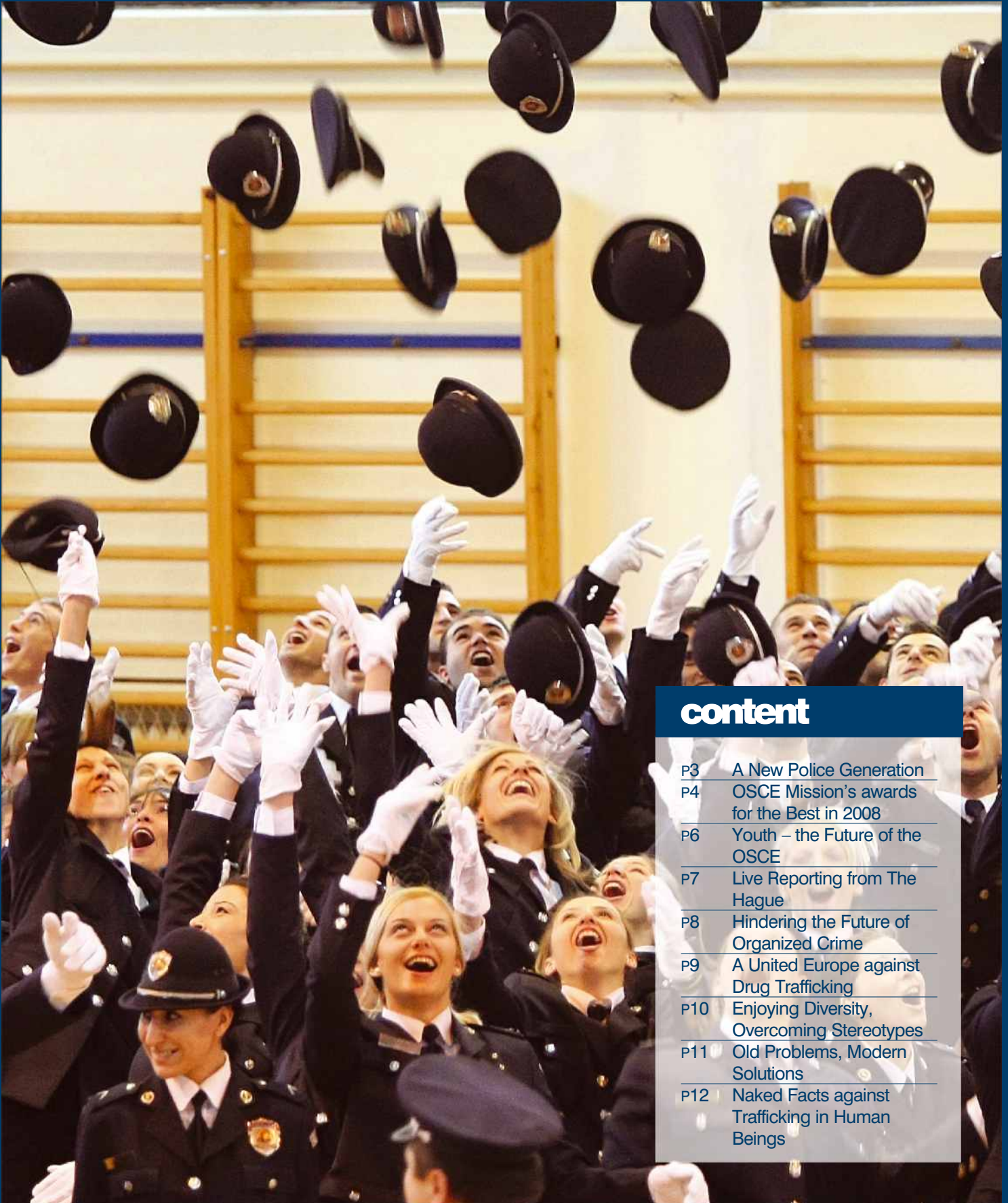


# Focus



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# Dear Readers,

It is my pleasure and honour to present to you the first issue of the OSCE Mission to Serbia newsletter. It primarily highlights some of the results of our activities in 2008 and in the beginning of 2009.

Having started my diplomatic work in Belgrade as Norway's Ambassador to Serbia in early 2001 and, since 2006 continuing as the Head of the OSCE Mission, I have had the chance to witness profound changes and improvements in Serbia.

The Serbian authorities are dedicated to continued implementation of their European reform agenda, and the Mission has had the pleasure of working closely with them on this.

With this newsletter we want to share with you some examples of our activities that support Serbia's efforts to strengthen its democratic institutions, making them more independent, accountable and effective, particularly in the fields of rule of law, human rights, media, good governance and law enforcement.

One story illustrates how we assist in strengthening co-operation between Serbian police and other European countries in order to combat drug trafficking, and how the Mission fosters international co-operation to more effectively fight financial crime. You can read about the experiences of Serbian journalists who participated in a study-visit to the The Hague, and how one civil society organization conducted an unusual anti-trafficking public awareness campaign.

I hope you will enjoy reading about some of the OSCE's activities taking place throughout the country, and will gain a better understanding of our work, of which we are very proud.

The encouraging developments are a result of generous support and engagement from the Serbian Government, the OSCE participating States, all other partners of the Mission, as well as Serbian civil society and media.

I will be concluding my assignment as the Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia this summer and return to Norway, but always have keen and very good memories from over eight years in Serbia, of its kind and generous people and its beautiful nature.

I have been here during a very critical period of societal transition, and my personal hope is that history will show that our Mission contributed to fundamental changes in Serbia in a constructive and positive way.

Sincerely yours,

Ambassador  
Hans Ola Urstad

Cover page photo: The first generation of cadets celebrates its graduation from the newly-established Basic Police Training Centre in Sremska Kamenica. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic).

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# A New Police Generation

## The Mission assists with the establishment of the Basic Police Training Centre in Sremska Kamenica

When you enter the courtyard of the Basic Police Training Centre in Sremska Kamenica on the day of the cadets' graduation ceremony, you are struck by the festive mood and jubilation – not usual for this serious institution. Yet, today 129 young men and women of different ethnic backgrounds have a good reason for celebrating. Indeed, they are the first generation of cadets who have successfully completed the reformed police vocational educational programme at the newly established Training Centre, and their graduation constitutes a milestone in the reform of police education and training in Serbia.



Interior Minister Ivica Dacic speaking at the graduation ceremony. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic)

Two happy cadets at their graduation ceremony in Sremska Kamenica. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic)

■ By Marika Alpini

This achievement comes after the final examination that marked the end of their training cycle. The cadets spent thirty-six weeks at the Basic Police Training Centre and six weeks in different regional police departments where, mentored by Police Training Field Officers, they had the opportunity to begin applying their new skills in the field.

Monika Santovac, who was awarded as one of the best students, commended the training programme. “We received first-class European police training and I am glad we were treated equally to our male colleagues. Full support from our teachers and our mates kept us highly motivated and focused on our objectives”. Aleksandra Curcic, another female cadet who was also awarded for her aptitude, explained how the training has prepared the students, “Now many of us will access specialized police units while others are planning to continue their studies at university.”

Since the beginning of the basic police training reform in 2003 the Mission supported the efforts of the Ministry of Interior aimed at building a police service that meets international standards of democratic policing and serves the society by safeguarding stability and security. The Norwegian Government along with the British Council provided fundamental financial support to the Serbian Government's efforts in this area. In particular, the OSCE Mission backed

the efforts of the Ministry for the transformation of the former Police High School into a modern centre meeting the highest standards in police training.


“The new concept of basic police training provides quality vocational education for future police officers, and is designed to meet the needs of our society. The Ministry of Interior has invested a great deal of effort into developing an efficient and cost effective basic police training that will define the future police culture in Serbia,” said Interior Minister Ivica Dacic at the graduation ceremony.

The Mission has been involved in the reform of this former Police High School through its advisory role on legislation and strategy design, and more directly through fund raising, curriculum design and development of the field training programme.

Torbjorn Sande, the Head of the Law Enforcement Department within the Mission said: “Together with the Ministry we achieved impressive results in the reform of police education and training. The changes involving the new Centre in Sremska Kamenica are the foundation for Serbia's modern European police service. The new concept also addresses the inclusion of women and minorities, and emphasizes working closer with communities and the citizens whom the police serve.”

For the first time, female candidates are now allowed to attend police training together with men, and ethnic minorities are particularly encouraged to apply. Greater participation of minorities into policing is the only way to achieve a police service more representative of the citizens who will be served. One of the most significant differences between the previous Police High School and the new Basic Police Training Centre is that the applicants to the Centre are adults who have completed secondary education. They bring to the training a greater diversity of interests and backgrounds.

Sladjana Petakovic, the psychologist at the Centre explained: “It has been a challenge for us to start working with adults. Discussions on the principles of human and minority rights, police ethics and community policing are more sophisticated when you talk to more mature and therefore differently motivated people. We look forward to the graduation of many more generations of cadets.”

“However this is by no means a completed process; it is just the beginning of a long term transformation that will require a strong commitment from the Interior Ministry to maintain this strategic direction. Yet, we will continue supporting our Serbian partners,” affirmed Ambassador Hans Ola Urstad, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia. 

# OSCE Mission's Award for the Best in 2008

## And the awards go to:

student **Romeo Mihajlovic**, Justice Ministry official **Damir Joka**, journalist **Sladjana Novosel**, entrepreneur **Sava Marinkovic**, and Interior Ministry official **Lazar Nestic**.

■ By Ivana Jovanovic

Since 2006, nine dedicated and talented professionals from Serbia have been awarded the Person of the Year award. At the end of 2008, the award was presented to five individuals for their decisive contributions to the Mission's success throughout the year: promotion of Roma rights (Democratization), establishment of the alternative sentencing system (Rule of Law/Human Rights), professional reporting (Media), employing highly-educated young graduates (Economy and Environment) and leading crime scene forensic investigations (Law Enforcement).

"Each of these five individuals has been doing an outstanding job in their field of expertise," stated Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, Ambassador Hans Ola Urstad. "Accomplishing our mission here in Serbia is more efficient when we can rely on such enthusiastic, energetic and dedicated professionals."

Thanks to Romeo Mihajlovic Roma pupils from an elementary school in Sid in Vojvodina will be able to study the Romani language, use free textbooks and gain school credits for their learning. Romeo is very active at Novi Sad University as the president of the Union of Roma students. He facilitates active dialogue between his fellow Roma students and the University management. Romeo Mihajlovic also works at the Vojvodina Executive Council Roma Inclusion Office. He is one of the Mission's most resourceful partners in his area of expertise. Romeo admits he was struck with disbelief when he learned he had won the award. "The Person of the Year award is very important to me. It confirms that our work is visible and highly valued not only by my peers but also by a respected international organization," said Romeo.

The winner in the Rule of Law/Human Rights category, Damir Joka, has throughout the last three years co-operated with the Mission and has actively promoted alternative sentencing in Serbia. "Damir is always open to new ideas, unpretentious, and extremely hard working," is how Livio Sarandrea, OSCE Mission's Acting Head of the Rule of Law and Human Rights Department described him. Joka is currently working as the Head of the Department for Treatment and Alternative Sanctioning within the Prison Administration of the Ministry of Justice. "As a result of his efforts, which often went beyond the regular call of duty, the Commissioner Service is finally ready to work on its first cases," added Sarandrea. Commenting on progress so far and what still remains to be done, Joka reveals that particular attention is devoted to the way in which this big change in serving sentences was presented by the media. "Educating the general public is a concrete, first step to prevent fear and to ensure the acceptance of this new system," he said.

The Crime Scene Forensic Programme has been one of the most successful projects by the Mission largely due to Lazar Nestic, the winner in the Law Enforcement category. As the Head of the National Crime Technical Centre, he succeeded in establishing the Centre as the leading forensic body in the country. Nestic also played a key role in linking the needs of the Interior Ministry with the expertise and assistance of the OSCE Mission. "Besides my entire team, the advancement of forensic procedures was also made possible with the assistance of the representatives from the OSCE Mission with whom we have implemented many projects." Nestic added he has high hopes for the future. "Together with my associates, I plan to establish a modern na-

tional forensic centre that would be best capable of responding to the users' demands. This, in turn should strengthen an efficient criminal proceedings system and thereby the rule of law in Serbia." Lazar Nestic is thrilled with the award. "I am especially pleased to know that with this award, forensics has been highlighted as a significant segment of the whole law enforcement process," he concluded.

Objective and accurate reporting in south-western Serbia is something that Sladjana Novosel, editor of the daily Danas weekly supplement – Sandzak Danas and the winner in the Media category, has dedicated her time to over the last six years. "She is a brave and professional journalist, adamant in revealing the truth about issues such as trafficking or corruption in this region," said Dragana Nikolic Solomon, Head of the Media Department at the OSCE Mission. In her articles, Sladjana Novosel reveals her deep appreciation for south-western Serbia's rich cultural and historical background and she works hard to foster tolerance and respect for human rights. Even though she has sometimes witnessed and experienced undue interference by politicians into editorial policy and independent reporting, Sladjana asserts that "truth, truth, truth and professionalism," is what matters to her the most. "I hope that in the future, media will become truly professional and independent... This is something that I will continue to strive for."

Six highly-educated university graduates have been employed with a company established by the Economy and Environment category award winner, young entrepreneur, Sava Marinkovic. His company, Teleskin, is based at the Belgrade University Business Technology Incubator Centre (BITC) supported by the Mission. "My



The winners of the Person of the Year Award 2008. From right to left: Ambassador Hans Ola Urstad, Sava Marinkovic, Sladjana Novosel, Lazar Nestic, Damir Joka, Romeo Mihajlovic. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic)

main motive for returning to Serbia after my education in the U.S. was to take advantage of the country's increase in opportunities following the decline in political risk," he explained. The Business Technology Incubator Centre provides new employment opportunities to technology graduates. Marinkovic stands out as a person who brings forth both socially responsible and entrepreneurial values to Serbian society. "Incubators help mitigate the risk that start-ups face, so that they can focus on winning in the marketplace, and the Business-Technology Incubator has been extremely supportive," said Marinkovic. "The management of the BITC also recognized that today's students are tomorrow's leaders and helped them to succeed."

The 2008 winners decided to donate the financial part of the award, worth around EUR 8,000, to the Belgrade-based Centre for Protection of Children and Youth Dragutin Filipovic-Jusa. The Centre provides housing, medical, educational and other services for children who have not been cared for by their families.

Romeo Mihajlovic, Damir Joka, Sladjana Novosel, Sava Marinkovic and Lazar Nestic received their award at the Mission reception in the presence of their colleagues, other OSCE partners, the media and representatives from the international community. The winners were the real stars of the evening, giving numerous interviews to the media and sharing their experiences with the audience.

"I am confident that this award will encourage our partners to continue in the same direction in 2009, and be an inspiration to others," said Ambassador Hans Ola Urstad. IF

#### 2007 Winners:

**Professor Radmila Marinkovic-Neducin**, Rector of the Novi Sad University, recognized for her exceptional contribution to improving education for national minorities at Novi Sad University.

**Judge Dragana Boljevic**, in recognition of her contribution in efforts to reform the Serbian judiciary. She chaired the official working group which drafted the "Basic Principles of Judiciary", to serve as the basis for a reformed package of judicial laws expected to be adopted in the coming months.

**Rodoljub Sabic, Commissioner for Information of Public Importance**, awarded for his assiduous efforts to ensure transparency in the work of public institutions in accordance with the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance.

**Aleksandar Vesic, Assistant Minister for Environmental Protection**, awarded for his outstanding contribution to the preparation of the VI Pan-European Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held in Belgrade in October.

#### 2006 Winners:

**Dragic Josifovic, the Head of Police Education Directorate of the Serbian Interior Ministry**, awarded for his contribution to the transformation of the Police High School in Sremska Kamenica into a Basic Police Training Centre. The financial part of the award went to the Sremska Kamenica School.

**Petar Teofilovic, the Ombudsman of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina**, awarded for his activism as a human rights defender who puts strong emphasis on preventing human rights violations and educating the youth. Mr. Teofilovic designated the Jovan Jovanovic Zmaj gymnasium in Novi Sad as the beneficiary of the financial award.

**Biljana Stojanovic, Adviser to the Ministry of Education and Sports on minority education**, awarded for promoting intercultural understanding and dialogue. Ms. Stojanovic awarded the financial part to the Marija Bursac elementary school in Belgrade.

**Djordje Vlajic, a senior BBC correspondent in Serbia**, awarded for epitomising the highest professional and ethical standards promoted by the OSCE – freedom of expression and of the media, tolerance, fairness and accuracy. The final recipient of the award is the Faculty of Political Science.

**Vladimir Jelenkovic, the Director of the Nikola Tesla Museum in Belgrade**, awarded for outstanding work in promoting the achievements of one of the greatest scientists of the contemporary era, Nikola Tesla, a forerunner of today's energy security concept. Mr. Jelenkovic decided to forward the financial part of his award to the Fifth Belgrade gymnasium.



# Youth – the Future of the OSCE

## The Mission supports the Model OSCE

In early August Mirjana Kotic and Milan Kosanovic from the Belgrade office of the Zikic Foundation came to the OSCE Mission to pitch the idea of collaborating on a simulation of the OSCE for Serbian University students. Mirjana Kotic stated that their idea for this project came from past experiences with the Model UN and Model NATO: “I myself learned a lot while participating in the Model UN and Model NATO. I know how important such experiences are for young people, especially in the period of their professional and personal development.”

■ By David Brown

Based on the philosophy of the well-known Model United Nations simulations taking place all around the world, the Model OSCE was a simulation of the debates taking place in the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna. Some 80 students from all parts of Serbia learnt how to negotiate successfully on topics related to environmental security in the OSCE region.

Students were assigned an OSCE participating State to represent as though they were the diplomatic voice of that state. In order to carry out an effective and successful negotiation, the diplomats naturally needed to be well versed in their state's position on the issues. The Zikic Foundation also assigned to some students top positions in the OSCE Secretariat and tasked them to run the actual simulation.

“The ultimate objective of this simulation is to give students the opportunity to learn more about the OSCE, the dynamics of international relations and the process of finding consensus. Additionally, it gives them a chance to apply their knowledge and creativity, improve their communication skills and become more actively involved in policy making. This event is also a great way to make new friends and expand their networks,” said Daliborka Nikodimovic from the Democratization Department within the OSCE Mission to Serbia.

Moreover, the delegates took part in three days of intensive workshops prior to the simulation held at the beginning of March. These workshops enabled the students to become better informed on the topics and gain a more comprehensive understanding of the structures and functions of the OSCE institutions.

Having previously taken part in a Model European Union simulation, Marko Labus

said: “The opportunity to play the role of an Ambassador also in a Model OSCE simulation gives me more exposure to the inside of this international institution. It is just a great experience for me.”

The diplomats from the Embassies of Germany, The Netherlands and Ukraine were present at the event and shared their working experiences with students, answering their questions, while representatives of other Embassies helped students with their research. The event was also supported by the Serbian Ministry of Youth and Sport.

It has not all been easy sailing however. Mirjana Kotic pointed out: “One of the challenges has been motivating students to get involved. Often students do not know how to incorporate such extracurricular activities into their studies. I have been positively surprised to see that in fact they are more open to interactive learning based on independent research and interdisciplinary approach. I am sure that the project will establish itself as a yearly event.”

Everyone involved was optimistic about the success of the project. When asked why this was important for him, Milos Mutic, representing Greenpeace International, answered that “Since academics in Serbia are predominantly theory-based, these simulations are great opportunities to gain practical experience. It really helps us get a taste of what kind of activities for environment protection can be incorporated into policy.”

This last point addresses one of the priorities of the 2009 OSCE Greek Chairmanship, which stresses the importance of “greening the OSCE”. TF



The students practicing their negotiation skills during the Model OSCE event. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic).

The students receive certificates for participating at the Model OSCE. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic).

The students who took part in the simulation of an OSCE Permanent Council session on topics related to environmental security. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic).

# Live Reporting from The Hague

## The Mission organizes a study visit for Serbian journalists to the ICTY

Bringing to justice those allegedly responsible for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia and rendering justice to their victims has been the mandate of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) since its creation in 1993.

■ By Srdjan Djurdjevic

The Tribunal's work has consistently made headlines not only in the Balkan media but also in the international press. However, after an initial wave of interest that kept The Hague Tribunal in the public eye, press coverage of ICTY cases has decreased considerably.

A lack of understanding of the ICTY amongst some media professionals, the high cost of the direct coverage of ICTY trials and the length and complexity of the trials themselves, make them difficult to cover. These are some of the reasons why editors often let war crimes trials pass unnoticed and media coverage can appear fragmented, biased and full of conspiracy theories. As a result, the public is increasingly lacking objective information about the ICTY.

"Just as many other media outlets, we can not afford correspondents in The Hague and therefore we have to follow the work of the ICTY through international news agencies," said Baki Rexhepi, the editor of Spektri local television station, which is based in Bujanovac in South Serbia.

"Furthermore international media do not have enough insight to touch on some subjects which are strictly related to Serbia. As a consequence, the trials are not covered properly, the public cannot fully understand what is going on and the voices of victims are not heard enough," he added.

To help increase professional standards on war crimes reporting, in November 2008 the OSCE Mission organised a study visit for journalists from south and south-west Serbia to the ICTY. The visit was part of an ambitious training programme designed to improve media coverage of war crimes trials, especially in this region. It was co-funded by the Embassy of the United Kingdom.

"The main purpose of this visit was to familiarise media professionals with the work of domestic and international war crimes courts ahead of some very important trials for these areas. For the first time, some of the regional journalists had the opportunity to broadcast live from the ICTY," explained Dragana Nikolic Solomon, Head of the Media Department at the OSCE Mission.

The editors and reporters participating in the programme were from Novi Pazar, Tutin, Bujanovac and Presevo, regions predominantly inhabited by ethnic Albanians and Bosniaks. The public in these areas of Serbia is carefully monitoring developments at The Hague, given their ethnic and geographical links to the regions which saw the worst of the fighting during the 1990s.

Zoran Maksimovic, a journalist from Regionalna TV in Novi Pazar, said that the OSCE-supported programme has given him a fresh insight into covering war crimes trials.

"It is a great opportunity for a journalist to visit an international institution where the history of my country is being shaped."

"Our visit to the Special Department of the Belgrade District Court in charge for war crimes was also extremely beneficial," he continued. "At both courts we learned how hard it is to gather evidence, find witnesses and protect them, bring justice to victims and punish criminals."

Following the OSCE Mission's training programme and the visit to The Hague, in south and south-west Serbia journalists produced radio and television shows, as well as magazine and internet articles specifically dedicated to war crimes trials. Regional and local radio stations in Novi Pazar and Bujanovac have now started broadcasting weekly digests of the ICTY trials produced by the Radio Free Europe and the Institute for War and Peace Reporting.

"This is just the first step. We plan to enable the whole south-west region to receive free coverage of Radovan Karadzic's trial," Nikolic Solomon said. "Following the success of this initiative, the Mission plans to organize more visits of Serbian media to The Hague. I am confident that our main beneficiary – the Serbian public – will gain better access to professional, regular and objective coverage of the trials." TF



One of the ICTY courtrooms where the alleged war criminals stand trial. (Photograph provided courtesy of the ICTY)

Dragana Nikolic Solomon, Head of the Media Department within the OSCE Mission is interviewed by one of the Serbian journalists during a study tour to the ICTY. (presheva.comweb portal)



# Hindering the Future of Organized Crime

The Mission and the Belgrade University host a course on combating organized crime threats

We all know that the future belongs to the younger generation, and the OSCE Mission recognizes that Serbia's young legal professionals will, in the coming years, undertake responsibility for public safety and security in the country. An increasingly important component of this responsibility will be to continue the fight against organized crime.

■ By Chiara Longhi

For this reason, the OSCE Mission to Serbia is supporting the Serbian institutions in their fight against this escalating form of crime. The Mission's experts and their Serbian partners deem fundamental both the need to raise awareness of the judiciary professionals on the intricacies of organized crime, and the need to educate future generations of lawyers.

Looking to the future was exactly the rationale underpinning the development of a specialized course on organized crime which was organized at the Belgrade University Law Faculty with the help of the OSCE Mission. The focus of this four-week seminar was on threats, specifics of existing legislation and future policy challenges.

"In the years to come these students will become legal professionals and will have to deal with the legal challenges presented by organized crime," said Marco Bonabello, the Organized Crime Legal Adviser in the Rule of Law Department of the OSCE Mission to Serbia. "It is very important they become fully aware that this may be one of the biggest threats to democratic development and stability of society, and they have

to be well prepared to use all the existing legal instruments."

The Deputy Dean of the Law Faculty Ljiljana Radulovic stressed the Faculty's long-term goal: "These students will be responsible for creating and implementing legal norms tomorrow. The course is an extremely valuable and innovative element in their legal education. Yet, it is also part of our long-term strategy aimed at the formation of a pool of legal professionals."

Course lectures were delivered by eminent Serbian professors, judges, prosecutors, lawyers and experts from the OSCE Mission and other international organizations. Furthermore, to put theory into practice, a simulation of a court trial of an organized crime case was carried out.

"I was particularly interested in learning more about modern methods used for combating organized crime. I found it also very useful that the trainers' professional background encompassed so many fields and that their countries of origin were so varied. This allowed us to look at the topic from different perspectives," said Tanja Koljensic, one of the course participants.

In fact, a decisive step in Tanja's professional growth is going to take place very soon. As the student who obtained the highest score in the course's final exam, she has been offered a two month-long internship in the OSCE Mission to Serbia in which she has the opportunity to put into practice the legal skills and expertise she has gained in her education.

"Organized crime is a global and multifaceted phenomenon entailing criminal activities such as human trafficking and corruption. Those criminal activities that are perceived as being distant from our everyday existence can turn out to affect people close to us. I am positive that the new skills acquired through this course will be very useful for my future contribution to this fight. I feel now even more motivated, and I look forward to starting my work in this field."

The high level of interest in learning more about the legal side of organized crime, as evidenced by the large number of students who applied to attend the course, encouraged the OSCE Mission and the University management to begin planning another course. **RF**



Belgrade University law students participate in a course on organized crime. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic).

Tanja Koljensic from the Belgrade University Law Faculty receives an award for scoring the highest result in the final test of the course. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic).



# A United Europe Against Drug Trafficking

The Mission encourages the strengthening of Serbia's co-operation with international partners against drug trafficking

When someone points to the “Balkan Route” today, the term does not exclusively signify the rich historical heritage of this part of Europe as a unique crossroad of cultures, traditions and people throughout the centuries. Unfortunately, these days the “Balkan Route” also refers to the transit route in drug trafficking to western European countries.

■ By Marika Alpini

Since some criminals operating in the production and trafficking of narcotics are using the Balkans region for cross-border activities, several countries are coming together to tackle this problem. The OSCE Mission to Serbia supports the strategic approach of the Serbian authorities and in particular of the Ministry of Interior, aimed at strengthening co-operation between the Serbian police service and its European partners in the fight against drug trafficking.

“Thanks to our efficient co-operation with the Serbian law enforcement service in carrying out joint investigations, many criminals have already been brought to justice. Much of the heroin, cocaine and other drugs transits to Europe along this route, therefore we are glad to have a reliable partner like the Interior Ministry of Serbia in our efforts to fight drug-related crime,” said Solveig Woolstad, the Swedish Chief Prosecutor for International Crime Investigation.

One can often read in the media about the successful results of the effective co-operation between Serbia and other countries in this field. The work with the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish police involves sharing of information on covert surveillance and in other areas of combating drug trafficking, yielding real results.

Last November, a Serbian law enforcement delegation, during an OSCE-supported exchange visit, met their counterparts from the Danish National Police in Copenhagen and participated in a workshop organized in Malmoe by the Swedish Narcotic Officers Association. At this seminar, two representatives from the Serbian Ministry of Interior, Veljko Popara and Ivan Brandic, had the chance to exchange their views and experiences on new surveillance techniques and equipment, thanks to the Swedish Narcotic Officers Association which financed their participation.



Co-operation between Serbia and Scandinavian countries against drug-related crimes has already yielded many positive results. (Swedish Narcotic Officers Association)

“Sharing knowledge with our colleagues from other countries is essential for the efficient investigation of the drug crimes we are dealing with in Serbia. The prompt exchange of information and joint operations are vital for our successes. I am very glad to see that our international partnerships are strengthening,” said Veljko Popara, the Head of the Surveillance Unit within Serbia's Service for Combating Organized Crime in the Ministry of Interior.

Ivan Brandic, the Head of the Combating Drug Smuggling Department within Serbia's Ministry of Interior noted the importance of this co-operation supported by the OSCE Mission. “Organized criminal groups are operating all over Europe. It is our task to stop them, bring responsible to justice and ensure that our citizens live in a safe and secure Serbia,” he said.

“Professional exchanges between Serbian and other European experts are a solid contribu-

tion to Serbia's efforts at strengthening international co-operation in counter-narcotic activities. The OSCE Mission will continue to assist the Serbian police service in capacity-building and in the implementation of its strategy in this field,” said Anders Stolpe, the Organized Crime Adviser within the OSCE Mission.

“The Serbian representatives' resolve to share their insight and knowledge of the Serbian situation as well as their openness to new ideas are exactly what is necessary for the successful fight against international organized crime. A pro-active approach both from Serbia and international partners will help us to secure a joint, and therefore more effective, European strategy against drug trafficking,” concluded Bjorn Pettersen, the Organized Crime Programme Manager within the Law Enforcement Department of the OSCE Mission. **IF**

# Enjoying Diversity, Overcoming Stereotypes

The Mission organizes a seminar on diversity issues reporting

Southwestern Serbia, one of the most beautiful regions of the country, includes Serbs and Bosniaks who have lived together for centuries, benefiting from their diversities. However, ethnic, religious and political tensions following the events of the 1990s are still evident in the society. Within this context, sensitive and unprejudiced media reporting can play a crucial role in improving mutual understanding among members of the local communities. In order to enhance professionalism of the media in reporting on diversity issues, the OSCE Mission to Serbia carries out many programmes for those engaged in the media on the local level. One such activity, held last autumn, gathered together in southwestern Serbia seventeen editors and journalists, as well as civil society activists, to discuss and improve professionalism of reporting on diversity.

## ■ By Srdjan Djurdjevic

This training was held by experts from the Mission together with representatives from the Novi Sad School of Journalism, a training institution licensed by the Media Diversity Institute from the United Kingdom.

“My colleagues and I appreciated the presentations delivered by the Belgrade and Novi Sad University professors. We gained a deeper insight into what are commonly considered the “pillars” of diversity: ethnicity, belief, gender, age, disability and sexual orientation. We also learned more about politically correct terminology, gender sensitive language, religious rights and the rights of sexual minorities. We openly spoke about our own prejudices and discussed how we can overcome them for the benefit of more objective reporting,” stated participant Sladjana Novosel, editor of the newspaper “Sandzak Danas”.



Tatjana Koroseva, one of the trainers at the seminar on diversity reporting in Novi Pazar. (Novi Sad School of Journalism)

Some of the main newspapers in south west Serbia where the training took place. (OSCE/Rasa Nedeljkov)



After providing examples from the past when people from this region were often discriminated against in the national media based on ethnicity or religion, journalists admitted that local media still sometimes act in the same way. “Prejudice leads to misunderstanding and misunderstanding leads to tension,” concluded Zoran Maksimovic, journalist of Regionalna TV from Novi Pazar. “Although I am aware that it is not always easy to abandon our stereotypes, people from this region, in particular, should understand how harmful stereotyping is. A lot depends on us, the journalists; we can make a difference with our efforts and improve the situation.”

“As expected, discussions of religious and ethnic diversity were of greatest interest to the participants. In this region where some prominent Orthodox Christian churches and Islamic mosques have stood side by side for centuries, journalists often report on religious tolerance and the manipulation of religious beliefs and symbols. Journalists claimed that eth-

nic divisions are still present in the area but they are also persuaded that the media can play a crucial role in overcoming these divisions. From their side, there is a strong will to give their contribution in the process of reconciliation,” added Dragana Solomon, the Head of the Media Department within the Mission.

One of the lecturers, Professor Zelimir Kesetovic from the Faculty for Security Studies in Belgrade University concluded: “The audience share and the circulation of print media seem to become the most important indicators of success. When chasing the story journalists and editors sometimes tend to forget basic professional and ethical standards. That is why training on diversity reporting is essential: I am confident that now media professionals will stop for a second and consider the stereotypes and prejudices they might transfer to the public, as well as the consequences that such reporting may bring about.”

TF



# Old Problems Modern Solutions

The Mission supports sharing of experience in financial and tax investigations

Financial crimes are often carried out in silent offices, without clamor or blatant illegal actions. Sometimes the only evidence is concealed IT data recovered from a damaged computer or a single bank transaction statement. Investigation, prosecution and prevention of these crimes require specialized technical skills, understanding of complex bank operations as well as awareness of the legal labyrinths ruling them. Of utmost importance, therefore is to have competent professionals in all of these fields who have the skills to track all aspects of these veiled activities.

■ By Marika Alpini

Serbian authorities are striving to enhance the professional capacities of institutions in combating financial crime. The OSCE Mission supports their efforts for more effective investigation and prosecution of economic crimes, such as money laundering, tax evasion and fraud. Jointly with the Ministry of Finance and other specialized offices, the Mission developed a comprehensive training programme tailored to the needs of each institution. Furthermore, the Mission is facilitating exchanges between international experts and their Serbian counterparts, allowing financial crime experts to share best practices and experiences.

“We have learnt that the Italian Financial Police Guardia di Finanza is a unique police corps under the Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance and has an extensive mandate covering all economic crimes such as smuggling and trafficking, tax fraud and evasion, money laundering, financial aspects of organized crime and financial frauds. Therefore, with the help of the OSCE and the Italian Embassy in Belgrade, we invited their experts to share with us their knowledge of best practices,” said Miodrag Djidic, State Secretary in the Serbian Finance Ministry.

“It is already my third seminar and I’ve also been with a group of officials from the Serbian Ministries of Finance, Interior and the Judiciary to Rome for a study trip,” said Snezana Djuric-Radulovic, the Head of the Department for Immediate Control at the Foreign Currency Inspectorate of the Ministry of Finance.

Snezana added: “This event is the continuation of a consolidated co-operation which began in May 2007, but I have particularly appreciated this year’s focus on cross-border transactions since one of the major problems the Ministry of Finance faces today is fraudulent transactions and the existence of tax heavens.”

“The goal of this four-day training was to strengthen the capacity of Serbian institutions to effectively fight financial crime. As a result, some 35 high-level officials from the Serbian Ministry of Finance and representatives of the Special Prosecutor office shared experiences with their Italian colleagues,” said Stefano Donati, Economic Transparency Advisor in the Mission’s Rule of Law Department.

Trainees and trainers benefited from the informal atmosphere during the seminar: “It was extremely useful to discuss concrete cases with our colleagues from Italy. The representatives of the Ministry of Finance and the Judiciary gained deeper insight into modern aspects of financial crime and the most efficient methods of prevention and prosecution. Yet, we have also come to realize the importance of synergy among different institutions and so we are building a solid base for stronger co-ordination and co-operation,” added Lidija Smiljanic, Advisor to the Governor of the National Bank of Serbia, responsible for implementing anti-money laundering measures.

“Although our primary role in this seminar is that of experts, we also gained a better picture of the problems and the different approaches to die-hard issues such as tax evasion and money laundering. Sharing experiences on the most innovative practices is essential in our daily struggle against these old but ever evolving crimes,” stated the Lieutenant-Colonel Renzo Nisi from the Italian Financial Police.

Ruth Van Rhijn, the Head of the Mission’s Rule of Law Department, remarked that “Effective co-operation between Serbian institutions and international partners is essential for the successful implementation of a long-term strategy in combating economic crimes. Safeguarding transparent rules and their

proper implementation in the financial sector will attract not only foreign investment but also local investors.”

TF



An expert from Italy’s Guardia di Finanza talks to his Serbian counterparts during the seminar. (OSCE/Marika Alpini)

Certificates are handed out to participants at the closing ceremony by Lieutenant General of the Guardia di Finanza, Cosimo D’Arrigo. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic)

# Naked Facts Against Trafficking in Human Beings

Women are not meat. Children are not slaves.  
People are not a commodity. These are just naked facts.

■ By Marika Alpini

The slogan appears alongside photos of seven well-known men in Serbia who, by showing their half-naked bodies, supported anti-trafficking campaign conducted by the local NGO Astra, in close co-operation with the OSCE Mission to Serbia. The campaign was also supported by the Austrian Development Agency. Under their photos Astra's hotline phone number is displayed. Potential and actual victims can call and get qualified legal consultation or are directed to an appropriate institution. Media outlets

supported the campaign by broadcasting public service announcements free of charge.

Trafficking in human beings is a pressing problem with a rapidly changing face. Indeed, trafficking is no longer just for sexual exploitation but it is also used for other forms of abuse such as forced labour, forced begging, petty crimes and fixed marriages. Due to its complexity, the OSCE works closely with both the civil society specialists and the authorities to design

proper response mechanisms. Such joint efforts have already resulted in the forging of a dynamic partnership between the authorities and civil society and the adoption in 2006 of a comprehensive National Anti-Trafficking Strategy. Madis Vainomaa, the Human Rights Programme Co-ordinator in the Democratization Department of the OSCE Mission, pointed out that: "It is important to continue proper implementation of the Strategy through the adoption of the National Action Plan for 2009–2011, adopted on 30 April 2009. **TF**



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