



CIO.GAL/30/05
16 March 2005

ENGLISH only

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CHAIRMAN IN OFFICE (9 March - 15 March)

US Tour Leaves Rupel Feeling Upbeat About OSCE

WASHINGTON - The OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel said he felt more upbeat about the OSCE's future after talks with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on 8 March, held as part of his five-day visit to the US. He explained that Rice had pledged steadfast support for the OSCE and urged Slovenia to persist in efforts to find a compromise on the open issues in the organisation.

Rupel Urges Calm as Kosovo PM Resigns to Face Hague Charges

WASHINGTON - The OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel said on 8 March he was concerned by the developments in Kosovo, where PM Ramush Haradinaj resigned to face a war crimes charges in The Hague. Welcoming Haradinaj's decision to travel to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Rupel said he hoped the people of Kosovo "realise their best interests lie in following the example of the Prime Minister and allowing the legal process to take its course". Kosovo topped talks Rupel held with US National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley on the same day. He briefed Hadley on Slovenian initiatives to reestablish dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade, adding that assuring minority protection and economic development should be the priorities in peace efforts in the province.

Official Underscores Need for Integrating National Minorities

KIEV - A Slovenian chairmanship co-organised a two-day seminar on the integration and protection of national minorities. Addressing the seminar, which was held on 10 and 11 March in Kiev, Stanislav Raščan of the Slovenian Foreign Ministry stressed the importance of minority integration as a means of conflict prevention. He also underscored that tensions between the majority and minority were one of the leading causes of internal instability and strife. Suitable protection of minorities must be made the basis of democracy, Raščan said, adding that a problem in many cases was the majority's opposition to the full integration of the minority.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

CHISINAU, 14 MARCH - OSCE Chair Dimitrij Rupel is visiting Moldova. The Transdniester issue is expected to top the agenda of his talks with Moldovan government and opposition officials and the leader of the self-proclaimed republic of Transdniester.

GENEVA, 15 MARCH - OSCE Chair Dimitrij Rupel is to take part in a session of the UN Human Rights Committee.