22 municipalities in intensive training sessions that have paired technical assistance on preparing sustainable capital projects with community participation. The OSCE Head of Mission, Robert Barry, commented that, "too often, local governments have operated independent of the people they should be serving. What the MIFI programme has worked so hard to do is empowering municipal administration by helping to develop the skills needed to serve the people. This is essential in the long-term democratic development of the country."

More than 700 Kosovar journalists trained during 2000 by OMIK

A year of successful training seminars for Kosovo broadcast and print journal-

ists was concluded in December by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK). In partnership with local media, OMIK provided for 730 Kosovar journalists to participate in extensive training seminars, which targeted specific professional needs of journalists and producers. This included skills such as writing news stories and features, interviewing techniques, internet research, news and documentary production, news programme production, on-air presentation, and also journalistic ethics. Special emphasis was placed on training in all aspects of fair and open media coverage of election campaigns. The OSCE team of professional journalist trainers co-ordinated the efforts of international donors as well as provided direct training. Training programmes for 2001 are being developed as the need for qualified staff remains, to familiarize Kosovo media with journalistic and management practices according to European standards.

Kosovo Law Centre hosts seminar on combatting trafficking

In co-operation with the International Organization for Migration, the OSCE-founded Kosovo Law Centre in Pristina hosted its third substantive seminar on trafficking in human beings. The event aimed at raising awareness of this problem in Kosovo, as part of the increasing efforts of the OSCE in combating this crime. The seminar, which focused on the criminological aspects of trafficking, reflected a recent decision taken by the OSCE Ministerial Council in November 2000, calling for further efforts to enhance the OSCE's efforts to combat trafficking.

Almost 3,000 graduates from OSCE Kosovo Police Service School

The 11th class of police cadets graduated from the OSCE-run Kosovo Police Service School on 16 December. They brought to 2,851 the total number of

trainee police officers who have successfully graduated from the school's eight-week long basic training course since it opened in 1999. Class 11 consisted of 312 cadets, of whom 45 represent minority communities in Kosovo. A total of 59 of the group are women. OMIK aims to provide democratically-oriented basic police training for at least 4,000 locally recruited police officers.

OSCE co-organizes Human Rights Conference in Kyrgyzstan

From 9 to 11 December the OSCE Centre in Tashkent, jointly with the OSCE field offices in Osh, Kyrgyzstan and Khujand, Tajikistan, organized a human rights meeting of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Osh, to commemorate International Human Rights Day (celebrated on 10 December). The main purpose of the meeting was to examine the achievements of human rights NGOs over the past decade, as well as steps to be undertaken in the field of promoting human rights knowledge and understanding. Representatives of human rights NGOs, as well as law enforcement bodies from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan participated in the event. They stressed the need for developing co-operation among each other, as well as with the local authorities.

Third phase of border guard training implemented in Kyrgyzstan

The third phase of the ODIHR project on border guard training in Bishkek began implementation on 27 November. Polish experts trained 23 persons, among them people serving at checkpoints and the so-called 'green border' in the mountainous regions. The training focused on the two roles of Border Guard Service: first the protection of the territorial integrity of the state and citizens' rights; and second the prevention of illegal activities. Particular attention was given to reforms in the Pol-

ish Border Guard Service, which transformed it from a military structure under the Ministry of Defense to the 'border police' under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The training was co-sponsored by the International Organization for Migration and carried out with the participation of the Bishkek Migration Management Centre.

Head of OSCE Croatia Mission speaks at convention of refugee associations

Speaking at the Convention of the Unions and Associations of Refugee Croats, Returnees and Settlers in Croatia on 18 December, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Croatia, Bernard Poncet, welcomed the initiative of refugee associations to bring together the various groups active in the country.

"This represents an important step toward healing divisions in this land," said Poncet. He commended the organizers for providing a forum for Croat and Serb communities to address truly existential problems.

"By organizing yourselves in this way, you demonstrate cultural maturity and willingness to work towards a solution for all persons affected by the recent armed conflicts in the region," he said. The conference was organized by the Unions and Associations of Refugee

Croats, Returnees and Settlers in Croatia, with the support and encouragement from the international community, including the OSCE Mission to Croatia.

OSCE Mission to Georgia organizes regional journalists conference

With support from the Swedish government, the OSCE Mission to Georgia organized from 8 to 11 December a conference for Abkhaz, Armenian, Azeri, Georgian, Nagorno-Karabakh and South Ossetian journalists. The event, which represents the fifth meeting of Abkhaz, Georgian and South Ossetian journalists since 1997 in such a forum, focused on the support of journalists' rights, raising of professionalism in journalism, advocating the principle of freedom of speech, and supporting the flow of information free from ideological influence. The participants also discussed the formation of a South Caucasian Journalists' Association. They signed a declaration on the establishment of an International Association of Journalists 'South Caucasus', a non-governmental organization to promote, inter alia, free and independent media in the region as well as to contribute to social and legal protection of journalists. This association will be a vehicle to promote journalistic ethics, defend journalists' rights, and act as focal point for

not only inter-ethnic exchange of news and views. It also aims at increasing contacts across national boundaries in the South Caucasus and thus playing a role in underpinning peace efforts in relation to the unresolved conflicts in the region.

OSCE invites UNEP Head to discuss Albanian environmental problems

Responding to the serious environmental problems existing in Albania, the OSCE Presence in Tirana has suggested to the country's authorities to invite the Executive Director of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), Dr. Klaus Topfer, to Albania. UNEP had published in autumn 2000 a 'Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment' on Albania, and the invitation to Dr. Topfer aimed at raising the awareness for this severe situation.

The environmental problems that Albania suffers from range from chemical contamination of the ground to the disposal of industrial waste and illegal logging. Through its contacts with other international agencies, and in its role as the co-ordinating point for the Friends of Albania, the OSCE Presence is able to bring specialist advice to bear on the problem. It is working with parliamentarians to encourage the Albanian authorities to establish a Ministry of Environment.

IN BRIEF



The then OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Austrian Foreign Minister, **Benita Ferrero-Waldner** expressed her deep concern on

29 November about the increasing tensions in Albania. She condemned the attack on public institutions in Bajram Curri on 28 November, which led to the tragic loss of human lives. "During my visit to Tirana on 13 November, I was

pleased to see that progress had been made in strengthening public security," Ms. Ferrero-Waldner said. "It is of essential importance for Albania that public security is maintained and further enhanced. I call on all sides to show utter restraint and to avoid any use of force. Political goals have to be pursued by democratic and non-violent means", she said.

On 14 December, the **OSCE Permanent Council** adopted a decision to

change the name of the OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia (CALO) to the OSCE Centre in Tashkent. The decision was taken in recognition of the change in the focus of the activities of CALO, taking into account the expanded presence of the OSCE in Central Asia (three OSCE Centres – in Almaty, Ashgabad, and Bishkek – opened in January 1999). The mandate of the new OSCE Centre in Tashkent calls on it to promote the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments and the co-operation of the

Republic of Uzbekistan within the OSCE framework. It will assist in arranging OSCE events and activities in the area and promote information exchange between OSCE bodies and participating States in Central Asia. The **OSCE Secretary General** wrote to President Karimov on 29 December, thanking him for the five good years of co-operation with CALO, noting its contribution to raising the awareness of the OSCE community towards Central Asia.

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the outgoing OSCE CiO, issued a statement on 24 December, on the peaceful and orderly

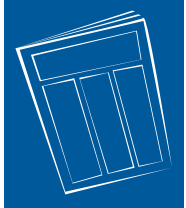
conduct of the Serbian parliamentary elections of 23 December. "I welcome that the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights was invited to observe these elections. The OSCE will deploy all efforts to assist the new Government in its task to overcome the many difficult problems caused by the policies of the previous regime and will establish a Mission in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for this purpose," she declared. For the first time, domestic non-partisan observer organizations were accredited for elections in Serbia, giving thousands of Serbian citizens a transparent perspective of the electoral process.

On 1 January, **Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Dan Geoana** took over the OSCE Chairmanship for 2001. With this change, Norway has left the OSCE Troika, which now consists of Romania, Austria and Portugal, which will take over the Chairmanship in 2002.

Permanent Council

Mustafa Mugezinovic has replaced **Dr. Bisera Turkovic** as Head of the Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the OSCE. Dr. Turkovic was appointed to the position of Minister for European Integration in the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

PRESS PROFILE



New York Times, 6 December

'A Serbian law student went on trial today in the northern Kosovo town of Mitrovica for genocide in the killings of 26 Albanian men during the NATO bombing campaign last year... (He) appeared before a panel consisting mainly of Albanian judges, a practice that has been severely criticized by the OSCE as unfair in such highly charged trials of ethnic-related crimes...

The European security organization, in a damning report released in October, contended that such serious cases should be tried by international panels of judges or a panel on which a majority of judges are from outside.'

Agence-France Presse, 8 December

'Belarus accused the OSCE Thursday of following a political agenda that only hurts former Soviet states. "The international organization's Minsk bureau is becoming more and more (politically)

involved in former Soviet countries at the expense of humanitarian problems, thereby violating its mandate," said Foreign Minister Mikhail Khvastov. "The OSCE has a very specific mandate which calls for the group to co-operate with the Belarusian government.

"We have admitted that we have internal problems so let's discuss them, but don't impose strict demands that we cannot carry out," said Khvastov... The OSCE refused to recognize Belarus parliamentary elections in October, saying they were not free, fair or equal. The OSCE mission has been stationed in Belarus since February 1998, monitoring the political situation, giving legal advice and helping to build civil society.'

Agence-France Presse, 14 December

'Belarus's KGB chief Wednesday accused the United States and the OSCE pan-European security organization of teaming up with Belarus's Opposition to subvert the existing state order... (He) also warned that the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group was overstepping its legal bounds of an international observer, joining the Belarusian political scene as

an active participant. Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko's deputy chief of staff also accused the OSCE observers of giving aid to "subversive groups and the opposition so they could undermine the authorities." The OSCE mission in Belarus has long annoyed Minsk, accusing the Soviet-style authorities of violating human rights and winning the recent parliamentary elections by downright fraud.'

Agence-France Presse, 16 December

'The OSCE mission here has angrily rejected a charge by Belarus' KGB chief that their observers are violating their mandate by dealing with the Opposition. The OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus insisted that assisting Minsk's political opponents was "well within its mandate" as outlined in the 1997 accord between the OSCE and the Belarus Government... This tough campaign comes as an unwelcome surprise after the OSCE 1999 summit in Istanbul, where all 54 member states, including Belarus, expressed strong support for the OSCE Minsk mission, the OSCE group's statement said.'

Reuters, 19 December

'Serbia's first elections since the fall of Slobodan Milosevic were free and fair, burying a long legacy of fraud and intimidation, and mark a big step on the road to stable democracy, OSCE observers said on Sunday... However, there was a need to update and correct voter registers and room for improvement in the way state-owned media covered parties not in

the establishment, old or new. OSCE officials said Serbian state television, from which most Serbs get their news, had essentially switched allegiance from the Socialists to the reform bloc, rather than covering all parties objectively like a Western public service broadcaster.'

Reuters, 19 December

'President Alexander Lukashenko

said on Tuesday that Belarus was holding three foreigners and one Belarusian for alleged spying... He said he was keeping his eye on Western bodies, including the Minsk mission of the OSCE, ahead of a 2001 presidential vote.

"We will not allow any foreign interference in our affairs... Who gave anyone the right to come here and carry out anti-state politics?"

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@odihr.osce.waw.pl

Stability Pact countries sign an "Anti-Trafficking Declaration"

On 13 December, an "Anti-Trafficking Declaration" was signed by Government Ministers from the countries of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, recognizing the "pressing and growing

Minister Helga Konrad, Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact's Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings. "The agreement to create national anti-trafficking co-ordinators in these countries will enable national and international resources to be targeted far more effectively in

combating this highly organized and lucrative crime." Ms. Konrad co-ordinates the Task Force on behalf of the ODIHR.

As a concrete measure to step up the fight against trafficking in

terial decisions. The co-ordinators will prepare progress reports and suggest further action to combat trafficking. The Ministers agreed to meet regularly once a year to review the progress in the field of combating trafficking and to give political guidance.

In the Declaration, the Ministers recognized trafficking as a human rights problem and agreed to address the issue in a regional and co-operative way. They acknowledged the responsibility of the States to fight against trafficking by implementing effective programmes of prevention, victim protection, legislative reform, law enforcement training and prosecution of traffickers. The Ministers also expressed the need for enhanced awareness raising and training programmes for border officials, police, judges, prosecutors, and consular personnel.

The Declaration was signed in Palermo, on the margins of the UN Conference on the signing of the International Crime Convention and its Optional Protocol on Trafficking in Human Beings, by Ministers from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic



Ministers from Stability Pact countries after the signing of the "Anti-Trafficking Declaration"

importance" in the region of the problem of trafficking in human beings and launching regional action and co-operation.

"Today we have taken another significant step in the fight against trafficking in human beings in Europe," said

human beings in South-Eastern Europe, the Ministers agreed to nominate high-level co-ordinators who will be tasked with co-ordinating national and regional activities, exchanging information at a regional level, and follow up on Minis-

of Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and representatives from Kosovo and Montenegro.



Parliamentary elections in Serbia

The 23 December National Assembly election in the Republic of Serbia/Federal Republic of Yugoslavia marked significant progress and was conducted largely in line with accepted international standards for democratic elections, concluded the International Election Observation Mission for the election in Serbia in a joint preliminary statement issued on 24 December.

In contrast to previous elections, fundamental freedoms were respected during the pre-election period. A multi-party election administration implemented the newly adopted law transparently, impartially and, through regulations, managed to overcome many of the flaws in the legislation inherited from the past, although some improvements are still required. The media environment was also improved significantly since the last elections, providing for a diversity of political views. For the first time, domestic non-partisan observer organizations were accredited, giving thousands of citizens of Serbia unimpeded access to observe the electoral process. The will of voters was respected during the polling on election day and the vote count.

The International Election Observation Mission was a joint effort of the OSCE/ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. The ODIHR long-term election observation mission was deployed on 28 November and was

headed by Nikolai Vulchanov (Bulgaria). On election day, more than 320 short-term observers were deployed, including 26 parliamentarians from the OSCE PA, seven parliamentarians from the Council of Europe, and four representatives from the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.

Election Observation Reports

The OSCE/ODIHR has released a final report on both rounds of the local government elections in Albania (on 1 and 15 October), the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan (5 November and 7 January), the presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan (29 October), and the parliamentary and presidential elections in Romania (26 November). These reports are available on the ODIHR website at www.osce.org/odihr.

DEMOCRATIZATION



Human rights training for Kyrgyz border and migration officials

The ODIHR continued to assist the Kyrgyztani border service by organizing a five-day human rights training programme in Bishkek. The training was held in co-operation with International Organization for Migration (IOM) Kyrgyzstan, the Bishkek Migration Management Centre and the OSCE Centre in Bishkek.

Twenty-four border and migration officials participated in the training, including representatives of the Department for Border Control under the Ministry of National Security, the Department for Border Protection under the Ministry of Defence, the State Agency on Migration and Demography, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of For-

eign Affairs. The Border Guard Service of Tajikistan also sent a representative.

The programme was designed as a “training of trainers” in order to ensure that the trainees are able to instruct their colleagues when they return to their duty stations. The participants were selected from among middle-ranking officials. The training was conducted by leading specialists in human rights and migration issues from the Polish Border Guards Training Centre in Ketrzyn.

For the first time ever, the Kyrgyztani border guards discussed with their colleagues from Central Europe issues of institutional reform, human rights aspects of border control, training standards, protection of the rights of refugees, legal and illegal migration, and trafficking in human beings.

The participants evaluated the training itself and the experience they gained as very useful. The majority of the trainees were convinced that most of the information would have practical application and felt ready to share their knowledge with colleagues. The main proposals for follow-up measures, made by the participants, included review by the ODIHR of internal regulations on border control, and a more detailed study of Polish legislation and its practical application by the Border Service. All of these proposals are under consideration by the ODIHR.

OIDHR holds training seminar for Uzbek Ombudsman office

From 13 to 17 December, a five-day training seminar with the Uzbek Ombudsman's office was held by the ODIHR in co-operation with the OSCE Centre in Tashkent. The training focused on complaints and monitoring activities of Ombudsman institutions with regard to the criminal justice system. With input from experts from the United States and Poland, participants discussed ways to

improve the institutions' performance with regard to complaints against the police, the prokuratura and the courts. The training also addressed the role of international human rights treaties applicable to Uzbekistan and their impact on such complaints. Another area of discussion was the role of an Ombudsman institution in a democratic society in visiting places of detention and the required methodology for prison visits.

Conference held on migration legislation in Kazakhstan

On 11 and 12 December, the ODIHR contributed to a conference on the development of migration legislation in Kazakhstan, which was organized by the Parliament of Kazakhstan, the Kazakhstan Agency for Migration and Demography, and the IOM.

The ODIHR Migration/Freedom of Movement Adviser gave two presentations at the conference, one on OSCE commitments in the area of migration and freedom of movement and the second on regulations on and practices of migrant registration in Kazakhstan and the implementation of recommendations of the March 2000 Almaty roundtable, sponsored by the ODIHR, on freedom of movement and choice of place of residence.

The participants discussed ways in which these recommendations could be incorporated into the legislation of Kazakhstan, as well as the recent pledge by the President of Kazakhstan to eliminate exit visas for Kazakhstani citizens travelling abroad.

ODIHR holds conference on legal support for Tajikistani women

A Conference on 'Legal Support Centres for Women in Tajikistan' took place from December 14 to 17 in Dushanbe. The conference was organized by ODIHR in co-operation with the

OSCE Mission to Tajikistan, and it addressed theoretical and practical approaches to organizing and running legal clinics which focus on equality between women and men.

Representatives of several Tajik universities and legal NGOs attended the conference which was facilitated by Polish experts and Kazakh trainers. The conference was run in a very interactive way and resulted in the identification of future partners for ODIHR's plans to organize and support legal clinics in Tajikistan.

Legislative review project begins in Tajikistan

The implementation of a new legislative review project started in December with a first assessment visit to Tajikistan conducted by the ODIHR Rule of Law Officer and a legal expert from the UK, Professor Bill Bowring.

The project aims to provide assistance to Tajikistan to implement the obligations assumed under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). During the visit, the experts gathered material on the legal system of Tajikistan with particular regard to the criminal justice area.

The experts also met with some of the key actors of the legal reform process which currently is underway in Tajikistan. The discussions focused on the importance of the ICCPR for the present criminal justice reform as well as on questions relating to the reporting obligation under the treaty.

ODIHR assists FYROM to address drug addiction and life sentences

In December, two ODIHR prison experts visited the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in order to assess the prison system's capacity to deal with life imprisonment and drug addiction in prisons. The assessment visit was part of

a regional assistance project in the framework of the Stability Pact. The experts' recommendations will contribute to assisting the authorities in improving prison conditions, as well as in establishing specialized training for prison personnel.

Human rights training for staff of Russian Representative in Chechnya

From 26 November to 6 December, the second phase of the human rights training for staff members of the Russian Presidential Representative for Human Rights in Chechnya was carried out by the ODIHR in co-operation with the Council of Europe.

Twelve staff members of Mr Kalamonov's office, nine of them from Chechnya, participated in the two-part training course. The first part, conducted for the ODIHR by the Polish Helsinki Foundation, focused on international commitments on human rights, instruments and mechanisms for human rights protection, activities of international organizations and government institutions relevant to the protection and promotion of human rights.

The team of lecturers included renowned human rights experts from various government and non-governmental institutions. The group of trainees also visited ODIHR for a session about the structure and work of the OSCE and ODIHR.

The second part of the training was conducted by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg and was dedicated to the European mechanisms and instruments of human rights protection. The training was supported financially by the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship.

As a result of the first two phases 21 staffers of Mr. Kalamonov's Office have successfully completed their training course. The third group of trainees is expected in the beginning of 2001.

‘Ariadne’ anti-trafficking project launched in Belarus

On 1 December an anti-trafficking awareness raising seminar was carried out in Minsk by La Strada Poland, the Belarusian Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) and ODIHR. About 30 people, mainly from NGOs, participated in the training. Government officials from the Committee on Migration (Ministry of Labour) and the Department of Morals and Illegal Circulation of Drugs (Ministry of Interior) were also represented in the seminar.

Through the new partnership project ‘Ariadne’, La Strada’s proven training methodologies will be used to empower grassroots NGOs throughout Belarus on prevention, networking and public awareness raising activities.

In 2001, the ODIHR and the Stefan Batory Foundation will provide support to La Strada Poland and the Belarusian YWCA to carry out five more regional anti-trafficking awareness raising seminars for NGOs and relevant authorities.

Each of the regional training seminars will include lectures on awareness

raising and practical workshops. The lectures will focus on the social, legal and economic aspects of trafficking throughout Europe highlighting the specific regional situation of Belarus and Poland.

The workshops will provide practical training on methods for social assistance and for prevention and information campaigns. In addition, the project includes support and training for the YWCA to run an information hotline in Minsk for people considering migrating abroad.

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

Van der Stoel addresses minority rights seminar in Zagreb

On 3 and 4 December, the High Commissioner on National Minorities attended an international seminar in Zagreb on ‘Legal aspects of minority rights: participation in decision-making processes and bilateral agreements on minority rights’. In his speech, Mr. Van der Stoel drew particular attention to the “right of return to one’s place of origin and home, both voluntarily and in conditions of safety”.

He noted that: “the primary responsibility lies with the state of origin to create and ensure conditions of return. The right of return also has a bearing on regional peace and security since the prolonged displacement of large numbers of persons can be destabilizing”. The full text of the speech is available on the HCNM section of the OSCE website:

www.osce.org/hcnm

HCNM holds further discussions on minority education in Ukraine

From 5 to 7 December, the High Commissioner, Max van der Stoel, visited Ukraine to receive further clarifications about the educational system in Ukraine. This visit was the last in a series of consultations designed to give the High Commissioner a clear picture of the educational situation of Russians in Ukraine and Ukrainians in Russia. He intends to issue a report in the near future.

While in Ukraine, Mr. Van der Stoel also discussed a number of minority-related issues. He took part in a donors conference for projects concerning the resettlement of Crimean Tatars and other formerly deported people in Crimea. He is also studying the government draft for a new law on language which has now been sent to the Ukrainian Parliament for consideration.

Higher education project continues to make progress in FYROM

From 18 to 20 December the High Commissioner visited the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. He met the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Srgjan Kerim, the Minister of Education, Nenad Novkovski, and a number of other Macedonian officials, Albanian representatives and members of the international community in Skopje. The main focus of his discussions was the ongoing process of creating a new institution of higher education with Albanian as a main language. The High Commissioner gave a press conference outlining progress on the project.

High Commissioner pays first official visit to Belgrade

From 11 to 13 December, Mr. Van der Stoel visited Belgrade. This was his first visit to the Federal Republic of

Yugoslavia in eight years as OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. His visit was prompted by a letter from Rasim Ljajic, the new Minister of National and Ethnic Communities, inviting the High Commissioner to visit the Republic.

During his visit he also met with President Vojislav Kostunica, Goran Svilanovic, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, minority representatives and representatives from the international

and non-governmental community.

The Yugoslav Government representatives gave the High Commissioner a clear indication that they would welcome his involvement in many minority-related issues in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Particular emphasis was put on the development of minority rights legislation and decentralization (particularly through municipal and regional councils). He indicated that he was willing to support the Government's efforts

and was particularly interested in soon visiting Vojvodina and Sandjak.

Van der Stoel speaks in Bonn

On 14 December, the HCNM participated in an international conference in Bonn on the subject 'Facing ethnic conflicts'. His speech, entitled 'Looking back, looking forward: reflections on preventing inter-ethnic conflicts' is available on the HCNM section of the OSCE website.

REPORT from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

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PA President Severin leads OSCE Observation Mission for the Serbian Parliamentary Elections

OSCE PA President Adrian Severin was appointed by the outgoing Chairperson-in-Office, Austrian Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner, as her Special Representative to lead the OSCE Observation Mission for the Parliamentary Elections in Serbia on 23 December and to deliver the preliminary post election statement. The Election Observation Mission was a joint effort of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the OSCE/Office Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly. The OSCE PA observation team included 26 parliamentarians from 15 OSCE participating States

The OSCE Observers concluded that the Serbian elections marked considerable progress in meeting international standards for democratic elections. Voting was conducted in a generally calm

ment has improved significantly since the September 2000 election generally providing a diversity of political views. It was noted, however, that although the amended version of the electoral law presented a step forward, further developments in the legislative framework were needed.

"These elections mark one more big step toward normalcy and full democracy. While they mark the end of a sad and damaging period of Serbian history, they also mark the beginning of a difficult period of reconstruction and reconciliation", Mr. Severin said at the presentation of the preliminary statement on the Serbian Elections.

"I think it is clear from the outcome, however, that the will of the people for change has been fully confirmed. I also think I can say with confidence that the international community welcomes these results and is ready to assist the Serbian people and their new government to meet the enormous challenges before them."



PA President Adrian Severin (right) and PA Secretary General, Spencer Oliver, discuss the elections with a Serb voter (centre)

atmosphere and both polling and counting procedures were followed accurately in accordance with the law. In the pre-election period, fundamental freedoms were respected and the media environ-

Prior to election day, the OSCE PA Delegation held a series of meetings with, among others, the Speaker of the House of Citizens, the President of the Republic Election Commission, international as well as local NGO's, media representatives, political parties and the ODIHR Core staff in Belgrade and OSCE Long-term Observers. On election day, Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Delegation visited polling stations in Belgrade city, the greater Belgrade area, Novi Sad, Cacak, Valjavo, Topola and Niz.

Visits paid to FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia

From 14 to 24 December, PA President Severin visited the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, including Kosovo, to meet senior government representatives, political leaders and call on the OSCE Missions and Offices in the area.

In FYROM, Mr. Severin was briefed by the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission in Skopje on the political situation in the surrounding area, as well as within the country. He also had meetings with the President of Macedonia, Boris Trajkovski; the President of the Assembly, Stojan Andov; the Prime Minister, Ljubco Georgievski, as well as with leading opposition party leaders including Arben Xhaferi of the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA), Branko Crvenkovski of the Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia (SDSM) and Risto Gushterov of the Liberal Party.

The main topic discussed during the meetings was the Macedonian perception of the general security situation in the area, including the role of the OSCE as well as the importance of the Serbian elections. While in Macedonia, Mr. Severin chaired a session of a conference arranged by the Italian Social Science Council entitled 'Project Macedonia'.



PA President Severin delivers the preliminary statement on the Serbian elections.

Other participants in the Seminar included former President Gligorov and Veton Surroi editor of *Koha Ditore*, a Kosovo daily.

In Kosovo, Mr. Severin was briefed by the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Daan Everts, and had meetings with the UN Special Representative, Bernard Kouchner, with the Commander of KFOR, Lt. Gen. Carlo Cabigiosu as well as with representatives of political parties and communities, including Dr. Ibrahim Rugova of the Democratic Alliance of Kosovo (LDK), Haradin Kuqi of the Party of Democratic Progress of Kosovo (PDK) and Serb representative Momcilo Trajkovic.

The main topics discussed concerned the future status of Kosovo, recent security developments in the Presevo Valley, the role of the new OSCE Office in Belgrade, and the furthering of the reconciliation between the ethnic communities.

In Montenegro, Mr. Severin was briefed by the OSCE/ODIHR Office in Podgorica and accompanied by the Head of Office, Julian Peel Yates during meetings with the President of Montenegro, Milo Djukanovic; Speaker of Parliament, Svetozar Marovic; Prime Minister

Filip Vujanovic; Minister of Justice and President of the People's Party (NS), Dragan Soc; President of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Zarko Rakcevic and with Vice-President of the Socialist People's Party (SNP), Predrag Bulatovic. Discussions included topics such as relations with Serbia and the future role of Montenegro in the area.

In Belgrade, Mr. Severin had meetings with the Yugoslav Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic and the Chief of Staff to President Kostunica, Mrs. Liljana Nedelcovic.

PA assists with rerun parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan

On 15 and 16 December, Ms. Asta Johannesdottir (MP, Iceland) travelled to Baku to discuss the measures undertaken by the authorities to address violations during the 5 November parliamentary elections and to review preparations for the elections scheduled to be re-run in 11 constituencies where the results had been cancelled. In Baku, meetings were held with the President of Azerbaijan, the Head of the Presidential Administration, the Chairman of the Central Election Commission as well as the main opposition parties. The visit was arranged in conjunction with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (CoE PA) and the OSCE/ODIHR.

Ms. Paula Kokkonen (MP, Finland), acting as Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, led the OSCE observers in the 7 January re-run elections. In a joint statement with the CoE PA, the International Election Observation Mission concluded that "the repeat elections in Azerbaijan mark some improvement, but still do not meet a number of international standards." The OSCE PA delegation consisted of parliamentarians from Finland, Iceland, Italy and Belgium.

NEWS

from the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

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Round table held on challenges of corruption for journalists

In the context of the broad issue of the dangers of journalistic work, the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media has focused on the often dramatic problem of journalism and the challenges of corruption. As a part of this effort, the Media Representative convened a round table entitled, "Corruption and professional journalists - Sometimes Discoverers, Sometimes Victims, or Sometimes Silent Contributors?" in Prague on 4 December. Prominent investigative journalists from Eastern and Western Europe, as well as academic experts in the field, participated in this round table.

As the first event of its kind, the round table is intended to start a discussion on the matter. The event was dedicated to the memory of Veronica Guerin from Ireland and Larisa Yudina from Russia, two courageous journalists killed while investigating cases of corruption and Mafia dealings.

OSCE Representative launches "mobileculturecontainer" project

On 1 December the new office for the project "mobile.culture.container" was

opened. The project was initiated by Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, as a response to the post-conflict situation in former Yugoslavia. The "mobile.culture.container" will be set up in towns in the region for a number of weeks, where it will act as a meeting place for youths to carry out different activities.

Students can attend discussions, use the peace library and the internet-café, produce their own newspaper, stage exhibitions, dance, listen to music etc. The foundation, *Verteidigung unserer Zukunft* (Defence of our Future), chaired by Mr. Duve, has been set up for the organization of the project. Mr. Achim Koch will act as the director, technical supervisor and project designer of the project. For more information on the project please contact Mr. Koch (tel. +43-1-532 84 44) or Ms. Renate May (rmay@osce.org).

Media developments monitored in the Czech Republic

The Media Representative monitored closely the developments around Czech Television during the last part of December. A change in the management structure was not approved by the journalists

who claimed that the decision was politically motivated and threatened the independence of the television station. As a result they blocked the television station while the new management stopped the broadcasting over the holiday season. Rallies were held outside the station in support of the journalists and the case attracted massive media attention. The Media Representative wrote to the Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic, Jan Kavan, on 28 December, asking for the assessment and the position of the Czech Government on this case.

FOM Office visits Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

In December, Alexander Ivanko, Adviser to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, took part in the OSCE Rapporteur Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The purpose of this mission was to help establish the mandate for the future OSCE Mission to FRY.

Mr. Ivanko also travelled to Belgrade in December to participate in a conference on telecommunications, organized by the Council of Europe and the NGO ANEM (the Association of Independent Electronic Media).

Latest edition of OSCE Handbook

Updated to 1 July 2000

English version available on-line at

www.osce.org/publications/handbook

Hard copies also available from the OSCE Secretariat,
Kärntner Ring 5-7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria

REPORT

from the OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat

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Secretariat participates in OSCE– Japan conference held in Tokyo

The Secretary General, Jan Kubis, travelled to Tokyo to participate in the OSCE-Japan Conference 2000, held on 11 and 12 December, at the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting, which had as its theme, 'Comprehensive security in Central Asia – sharing OSCE and Asian experiences', marked the first time that such a joint conference had taken place with a Partner for Co-operation from Asia. It followed a number of meetings on issues

dealing with Central Asia, co-organized or with the active participation of the OSCE. The conference was co-chaired by the Secretary General and the Representative of the Government of Japan, Dr. Tatsuo Arima.

The conference was officially opened by the Foreign Minister of Japan, Yohei Kono. Ambassador Franz Parak, also addressed the opening session, on behalf of last year's Chairperson-in-Office, Ms. Benita Ferrero-Waldner. Representatives from 36 OSCE participating States, including all five Central

Asian countries took part in the Conference, as well as eight Partners for Co-operation, from Asia and the Mediterranean group. Apart from the Heads of all the OSCE presences in Central Asia, representatives from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the OSCE Co-ordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities, and several international organizations and research institutions also participated in the event.

Participants discussed the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security,

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In his first address to the OSCE Permanent Council on 11 January 2001, the new Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Dan Geoana, outlined priorities for 2001
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MISSION TO FRY
A new OSCE Mission to FRY will assist in the development of democratic institutions and protection of human rights, decided the OSCE Permanent Council
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22.01. 2001 - 23.01. 2001 OSCE Ministerial Troika meets
25.01. 2001 Round table on elections, Astana
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Chairman-in-Office delivers first address to OSCE Permanent Council (11 January 2001) more
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with three main sessions devoted respectively to the politico-military, the human and the economic and environmental dimensions. The consolidated summary of the Conference, which includes the concluding summary by the Co-Chairpersons, and all other documents distributed during the event, are available upon request from the Secretariat. The summary will be available on the OSCE website shortly.

Romanian Chairmanship goes online on OSCE website

The new OSCE Chairmanship website, accessible at www.osce.org/cio, offers web visitors the latest news and press releases as well as background information on Romania. Other features include biographical information on the

OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Dan Geoana, as well as links to the Romanian Foreign Ministry and Presidency, the speeches given by the Chairman-in-Office and a regularly updated calendar of his activities. The site can also be directly accessed through the OSCE homepage at www.osce.org.

Information on OSCE training activities now posted

As one of its newest features, the OSCE website now offers specific information on the Organization's training activities, both within the Secretariat and its three largest field activities – the Mission in Kosovo, and those to Bosnia & Herzegovina and Croatia. At www.osce.org/training, web visitors can

learn more about the OSCE's training strategy and standards in use, as well as the different training modules. The website also features the newsletter of the OSCE training section and a page containing links to websites of other training programmes conducted by individual countries, international organizations, international training centers, and other research institutions. Future components of this site will include a link to the web page of the OSCE Mission Preparation Training, conducted by the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution in Burg Schlaining.

For further information on this or other aspects of the website, contact the Press and Public Information Section of the OSCE Secretariat, tel.: +43 1 514 36 180 or e-mail: info@osce.org

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