

# Chairmanship



BOBO/Srdjan Zivulovic

**Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel (left) meets late Kosovo President Ibrahim Rugova on 25 March 2005.**

*Chairman-in-Office | Permanent Council*

*Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office*

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*Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation*

# Chairman-in-Office

## Introduction

Slovenia took over the OSCE Chairmanship during a difficult period. A high-level debate about the relevance and fairness of the OSCE's work created a sense of deep political crisis. Lack of consensus on the participating States' scales of contribution to the Organization, the inability to reach agreement on the Unified Budget for 2005 and a protracted process to find a successor to the outgoing Secretary General further complicated the situation.

Slovenia's main challenge was, therefore, to get the Organization back on an even keel, to try to recapture a sense of common purpose, and to take steps to strengthen the effectiveness of the OSCE. All of this needed to be done in addition to ensuring implementation of decisions taken at the Sofia Ministerial Council and running the daily political business of the Organization.

On the positive side, 2005 was a year of anniversaries: the 30th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the 15th anniversary of the Charter of Paris. This helped to put the historical significance of the OSCE into perspective and prompted States to think about the future of the OSCE.

As usual, the Chairmanship always has to expect the unexpected. In 2005, the OSCE had to react quickly to events in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Slovenia also sought to move ahead on the resolution of frozen conflicts. The Chairmanship welcomed the joint declaration of Georgia and the Russian Federation on the closing of Russian military bases and facilities in Georgia by 2008.

In 2005, much has also been done concerning the conflict dealt with by the Minsk Conference: the so-called Prague meetings of the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan have had a positive effect, enabling the presidents of both countries to meet in Warsaw and Kazan, thus bringing new momentum to the process of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

By the end of the year, agreement had been reached on scales of contribution to the Unified Budget, a new Secretary General had been appointed and steps taken to strengthen the effectiveness of the OSCE, thanks to a report by a Panel of Eminent Persons, high-level consultations and agreement on a roadmap for reform at the Ljubljana Ministerial Council.

Despite no agreement on a Ministerial Declaration, the Council helped to restore a constructive spirit, and took a number of decisions to strengthen the OSCE's ability to tackle new threats and challenges to security, including transnational organized crime, anti-trafficking, illicit drugs, and counter-terrorism as well as broadening the Organization's work in human rights education, migration, tolerance and non-discrimination and a decision on strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE.

To cap a successful year, the budget was adopted on time for the first time in five years.

Slovenia is proud to be able to hand over the Chairmanship of the OSCE to Belgium with the Organization in good shape – proud of its past, well-equipped to deal with contemporary challenges, and looking constructively and innovatively to the future.

## Reform of the OSCE



**First meeting of the OSCE Panel of Eminent Persons at Brdo pri Kranju on 17 February. (left to right: Ambassador Knut Vollebaek, who chaired the panel meetings, and Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel)**

Reform was a high priority for the OSCE in 2005. The Organization's participating States have been sensing the need for reform over recent years, and several Chairmanships have given reform a high priority. At the Sofia Ministerial Council, the Foreign Ministers passed a decision on the establishment of a Panel of Eminent Persons on strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE, opening the way for a thorough debate on the role and reform of the Organization. The Panel was mandated to give new impetus to political dialogue and provide a strategic vision for the OSCE of the 21st century.

MC Decision no. 16/04 tasked the Chairman-in-Office (CiO) to appoint the members of the panel after consultations with all participating States. In February, seven eminent persons with knowledge of the OSCE were thus appointed, taking into account the diversity of the OSCE community, including participating States that host field presences. The members of the panel were: Ambassador Nikolay Afanasievsky (replaced at the last meeting by Ambassador Vladimir Shustov, both Russian Federation), Ambassador Hans van den Broek (the Netherlands), Ambassador Wilhelm Hoyneck (Germany), Ambassador Kuanysh Sultanov (Kazakhstan), Ambassador Knut Vollebaek, who chaired the panel meetings (Norway), Ambassador Richard Williamson (United States) and Ambassador Miomir Zuzul (Croatia). The Secretariat of the OSCE provided active support, while the CiO acted as focal point for the panel. Ambassador Afanasievsky sadly passed away before the report was submitted.

Between February and June, the panel convened five times during which it met more than 30 experts from international organizations including the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the Council of Europe (CoE), as well as think-tanks and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It presented its report with recommendations to the participating States through the CiO at the end of June.

Simultaneously, other individuals and institutions produced publications on reform, including the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (in co-operation with the Swiss Foundation for World Affairs), the Centre for OSCE Research and the *Helsinki Monitor* publication.

The Sofia Decision had called for convening high-level consultations as a follow-up to the Panel report in order to make recommendations for appropriate action to the Ministerial Council meeting in December. These were held in September and the outcome was followed up by a *Working Group on Strengthening the Effectiveness of the OSCE*, chaired by Slovenia.

At the Ljubljana Ministerial Council, an important decision was taken on strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE. It set out a roadmap for reform and tasks the Permanent Council to work on a number of specific reform-related issues (rules of procedure, improving the consultative process, OSCE conferences, activities, budgetary and extra-budgetary financing, role of the Secretary General, modernizing of the Secretariat, programme planning, professionalism of OSCE personnel, thematic missions) and to report to the 2006 Ministerial Council. It also tasked the ODIHR to submit, for discussion at the next Ministerial Council, a report on the implementation of existing commitments, possible supplementary commitments, ways of strengthening and furthering its election-related activities, and improving the effectiveness of its assistance to participating States.

### *An anniversary year*

In 1975, the first Conference on Security and Co-operation ended with the signing of the Helsinki Final Act. The CSCE process and the “spirit of Helsinki” helped to reduce tensions in Europe and contributed to the end of the Cold War. This was acknowledged at the Paris Summit of 1990, which resulted in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe.

These milestones of modern European history were marked by the OSCE community in 2005 through a number of events and publications.

The CiO took part in commemorative events in Vienna on 20 July, in Helsinki on 1 August, and in the Annual Session of the Parliamentary Assembly in Washington on 1 July. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly event had as its theme *30 Years Since Helsinki: Challenges Ahead*.

Politically, the anniversaries helped remind States of the CSCE’s historical significance and the OSCE’s valuable work. Recalling

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**The signing of the CSCE Helsinki Final Act on 1 August 1975. From left to right: The Head of the Government of Spain, Carlos Arias Navarro; President of the Republic of Finland, Urho Kekkonen; President of France, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing**



APA-IMAGES / LEHTIKUVA / Pentti Koskinen



**Photographers and cameramen capture the signing.**

the sense of common history and common commitments reduced the sense of crisis and criticism and inspired States to seize this opportunity to plot a course for the OSCE’s future. These sentiments were reflected in the beginning of the Chairman’s Statement from the Ljubljana Ministerial Council, in the opening section of the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons, and in the ministerial decision on strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE.

## A cross-dimensional approach

The OSCE has traditionally looked at issues in terms of “dimensions”: politico-military, economic and environmental and human. At the same time, it has always stressed its comprehensive approach to security.

In 2005, a recent trend towards a more cross-dimensional approach was strengthened by recommendations of the Panel of Eminent Persons and by taking a more holistic approach to issues like migration, combating trans-national organized crime, anti-trafficking and counter-terrorism. The Ljubljana Ministerial Council took important decisions on these issues.

## Tackling stocks of toxic rocket fuel component

The OSCE field missions, the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities are devoting ever more attention to the growing problem posed by old stocks of liquid rocket fuel once used in rockets and guided missiles in the OSCE region. The inherent hazards of the issue – encompassing political, human and socio-economic concerns – epitomize the OSCE’s “comprehensive security” approach.

Five participating States from Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus requested help in 2004 and 2005 from the OSCE in disposing of these stocks – composed of *Melange* and *Samine*. They lack the necessary technical, material and financial resources to tackle this problem alone.

*Melange* is usually stored in steel or aluminium tanks, but these are prone to corrosion over time. Once leaked, this highly toxic, volatile and explosive chemical substance can undermine the health of whole communities and pollute the environment. Land contamination may linger for almost a century.

The problem is large. Armenia has stocks of 872 tons, Uzbekistan more than 1,000 tons, Ukraine up to 17,000 tons, Azerbaijan 1,000 tons and Kazakhstan 1,500 tons.

Given the magnitude and geographic spread of the problem, the OSCE held a workshop in Kyiv in July to discuss the most effective way to dispose of or recycle these stocks. It reconfirmed the risk posed by *Melange* as well as the urgent need for a safe disposal that prevents serious environmental catastrophes and human casualties.

By the end of 2005, the OSCE had assessed the situation of rocket fuel component in all the countries that requested assistance, with the exception of Uzbekistan, providing a solid base for developing and implementing projects starting from 2006.



**The OSCE conducted an assessment visit to Ukraine in July. Here, Ukrainian specialists check the condition of rocket fuel component containers.**

In Armenia, the OSCE made considerable headway during the year. The chosen method of neutralizing the rocket fuel component results in a positive by-product – a liquid mineral dressing for use in farming. The additive will reduce the high acidity content of the region’s soil. This follows the lead of a pilot project in 2002, which successfully converted 450 tons of *Melange* into fertilizer for western Georgia’s soil.

The final and decisive phase of the Armenia project began in September, when the office signed an agreement with the Ministry of Defence to begin recycling. The conversion plant will be launched in March 2006. The initiative was funded by Finland, Germany, the United States and Canada.

Ukraine faces a daunting amount of *Melange*. The project will be the largest ever implemented

by the OSCE in Ukraine, in terms of cost and of time. To fund the project, the Secretariat and the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine must raise more than €10 million over the next four years.

In 2005, an international expert team accompanied by Ukrainian authorities carried out two fact-finding missions, visiting eight military *Melange* storage sites. The team also examined Ukraine’s industrial capacity for processing the toxic material. The team identified suitable ways of disposing of and recycling *Melange* and technical and financial needs. The next phase, which is already underway, focuses on fundraising, budgeting and contracting an implementing company.

Similarly, OSCE experts visited Kazakhstan in November to determine the quantity and characteristics of liquid rocket fuel stocks, the processing technology available in the region and internationally, and to offer a cost and timeframe for recycling or disposal of the fuel component. As in Ukraine, the Secretariat and the Mission are now focused on the next phase of fundraising, budgeting and contracting an implementing company. Estimated funding of €1 million is needed for the disposal operation, which is planned for 2006-2007.

In Uzbekistan, stocks are located at Oqtosh, in the Samarkand region. The project here is scheduled to begin in 2006, following an OSCE Mission on-site visit and Uzbekistan participation in the Kyiv workshop.

In Azerbaijan, the OSCE supported the launch of a project aimed at providing technical and financial assistance for upgrading two outdated rocket fuel storage sites. The international expert group visited Azerbaijan to identify a suitable way to carry out the renovation of the sites and the technical and financial needs required. Additional information and in-depth analysis is needed to identify the exact volume of remediation activities to follow the disposal project led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

## *Ljubljana Ministerial Council*

Foreign Ministers from OSCE participating States met in Ljubljana on 5 and 6 December for the 13th Ministerial Council of the OSCE. The Ministers adopted 19 decisions on a range of issues, including fighting organized crime, human rights education, combat against human trafficking and the role of women in conflict prevention. The Ljubljana Ministerial Council documents include:

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**Chairman-in-Office  
Dimitrij Rupel (left)  
and incoming  
Chairman-in-Office  
(right) Karel de Gucht at  
the Ljubljana Ministerial  
Council on 5 December.**

- Ministerial Declaration on the 20th anniversary of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant
- Ministerial Statement on the International Convention for the Suppression of acts of Nuclear Terrorism
- Ministerial Statement on Georgia
- Ministerial Statement on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Group
- Decision No. 1 on the appointment of the OSCE Secretary General
- Decision No. 2 on migration
- Decision No. 3 on combating transnational organized crime
- Decision No. 4 on enhancing legal co-operation in criminal matters to counter terrorism
- Decision No. 5 on combating the threat of illicit drugs
- Decision No. 6 on further measures to enhance container security
- Decision No. 7 on supporting the effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)
- Decision No. 8 on further efforts to implement the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition
- Decision No. 9 on the OSCE seminar on military doctrine
- Decision No. 10 on tolerance and non-discrimination: promoting mutual respect and understanding
- Decision No. 11 on the promotion of human rights education and training in the OSCE area
- Decision No. 12 on upholding human rights and the rule of law in criminal justice systems
- Decision No. 13 on combating trafficking in human beings
- Decision No. 14 on women in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation
- Decision No. 15 on preventing and combating violence against women
- Decision No. 16 on ensuring the highest standards of conduct and accountability of persons serving on international forces and missions
- Decision No. 17 on strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE
- Decision No. 18 on the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2008
- Decision No. 19 on the time and place of the next meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council

## Politico-military dimension activities

Implementation of the OSCE *Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century* represented the chapeau for the work on the politico-military dimension and its further strengthening. The *Annual Security Review Conference* that took place in June reaffirmed the continuing importance of the “first dimension” and put forward a number of proposals and recommendations aimed at further enhancing the OSCE’s capacities to effectively respond to evolving threats and challenges. The Ljubljana Ministerial Council endorsed some of these initiatives.

Preventing and combating terrorism remained high on the OSCE’s agenda as terrorist attacks in the Organization’s area further demonstrated the need to work together to tackle this menace. In 2005, the OSCE looked at the relationship between terrorism and human rights. The Ljubljana Ministerial Council took a decision to enhance co-operation in criminal matters to counter terrorism and the threat of illicit drugs. Attention was also paid to the issue of container security. The Ministerial Council took a decision to further strengthen the existing measures.

A special focus was given to countering the threat emanating from chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear sources. At the Ministerial Council, a decision was taken to support the effective implementation of UN Security Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation. This is more evidence of the OSCE’s role as a regional implementer of global instruments.

Participating States were also encouraged, through a Ministerial Council decision, to make further efforts to implement OSCE documents on small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition.

Following up a Maastricht Ministerial Council 2003 decision and in an effort to achieve the goal of open and secure borders as well as addressing cross-border issues, participating States worked on a *Border Security and Management Concept*, which was finalized at the Ljubljana Ministerial Council.

OSCE police-related activities have been important in improving the capacity of the participating States to address new security threats. These activities focus on capacity-building, including community policing, police training and human resources management and enhancing the rule of law, as well as specialized activities such as combating human trafficking, improving the capacities of law enforcement officials to prosecute offenders and preventing and combating hate-crime. The activities focused on Central Asia, the southern Caucasus and south-eastern Europe.

The Chairmanship further strengthened co-operation between the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation and actively promoted the Forum’s agenda. It supported the full implementation of the existing arms control agreements, non-proliferation and confidence- and security-building measures, their timely adaptation and, when required, their further development. This included increased activity on the implementation of commitments on small arms and light weapons, stockpiles

of conventional ammunition and the disposal of liquid rocket fuel. The OSCE took an important step forward in 2005 in the implementation of related commitments (implementation of small arms and stockpiles project in Tajikistan and a rocket fuel project in Armenia). Information exchange on related activities and co-operation with the UN, EU and NATO has been an important part of this endeavour.

Slovenia actively promoted the idea of holding an OSCE Seminar on Military Doctrine. Pursuant to decisions by the Forum and the Ministerial Council, such a meeting was held in Vienna on 14 and 15 February 2006 to examine changes in military doctrine derived from evolving threats, changing forms of conflict and the emergence of new technologies.

## Economic and environmental dimension activities

Slovenia supports raising the profile of the economic and environmental dimension and ensuring its proper place in the cross-dimensional scope of the OSCE’s work. As its starting point, Slovenia’s Chairmanship pushed for full implementation of the *OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension*, in order to enhance co-operation, good governance, sustainable development and protection of the environment.

According to the Maastricht Ministerial Council Strategy Document on enhancing the economic and environmental dimension, attention was given to the preparations of the report of the Economic and Environmental Sub-Committee of the Permanent Council focusing on the further improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Economic Forum. The Chairman of the Sub-Committee presented a report to the Permanent Council on 16 June, prepared by the Informal Group of Friends of the Chair on Enhancement of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Dimension, which was set up by the Chairmanship in January.

The priority of the Slovenian Chairmanship in the economic and environmental dimension was the issue of migration and integration. The Chairmanship worked closely on this issue with the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA), the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) and outside partners, including the International Organization on Migration (IOM) and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

The preparatory cycle of the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum started with an examination of the economic and security challenges posed by demographic developments at the First Preparatory Seminar on 8 and 9 November 2004 in Trieste, Italy. The seminar put forward useful suggestions in this respect.

The second preparatory seminar, held on 24 and 25 January in Almaty, Kazakhstan, yielded meaningful suggestions in the areas of management of economic migration and its security implications. In the third and final preparatory seminar, participants considered the economic and social aspects of the integration of persons

## Combating human trafficking in Ukraine

Ukraine has been seen for a number of years as a major country of origin and transit for trafficking in human beings. A 2005 assessment by international organizations including the United Nations Children’s Fund and the OSCE found that orphans are one of the groups that run the greatest risk of victimization.

To help address this problem, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator’s Office in Ukraine in co-operation with the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities launched a pilot project aimed at providing internships, employment assistance and life skills to Ukrainian orphans. The Project reaches out to orphans in the capital Kyiv and in the region of Kharkiv, both industrial centres with numerous employment opportunities.

Since its launch in 2005, this Project has helped 60 youth in both regions. Twenty-one of them have found positions and independent housing and are well on the road to successful adulthood. Here are two of their stories:

When the Project offered 18-year-old orphan Eugene Diduk a probationary position as a plasterer at a well-known private construction company in his hometown of Kharkiv, he jumped at the chance.

At the time, he was working as an unskilled part-time worker. Although he graduated from trade school as a plasterer and floor-tiler in 2005, his first factory position, found through the offices of a government agency, failed to provide him with the skills and training he

After joining the OSCE programme, Eugene passed his probation at the *Delta Group* construction company in December. He is now employed full-time with them at a good salary. Eugene also has a mentor who is teaching him various additional construction skills.

“Now at *Delta* I’m getting more construction skills and a good salary after my three probation months and I know my Grandma and I will be fine,” he said.

To improve his life skills, Eugene meets twice a week with a social worker who represents his interests, works with him on a budget and teaches him how to use community resources efficiently.

For orphan Olga Kanistratenko, the Project came along just in the nick of time. A 2005 graduate of the Kharkiv Food Technology Trade School, the young pastry chef was living at a hostel in one room together with her aunt’s family. The living space was cramped and she was unhappy.

The Trade School found her a position at a canteen, but when she arrived she discovered that there was no real opening. She was told she would have to wait until one arose. She was advised to resign in writing, which would free her to look for a position herself.

Unfortunately, it also meant that she lost valuable housing rights available to orphans taking their first positions through the trade school administration. Had she stayed with this job, she would have been put in a separate, privileged queue for housing.

“I didn’t know all my orphan’s rights so I found myself in a difficult situation. I didn’t know how to protect myself,” Olga said.

The project found her a new workplace at a large store called *Big Pocket*. Her social worker helped her regain her privileged slot in the housing queue. While she is on probation, she earns a minimal salary from the supermarket and a stipend from the Project.

“Now I have people to address my questions and I get real help. I’m very grateful to them,” Olga said.

(For more information on this issue, please visit the OSCE website at [www.osce.org/eea](http://www.osce.org/eea).)

OSCE



**Orphan Eugene Diduk at work as a plasterer at the construction site of the new Kharkiv entertainment centre.**

OSCE



**Orphan Olga Kanistratenko places goods at the supermarket, Big Pocket, where she now works.**

Most orphans enrol in vocational schools to learn a trade. Upon graduation, they are in theory guaranteed employment; however, in practice, the choice of jobs is usually limited. Orphans often graduate with unrealistic expectations about their future jobs and salaries, with no special programmes being offered to prepare them for their first employment or for an independent life. As a result, many quit soon after they start working and thus become easy prey for traffickers.

needed to advance. He resigned and turned to unskilled work, but his pay was unofficial, delivered in envelopes and it wasn’t enough to make ends meet.

“I’m living together with my Grandma. She’s seriously ill and I want to work hard and get well paid in order to be able to buy all the necessary medicines for her,” Eugene said.

belonging to national minorities, the promotion of integration and prevention of discrimination, education policies for integration and the importance of good governance for the management of integration. This final preparatory seminar was held in Kyiv, Ukraine on 10 and 11 March.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Economic Forum, held in Prague from 23 to 27 May, focused on *Demographic Trends, Migration and Integrating Persons belonging to National Minorities: Ensuring Security and Sustainable Development in the OSCE Area*. It brought together over 450 participants, representatives of the OSCE participating States, Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, the OSCE Secretariat and field operations, international organizations and NGOs, as well as academics and representatives of the business community. The topics of demography, migration and integration continue to be among the most important challenges confronting the OSCE participating States and one of their central areas of concern.

The Chairmanship attached great importance to the follow-up of the Economic Forum. In co-operation with the OCEEA, IOM and ICMPD, the Chairmanship prepared a food-for-thought paper in September on managing migration and, together with the High Commissioner on National Minorities, drafted a *Statement of Principles of Integration Respecting Diversity*. The Ljubljana Ministerial Council decision on migration opened the way for increased OSCE activity in this field. The paper *Co-operation towards better economic migration policies – Proposal for an OSCE contribution* provides food for thought to continue the work in the area of migration in 2006. The Chairmanship supported the organization of the workshop on migration in Central Asia, as this was one of the concrete recommendations of the Forum, and will participate in the joint OSCE-ICMPD workshop on labour migration in Central Asia, which was due to be held in Almaty on 31 January and 1 February 2006. The Chairmanship supported the preparation of the *OSCE-IOM Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies in the Countries of Origin and Destination* that is to be presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> OSCE Economic Forum at the end of May 2006 in Prague.

## Human dimension activities

The activities of the CiO in the human dimension are manifold. A number of activities followed the regular pattern of annual events organized in co-operation with the ODIHR: the *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting* (the yearly ODIHR seminar), and the three *Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings*. Other important activities were the organization of the *Conference on Anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance*, the elaboration of the *Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings: Addressing the Special Needs of Child Victims of Trafficking for Protection and Assistance*, as well as the work done in the field of democratic elections. The Slovenian Chairmanship launched a human rights education pilot project for youth in the OSCE area, in order to implement the human dimension requirements in the *Strategy to Address Threats to Security*

*and Stability in the Twenty-First Century*. The human dimension continues to play an important role in the activities of the CiO in regional issues.

The first Supplementary Meeting was held in Vienna on 21 and 22 April. The theme *Challenges of Election Technologies and Procedures* was chosen to enable all interested parties, including international organizations and NGOs, to provide input for work in three fields of interest: new election technologies (challenges for the electoral process); OSCE election commitments (on-going challenges to implementation – “Copenhagen Plus” as a possible means to enhance compliance); and election observation (challenges to enhancing electoral integrity).

The second Supplementary Meeting was devoted to *Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism*. This meeting, which took place in Vienna on 14 and 15 July, demonstrated progress in this field. However, in the fight against terrorism there are areas and situations where the respect for freedom of religion or belief could be enhanced, the fight against torture strengthened and the role of civil society further promoted. Following a very dynamic discussion during the meeting, governments, international and non-governmental organizations made several recommendations on the issue. Participating States re-emphasized their determination to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as a crime without justification, whatever its motivation or origin, and to conduct this fight with respect for the rule of law and in accordance with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law.

The third Supplementary Meeting looked at the *Role of Defence Lawyers in Guaranteeing a Fair Trial*. It took place in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 3 and 4 November. This Supplementary Meeting was the first ever held outside Vienna as well as the first devoted to the topic of defence lawyers. It examined issues such as access to legal counsel, admission to and regulation of the bar and equality of parties in criminal procedures. Participants of the meeting made many recommendations to participating States and to the OSCE and suggested further follow-up.

The 2005 *Human Dimension Seminar* was devoted to *Migration and Integration* and took place in Warsaw from 11 to 13 May. The meeting offered a good opportunity to highlight the work done in the field of migration and integration by the OSCE and the ODIHR. The recommendations included the need for a cross-dimensional approach to drafting a strategy for managing migration issues and a statement of principles on integration.

As urged by the Sofia Ministerial Council, the Chairmanship organized a special Conference on issues addressed in a decision on tolerance and non-discrimination. The *OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism and On Other Forms of Intolerance*, which took place on 8 and 9 June in Cordoba, Spain, defined and summarized the work done in 2004. Its main message was reflected in the CiO's *Cordoba Declaration*. On the one hand, the conference addressed various aspects of fighting anti-Semitism; on the other, it tackled fighting other forms of intolerance and discrimina-

tion, including racism and xenophobia. For the first time in the OSCE framework, the topic of intolerance and discrimination against Christians, Muslims and members of other religions was discussed during two formal working sessions. These discussions highlighted the role of the media, education, law enforcement and legislation. They emphasized the growing need to address tolerance and non-discrimination issues through the promotion of mutual respect and understanding, as well as the need for full implementation of OSCE commitments in this field.

The *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting* took place from 19 to 30 September in Warsaw. In a break from past practice, the Implementation Meeting focused on making thematic links on three specially selected subjects: tolerance and non-discrimination, the situation of the media in the OSCE region and the role of state and non-state actors in promoting media freedom and methods to prevent and combat torture.

The Permanent Council, through the *Informal Working Group on Gender Equality and anti-Trafficking*, with support provided by the Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and other relevant OSCE structures, elaborated an *Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, on Addressing the Special Needs of Child Victims of Trafficking for Protection and Assistance*, as required by the Sofia Ministerial Council. The addendum was adopted by the Permanent Council on 7 July and endorsed by the Ministerial Council in Ljubljana.

The Chairmanship, in co-operation with the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, has consolidated the existing partnership with other international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations into the *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons*. This Alliance was set up with a view to further develop meaningful and effective joint strategies and to provide participating States and the Partners for Co-operation with harmonized responses and decision-making aids. Three main meetings in Vienna were organized in this framework: a meeting of national experts on assistance and protection of victims of trafficking on 28 February; the OSCE Annual Anti-Trafficking Conference – with the focus on the trafficking of children – on 18 March; and the OSCE Conference focusing on forced labour on 7 and 8 November.

Following the Supplementary Meeting on the challenges of new election technologies and procedures in April, the Chairmanship issued a non-paper on elections, in which it proposed a three-pronged approach. In this context, the Chairmanship proposed to the ODIHR to convene three technical-expert meetings addressing the following issues: possible supplementary commitments on democratic elections; election observation; and new voting technologies. A first meeting on possible supplementary commitments on democratic elections was held in September in Warsaw. Experts participating in this meeting proposed elaborating “Copenhagen Plus” commitments, as illustrated in the *OSCE/ODIHR Explanatory Note on Possible Additional Commitments for Democratic Elections*. This issue was also discussed at the main Warsaw

BOBO/ Kristina Kosec



**OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel attends the OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance in Cordoba on 8 June. To his left in the picture is Spain's Foreign Minister, Miguel Angel Moratinos.**

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, and general support for the idea was expressed during a briefing for delegations on “Copenhagen Plus” in October in Vienna. In late November, the ODIHR organized in Moscow a second meeting addressing the issues of election observation. The Chairmanship proposed a draft *Ministerial Council Decision on Enhancing Democratic Elections Through Supplementary Commitments (Copenhagen Plus Document)*, which focused on three supplementary commitments: transparency, accountability and public confidence.

Following the adoption of the *2004 OSCE Action Plan for Promotion of Gender Equality*, the Chairmanship co-organized an expert workshop on violence against women, held on 28 and 29 April in Paris. Leading experts from the UN, CoE, the EU, the OSCE and other international organizations active in the field of combating violence against women attended the workshop. The event focused on three aspects of violence against women: violence in the family and at home; violence on the basis of social and economic circumstances; and sexual violence in armed conflicts.

The Chairmanship, together with the ODIHR, the CoE, Poland and the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), organized an international conference to push forward the agenda of the OSCE's *2003 OSCE Action Plan on Improving*

*the Situation of Roma and Sinti.* The conference, which took place in Warsaw in October, focused on concrete measures to implement policies and action plans for Roma, Sinti and travellers, and on measures against the anti-Gypsyism phenomenon in Europe. Participants of this conference proposed follow-up in 2006 to the recommendations.

In line with the OSCE's efforts to promote tolerance and fight discrimination, the CiO re-appointed Anastasia Crickley as his Personal Representative on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions; Gert Weisskirchen as Personal Representative on Combating anti-Semitism; and Omur Orhun as Personal Representative on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims.

The Chairmanship proposed a pilot study on human rights education to help strengthen the implementation of the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century and other relevant OSCE commitments. The pilot project was offered to all participating States. The teaching texts were translated into 16 languages spoken in the OSCE participating States, including Roma. At the beginning of the school year, the pilot project was launched for pupils in Albania, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Ireland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine. The teaching material, entitled *Our Rights*, is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and was developed in co-operation with the CoE and relevant NGOs. It can either supplement existing methods and tools or serve as an innovative approach outside the formal school curricula.

At all human dimension activities and events, the Chairmanship paid special attention to the important role of civil society and NGOs. At the beginning of his mandate, on 13 January, the CiO met in Vienna with representatives of NGOs and civil society who are active in the OSCE region. A day before the Cordoba Conference, the CiO addressed the NGO Forum in Seville.

The CiO informed the UN Secretary-General in December of the OSCE's interest in supporting the *Alliance of Civilizations* initiative, as requested by the Ljubljana Ministerial Council.

## Management issues

One of the first priorities of the Slovenian Chairmanship was to ensure adoption of the OSCE's Unified Budget for 2005. The absence of an approved budget for several months added to the overall sense of instability and threatened the effective management of OSCE operations. Consensus was reached on 12 May on the adoption of a budget of €168.8 million.

Another major challenge for the Chairmanship was finding a successor to Secretary General Jan Kubis, whose mandate expired

in June. Under Slovenia's stewardship consensus was reached on the appointment of Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, who became the OSCE's fourth Secretary General on 21 June.

The continuing lack of agreement on participating States' scales of contribution to the OSCE budget threatened to severely handicap the Organization's work. Fortunately, after considerable negotiations, agreement was reached on 25 November. Following this, the 2006 Unified Budget was adopted on 20 December, for the first time in five years within the deadline stipulated in Financial Regulations and relevant PC decisions.

## Regional issues

### South-eastern Europe

The chance of joining the EU and NATO was the most important incentive for the countries of south-eastern Europe to continue with their reform processes. To support and complement them in their efforts, the OSCE focused on capacity- and institution-building in various areas. The Chairmanship asked OSCE missions to make projections on how these extra demands would fit with their mandates, affect their current programmes and enable them to fulfil their tasks without changing the mandates or programmes.

Promoting regional co-operation in the field of refugee return and of interstate co-operation on war crime trials and reconciliation stood high on the agenda. The Chairmanship organized a ministerial meeting in Brijuni, Croatia, on war crime proceedings to highlight the need to continue co-operation on all levels. An expert-level meeting continued in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Chairmanship also supported the reconciliation process ("Igman initiative") that brought together the Heads of State of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro.

The Chairmanship supported the important role the OSCE plays in Kosovo through its largest mission and took an active part in the work of the Steering Group (together with the UN and the EU) under the direction of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, Soren Jessen-Petersen. In the current situation, there is still no need for substantial changes in the mission's mandate. During the year, the Mission continued its activities in the field of pro-active monitoring and capacity-building, while leaving enough flexibility for the continuity of work in a new structure after the finalization of status talks. The role of the Mission's field offices will soon be reinforced following the UN Mission in Kosovo's draw-down, placing it in an ideal position to deal with capacity-building and monitor the performance of local institutions and the police. In his frequent visits to the region, the CiO repeatedly emphasized the need for both Pristina and Belgrade to understand that, in the future status negotiations, compromise would be essential and both sides would have to make important concessions.

With respect to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the CiO took part in the Srebrenica commemoration ceremony, a highly significant event for the reconciliation process in both the country and in

south-eastern Europe as a whole. During his visit in September, he reiterated the OSCE's continued support for political stabilization and ongoing reform. He discussed the political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially given the stalemate in police reform and its implications for the European integration process, as well as the future structure of the international community in the country. He also talked about education and defence reform efforts, co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and domestic prosecution of war crimes, democratization and good governance, as well as other OSCE initiatives. An international conference commemorating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Dayton Peace Agreement was organized under the auspices of the Chairmanship in Sarajevo. The aim of the event was to assess the historical background and to discuss possible future opportunities for co-operation within a broader European and global context.

During a visit to Tirana, the CiO said the parliamentary elections in July represented a major test case for Albania's goal of Euro-Atlantic integration and as an indicator of the country's political stability and democratic development. Throughout the process, the OSCE has supported the political and technical electoral processes. It also deployed an ODIHR Election Observation Mission tasked with assessing the compliance of the election process with commitments and standards for democratic elections in conformity with OSCE commitments. The OSCE's role was purely technical and politically neutral, and focused on ensuring fair and correct elections.

The CiO visited Skopje in September, where he met leaders of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. He expressed Slovenia's firm support for the OSCE Mission's commendable efforts in the fields of rule of law and judicial reform. He said that the structure of the field mission should remain intact at least through the parliamentary elections in 2006.

## Eastern Europe

In 2005, the OSCE remained committed to finding a peaceful political settlement to the Transdniestrian question that fully respects the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, while providing a special status for Moldova's Transdniestrian region. The CiO paid a visit to the Republic of Moldova in March and October where he met representatives from Chisinau and Tiraspol. The talks there focused on all issues related to the settlement of the Transdniestrian issue.

Besides supporting the efforts aimed at reinvigorating the search for a political settlement to the Transdniestrian question and welcoming the inclusion of the EU and the US as observers in the process, the Chairmanship also encouraged contacts and dialogue between Chisinau and Tiraspol and worked to re-establish a stable ongoing framework acceptable to both sides.

The settlement of the Transdniestrian issue has received new momentum in the form of Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko's

plan, *Towards settlement – through democratization*, and by a "roadmap/plan", which was also the basis for deploying an EU border monitoring mission on the Moldovan-Ukrainian border.

The package of confidence- and security-building measures that was presented to the Moldovan and Transdniestrian sides in July by the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the OSCE aims at strengthening security and confidence and stable demilitarization.

There was no withdrawal of Russian Federation arms and equipment from the Republic of Moldova during 2005.

The first two regional visits of the CiO were made to Ukraine, following the events at the end of 2004, when more than 1,000 election monitors made up the largest election-monitoring operation in the Organization's history. The Chairman-in-Office visited Ukraine for the third time in October to discuss, among other issues, the continuous role of the OSCE and its co-operation with Ukraine.

Ukraine co-operates with the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, and other international organizations, in activities to secure and cement the democratic progress made. The Project Co-ordinator worked to strengthen electoral law and practices, including inserting early-warning systems for the upcoming 2006 parliamentary elections; promote economic and social developments; protect and promote freedom of the media; establish laws protecting national minorities; and strengthen internal and border security.

Concerning Belarus, the OSCE has expressed concerns about the situation of civil society, the rule of law and human rights. The OSCE continues to monitor the situation of civil society and to work with the Belarusian authorities, in accordance with the mandate of the Office in Minsk, to ensure respect for OSCE commitments.

## Caucasus

In the southern Caucasus, the OSCE played a lead role in working with the parties in resolving the conflict in South Ossetia, Georgia, and the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference in Nagorno-Karabakh. Throughout the region, its focus is on the reform of constitutions, local governance and electoral systems. It is working to strengthen freedom of assembly principles and freedom of the media.

The CiO visited the countries in the southern Caucasus between 30 March and 2 April, and paid a second visit to Armenia and Azerbaijan between 4 and 6 September. He appointed Mircea Geoana, former Foreign Minister of Romania and OSCE CiO in 2001, as his Personal Representative for Georgia. Geoana visited Tbilisi and Tskhinvali on 6 and 7 October.

During their visits to Georgia, the CiO and his Personal Representative welcomed the work done on amendments to the country's constitution and assessed the reforms undertaken by Georgia in the past year as encouraging.

# Moldovan schools in Transdniestria remain under pressure

Most pupils in the OSCE area consider starting a new school year on schedule in their own school building a matter of course. For the 4,200 pupils in the six Moldovan Latin script schools in the country's breakaway Transdniestrian region this is not the case.

The contentious issue of Moldovan schools in Transdniestria is a lingering remnant of the armed conflict between Transdniestrian and Moldovan forces in 1992.

The breakaway Transdniestrian authorities reintroduced the use of the Cyrillic alphabet, in keeping with past Soviet policy. The Soviets considered Moldovan, essentially the romance language Romanian, in Cyrillic as a different language from Romanian, which is written in Latin script. However, six schools in the region continued to offer instruction in Moldovan/Romanian in the Latin script, following the curriculum of the Moldovan Ministry of Education. Undeterred by local authorities' constant intimidation, teachers have been educating more than 4,000 children in their native script, using the Latin alphabet to which Moldova returned in 1989.

"I would like to keep my Romanian language, the Romanian traditions, even if it's difficult," says Natalia, from the Evrica Lyceum in Ribnita.

And difficult it is. If parents enrol their children in one of the schools that offer a Moldovan curriculum based on the Latin script, they may lose their jobs.

The 33 Transdniestrian schools that teach Moldovan in Cyrillic are an unappealing alternative: the schools follow an outdated curriculum with textbooks from the Soviet period.

Furthermore, there are no institutes of higher learning anywhere in the world – including in Transdniestria – that teach Romanian in Cyrillic. The authorities' insistence on the Cyrillic script deprives Moldovan children in Transdniestria of their right to pursue advanced education in their mother tongue.

Caught in this no-win situation, many parents choose to enrol their children in a Russian-language school, where educational standards are relatively up to date. Some take even more drastic measures; they uproot

themselves and move to the right bank in Moldova.

Disputes have arisen every summer since 1994 over whether Transdniestrian authorities would allow the schools to re-open for the following school year. Each year, the OSCE Mission, supported by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, stepped up year-round mediation efforts.

In 2003, the High Commissioner's office and the OSCE Mission to Moldova brokered a comprehensive agreement, but the euphoria proved short-lived.

On 15 July 2004, the Transdniestrian militia stormed the Moldovan school in Tiraspol, destroying parts of the building, and confiscating the facilities and other school property. Transdniestrian authorities also threatened the Latin-script schools in Bender and Ribnita, disconnecting their power, water and gas supplies. Students, parents and teachers took it upon themselves to guard their schools day and night. To defuse the potentially explosive climate, members of the OSCE Mission and colleagues in the Secretariat monitored the schools in Bender and Ribnita from sunrise to sunset, seven days a week.

The Mission also pursued talks with local authorities, who unfortunately showed no readiness for compromise. On 29 July, Transdniestrian militia stormed the school in Ribnita.

As tension mounted, the international community stood firm and insisted that Transdniestrian authorities agree to compromise. Finally, in late August, they agreed to register the schools under a private status, valid for one year, enabling them to use a Moldovan curriculum and Latin script. Four of the six schools began the 2004 academic year as planned.

In Ribnita, the Evrica Lyceum, however, still lacked a building, as local authorities refused to return the confiscated premises. Teaching resumed in exile at the kindergarten of a local factory in October.

In Tiraspol, the school was under repair. Until it reopened on 7 February 2005, its 500 children travelled long distances to attend schools in neighbouring villages.



**The OSCE Mission to Moldova, based in the capital, Chisinau, was officially established in February 1993.**

In summer 2005, pupils, parents and teachers feared a repetition of the nightmare of 2004. But thanks to the mediation efforts of the OSCE Mission together with the co-mediators from the Ukrainian and Russian Embassies, the school year began on schedule.

From 28 February 2005, the OSCE Mission hosted nine negotiation meetings of education experts from Tiraspol and Chisinau. On 1 July, these negotiations led to an agreement on a set of school statutes and to the permanent registration of the four Moldovan schools temporarily registered in 2004.

"This hopefully brings a long-awaited solution to the conflict over the existence of the Moldovan schools in Transdniestria," says Kristin Franklin, the OSCE Mission's Human Dimension Officer.

"The permanent registration means that the local Transdniestrian authorities now regard them as legal entities."

Despite the agreement, some issues remain unsolved. One of the most visible outstanding problems is the confiscated school building of the Evrica Lyceum in Ribnita.

The Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Ambassador William Hill, said: "The local authorities in Ribnita have de facto stolen this building. They must give the building back to the school without any further delay and without any conditions."

In the conflict in South Ossetia, Georgia, the OSCE facilitated the political process and supported de-militarization as agreed by the parties. The Slovenian Chairmanship welcomed the support rendered by the Venice Commission in elaborating concrete status proposals for South Ossetia from the Georgian authorities. Confidence-building and economic rehabilitation should be part of a concerted approach to bring sustainable peace to this long-troubled region of Georgia.

The first expert meeting of the *Georgian-Ossetian Dialogue* project, under the auspices of the Slovenian Chairmanship and the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies, took place in Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia, from 15 to 18 March. The aim of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for an informal exchange of views on a wide range of issues related to the resolution of the conflict. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Georgian and South Ossetian parliaments, the government and NGOs, as well as by a representative from North Ossetia. The format of the meeting stipulated that the participants take part in a personal capacity, rather than expressing their organizations' official positions.

The Slovenian Chairmanship also hosted the meeting of the Joint Control Commission on the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, which took place between 15 and 17 November in Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia. At the meeting, the CiO called on the participants from Georgia, the Russian Federation, North and South Ossetia to move along the path towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict and urged them to pave the way for an early dialogue at the highest level. Unfortunately, the meeting did not bridge the differences between the sides; however, there was an expression of joint support for a European Commission-funded economic rehabilitation programme in the zone of conflict and the recently launched needs assessment study.

With regard to Abkhazia, the OSCE under the Slovenian Chairmanship continued to support the UN-led settlement process and to promote the establishment of a joint UN-OSCE human rights office in the Gali region, which could also contribute to a return of the displaced population.

Georgia requested the OSCE's assistance in border management and security after the mandate of the Border Monitoring Operation was terminated in 2004. The OSCE launched a Training Assistance Programme in June, which was extended on 21 December for another six-month period, to complete the original training programme as outlined in the proposal.

The Chairmanship welcomed the joint declaration of the Foreign Ministers of Georgia and the Russian Federation on closing Russian bases at Batumi and Akhalkalaki and other military facilities in Georgia by 2008. The OSCE Ministerial Council in Ljubljana adopted a Statement on Georgia, the first after the Ministerial Council in Porto in 2002.

In Armenia and Azerbaijan, the CiO further strengthened the OSCE's efforts to reach a lasting solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh

conflict. During visits to the two countries, the CiO called for the stabilization of the situation along the frontlines. He reiterated that every existing avenue to accelerate the peace process should be explored to the full, and said that the personal engagement of the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia, in the wake of meetings between the foreign ministers, was an important milestone that gave added momentum to the peace process.

In February, a fact-finding mission under the auspices of the Minsk Group visited the occupied territories of Azerbaijan around Nagorno-Karabakh to examine first-hand the settlement situation in the occupied territories. The Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group met the CiO twice during the year in March and September. In December, the OSCE High-Level Planning Group conducted its first reconnaissance mission to Armenia and Azerbaijan since 1997. The CiO also supported the work done by his Personal Representative, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk.

Much has been done in the past year: the so-called Prague meetings of the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan have had a positive effect, resulting in meetings of the Presidents of both countries in Warsaw and Kazan, thus bringing new momentum to the process resolving the conflict. The Ministerial Council in Ljubljana adopted a statement saying that the time had come for making the transition from negotiation to decision.

In Armenia, the CiO encouraged the authorities to undertake important reforms, including amendments to the electoral code to strengthen the impartiality, professionalism and transparency of electoral administration. He offered OSCE assistance in areas such as constitutional and electoral reform, freedom of the media and the fight against corruption.

In Azerbaijan, the CiO reiterated the OSCE's readiness to continue assisting in implementing various reforms, particularly in the fields of elections, anti-corruption and money-laundering, diversification of the economy, human rights promotion and protection programmes.

Under the auspices of the Slovenian Chairmanship, the Third Plenary Assembly of the Southern Caucasus Parliamentary Initiative met in Ljubljana from 18 to 20 January. The Initiative is a framework for dialogue, contacts, an exchange of views and joint analysis among the Parliaments of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the three on 13 May 2003.

## *Central Asia*

The CiO visited Central Asia three times. Concerned by the state of human rights and fundamental freedoms, his visits emphasized the need to preserve stability and to nurture democratic reforms in the region. The pressure from the population is mounting, as witnessed by the change of leadership in Kyrgyzstan or the violent events in Uzbekistan.

The CiO visited Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in February, presenting Alojz Peterle as his Personal Representative for Central Asia. He flew to Kyrgyzstan immediately following the events in March. He toured the region in April, meeting representatives of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

In Kyrgyzstan, the OSCE was immediately on the spot to help reduce tensions and it remained at the forefront of international efforts to ensure stability in that country. The Chairmanship, participating States, OSCE Institutions and the Centre in Bishkek were actively involved in developing a work plan to assist the

Kyrgyz Government in dealing with the aftermath of the March events. (For more on this topic, please see page 21.)

The ODIHR, with support from the Parliamentary Assembly, monitored Kyrgyzstan's presidential election on 10 July. In its preliminary report, the ODIHR said that these polls marked tangible progress towards meeting OSCE and other international commitments for democratic elections, although the vote count proved to be problematic. Furthermore, the ODIHR concluded that fundamental civil and political rights were generally respected and there was an improved media environment.

## *The OSCE responds to March events in Kyrgyzstan*

Long-simmering grievances boiled over in Kyrgyzstan after the parliamentary elections in February and March 2005. Scattered post-election protests in the south of the country snowballed into larger demonstrations.

The OSCE stepped up immediately to help contain the crisis. It worked urgently to ensure the authorities did not attempt to control the demonstrators with force of arms. Simultaneously, it channelled its efforts into encouraging a political dialogue between then President Askar Akaev and his opponents.

As soon as the Government and opposition leaders agreed to the OSCE's assuming the role of mediator, Alojz Peterle flew to Bishkek on 24 March in his capacity as Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to help ease the country's political tensions. It was to be the first of many visits in the next weeks.

"I was in the middle of a meeting with then Foreign Minister Askar Aitmatov when we were suddenly interrupted by news that Bishkek's 'White House' – the seat of government – had been stormed by demonstrators. Later, we learned that the President had left the country," Personal Representative Peterle said.

"This unexpected turn of events changed the course of my mission profoundly, since one of the negotiating parties had disappeared. Furthermore, the security situation had spun out of control. With police and security forces backing off, public order broke down and widespread looting of business establishments in the capital took place unham-



**Acting President Kurmanbek Bakiev and Alojz Peterle meet on 28 March in Bishkek.**

pered during the night of 24 March and most of the next day.

"It was an unusual situation, to say the least: at that moment, the country had de facto two parliaments and diverse groups of demonstrators."

After the country's one-day political and security vacuum, the OSCE quickly initiated a working relationship with the interim government, serving at the same time as a neutral platform for dialogue with the new leadership. It assumed the role of focal point for co-ordinated action.

As a matter of urgency, the OSCE appealed for law and order.

In co-operation with the European Union, the UN, and bilateral embassies in Bishkek, which recognized the OSCE's leading role in this process, the OSCE drew up a working plan of urgent as well as long-term tasks, shifting its priorities in light of the dramatic political change in the country. The work plan was developed at the request of the

Kyrgyz Government and in close co-operation with it.

Heading the urgent to-do list was the need to give practical assistance in re-establishing law and order. The decision was made to bolster the Bishkek Office's well-developed Police Assistance Programme, whose overall aim is to assist in the creation of a national police service by 2010. The Office added a series of quick impact initiatives, which aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the police in coping with such issues as preventing crime escalation and restoring public order.

The work plan also focused on the OSCE's crucial immediate role as a platform for political dialogue among stakeholders, with a focus on enhanced dialogue between the authorities and civil society and on election-related issues.

Other immediate work included encouraging the Government to re-confirm guarantees to local and international business, given that the March events were likely to hurt economic growth. It also focused on environmental issues and media development. Freedom of speech and of expression as well as access to information were recognized as necessary conditions to building an open society, particularly in the interim period.

While short-term initiatives were necessary, the OSCE knows that only a long-term, comprehensive approach will create sustainable stability. In the long term, the OSCE will focus on election assistance; the rule of law as well as police reform and legislative and judicial support; free media development; and support to the work of civil society.

Security in Central Asia, particularly in Uzbekistan, remains of concern and therefore requires co-operative solutions. The Government of Uzbekistan, as a member of international organizations, is expected to co-operate with the international community to undertake an independent investigation on the Andijan events of May.

In response to an invitation by Kazakhstan's Foreign Ministry, the ODIHR observed the 4 December presidential election in the country.

At the request of the Slovenian Chairmanship, the Secretary General visited Uzbekistan in July and met representatives of the Government and of civil society. One result of the visit was Uzbek acceptance of the presence of expert ODIHR monitors at the Andijan trials, which, however, did not continue as promised at the second round of trials in November. The visit re-established a genuine dialogue and maintained working relations between the OSCE and Uzbekistan. It should also help to strengthen the role of the Head of the OSCE Centre in Tashkent and his position on the ground in increasingly difficult circumstances.

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office and representatives of other organizations welcomed the resettlement of 440 asylum seekers/refugees from Uzbekistan to Romania by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Chairmanship underlined on several occasions that the safety and welfare of asylum seekers, who escaped the turmoil in Andijan, must be assured by the Kyrgyz authorities, with assistance from the UNHCR.

### *Co-operation with other international organizations*

The CiO actively strove to further improve relations between the OSCE and other international organizations.

On 4 March, he addressed the UN Security Council and met UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The Chairmanship also took part in the sixth high-level meeting between the UN and Regional and other International Organizations that took place in New York on 25 and 26 July. On 21 September, the CiO addressed the UN General Assembly and again met the Secretary-General. On that occasion, he expressed support for the UN *Alliance of Civilizations* initiative and called for strengthened co-operation between the UN and the OSCE in this field. Further, the Ljubljana Ministerial Council outlined a role for the OSCE in promoting dialogue among civilizations, and decided to make an appropriate contribution to the UN's *Alliance of Civilizations* initiative through the promotion of inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue and the advancement of mutual understanding and respect as well as human rights throughout the OSCE area.

Another major development was an agreement on co-operation between the OSCE and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Under the terms of a Permanent Council decision adopted in May, the OSCE Missions to Bosnia and Herzegovi-

BOBO/Kristina Kosec



**Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel (right) at the Council of Europe Summit in Warsaw on 17 May.**

na, Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro will monitor war crimes trials on behalf of the Prosecutor's Office of the Tribunal.

In February, the Chairmanship was represented at the yearly tripartite and target-oriented meetings in Strasbourg between the UN Office at Geneva, the OSCE and the Council of Europe, with the participation of the EU, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Organization on Migration.

The Chairmanship renewed its efforts to further improve relations between the OSCE and the European Union. The CiO took part in two EU-OSCE Troika meetings and used Slovenia's position as an EU member to encourage the Union to make effective use of the Organization. The ministerial-level meetings were complemented by two meetings at ambassadorial level between the respective Troikas of the OSCE and the EU Political Security Committee.

In 2005, co-operation between the OSCE and the CoE was considerably deepened. The CiO participated in the CoE Summit in Warsaw on 16 and 17 May, where the declaration on co-operation between the CoE and the OSCE was brought to the attention of Heads of State and Government.

The CiO met the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the CoE and the Secretary General of both organizations in February. At that time, he also addressed the Council's Committee of Ministers' Deputies on the OSCE's 2005 priorities. Furthermore, a joint meeting of the Permanent Council and the Committee of Ministers' Deputies was held on 18 April, to discuss the Declaration on Co-operation between the OSCE and the CoE. The OSCE-CoE Co-ordination Group started its work, and two meetings were held in 2005. Further, the Chairmanship continued to participate in the regular high- and working-level meetings between the OSCE and the CoE in the course of the year.

One of the CiO's first visits was to NATO headquarters on 26 January where he addressed the North Atlantic Council and met Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. He also addressed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in November in Brussels and

its Forum in May in Aare, Sweden. The Chairmanship participated in the regular staff level meetings between the OSCE Secretariat and NATO that took place during the year.

The Chairmanship also maintained relations with regional and sub-regional organizations. The CiO took part, for example, in the Summit meeting of the Central European Initiative in Piestany, Slovakia on 25 November and visited the Organization of American States.

The CiO also took every available opportunity to promote intercultural dialogue through the OSCE, meeting, for example, with leaders of the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Partner regional and sub-regional organizations and initiatives were regularly invited to all the major OSCE events in 2005, including the Ministerial Council in Ljubljana, and were given the floor where appropriate. Representatives of relevant organizations were also invited to address the Permanent Council in the course of the year.

## Supporting elections in Afghanistan

**“The 2005 elections were considered an important step forward in fostering democracy, stability and human rights in Afghanistan.”**

### ***The OSCE Election Support Team Report***

In September, the OSCE sent its second Election Support Team to Afghanistan, one of its Partners for Co-operation. It dispatched a 32-member team to help the country conduct its first National Assembly and Provincial Council elections in over three decades, held on 18 September. As in the 2004 presidential election, the Team’s mandate was to analyse the electoral process rather than to exercise its more typical role of election monitor.

Before polling day, the Team met regularly with election administration bodies, candidates and political parties, civil society organizations and international community representatives. On election day, the team visited some 250 of 26,500

polling stations. The team also went to eight of 32 provincial count centres to analyse the count and vote tabulation process.

*“Afghan and international security forces provided a relatively stable environment for the elections, despite ongoing security threats. Unlike in 2004, polling took place in all districts. Although it appears that somewhat fewer voters cast ballots than in 2004, the Afghan people again showed commendable commitment and often, especially in the case of women, considerable resolve and courage.”*

### ***The OSCE Election Support Team Report***

To improve future elections, the team offered a number of suggestions, including five overarching recommendations:

- 1) Future elections must be run at a more sustainable cost while maintaining confidence in the process. The direct cost of the last two electoral cycles, including voter registration, was close to \$300 million, roughly €250 million, which was paid for by the international community.
- 2) For technical reasons, the fewer elections that can be conducted before the next scheduled state-level elections in 2009 the better. The team recommends using the interim to consolidate and support Parliament and provincial councils; strengthen the Afghan electoral administration; conduct a sustainable voter registration, districting, civil registration and census; build political parties; and conduct extensive civic education programmes, especially amongst women, youth, rural populations and in the south and south-west.
- 3) Afghanistan must make progress on issues of justice. Thirty-three candidates were disqualified under an electoral law forbidding those candidates who were convicted of crimes, including crimes against humanity or links to illegal armed groups, from standing. But many Afghans and human rights advocates expressed disappointment that the ballot contained significant numbers of “war-lords” or “ex-commanders” linked to Afghanistan’s violent past. While candidate vetting was important, the expectations on it were unrealistic. The electoral system cannot replace functioning courts or truth commissions.
- 4) Increase civic education and democratic understanding, especially in rural areas including the south and south-east.
- 5) Women must continue to be strongly supported in their aspirations to participate fully in the political processes of Afghanistan.

OSCE/Alexander Nitzsche



**Voters register at the polling station.**



**Afghan men queue up to vote.**

## *Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation*

Slovenia made major efforts to further engage the OSCE's Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in ongoing dialogue and activities. The Chairman of the Permanent Council frequently addressed the meetings of the Asian and Mediterranean Contact Groups with a view to keeping Partner States updated on pertinent issues, including those that had a direct bearing on relations with the Partners. Partner States were also regularly invited to the Permanent Council, including – for the first time – to a joint side meeting on the margins of the Annual Security Review Conference and to the closing session of the high-level consultations on strengthening the OSCE.

The themes of migration and integration, which were priorities for Slovenia's Chairmanship, were the focus of the OSCE Mediterranean Seminar which took place in Rabat, Morocco, on 8 and 9 September. On that occasion, the CiO stated that the OSCE partnership process played the role of a bridge linking Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, and welcomed the fact that the partnership was becoming more pragmatic. He stated that migration presented challenges for the countries of origin and the countries of destination, affecting security, social cohesion, human rights and economic development. He noted that the OSCE had a great deal to offer, whether it was expertise in policing, anti-trafficking, counter-terrorism, confidence and security-building measures, peace-building, democratization or preventing ethnic conflict. He said that this expertise should be put at the service of the OSCE's partners, and others who subscribe to the OSCE's values. Effective follow-up to the Seminar was encouraged.

The CiO participated in the annual meeting of the OSCE with the Asian partners, namely the OSCE-Korea Conference on new security threats and a new security paradigm, which was held in Seoul on 25 and 26 April. During the event, he said, „The OSCE offers a model of multilateral security co-operation that could also be taken up by north-east Asia.“

The meeting discussed the challenges of the non-traditional and multi-dimensional threats to security and stability in the world, which by their very nature require ever-more enhanced multi-lateral co-operation, including between Europe and north-east Asia. Participants discussed new threats to security and measures to combat them, the need for a new security paradigm, and focused on the question of a new security paradigm in north-east Asia.

A representative of the Chairmanship also took part in an OSCE seminar on combating trafficking in human beings in Bangkok in June.

China expressed considerable interest in the OSCE in 2005. Some participating States were supportive of entering into a formal OSCE-China partnership but in 2005 conditions were not yet ripe.

For the second year in a row, the OSCE deployed an Election Support Team to Afghanistan, this time to assist with National Assembly and provincial elections held on 18 September. The team was tasked with analysing the electoral process and preparing a set of recommendations to the Afghan Government, with a view to enhancing the conduct of future elections and improving Afghanistan's legal framework and procedures. The decision by the Permanent Council on the Election Support Team underscores the importance of democratic elections for fostering democracy and human rights and furthering stability in Afghanistan, while at the same time assisting the democratic Government of Afghanistan to accomplish this important step, which marked the completion of the tasks set by the Bonn Conference. (For more on this topic, please see page 23.)

At the invitation of the Palestinian Authority and after consultations with the participating States, in January the Chairmanship requested that an expert training needs assessment team be sent by the OSCE Secretariat and the ODIHR to the Palestinian Territories. In a report to the Permanent Council, the team identified areas where the OSCE and its Institutions might offer expertise to the Palestinian Authority and to Palestinian civil society in relation to its elections to the Palestine Legislative Council. This was the second time the OSCE provided support, in co-operation with other international actors, at the request of a country outside the OSCE area. Following the team's deployment, an application by the Palestinian Authority to become an OSCE Partner for Co-operation was presented to the CiO. However, the request failed to meet with consensus among the participating States.

On the eve of the Ministerial Council in Ljubljana, the CiO chaired two Ministerial Troika meetings with counterparts from the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation, respectively. They assessed the current dialogue with the Asian and Mediterranean Partners and focused on perspectives and proposals for future co-operation. Participants welcomed the positive developments undertaken throughout the year, in particular their deeper involvement and more regular consultation on issues of mutual interest.

# Permanent Council

The Permanent Council engaged actively in a range of issues that stood high on the OSCE's agenda in 2005.

In Council meetings and behind the scenes, consensus was hammered out on appointing a new Secretary General, adopting a Unified Budget for 2005 (several months late) and for 2006 (on time) as well as agreeing on participating States' scales of contribution to the OSCE for 2005 to 2007. Amendments were made to the Staff Regulations and Rules and a Common Regulatory Management System was agreed upon.

At the end of June, the Panel of Eminent Persons, charged with proposing reform steps for the Organization, presented its report, *Strengthening the Effectiveness of the OSCE*, to the Permanent Council. This was followed by high-level consultations on reform in September.

The Council took two important decisions on strengthening co-operation with strategic partners, the Council of Europe and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

The Permanent Council also mandated the deployment of two important operations: a Training Assistance Programme for Georgian Border Guards and an Election Support Team to Afghanistan.

**Ambassador Janez Lenarčič of Slovenia, Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council in 2005.**



OSCE/Mikhail Evstafiev

A number of decisions were taken to strengthen the OSCE's ability to combat new threats and challenges to security, for example on counter-terrorism and anti-trafficking.

Discussion was particularly lively on "Current Issues", demonstrating the Permanent Council's usefulness as a forum for dialogue on fast-breaking developments and for peer review of the implementation of commitments.

As every year, decisions were taken on the structures of OSCE meetings and extending mission mandates. Heads of Institution and Heads of Mission regularly reported to the Permanent Council.

The Permanent Council played host to a number of distinguished guests including Acting President Kurmanbek Bakiev of Kyrgyzstan, Prime Minister Zurab Nougaideli of Georgia, nine Foreign Ministers and the Secretary Generals of NATO and the Council of Europe.

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

## Guest speakers at the PC in 2005

- 13 January: Chairman-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, **Dimitrij Rupel**
- 27 January: Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg, on the priorities of the EU presidency, **Jean Asselborn**
- 3 February: Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia, **Giorgi Gomiashvili**
- 10 February: Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Kosovo, **Soren Jessen-Petersen**
- 3 March: Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, **Solomon Passy**
- 10 March: Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia, **Giorgi Gomiashvili**
- 7 April: President of the Co-ordination Centre of Serbia and Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia for Kosovo and Metohija, **Nebojsa Covic**
- 21 April: Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, **Mladen Ivanic**
- 19 May: Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, **Carla Del Ponte**
- 30 May (special PC): Acting President of Kyrgyzstan, **Kurmanbek Bakiev**
- 16 June: Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, **Erhard Busek**
- 14 July: Secretary General of the Council of Europe, **Terry Davis**
- 21 July: Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, **Ursula Plassnik**
- 1 September: EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, **Heikki Talvitie**
- 6 September (special PC): Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Montenegro, **Vuk Draskovic**
- 6 September (special PC): Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, **Elmar Mammadyarov**
- 13 October: Chairman of the UN Security Council Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee, Ambassador **Cesar Mayoral**
- 13 October: Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Georgia and Chief of the UN Observer Mission in Georgia, Ambassador **Heidi Tagliavini**
- 27 October: Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, **Antanas Valionis**
- 27 October (special PC): Prime Minister of Georgia, **Zurab Nougaideli**
- 3 November: NATO Secretary General, **Jaap de Hoop Scheffer**
- 14 November (special PC): Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, **Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu**
- 15 November (special PC): Minister for Foreign Affairs of Croatia, **Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic**
- 15 December: High Representative and EU Special Representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina, **Lord Paddy Ashdown**
- 22 December: UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, **Manfred Nowak**

# The Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office

## High-Level Planning Group

The High-Level Planning Group (HLPG) was established in 1994 at the Budapest Summit of the Heads of State or Government of the OSCE (then CSCE) participating States, to make recommendations for planning options of a multinational OSCE peacekeeping force for the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference. This includes plans for the establishment, force structure requirements, operations as well as the size and characteristics of this force. The HLPG liaises with the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group, as well as with the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference and contributing States.

In June, the Chairman-in-Office issued a directive requiring the HLPG, with the consent of the parties to the conflict, to plan, prepare and execute a reconnaissance mission to the area during the second half of 2005, in order to obtain information on the operational, logistical and financial aspects of the existing contingency planning.

The HLPG conducted reconnaissance missions to Armenia between 11 and 15 December and to Azerbaijan (with the exception of Nagorno-Karabakh) between 15 and 22 December. A reconnaissance mission to the Nagorno-Karabakh region is planned for early 2006.

Furthermore, the HLPG is also tasked with: revising and updating the planning documents; completing the revision of the most recently devised peacekeeping operations option; co-operating with the respective units of the OSCE Secretariat; aligning the current plans with the requirements of the new Integrated Resource Management Agenda management system; and liaising as appropriate with international organizations involved in peace-keeping activities.

The HLPG also revised the post descriptions of staff members to improve the efficiency of the group. It reconsidered the composition of the HLPG planning team.

The HLPG participated in a number of monitoring missions on the Line of Contact, as it has done since September 1998.

## Office of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference

Negotiations towards the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict increased in momentum in 2005, resulting in two meetings between the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia and in meetings between the respective Foreign Ministers in the framework of the so-called 'Prague Process'. This increase in activity resulted in intensified work by the Personal Representative, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, in keeping the Chairmanship and the Minsk Group, including its Co-chairs, informed of developments. Following agreement reached by the Co-chairs, the Personal Representative was instrumental in organizing the meeting between the Presidents in Warsaw in May on the margins of the Council of Europe summit.

The Personal Representative and his office continued the mandated task of monitoring the front line to assess the military situation and to assist in reducing tension. This was particularly important in the spring, when an increased number of cease-fire violations were reported and the situation threatened to deteriorate. Reports from the Personal Representative gave early warning of this rise in tension and steps were taken to normalize the situation. The military situation on the front line appeared to have stabilized thereafter.

The Personal Representative also assisted the High-Level Planning Group in fulfilling its mandated tasks. Contact was maintained with the European Union and organizations such as the Council of Europe, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and various international non-governmental organizations, with relation to the major problems of internally displaced persons and refugees, prisoners of war, missing persons and detainees, as well as mine clearance.

Confidence-building measures promoted by the office between the sides were largely confined to what was needed to carry out monitoring activities and assist in the return of prisoners of war detained by the sides. Efforts continued to encourage contact between the sides at local level.



**Representatives of the High-Level Planning Group conducted reconnaissance missions to Armenia and Azerbaijan in December.**

Following an agreement between the sides in 2004, an OSCE Minsk Group Fact-Finding Mission to the occupied territories around Nagorno-Karabakh took place from 31 January to 5 February, with the support and assistance of the office of the Personal Representative.

### *Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Article IV*

The Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office promotes the fulfilment of key aspects of the Dayton Peace Accords, which ended more than three years of war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995. The Accords left BiH in a unique military situation. The State had no military forces of its own, nor any control over the armed forces established during the war by two relatively strong entities – the (Bosniac-Croat) Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the (Serbian) Republika Srpska.

In 2004, Bosnia and Herzegovina and its two entities achieved a major milestone in the region's normalization. They agreed that Article II, Annex 1 B, of the Accord on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures among the parties had successfully served its purpose and was no longer necessary.

Under Annex 1 B, the OSCE is charged with assisting the Parties in the implementation and verification of the agreed measures. Broadly speaking, the Personal Representative's role is to broker political consensus, ensure the process flows, and surmount obstacles to the Agreement's implementation.

This past year, the Personal Representative continued work on arms control in the region as per Article IV, Annex 1 B. Signed in 1996, its aim is to balance arms limits for Bosnia and Herzegovina and its two entities, as well as for the Republic of Croatia and the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, now Serbia and Montenegro.

#### ***Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control (Article IV, Annex 1 B, Dayton Peace Accords)***

In 2005, the five signatories to Article IV took several key legislative steps in defence reform that can serve as a basis to conclude the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Accords. In addition, they destroyed some 500 pieces of heavy weapons as per the Armaments Limited to the Agreement, and they concluded work on improving this Agreement with the destruction of some 100 pieces of exempted heavy armaments.

The Personal Representative reported that the signatories achieved greater stability and security in the region in 2005. As scheduled, the Parties conducted 18 inspections involving experts from 26 OSCE countries.

In consultation with the Parties, the Personal Representative assisted in implementation and verification by:

- co-ordinating the schedule of inspections;
- requesting OSCE States to provide assistants and;
- co-ordinating offers for training.



**Experts met to review Bosnia and Herzegovina's defence reform and changing security situation from 8 to 10 November.**

The Personal Representative reported that the inspection regime functioned well in an environment of trust, openness and transparency. The Parties provided accurate information exchanges and notifications reflecting the continuous restructuring process of the armed forces in the region. Reduction of heavy weapons proceeded as planned during the year with the destruction of about 500 Armaments Limited to the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control.

Since Article IV entered into force, the Parties, assisted by the Personal Representative, have improved it by closing certain loopholes, such as exempted equipment that allowed Parties to maintain large quantities of equipment above agreed ceilings. This long process of improvement concluded this year with the destruction of about 100 pieces of exempted heavy armaments. The Parties also reduced armaments held by the internal security forces (police).

In 2005, the Sub-Regional Consultative Commission, which administers Article IV, met five times and resolved two pending issues. The Parties clarified the status of all existing types, versions and models of the armoured personnel carrier BTR-50 and included the category of lookalikes into the Protocol on Existing Types of Armaments.

To ensure statistical relevance with the number of objects of inspection steadily decreasing, the Consultative Commission decided to maintain a minimum number of passive inspection quotas for each of the Parties.

The Personal Representative reported that the overall strategic environment around the region covered by post-Dayton arms control has improved significantly and cannot be compared to the situation ten years ago when the mandates for the various Agreements were shaped by Annex 1 B to the Accords. The Personal Representative therefore continued consultations with OSCE

**Defence reform**

The legislative bodies in Bosnia and Herzegovina passed key defence reform legislation packages that will at last unify the country's defence architecture into a single state-level framework. The consequences of the passage of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Law on Defence and the Law on Service in the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina are far-reaching. They open the road for the country to join NATO's Partnership for Peace programme, which focuses on defence-related co-operation with the aim to enhance stability and security throughout Europe, and eventually to full membership in NATO. Ten years after Dayton, the final adoption of the defence reforms also means that BiH has set the foundation needed for the conclusion of the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Accords.

The defence laws entered into force on 1 January 2006 and will affect the Article IV Agreement. All Article IV Parties signed an amendment to the Agreement, which stipulates that Bosnia and Herzegovina will assume responsibility for the representation of the entities in the Sub-Regional Consultative Commission and will exercise their former rights pursuant to the Article IV Agreement. The OSCE Personal Representative prepared this amendment, which was signed in March 2006.

delegations and specifically with Contact Group States to develop a long-term strategy consistent with the overall policy within the region. To that end, the OSCE conducted a workshop with all Parties on Sub-Regional Arms Control and the changed security situation in the region in November 2005 in Zagreb.

Within the confines of the Article IV Agreement, the policy on ownership has been achieved and could be further extended. The Personal Representative will continue to provide the Parties with guidance and technical support for implementing an inspection regime with three Parties only and provide analysis and expertise for managing the annual information data exchanges and necessary amendments to the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control in consultation with the Parties.

### *Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings*

The Special Representative, Helga Konrad, gave priority in 2005 to tackling trafficking in children, for labour exploitation and for forced or bonded labour.

The Special Representative dealt with these issues at two high-level conferences organized within the framework of the *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons* in March and November. The conferences stimulated deeper reflection and established a dialogue with and among the OSCE participating States on how to address two issues: first, the special assistance and protection needs of children; second, the dismantling of the structures underlying trafficking for forced and bonded labour. They also aimed to provide high-quality practice-oriented background information

to governments as decision-making aids in the formulation of anti-trafficking strategies. The Conference on Child Trafficking helped prepare the ground for the formulation of the *Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings: Addressing the Special Needs of Child Victims of Trafficking for Protection and Assistance* adopted at the Ljubljana Ministerial Council on 5 and 6 December.

Despite increased attention at the political level, and some on-the-ground improvement, victims of trafficking are still frequently seen as perpetrators and are being criminalized. Instead of being taken to appropriate shelters, they are often put into custody in the receiving countries and/or immediately returned to their home countries. The protection and assistance measures offered are insensitive to human rights.

Workshops and meetings of national and international experts addressed these issues, aiming at fine-tuning existing approaches, measures and activities to step up their impact and make them more sustainable. A case in point was the expert meeting held in February on victim assistance. All the relevant OSCE structures and institutions (ODIHR, SPMU, OCEEA, Senior Gender Adviser, and field missions) contributed their expertise and know-how to the conferences and meetings.

The Special Representative chose the motto *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons* for joint efforts to combat human trafficking undertaken together with major international, inter-governmental and non-governmental actors. The Alliance takes account of the complexity of the problem and complements existing co-ordination efforts among the OSCE and other international partners. The *Alliance Expert Co-ordination Team*, which is a forum for discussing and streamlining appropriate responses to the individual links in the human trafficking chain and to the problem as a whole, met three times in 2005, presided over by the Special Representative. Thanks to the findings of these meetings, the OSCE played a major role in framing the EU *Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking*, which points to the OSCE Action Plan as a reference document.

In line with her mandate, the Special Representative paid official visits to 24 OSCE participating States (15 EU countries, four of these new EU member States, four to south-eastern European States, five to States of the Commonwealth of Independent States), assessing the situation on the ground and discussing strategies and concrete future steps with decision-makers and stakeholders. These fact-finding missions facilitate the interaction between theory and practice. They have proved to be a highly effective tool in gauging whether human trafficking is perceived to be what it really is: a serious crime and horrendous violation of human rights.

In addition to the OSCE conferences and meetings under the aegis of the *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons*, the Special Representative responded to invitations to act as keynote speaker in more than 50 national, regional and international conferences, meetings, workshops, roundtables and panel discussions.

This further strengthened co-operation in all aspects of the work against human trafficking and enhanced the visibility of the OSCE's overall commitment to fight this scourge vigorously and to strengthen its lead role in this field.

To provide a comprehensive overview of the overall trafficking situation in the OSCE region and to give an account of the struggle against it, the Special Representative has given guidance for the preparation of a report which will inform about both good practice examples and about factors impeding the effective fight against human trafficking. The report is due to be published in early 2006.

### *Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia*

The Chairman-in-Office appointed Alojz Peterle, a member of the European Parliament, as the OSCE's Personal Representative for Central Asia for 2005.

During the year, the Special Representative for Central Asia played an active role in the region, visiting countries on a regular basis to consult on significant issues of regional interest at a high political level.

His work focused particularly on the situation in Kyrgyzstan after the March events and subsequent developments. Following parliamentary elections in the country in February and March, the Personal Representative visited Bishkek for the first time on 24 March to encourage a political dialogue between the President and the opposition. That day demonstrators stormed the seat of Government and the President fled, altering the nature of the Personal Representative's mission. The OSCE served as a neutral platform for dialogue with the new leadership and as a focal point for co-ordinated action between the representatives of embassies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations. The Personal Representative played a key role in the elaboration of an OSCE work plan for Kyrgyzstan, aimed at bringing about stability and security in the region. (For more on this topic, please see page 21.)

Elections were high on Mr. Peterle's agenda in his discussions with the authorities. The Personal Representative visited Bishkek in June to propose to the presidential candidates a politically binding code of conduct on fairness in campaigning. The majority of the candidates agreed to and signed this code of conduct.

During his visit to Kazakhstan at the beginning of November and his meetings with political leaders, including the chairs of the Central Election Commission and representatives of civil society, the Personal Representative recalled the importance of the presidential elections of December 2005 and the implementation of the ODIHR's recommendations on election procedures.



**Alojz Peterle, Personal Representative of the OSCE  
Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia, at a news conference  
in Vienna on 14 April.**

During his visit to Kyrgyzstan in late November, the Personal Representative addressed the *Conference on Constitutional reform in the Kyrgyz Republic: International review*. He met the President as well as key members of the Kyrgyz Government to discuss political developments and to raise other important issues such as the fight against corruption. He underlined the need to continue the constructive debate on constitutional reform, a prerequisite for political stability and the economic development of the country. He also stressed the excellent co-operation between the Kyrgyz authorities and the OSCE, highlighting specifically the police assistance programme.

In fulfilling his mandate, the Personal Representative demonstrated the Organization's continued relevance for, and its firm commitment to, the security of Central Asia and the wider OSCE region.

From 1990 to 1992, Alojz Peterle served as Prime Minister of the first democratically elected Slovenian government. He is also a former Foreign Minister.

# Reports of the Chairpersons of the Contact Groups with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation

**The Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation are:** Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

**Chairmanship of the Mediterranean Contact Group in 2005:** Belgium

**The Asian Partners for Co-operation are:** Afghanistan, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia and Thailand.

**Chairmanship of the Asian Contact Group in 2005:** Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Chairmanship of the Asian Contact Group and the Belgian Chairmanship of the Mediterranean Contact Group, with the support of the Secretariat's External Co-operation Section, further improved dialogue between the OSCE and its Partner States. The year was marked by joint efforts to provide adequate follow-up to the recommendations contained in the Report on the Implementation of PC.DEC/571/Corr.1 on the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation.

Continuing a trend, the OSCE provided the Partners more regular access to the meetings of the Permanent Council. The Partners' contributions to Permanent Council debates were valuable and interesting, as were their interventions at the first joint meeting with the Forum for Security Co-operation. The regular work of the Asian and Mediterranean Contact Groups complemented their participation in these debates. The Partners participated actively in the major OSCE events of the year, such as the *Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting*, the *Annual Security Review Conference*, the *Economic Forum* and the *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting*. They also took part in the *OSCE Cordoba Conference on Anti-Semitism and other forms of Intolerance*, held in Spain on 8 and 9 June, and sent delegations of parliamentarians to the relevant sessions of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

In addition, 2005 witnessed further interaction among Asian and Mediterranean Partners. For the first time, on 23 November, at the initiative of the Belgian and Bulgarian Chairmanships, a joint meeting on small arms and light weapons took place between the Mediterranean and Asian Partners and the Forum for Security Co-operation. Apart from serving as an important landmark, the meeting provided a valuable contribution to the preparations for the 2006 UN review conference on small arms and light weapons. The *OSCE Small Arms and Light Weapons Handbook* was translated into Arabic, a project sponsored by Germany, Switzerland and Belgium.

Also for the first time, at the initiative of the Contact Group Chairmanships and in co-ordination with the OSCE Slovenian Chairmanship, a special side event for all Partners was held on the margins of the *Annual Security Review Conference*. The event promoted dialogue and co-operation between OSCE Partners and

participating States in the politico-military dimension, specifically on the assessment and possibilities for increased interaction and implementation. The relevance of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and the fight against terrorism was a main issue of concern for the OSCE and its Partners. The need to implement international norms was highlighted, as was the need to enhance co-operation with other regional organizations, in particular the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Support was expressed for a proposal to hold a joint event of the OSCE and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in the Mediterranean region. The event became another important element in the process of successful realization in 2005 of some of the recommendations contained in the report on the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation. Furthermore, the Partners for Co-operation participated in the closing session of the high-level consultations on strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE on 13 September in Vienna.

**Mediterranean Contact Group.** Nine Mediterranean Contact Group meetings covering the three OSCE security dimensions were key to maintaining an open channel of dialogue and consultations between the participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

To ensure early input by the Mediterranean Partners, their comments and suggestions were welcomed in discussions at the Contact Group that took place prior to OSCE events such as the *Economic Forum*, the *Conference on anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance*, and the *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting*. Following their request, the Mediterranean Partners, within the framework of the Contact Group, met the three Special Representatives on tolerance and non-discrimination informally in June and November.

In the spirit of synergy and possible co-operation with other international organizations and institutions that conduct a Euro-Mediterranean dialogue, the Chairman invited high-level speakers from the External Relations Directorate-General of the European Commission and the NATO's Political Affairs Division for an exchange of views. The Group focused on debates taking place in various OSCE working groups on reform-related issues:

improving the functioning and effectiveness of field operations; borders; combating terrorism; and gender equality and anti-trafficking. A discussion on the politico-military dimension and the Forum for Security Co-operation work was also held following a briefing by a representative of Belarus holding the rotating Chairmanship of the Forum. The Special Representative of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly informed the Contact Group about activities carried out by the Assembly with regard to the OSCE Mediterranean dimension, such as the annual Mediterranean Forum with parliamentary representatives from the Mediterranean Partners that took place in October in Sveti Stefan, Serbia and Montenegro.

**Open Skies Treaty – a demonstration of openness and transparency in military matters.** Experts from the Mediterranean Partners were invited to an event on 4 and 5 July in Brussels demonstrating the Open Skies Treaty regime's role in contributing to enhancing openness and transparency among states. The Treaty, whose basic philosophy of openness and transparency coincides with that behind Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, outlines provisions for the conduct of unarmed observation flights over the territories of State Parties. Experts from the Verification Agency of the Belgian Armed Forces welcomed representatives from the Mediterranean Partners at the Melsbroek Air Base where they discussed the Treaty; the C-130 H Open Skies Pod System, the technology used in aircraft for observation flights; as well as co-operation among Benelux countries in the Pod Group, which comprises Benelux, Canada, France, Greece, Italy, Norway, Portugal and Spain. The participants gained first-hand experience of the technology as well as a practical demonstration of the kind of information obtained through observation flights.

This visit built on a simulation exercise organized last year by Slovenia and contributed to raising further awareness on confidence-building measures. The Mediterranean Partners, represented by experts, including from capitals, were accompanied by representatives from Belgium, the OSCE Chairmanship and the Secretariat. Military representatives from Luxembourg and the Netherlands also attended.

**High-level consultations on OSCE reform.** The Mediterranean Partners also contributed to the dialogue on strengthening the OSCE. In July, the Chairman of the Contact Group forwarded a common position by the Mediterranean Partners to the members of the Panel of Eminent Persons on strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE. Following the presentation of the Panel's report, the Partner States were invited to the closing session of the high-level consultations on OSCE reform. The Mediterranean Partners provided a joint statement, sending a strong political signal to the OSCE participating States. The Ambassador of Algeria delivered the statement, putting forward a number of proposals to strengthen the Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE.

**Side-event with the Mediterranean Partners – Economic Forum.** For the second consecutive year, a side-event with the Mediterranean Partners was held on the margins of the Economic Forum. The event was also part of the preparations for the OSCE

Mediterranean Seminar. Participants, including representatives from participating and Partner States, were invited to address relevant questions related to migration, conditions to guarantee a contribution by migrants to the development of the economies of their countries of origin and destination; reinforcement of the link between migration and development; challenges posed by migration in countries of origin and destination; management of migration in a win-win situation for the migrants themselves as well as for their societies of origin and destination. The points raised contributed to establishing a basis for the seminar's agenda and an opportunity to expand the debate with a view to submitting key proposals for follow-up.

**OSCE Mediterranean Seminar on migration and integration policies.** On 8 and 9 September, Morocco hosted the annual Mediterranean Seminar for the first time. The event, which took place in Rabat, was attended by delegations from 33 participating States, all six Mediterranean Partners, three Asian Partners, various international organizations and non-governmental organizations. Current migration and integration challenges faced by both shores of the Mediterranean were at the centre of the debate among high-level representatives and experts.

*"A concerted effort is needed to end the flow of illegal trafficking, but also to develop a common approach to addressing the causes of migration. On the other hand, well-managed migration is a source of economic, social and cultural progress,"* said Karel De Gucht, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium at the event.

Participants agreed that the fight against illegal migration and trafficking in human beings merited deeper interaction among countries of origin, transit and destination. They put forward various proposals and new concepts to counter the common concerns in this field. These included the organization of pre-migration training, the creation of reception facilities to make it easier for migrants to adapt and the introduction of "integration contracts" between migrants and the authorities of the host country. They suggested holding follow-up meetings to the work of Rabat, bringing together experts and officials. To further develop the OSCE Mediterranean dialogue, participants supported establishing a Partnership Fund sustained by voluntary contributions from participating and Partner States.

**Asian Contact Group.** Under the Bulgarian Chairmanship, the Asian Partners intensified their work, increasing the number of meetings from four to five. Furthermore, the regular practice was established of preceding the meetings of the Asian Contact Group with preparatory meetings at the level of the respective contact points. The Bulgarian Chairmanship also reviewed the Group's meeting agendas and launched the inclusion of an item on current issues. Under this item, the Chairman of the Permanent Council briefed the Asian Partners on recent developments in the OSCE, while, at the same time, Partners were given the opportunity to brief participating States on topical developments in their region, as well as raising issues of mutual concern. Further items discussed by the group included the *OSCE-Korea Conference on New Security Threats and a New Security Paradigm*, a Workshop

on Human Trafficking hosted by Thailand in June, anti-terrorism issues, the OSCE Cordoba Conference on anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance and OSCE reform-related issues.

**OSCE-Korea Conference.** In April, some 140 representatives of OSCE participating States as well as Asian and Mediterranean Partner States, international organizations, academic institutions and NGOs from Asia and Europe with member States of ASEAN's Regional Forum as observers, gathered in the premises of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea in Seoul. In the framework of the *OSCE-Korea Conference on New Security Threats and a New Security Paradigm*, they discussed issues related to new threats to security and stability, as well as a new security paradigm in north-east Asia.

Conference participants analysed in detail the security situation in north-east Asia, with reference to the European security arrangements and their relevance for the region. The participants made several interesting proposals, which the OSCE Secretariat reflected in the consolidated summary. These included proposals to increase and enhance relations between the OSCE and the ASEAN's Regional Forum on security issues, such as holding a joint conference, and suggestions to create a more effective security framework for the region and a culture of dialogue among north-east Asian countries. Participants also expressed support for the recommendations included in the report of the Chairman of the Informal Group of Friends on Implementation of PC Decision 571, such as participation by the Asian Partners in ODIHR election observation missions, the secondment of experts to OSCE field operations and participation in the OSCE's internship programme. Some of the proposals made at the conference were realized in 2005.

**Thailand Conference on combating trafficking in human beings.** Thailand hosted a conference on *Sharing of Experiences in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings* on 16 and 17 June in Bangkok. More than 75 participants from OSCE participating and Partner States, as well as representatives of Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Regional Forum and international organizations participated in the event. The discussions concentrated on human trafficking in Asia and Europe; the critical role of legal and law enforcement measures in combating human trafficking; and regional solutions and models for co-operation. Participants proposed taking into consideration the conclusions from the forum in Bangkok in the preparation of the 2006 OSCE Thailand conference.

**OSCE Election Support Team to Afghanistan.** Following the first ever successful deployment of an Election Support Team to the presidential elections in Afghanistan in 2004, the Permanent Council decided on 7 July to deploy a similar team in support of Afghanistan's National Assembly and Provincial elections on 18 September. The decision was taken in response to separate invitations to the OSCE from Abdullah Abdullah, Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, and Bismillah Bissmil, Chair of the Joint Election Management Body. The Team was led by Craig Jenness of Canada. (For more on this topic, please see page 23.)

The OSCE's continued support to Afghanistan was a tribute, and an important contribution, to the importance of democratic elections and stability in the country, especially considering that the legislative elections closed the cycle started by the Bonn recommendations.

**Ministerial Troika meetings with Partner State representatives.** As has become customary, on the eve of the 13<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Council meeting in Ljubljana, the OSCE Troika Ministers held meetings with the Asian and Mediterranean Partners. The discussions at both meetings were lively and concentrated on a review of the work done by the respective Contact Groups as well as an exchange of ideas on further improving mutual dialogue in light of the Seoul and Bangkok conferences and the Rabat Seminar. Significantly, for the first time the Asian Partners agreed on a joint statement containing a common set of proposals on strengthening dialogue in 2006 between the OSCE and its Asian Partners. The statement highlighted the Asian Partners' satisfaction with the important developments in the Contact Group's work in 2005 and expressed the hope that this trend would continue in 2006.

The statement suggested measures such as strengthening OSCE assistance to Asian Partners in election monitoring, border control and police capacity-building, and proposed that the Asian Contact Group focuses on thematic issues such as human security. With regard to the ASEAN Regional Forum, the Asian Partners proposed a review of possible mechanisms to achieve this goal, including possible exchanges of visits with the OSCE and a regular dialogue. At the meeting with the Mediterranean Partners, the Belgian Foreign Minister welcomed the Partners' proposals on themes and venues for future Mediterranean Seminars, conferences, and a workshop for young diplomats from Partner countries, as well as expert meetings on the issues of border security, civil emergency planning and counter-terrorism. Emphasis was put on the need to properly follow-up the Mediterranean Seminar in Rabat, amongst others by creating a task force for further reviewing the recommendations and suggestions regarding migration, and by creating a voluntary fund for the financing of partnership activities.