

## Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Turkish Tourist Office



### IN THIS ISSUE

- Handover of Skrunda Radar station ..... 2
- CiO in Central Asia ..... 3
- Police monitoring in Croatia ..... 4
- CiO in Kosovo ..... 6
- Kosovo: first Police School graduates ..... 7
- Women Making History ..... 8
- Troika meeting in Vienna ..... 9
- Report from the Representative on Freedom of the Media ..... 9
- Report from the HCNM ..... 10
- Update from the ODIHR ..... 11
- News from the Secretariat ..... 13
- Report from the PA ..... 14
- Press profile ..... 16
- In Brief ..... 17
- News from the field ..... 19
- Y2K Problem ..... 20

## OSCE to hold Summit Meeting in Istanbul

**H**eads of State or Government of OSCE participating States will gather in Istanbul on 18-19 November for a Summit Meeting which could significantly strengthen the OSCE's ability to play a key role in European security. Following tradition, the Secretary General of the United Nations will address the Summit. Leaders of the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation – Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia – and the OSCE Partners for Co-operation – Japan and Korea – are also expected to attend, as are representatives of some 30 international organizations. About 100 non-governmental organizations are also registered for the Meeting and Summit orga-

nizers are expecting as many as 2000 journalists to cover it.

The Summit will be held at the Ciragan Palace, which overlooks the Bosphorus. It will be preceded by a Review Conference, from 8 to 10 November, and a Preparatory Meeting from 11 to 17 November. On the agenda of the Istanbul Review Conference, the first part of which was held from 20 September to 1 October in Vienna, are human rights, rule of law and the promotion of democracy, economic and environmental aspects of security, as well as OSCE activities, institutions and instruments. The Review Conference will also highlight issues related to the prevention of torture, children and armed

conflict, good governance and the fight against corruption. The Preparatory Meeting allows OSCE delegations to work on final negotiations of Summit documents and decisions.

The Summit is expected to adopt a Charter on European Security, which is intended to confirm and even enhance the norm-setting authority of the OSCE. It would strengthen its tools so it can better react to situations that require early warning, conflict prevention or democracy-building. The Security Charter would commit States to devote resources and attention to the new risks and challenges to security in the OSCE area. And it would lay out a vision of a new

*Continued on page 20*

# OSCE chalks up success with hand-over of dismantled Skrunda radar station site in Latvia

In a formal ceremony on 21 October, the Russian Federation handed back authority over the territory of the former radar station in Skrunda, Latvia, to the Republic of Latvia. Two days earlier, an OSCE experts team inspecting the site had confirmed that work on dismantling the radar station had been completed, some four months ahead of schedule.

That series of events marked the end of a process that may be regarded as one of the unsung success stories of international diplomacy during the 1990s, the culmination of a process that began over five years ago.

In June 1994, the Republic of Latvia and the Russian Federation requested the then Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to provide assistance in the implementation of the 'Agreement on the Legal Status of the Skrunda Radar Station during its Temporary Operation and Dismantling', which took effect on 1 September, 1994.



OSCE/Col. Hübschen

*Latvian Representative to the Joint Committee, Mr Edgar Skuja (left) shakes hands with his Russian counterpart, Colonel Alexander Nikitin, Administrative Director of the Radar Site.*

Under that accord, a Joint Latvian-Russian Implementation Committee was established to oversee both aspects of the

work. In April 1995, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office appointed a Representative to this Joint Committee with the tasks of monitoring and co-ordinating the implementation of the Agreement.

An OSCE Inspection Team was set up, which was to conduct inspections of the radar site twice a year. Under the terms of the Agreement, the dismantling of the

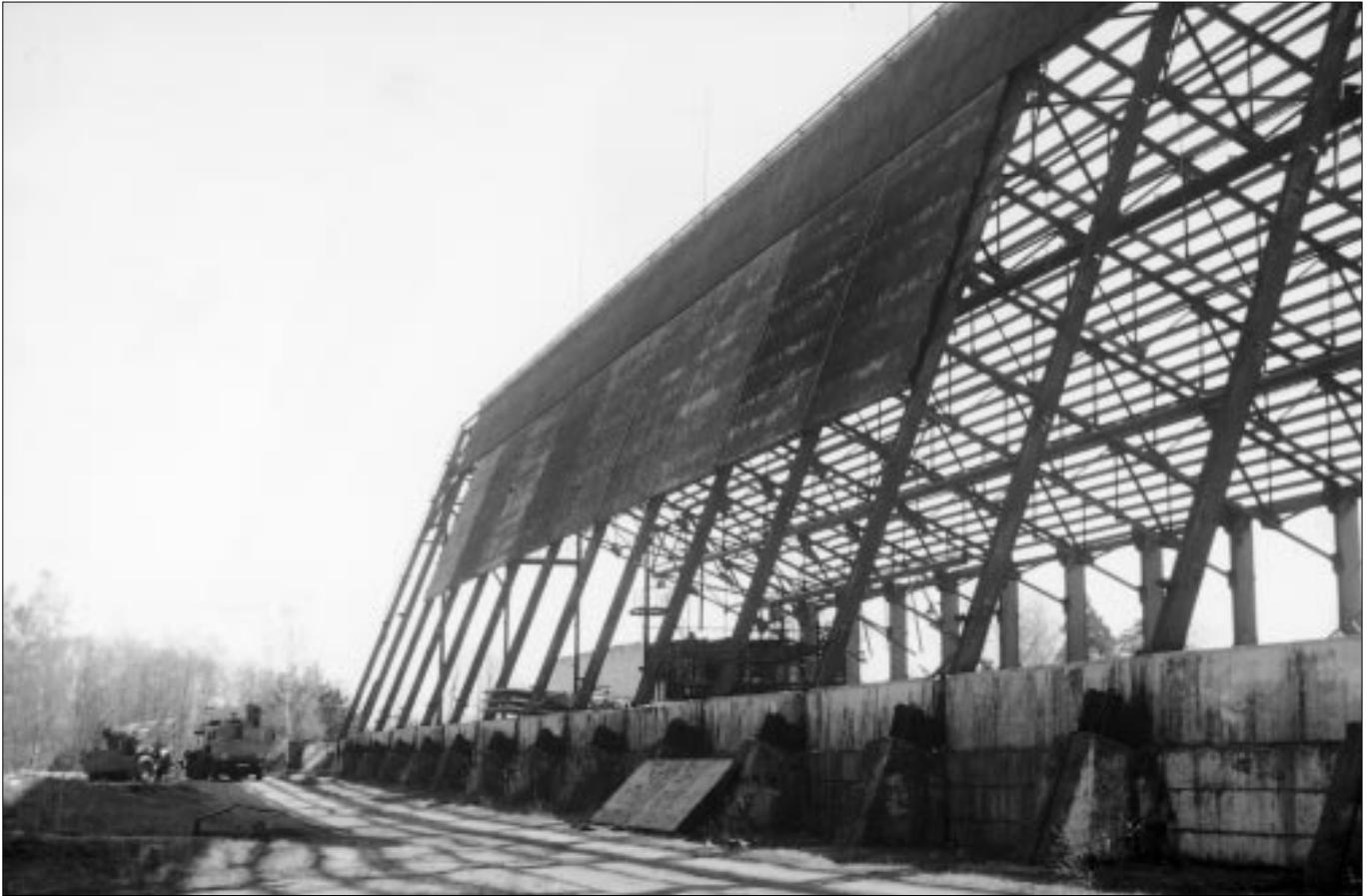
Skrunda radar station was to be completed not later than 29 February 2000. During the five years that have elapsed since the Agreement took effect, the work of dismantling the radar station has proceeded without problems and was concluded well ahead of time.

## Spirit of co-operation

In total, seven OSCE inspections of the site have taken place. On 3 September 1999, the OSCE Inspection Team reported that the radar station had been switched off, as foreseen in the Agreement. And finally, the last inspection on 19 October confirmed the work of dismantling the radar station was completed.

The OSCE Representative to the Joint Implementation Committee, Colonel Jürgen Hübschen, reports that all inspections were carried out in a business-like and co-operative spirit. The entire work of dismantling the radar sta-





*The front of one of the antenna buildings, showing all technical equipment and most of the weather protection removed.*

tion and monitoring compliance with the Agreement has been done “in a very professional manner and also in mutual respect and a very good atmosphere and spirit,” he added.

“The Skrunda Story is a story of success,” Colonel Hübschen said, “because the two Parties wanted it that way and got

the necessary support from engaged and professional experts from the OSCE.”

The Agreement, which has now been fully implemented, forms an integral part of the Treaty between the Republic of Latvia and the Russian Federation on the withdrawal of Russian armed forces from Latvia. In fact, the fulfillment of the

Agreement means that all provisions of the Treaty have been complied with. Describing the completion of this process, the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Foreign Minister of Norway, Knut Vollebæk, said it should be regarded as an important confidence-building measure.

## Chairman-in-Office Vollebæk visits the five OSCE Central Asian participating States

During a trip lasting from 28 September to 4 October, the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Norway’s Foreign Minister, Knut Vollebæk, paid brief visits to each of the five participating States of Central Asia – Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. The CiO was accompanied by a large delegation

with representatives from the OSCE Chairmanship, the OSCE Secretariat, the OSCE Troika, ODIHR, the European Commission and the UNHCR. Also present on the trip was a group of international journalists, representing major European media.

In the capitals of the various States visited, the CiO held meetings with the

respective Heads of State, Heads of Government and Speakers of Parliament. He also met with opposition leaders, indigenous non-governmental organizations and local representatives of international organizations.

In all his meetings, Minister Vollebæk underlined the importance of the Central Asian region to the OSCE as a

whole. His message was that the Organization should increase the amount of attention paid to the Central Asian countries, given the enormous challenges they face in years to come. He also stressed the importance of improved cooperation among the Central Asian States themselves, in order to promote economic development and stability in the region and to meet environmental challenges.

Other specific issues raised during the meetings in Central Asia were democratization and human rights, fair elections and electoral laws as well as regional security concerns, particularly international terrorism.

The Chairman's report on Central Asia (prepared by the CiO's personal representative, Ambassador Wilhelm Höynck), which had been discussed in the OSCE Permanent Council during September, was positively assessed in all meetings. Practical proposals emanating from the report and the discussions around it will be pursued by the OSCE Chairmanship in the weeks and months to come, not least during the



*Ambassador Höynck (left) and CiO Vollebæk (right) in Uzbekistan.*

Organization's Istanbul Summit in November. Minister Vollebæk issued invitations to the five Presidents of the Central Asian States to a meeting in Istanbul in the context of the Summit, in order to discuss ways to move forward in this process.

During the trip, the CiO visited all the regional offices of the OSCE, which are actively involved in the human dimen-

sion: in particular legal advice, electoral assistance, human rights training and other democratization issues. The high priority given to these issues in the practical work of the OSCE offices has, in some cases, led to friction with local authorities. Such aspects of the cooperation between the Organization and the States involved were openly discussed in a positive atmosphere. Broad agreement was reached that the democratization of the countries of Central Asia is a long process which cannot be completed overnight, but that it is a serious and irreversible process.

In his speech to the OSCE Permanent Council on 21 October, the Chairman-in-Office, Minister Vollebæk summarized his visit in this way:

"My discussions with the political leaders of the five Central Asian States gave me hope for a new and more open dialogue on sensitive issues. I will do my best to keep up the momentum in these discussions... To succeed, all parts of the OSCE must pull together: in Vienna, in Warsaw, in the Hague and in the Central Asian capitals."

## OSCE police monitoring in Croatia – building on a solid foundation over twelve months

*By Andy Burridge*

Exactly one year ago, the deployment began of the first OSCE policing mission, in the overall context of the OSCE Mission to Croatia. On 15 October 1998, after a smooth hand-over from the United Nations Police Support Group, some 120 members of the OSCE Police Monitoring Group took over the role of monitoring, assisting and advising the local police in the Danube Region. Now, one year on, the police component is an integrated part of the

Organization's operations, providing a quality service and assisting in normalization and institution-building in its Mission to Croatia.

As a basic principle, people who become police officers, irrespective of nationality, commit themselves to serving and respecting all members of the community regardless of the background of the individual citizen. In the Danube Region, the multi-ethnic police are faced with many ethnically-inspired criminal acts and their response, through

crime prevention and investigation, has been encouraging.

Many of these criminal acts, such as murder, arson and intimidation, are difficult enough for the police to handle under normal circumstances, but the difficulties are compounded when there are ethnic undertones. Hence the need for other bodies, dealing with trust and reconciliation, location of missing persons, confidence-building, etc., to work closely with the police in order to create a society which is peaceful and tolerant

and where decency prevails. In this regard, the Mission seeks to encourage political, educational, community and religious leaders to play an active role to help break down the barriers that exist between communities.

### Safe environment

The region can now be seen as relatively secure, with most people living in a safe environment, but it must be acknowledged that more work has to be done before the multi-ethnic police enjoy the confidence of the entire local population. The gap between the actual security provided by the police and the perception of security is widening. The police administrations in the Danube Region can boast some of the lowest crime rates in Croatia and certainly lower than the European average. This, coupled with high detection rates for crimes committed, could lead one to believe that few problems exist.

But on the contrary, there is still a general feeling of insecurity within a large section of the community, particularly among the ethnic Serbs, which originates from the recent conflict, but is also due to the present and future prospects of social and economic well being. In villages close to the city of Vukovar, ethnically motivated incidents and acts of intimidation directed against the minority Serb inhabitants also lead to a feeling of insecurity. Again, the dual role of police on the one hand and other responsible bodies on the other is the key to the solution.

These are just some of the complex problems which the Police Monitoring Group, in conjunction with the civilian component of the OSCE, is trying to address. The multi-ethnic population of the region can only be maintained through an integrated system of security, law and order and institutional and local development. The police can provide

OSCE/Andy Burridge



*An OSCE police monitor (left) discusses matters with a Croatian police officer, outside the ruins of the railway station in Vukovar.*

security in order for this to prevail.

One year on, the OSCE has expanded its policing role to Kosovo, where it is responsible for training the new Kosovo Police Service. It also has police advisors in other parts of Croatia assisting in field operations. The Organization is now well placed to stretch its creative boundaries in relation to policing, and to accomplish this it does not need to invent anything new. The expertise exists in its participating States to build on this Mission's experience and to create guidelines for future requirements.

### Key to success

Quality people can provide a quality service and recruitment and selection of personnel is the key to long term success of future OSCE Missions involving international police. If the mandate requires police monitoring, this can be done effectively by deploying numbers of police monitors in police stations who, in turn, report on police performance etc. However, if the mandate

requires assisting and advising then the Mission has to ensure that those selected are sufficiently experienced and qualified to offer this advice and assistance.

Training by qualified personnel, such as those who attended the OSCE 'Train the trainers' course in the Police School of Perfection in Rome this year, is essential. This training would prepare prospective Mission members in such areas as human rights and international legal standards prior to secondment, and would also provide the basis for a rapid-reaction assessment team.

The first OSCE Police Mission in Croatia has established a sound framework for policing within the Organization. The groundwork has been completed and should be built upon to provide a much-needed police service in areas of conflict and post conflict to help build a legitimate and legal framework, based on the rule of law.

*Mr. Burridge is Public Affairs Officer, Co-ordination Centre, Vukovar, within the OSCE Mission to Croatia.*

# Chairman-in-Office urges restraint and reconciliation in Kosovo

Speaking at a press conference at the end of a two-day visit to Kosovo, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Norway's Foreign Minister, Knut Vollebæk, condemned the violence in the province. "All people of Kosovo should now look towards the future and put an end to the growing violence. They must realise that

lished by the OSCE. It will provide political parties with office space, basic infrastructure and communication facilities. To date, 14 political parties have been invited to set up offices in the centre. The facility provides political parties with two large conference rooms and office facilities, including computers, photocopy

process for preparing and holding elections in Kosovo is more important than the date," he said.

The issue of ethnic violence was most prominent on Mr. Vollebæk's agenda. Speaking to Albanian and Serb community leaders, Mr. Vollebæk urged them to use their influence to stop the violence in the province and expressed his concern about the growing instances of hate speech. He highlighted the importance of establishing a secure environment as a prerequisite for democratic development and economic prosperity. He pointed out that, in view of their own experiences, the Kosovo Albanians have a particular responsibility to safeguard the rights of all inhabitants of Kosovo. During his trip, the CiO visited the Serb Orthodox monastery of Gračanica (see left).

The issue of security was one of the topics addressed at meetings with Dr. Bernard Kouchner, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General, and his deputies. He also met the then KFOR Commander General Michael Jackson. In the CiO's meetings with the representative of Yugoslav authorities to Kosovo, Ambassador Stanimir Vukićević, *inter alia*, he took up the question of the fate of Albanian detainees, currently held in Serb prisons. He made particular mention of Mr. Bekim Kastrati, a former OSCE employee, who was sentenced to 15 years in prison earlier this year.

"Our common goal is a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo, on the basis of substantial autonomy and self-government within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The first requirement is a safe environment. The safety of all the inhabitants of Kosovo, be they Albanians, Serbs, Roma, Turks or others, is the responsibility not only of KFOR and the Kosovo Police Force, but also of the people of Kosovo themselves," said Mr. Vollebæk.



OSCE/Lubomir Kotek

*Father Sava and the CiO admire the Serb Orthodox monastery of Gračanica.*

progress and sustainable development in Kosovo cannot be achieved through revenge and hostile acts against other ethnic groups, but only through reconciliation," said Mr. Vollebæk.

The visit to Kosovo, from 6 to 7 October, was his fifth trip to the region as OSCE Chairman-in-Office (CiO). During his stay, Mr. Vollebæk visited the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and held meetings with international representatives and Albanian and Serb community leaders.

In Pristina, the CiO was on hand to open the first Kosovo Political Party Service Centre, one of five that will be estab-

lished by the OSCE. It will provide political parties with office space, basic infrastructure and communication facilities.

Mr. Vollebæk also visited the facilities of the Kosovo Police Service School in Vučitrn and the facilities of Radio Television Kosovo (RTK), which has been set up by European Broadcasting Union with assistance from the OSCE as an emergency interim television service.

During an interview at RTK, he noted that one of the major challenges for the OSCE Mission in Kosovo is the preparation for elections. "We aim to hold elections as soon as responsibly possible," Vollebæk said, noting it is too early to provide a date for the elections. "The

## Kosovo: first class graduates from Police School

The first 173 graduates of the UNMIK/OSCE Kosovo Police Service School have completed their classroom training and are now deployed in the field, working side-by-side and under the supervision of international police officers. This is the first contingent of newly trained officers who will form the new Kosovo community-based police force.

During the graduation ceremonies the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Ambassador Daan Everts, commended the students for their commitment and dedication. He reminded the officers to be professional and never become the instrument of special interest groups. He told them their task is to serve the population of Kosovo in an egalitarian and unbiased way. They must be committed to protecting the human rights of all people, he said.

The next step in the programme is 19 weeks of field training, under the supervision of international police officers. During this time, the recruits will focus on the practical aspects of police work. Only upon successful completion of the field training will the new Kosovo police officers be granted executive authority.

Founding the Kosovo Police Service is a significant step toward restoring trust and confidence in law enforcement among the citizens of Kosovo. A great deal of care is taken in selecting candidates for training. For example, the 173 candidates attending the first classes were selected from a pool of 19,558 applicants.

There is a rigorous screening and selection process. For example, recruits go through a series of oral interviews and written tests, and also undergo evaluations of their medical and psychological capacity, physical agility and background checks. The screening process also considers gender and minority representation.

Among the first class of recruits, 39 are women (22 per cent), while 17 represent minorities (10 per cent), including eight Serbs (4 per cent), three Bosniacs,

average age of the class is 32 years; the youngest student was 20 and the oldest student was age 46.

As the first class starts field training, work is already advanced with the second intake, with the selection process well under way. Classes are expected to start in late November.

The OSCE plans to train about 3,500 locally recruited police officers within 18 months. Supervisory and management police training courses will be held for about 700 officers. In addition, the



*The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Dr. Bernard Kouchner, presents graduation certificates to members of the first class.*

three Roma and three Turks. A substantial portion of the class has a military or police background (79 per cent); two-thirds have a high school education and 30 per cent have a university degree. The

OSCE will provide a training course for up to 3,200 international UNMIK Police Officers, helping them prepare for field training with their new Kosovo colleagues.

### *Recent publications on the OSCE:*

*Packer, John, The Role of the High Commissioner on National Minorities in the Former Yugoslavia, Cambridge Review of International Relations, Volume XII, No. 2 spring/summer 1999, pp. 169-184.*

*Peace and Stability through Human and Minority Rights. Speeches by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. Edited by Wolfgang Zellner and Falk Lange, Baden-Baden, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1999.*

# Women making history

By Urdur Gunnarsdottir

What inspires me when I'm talking to the women at the Police School is how aware they are that they are making history," says Lynn Holland, Chief of Recruitment and Selection for the Kosovo Police Service School, which the OSCE has been running since September in Vuçitrn, some 25 kilometres north of Priština.

Ms. Holland, who has made a special effort to support the female officers at the school, was one of the first women to join the US police force 20 years ago. She knows many of the difficulties but also the opportunities that lie ahead:

"They have been given a big chance to participate in all the functions of law enforcement in Kosovo. Society gets used to seeing women as part of the police from the very beginning."

Altogether, 36 women were selected for the first intake of 173 students at the school. Overall, the OSCE set an aim of attracting a ratio of at least 20 per cent women, as well as a 10-15 per cent proportion of minority ethnic groups and has so far been successful in recruiting a mixed group of people that represents the diversity of Kosovo. In a society rife with ethnic hatred, attention has mainly been on the ethnic minorities. But the traditional role of women in Kosovo makes

many people raise their eyebrows when they see women driving police cars, on patrol and making arrests.

The first Kosovo police women are therefore bound to face a lot of prejudices in their work, says Ms. Holland, but she firmly believes that they will overcome it: "Kosovo women were empowered

human rights investigator in Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as assisting the port authorities in Durres, Albania, on the importing of humanitarian goods during the refugee crisis. In her work as human rights investigator, Holland reported on the darkest sides of the ethnic cleansing

that reached its peak after OSCE was forced to evacuate in March.

After the OSCE returned to Kosovo in June, Ms. Holland was assigned to recruiting for the Police School. "It is therefore particularly rewarding to return to Kosovo to establish a police service that marks a fresh start. I have high hopes for the police and ten years from now I

am planning to take my grand-daughter, now aged two, with me to Kosovo to show her what we have achieved."

The female students range in age from 20 to 42 years, several are married but there are no couples in the student group. On the other hand, there are two sisters at the school, which supports the claim of the women that their families give them full support. And that is needed since, for instance, two of the women have four children.

*Ms. Gunnarsdottir is Press Officer with the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.*



*A female cadet takes aim on the firing range at Kosovo Police School.*

during the war. When many of the men were gone they stepped in. I think they want to make use of the opportunity they have been given. It's going to be difficult. It's not fun being first, but someone has to do it."

Ms. Holland, who amassed more than 20 years of police experience in the USA, Haiti and Bosnia, has spent the last year in Kosovo, initially with the US Kosovo Diplomatic Observer Mission then from December 1998 with OSCE's Kosovo Verification Mission.

She worked as an observer and



# OSCE Ministerial Troika meets in Vienna

The OSCE Ministerial Troika, Foreign Ministers Knut Vollebæk of Norway, Wolfgang Schüssel of Austria and Bronisław Geremek of Poland, met on 21 October in Vienna under Norwegian chairmanship. The Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador Ján Kubiš, also took part in the meeting. Other participants were the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Helle Degn; the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoep, and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve, and a representative of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

The Ministers focused on preparations for the OSCE Summit Meeting, which will take place 18-19 November in Istanbul. They emphasised the importance of concluding the negotiations on a Charter for European Security. The Ministers also discussed regional issues in the OSCE area, in particular the situ-

ation in Kosovo, Belarus, Moldova and the Northern Caucasus.

The Ministers expressed their deep concern for the deteriorating situation in and around Chechnya. They considered the humanitarian situation extremely worrying. They invited the Russian Federation to consider ways in which the good offices of the OSCE could be used in the context of the crisis and with a view to alleviating the suffering of the civilian population.

With regard to Kosovo, the Ministers expressed their concern about the grave situation for the ethnic minorities. They also agreed on the necessity for a stable environment as a requirement for elections and noted the OSCE Mission in Kosovo has begun thorough preparations for the election process.

Regarding Belarus, the Ministers expressed their expectation that the dialogue initiated between the Government and the opposition takes concrete shape. They expressed deep concern

about the marked absence of the rule of law in the country and the disappearance or detention of prominent political figures.

The Ministers expressed their satisfaction that the parties are considering proposals for military transparency and confidence-building measures in Moldova. They regretted that opposition from the Transdniestrian authorities had prevented the implementation of the decision that an international assessment mission should facilitate the withdrawal and destruction of Russian arms and ammunition in Transdniestria.

On the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, the Ministers took note of several positive developments and expressed hope for visible progress by the Istanbul Summit.

They reaffirmed the OSCE's commitment to the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, and saw a need for the further development of the OSCE's own regional dimension in the Balkans and in Central Asia.

## **REPORT** of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

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### **Media in Central Asia conference**

The Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media played a central role in the organization of the first-ever conference on the Media in Central Asia, held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 25-27 October. Jointly sponsored by the Union of Kyrgyz Journalists and the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, this conference gathered together representatives of media and government from the host country Kyrgyzstan, as

well as from neighbouring Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The Turkmenistan delegation was unable to attend the session.

In his welcoming remarks to over a 100 participants, read by Advisor Stanley Schrager, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve, praised the initiative of the Union of Kyrgyz Journalists and the OSCE Centre in Bishkek in bringing about this pioneering effort at a regional approach to Cen-

tral Asian media. Mr. Duve said he hoped this would be the first of many annual conferences on this theme which would be hosted by other Central Asian Republics. Representatives of the OSCE Centres in all five participating States in Central Asia also attended.

The three-day discussion centred around topics concerning the rights and responsibilities of Central Asian media, its relationship with government, the economic difficulties of the independent

media, and ways to further co-operation, including suggestions for the formation of a Union of Central Asian Journalists and the establishment of a Central Asian News Agency. All the participants voiced their support for the initiative of the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media to establish a Media Fund for Central Asia, which would assist struggling independent media in Central Asia.

### **Balkans publishing initiative**

Early in 1999, the Representative on Freedom of the Media launched a proposal to writers and journalists in the Balkans to look toward the future in a process of rebuilding. This proposal was taken up by the Zagreb publisher, Nenad

Popovic, and by the director of the world's largest book fair in Frankfurt. The newly formed Group 99 met at their invitation in October 1999, near Frankfurt.

Both Mr. Duve and Mr. Popovic invited authors and journalists to contribute to a book, 'Defence of the Future', which has so far been published in Croatian, German and English. This represents a new initiative which the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media intends to propose to writers in other conflict areas of the OSCE.

### **Books for refugee children**

Another current initiative of the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media is the publishing of children's books for the Kosovo refugee chil-

dren in the Albanian language. After visiting the refugee camps in Skopje and meeting with the Macedonian and Kosovo intellectuals earlier this year, Mr. Duve suggested that one of the ways the international community could help refugees was by financing the publishing of children books. Funding for this initiative has already been secured. The project was carried out by OSCE MIK staff member, Mrs. Mirjana Robin-Cejrovic.

Under the logo 'Peace for Children' these books were displayed at the Frankfurt Book Fair. They are being distributed now to every newly re-opened school in Kosovo. Copies of the edition have gone also to libraries in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Germany.

## **NEWS** from the High Commissioner on National Minorities

*The Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) is located at Prinsessegracht 22, NL-2514 AP The Hague, The Netherlands, tel.: (+31-70) 312 55 00, fax: (+31-70) 363 59 10, e-mail: hcnm@hcnm.org*

### **Conference in Greece**

On 7 and 8 October, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr. Max van der Stoel participated in a conference on "Minority issues in South-eastern Europe" in Athens organized by the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy. He also met senior Greek officials, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs, George Papandreou, and the Alternate Minister for Foreign Affairs, Rocosylos. The main objective of his visit was to discuss the position of the Greek Government on minority rights. The High Commissioner urged the Greek Government to ratify the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. In his meetings with minority representatives, he stressed the need for their public support of the territorial

integrity of Greece. They declared their willingness to do so.

### **Speeches and book launch**

On 19 October, Mr. van der Stoel gave a speech at the London School of Economics on the topic 'Human rights, the prevention of conflict and the international protection of minorities: a contemporary paradigm for contemporary challenges.' On 21 and 22 October, he visited Berlin, where he gave a speech at the German Association for the United Nations on the topic 'Minorities and conflict prevention – the experience of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.' On 22 October, he attended the launch of a book containing a collection of his speeches. The book, entitled 'Peace and Stability through Human and Minority Rights', is available from

Nomos Publishers, 76520 Baden-Baden, Germany. Copies of both the LSE and Berlin speeches are available from the HCNM office.

### **Visit to Central Asia**

From 24 to 31 October, the High Commissioner visited four Central Asian republics, starting with Uzbekistan, where he met with President Islam Karimov. One of the subjects discussed was the danger posed by religious extremism. The importance of continued OSCE cooperation with the states of Central Asia was also raised. So, too, was the importance of paying constant attention to inter-ethnic tensions.

In Kyrgyzstan, Mr. van der Stoel had a long tête-a-tête with President Akayev. Here too, religious extremism and inter-ethnic relations were the main topics of

discussion, particularly in the south of the country.

Visiting Tajikistan, the High Commissioner met a number of high-level officials including the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, the Speaker of the Parliament, the Minister of Justice, the President of the Constitutional Court and the leader of opposition Mr. Nuri. The High Commissioner was informed about developments concerning Presidential elections to take place on 6

November, particularly as regards the decision of Mr. Nuri to suspend his activities as Chairman of the Reconciliation Council, due to a disagreement concerning the procedure of nominating Presidential candidates. Religious extremism was also a subject of discussion.

Polls were again an issue in Kazakhstan, this time the recent parliamentary elections. However, the High Commissioner's main attention was focused on

the work of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan. The Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations (FIER) and the High Commissioner's office have been working with the Assembly in creating a monitoring network that regularly reports on inter-ethnic developments across the country. During his visit, a joint seminar of the Assembly, FIER and the High Commissioner's office was held on the subject of the draft law on the state language.

## **UPDATE** from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

*The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is located at Aleje Ujazdowskie 19, PL-00 557 Warsaw, Poland, tel.: (+48-22) 520 06 00, fax: (+48-22) 520 06 05, e-mail: [office@odih.osce.waw.pl](mailto:office@odih.osce.waw.pl)*



*ODIHR Director Stoudmann (left) and the President Djukanovic of Montenegro, meeting on the margins of the ODIHR forum on Montenegro*

### **Forum on Montenegro highlights need for international support**

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the European Action Council for Peace in the Balkans organized a forum from 9 to 11 October in Budva, Montenegro on the present situation of that country. The aim of the forum was to raise awareness

in the international community on the specific situation of Montenegro in all its aspects, including political, legal and economical developments.

The forum, which attracted over 50 Montenegrin and international participants, recognized that the Montenegrin authorities are genuinely committed to democracy, the rule of law and human

rights. However, progress was being hindered by a deteriorating economic and monetary situation, which is linked to the situation in the rest of the Former Republic of Yugoslavia. In these difficult circumstances, movements favouring independence have become stronger. It was concluded that, for the sake of stability and democracy in Montenegro and beyond, the international community should urgently strengthen its support for Montenegro.

The ODIHR Office in Podgorica will continue to assist the Montenegrin authorities in consolidating democracy and the rule of law.

### **Election observation missions**

In Kazakhstan, the OSCE election observation mission for the 10 October parliamentary elections issued a preliminary statement after the first round of voting that highlighted improvements in the electoral framework, as well as continuing problems with the process. Developments after the preliminary statement, together with continuing problems in the second round, led the ODIHR to conclude that the election fell

short of meeting OSCE standards. The ODIHR remains ready to continue its dialogue with Kazakh authorities and to assist in instituting reforms.

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the ODIHR continued its long-term observation of the 31 October presidential election with a core team in Skopje and eight long-term observers deployed around the country. The ODIHR mission is headed by Mark Stevens. While the tone of the campaign became more negative, all presidential candidates continued to campaign actively, holding well attended and peaceful rallies. The Election Observation Mission was due to make its preliminary findings public on 1 November.

In Georgia, the ODIHR continued its election observation mission for the 31 October parliamentary elections. The mission, headed by ODIHR Election Adviser Nikolai Vulchanov, deployed approximately 160 short-term observers throughout the country on election day. On 13 October, the observation mission issued a statement condemning violence in elections, in particular a violent incident directed at one candidate. A preliminary statement was due to be released on 1 November.

In Ukraine, the ODIHR established an election observation mission on 15 September. Presidential elections are scheduled for 31 October with a likely second round on 14 November. The mission, headed by Simon Osborn, deployed 18 long-term observers and a core team in Kiev to follow the pre-election campaign and preparations for this election, including media monitoring at national and local level. A press statement was issued condemning violence during an election campaign on 5 October, following a hand-grenade attack on one of the presidential candidates. Some 200 short-term observers were expected to be deployed on election day and a prelimi-

nary statement was due to be released on 1 November.

With a view to observing the 19 December parliamentary elections to the State Duma in Russia, the ODIHR conducted a needs-assessment mission from 18 to 22 October. A decision was made to deploy a fully-fledged observation mission. The ODIHR mission will be headed by Ambassador Edouard Brunner, former State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland. Thirty-five long-term and 400 short-term observers will be requested from participating States.

The ODIHR also undertook a needs-assessment mission in Uzbekistan, in anticipation of the 6 December parliamentary elections. The mission, headed by Ambassador Madelaine Ströje-Wilkens of Sweden, visited Tashkent from 20 to 24 October, and is preparing a report on its findings.

#### **Technical election assistance in Georgia and Azerbaijan**

In Georgia, the ODIHR conducted two technical assistance projects in preparation for the 31 October parliamentary elections. The ODIHR technical assistance team prepared a training manual for election officials and also conducted training for law enforcement agency officers, focusing on the role of security forces on election day.

In preparation for the municipal elections scheduled for 12 December in Azerbaijan, the ODIHR presented recommendations to the Central Election Commission for issuing instructions to improve the transparency and efficiency of the process. The Central Election Commission expressed its commitment to fully incorporate all the recommendations. An ODIHR election expert travelled to the capital, Baku, to give further assistance to the Central Election Commission in the implementation of the recommendations.

## **DEMOCRATIZATION**



### **Opening of training college for prison personnel in Croatia**

The Minister of Justice of Croatia formally inaugurated the training college for prison personnel in Lipovica on 22 October. This major step in the improvement of the training of prison personnel in Croatia was supported by the ODIHR and the British Government. From October, newly recruited prison personnel will go through a three months training course, which includes courses on human rights of prisoners and international standards.

The ODIHR has advised on the curriculum and administrative issues, and conducted training for possible trainers as well as sponsoring a working visit of Croatian prison administrators to the Wakefield Prison Training School in the United Kingdom. The ODIHR will support the further development of the college with a view to offering training programmes and workshops for prison officials and Ministry of Justice staff.

### **ODIHR assists Albanian prison service**

An ODIHR prison expert, Mr. Alan Walker, visited Albania from 8 to 15 October to continue providing advice to the Albanian prison administration on reform issues. Faced with a hunger strike in one of the prisons at the time of his visit, he included in the work programme advice on how to properly address emergency situations occurring in prisons.

The Albanian Deputy Minister of Justice, the Director General of Prisons and a senior official of the prison administration visited Poland from 19 to 24 October. The delegation visited several prison facilities, including spe-

cial regime prisons and the Polish prison training college in Kalisz. The purpose of the visit, which was sponsored by the ODIHR, was to exchange experiences on cost-efficient measures aimed at improving the administration of the prison services.

### **Workshop on registration of residents in Kyrgyzstan**

A workshop on the registration of permanent residents in Kyrgyzstan was organized by the ODIHR in Bishkek on 14-15 October. The discussions focused on ideas for reforming the previous Soviet-era registration system. In view of the lack of information on international experience, which hinders the continuing reform, ODIHR experts explained to the participants how the reform of internal registration systems in other CIS countries has been structured and how already existing systems in Denmark and the Netherlands are functioning.

Other issues discussed during the workshop included contradictions between various laws and regulations relating to internal registration in Kyrgyzstan, as well as the lack of implementation of some of these legal provisions. It was stressed that the new sys-

tem of registration should not contradict international standards on the right to freedom of movement and choice of residence. Follow-up steps to the workshop will include the analysis of current laws and regulations, as well as the creation of a working group to deal with the issue.

### **Workshops to be held on trafficking in women**

Preparations for a series of six workshops on trafficking in women were completed in October. They are being organized by the Polish NGO, La Strada, with support from the ODIHR and the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The purpose of the project is to raise awareness of the problem of trafficking in women among relevant groups of professionals, such as social workers, policemen, border guards, prosecutors, teachers, local government representatives, and journalists. The programme includes information on Poland as an important country of origin, transit and destination, and also takes into account the various legal, social, economic, and human rights aspects of the trafficking problem. The participants will also be trained in dealing with the victims of trafficking.

### **NGO meeting organized in Uzbekistan**

As part of the civil society programme in Uzbekistan, the ODIHR organized an NGO meeting in Samarkand on 12 October, in co-operation with the OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia and the National Centre for Human Rights. Twenty-three NGOs from Samarkand, representing some of the most developed and experienced groups in Uzbekistan, participated in the meeting. They discussed problems faced in their relation with local authorities and suggested possible ways to improve co-operation in the future.

As a result of the meeting, a letter with concrete recommendations to local authorities was prepared by the participants. In this letter, the NGOs suggested organizing more roundtables, seminars and training with government representatives, and requested to be invited by local authorities to meetings within Government structures related to their particular work in order to be able to provide input. Several participants called for the creation of a working group, consisting of NGO and government representatives to consider issues of common concern on a regular basis.

## **NEWS** from the OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat

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### **Working visits**

At the invitation of the Russian Foreign Ministry, the OSCE Secretary General, Ján Kubiš, visited Moscow on 4-5 October on a working visit. On 9 October, he participated in an international conference in Venice on 'The European Union, the Danube and the Balkans'

organized by the Aspen Institute.

On 12 October, the Secretary General visited Paris at the invitation of the French Foreign Ministry. The following day, 13 October, Ambassador Kubiš delivered a statement to the Second Parliamentary Conference on 'Sub-regional economic co-operation

processes in Europe faced with new challenges', held in Nantes. It was organized jointly by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the French National Assembly.

The Secretary General participated, on 20 October, in the '2+2' meeting in Berlin between high-level officials of the

OSCE and the Council of Europe. He also took part in the OSCE Ministerial Troika meeting in Vienna on 21 October.

### Visitors to Vienna

At other points during the month, the Secretary General had meetings with several high-ranking officials from other international organizations and from OSCE participating States. On 7 October, he met in Vienna with Mme. Louise Fréchette, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations. On 14 October he met with the Foreign Minister of Tajikistan, Mr. Talbak Nazarov, also visiting Vienna.

In the context of OSCE support to and participation in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, the Secretariat sent representatives to the inaugural Working Tables in Bari (9 October), Oslo (13 October) and Geneva (18 October). At the Working Table on the Human Dimension in Geneva, the OSCE was represented by the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, Ambassador Marton Krasznai. The Director also participated in the East-West Institute Round Table in Tbilisi, Georgia on 9 to 10 October.

### Economic seminar held in Tashkent

On 19-20 October 1999, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic

and Environmental Activities held a seminar on "Economic rehabilitation and next steps in the transition: institution-building, rule of law and the role of civil society". The seminar, which took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, was the first of a series of three seminars designed to help the participating States prepare for the Eighth Economic Forum, due to take place next year. The seminar was organized with the support of the Government of Uzbekistan.

During the event, a lively and active discussion took place among representatives of OSCE participating States, as well as numerous international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from throughout Central Asia and further afield.

The participants pointed with satisfaction to the OSCE seminar which was held in Almaty in June this year on the subject of public participation in environmental decision-making. They noted with pleasure that one concrete consequence of that seminar was improved dialogue between the Government of Kazakhstan and the NGO community in that country.

There was wide agreement among the participants that contacts between local NGOs and NGOs from other OSCE participating States should be improved.

The OSCE could usefully facilitate this networking of NGOs. Representatives of international organizations stressed the importance of promoting, cultivating and maintaining social and political dialogue on economic reform.

Additionally, participants noted that in many Central Asian countries, there is a clear lack of information on legislation among the citizens. They paid attention to the importance of the implementation of existing legislation in Central Asian countries, and emphasized a link between the security of individuals and the security of nations. They stressed the urgent need to deal with related issues – such as language rights, minority participation in economic life, gender issues and corruption – in order to promote this sense of security and consolidate the transition. The Office is currently occupied with preparation for the next seminar.

### Summit preparations

Throughout October, the Secretariat was busily engaged in the preparations for the Istanbul Summit, as well as the Istanbul Review Conference. In close cooperation with the Turkish hosts, practical steps were being undertaken especially by the Department for Conference Services to support the successful convening of the Summit.

## REPORT from the Parliamentary Assembly

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### OSCE Parliamentarians monitor elections in Kazakhstan

The Ukrainian parliamentarian, Ihor Ostash, who is Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA), was appointed Special Representative of OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Knut Volle-

bæk to lead the Election Observation Mission to the Parliamentary Elections in Kazakhstan on 10 October and issue the preliminary election statement for the OSCE. The OSCE Parliamentary Observer Delegation consisted of representatives from Ukraine, Czech Repub-

lic, Poland, Austria, Belgium, Norway, Italy, the Netherlands, Turkey and the United States.

While in Kazakhstan, Mr. Ostash and 18 members of the delegation of the OSCE PA met Ms. Balieva, Chair of the Kazakhstan Central Election Commis-

sion and Minister of Justice, Mr. Muhamenzhanov. The Delegation also met the Chairman of Supreme Court, Mr. Narikabaev; the Chairman of the Senate, Mr. Baigeldi, and the Chairman of Parliament, Mr. Ospanov. On election day, members of the Delegation visited a substantial number of polling stations and were present at the opening and closing of the vote.

The day after polling, Mr. Ostash issued a preliminary statement in conjunction with Ms. Linda Edgeworth, Head of ODIHR Long-term Election Observation Mission. According to this statement, read at the joint press conference in Almaty, "The Republic of Kazakhstan made a tentative step in the country's transition to democracy". However, a number of serious concerns were raised by the observer mission, who pointed out that, "If Kazakhstan is to make further progress in the transition to democracy, interference by executive authorities in the broader electoral process must be halted, and their resistance to international standards must be overcome."

### **Nantes Conference held on economic co-operation**

The Second Conference on "Sub-regional economic co-operation processes in Europe faced with new challenges" was held in Nantes from 13-15 October. The conference involved more than 100 parliamentarians and 150 officials and was co-hosted by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the French National Assembly, in partnership with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

The conference represented a continuation of a process which in Monaco in October 1997 with the first Conference. By providing a forum for meetings

and exchanges, the Conference was further designed to build and strengthen contacts between sub-regional organizations, as well as to engage and deepen the objectives, with the focus on market-based economic development. The all-encompassing aim of the conference was therefore to promote sub-regional co-operation and to establish programmes in fields as varied as transportation, energy, environment, nuclear energy, culture, agriculture, safety and cross-border co-operation.

The Conference was organized around four main topics: "Safeguarding of the environment"; "Conventional and nuclear energy security"; "Social cohesion within states and economic disparities" and "Corruption and organized crime." On the last day the Conference adopted the "Nantes Declaration".

The Nantes Conference was addressed by a number of senior parliamentarians and executive officials, including Mr. Laurent Fabius, President of the Host Parliament; Mrs. Helle Degn, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Chair of the Conference; Ambassador Ján Kubiš, Secretary General of the OSCE; Ambassador Kai Eide, Chair of the OSCE Permanent Council and Mr. Yves Berthelot, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe.

Mr. Jacques Floch, Chair of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment of the OSCE PA has initiated the holding of the two parliamentary conferences on sub-regional economic co-operation.

### **President Helle Degn visits Finland, Estonia and Latvia**

PA President Helle Degn visited Finland on 18-19 October at the invitation of Mrs. Riitta Uosukainen, Speaker of the Finnish Eduskunta (Parliament). The

timing of the visit coincided with the Finnish EU Presidency and the EU-Russia meeting.

During her visit, President Degn met the President of Finland, Mr. Martti Ahtisaari. The topics of the meeting included the forthcoming OSCE Summit in Istanbul, strengthening of the parliamentary dimension of the Organization, OSCE's role in Kosovo and the crisis in Chechnya.

President Degn also held discussions on the same subjects with a large number of Finnish Parliamentarians and representatives of the Foreign Ministry.

From Helsinki, President Degn proceeded to Estonia on a visit organized by the OSCE Mission to that country. On 20 October, she met Mr. Mart Laar, the Prime Minister of Estonia. He informed the PA President about the new language law and, in particular, the integration programme concerning the Russian speaking population. She also discussed these matters with the Minister for Ethnic Affairs, Mrs. Katrin Saks, Vice-President of the Parliament, Mr. Tunne Kelam and the Vice-President of the OSCE PA, Mr. Tiit Käbin as well as other parliamentarians.

On 21 October, President Degn addressed the Troika in Vienna. She stressed the importance of giving the Parliamentary Assembly a more visible profile in the Charter for European Security.

On 22-23 October, President Degn visited Latvia on a visit that was been organized by the OSCE Mission to that State. There she met the Speaker of the Saeima (Parliament), Mr. Janis Straume, several other parliamentarians and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Indulis Berzins. The language law and the integration program of the Russian speaking population were again central topics of discussion. The President also expressed the view that the

completion of the work of the Joint Committee on the Skruna Radar was a success story and an instance where the OSCE has had an important and positive role to play.

## PRESS PROFILE



### **Reuters, 4 October**

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

expressed concern on Monday for the plight of refugees fleeing Chechnya but stopped short of criticising Russia's bombing campaign of the rebel region. "There's no doubt we are facing a severe situation – both humanitarian, but as I say, also from a terrorism point of view," OSCE Chairman Knut Vollebæk told reporters after talks with Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister during a brief stopover at Moscow's Shremetevo airport. Vollebæk, who is also Norway's Foreign Minister, said he had voiced his concerns to the Russian Government about the refugee problem, but stressed that the OSCE regarded the breakaway region as part of Russia.

### **Le Monde, 7 October**

Because his election took place under the aegis of the OSCE, the international community should acknowledge their obligations towards President Maskhadov (of Chechnya). So far, there has not been one word uttered in support of this man, the legitimacy of whom the Kremlin does not recognize any longer.

### **Tages-Anzeiger, 20 October**

The OSCE wants to defend human rights and basic freedoms from Vancouver to Vladivostok. However, it seems like its commitment ends just outside

After her visits to Tallinn and Riga, the President complimented the work done by the respective OSCE Missions and by the High Commissioner for National Minorities, Mr. Max van der Stoel, and recog-

Moscow... With its squeamishness, the OSCE is doing neither Moscow nor itself any favour... The OSCE loses its credibility if it acts only in places where it is politically harmless to do so.

### **Der Standard, 23 October**

As a member of the Council of Europe, Russia has committed itself to honour human rights. And under the supervision of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), a ceasefire agreement was reached in Chechnya and Aslan Maskhadov was elected President of Chechnya – his legitimacy, however, is not acknowledged by Moscow anymore. A lot is at stake in northern Caucasus, not only the lives of many human beings, but also the credibility of these organizations and the whole of Europe as well.

### **The Economist, 30 October**

In the last Chechen war, the rest of the world stood aside, vaguely muttering that it was an internal Russian affair. This time, with several neighbouring countries threatened by the convulsions, outsiders have every reason to use their influence to promote a settlement. Fortunately, a good moment for trying to do that is at hand. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is soon to hold its first grand Summit for three years. Among the club's members are the United States, Russia, Turkey, three ex-Soviet republics in the Caucasus (Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia) and all the other countries of Europe. The OSCE has come up in the world, mainly

nized the progress made in both countries. She also expressed her wish that the Missions' work would continue to be supportive of Estonian and Latvian integration into European Institutions.

as an organization that can discuss human rights and other delicate issues. It also happens to be Russia's favourite forum. Its gathering in Istanbul in three weeks' time provides the ideal opportunity to seek a general settlement in the Caucasus.

### **Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 30 October**

In three weeks, a big summit meeting of all the OSCE participating States will take place. If by then the organization has not even managed to send observers to Chechnya, there will be more substance to the question what purpose the continued existence of this organization actually serves.

### **International Herald Tribune, 5 October**

The disappearance of Mr. Gonchar and his friend shocked many people in Belarus because there had seemed to be a lull in repression. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe was arranging talks between the Government and the dissidents. Mr. Gonchar had been planning to meet members of the disbanded Parliament to select the opposition delegation. His disappearance threw the talks into limbo.

### **Reuters, 17 October**

Recent months have seen the arrests of key opposition leaders and disappearances – most recently that of Viktor Gonchar, the deputy speaker of the parliament that Lukashenko disbanded. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which plans to broker talks between the government and opposition to make next



year's parliamentary election accepted by all, has said Gonchar's disappearance must be accounted for. "Meaningful negotiations cannot be undertaken in a climate of distrust and fear", an OSCE statement said.

#### ***The New York Times, 22 October***

The Western group with the most influence in Belarus is the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which has been inexplicably muted in its defence of Belarus's opposition. It, and foreign governments, must prove Mr. Lukashenko wrong by strengthening their support for Belarus's dissidents.

#### ***Reuters, 11 October***

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe said on Monday that Sunday's parliamentary election in Kazakhstan was an improvement on the

controversial presidential ballot in January, but remained deeply flawed... The OSCE refused to send a full observer mission to the January vote... but it agreed to monitor Sunday's ballot to the lower Mazhilis chamber.

#### ***Der Standard, 13 October***

Not only the budding civil society was watching the elections, also the OSCE had sent monitors. Not all human rights activists are happy about that – it looks almost as a sanctioning of the elections, their framework and their results – even though the OSCE afterwards issued harsh criticism and protests... The OSCE itself is very well aware of these difficulties. But, first, the OSCE presence at least gives some protection to the opposition,... second, the progress made since the elections in January - by democratic standards catastrophic - must be recognised.

#### ***Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 19 October***

Little Estonia has been accumulating particular experience in this regard since it started receiving advice on how to treat its Russian population. For years, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has been keeping close watch over it. Again, the EU is putting pressure to bear on the Government in Tallinn whenever the OSCE complains about the legislation of the country and sees a danger to the peaceful co-existence of the national groups. Indeed, no Western state has any experience of circumstances like in Estonia and there has never, so far, been reported from Estonia that homes for asylum seekers have been put on fire or that foreigners have been attacked by skinheads. However, this does not help the country: since it is situated in the east, it will be seen as heavy-handed in these matters.

## **IN BRIEF**



### **OSCE and Council of Europe discuss common efforts in problem areas**

On the initiative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, a meeting was convened on 4 October in Vienna of representatives of the Council of Europe (CoE) and the OSCE. This meeting was a follow-up to the joint meeting held in March 1997 in Strasbourg. Also participating were representatives of the respective organisations' Secretariats and Institutions. The meeting dealt with procedures for the monitoring of commitments and on present and future co-operation between the two organizations.

Representatives of the two organizations met again in Berlin on 20 October. The Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, the Icelandic Foreign Minis-

ter, Halldór Asgrimsson, and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Mr Knut Vollebæk, as well as the Secretaries General of both Organizations, Mr Walter Schwimmer (CoE) and Mr Ján Kubiš (OSCE), met in Berlin for the 7th high level "2+2" meeting between the Council of Europe and the OSCE. With regard to Kosovo, they agreed to strengthen their co-operation in the training of judges, local government officials and policemen and promotion of the protection of human rights. Both organizations play an active role in the implementation of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, launched by the EU and placed under the auspices of the OSCE.

They also discussed issues pertaining to Armenia and Azerbaijan, including the prospects for a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. On Georgia, they agreed to support the

country's efforts to find a solution to the questions of the status of Abkhazia and South-Ossetia within Georgia.

### **German Foreign Minister addresses OSCE Permanent Council**

The OSCE is in the best position to pioneer the "culture of prevention", the German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, told Delegations attending the Permanent Council on 6 October. In his address, he offered a number of suggestions. Issues such as the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and the further development of military security agreements were brought into the discussion. The Minister said one purpose of his visit to the Permanent Council was to stimulate OSCE participating States to reach an agreement on a Charter on European Security at the upcoming summit in Istanbul. This charter, he said, was of major significance for peace and

security in Europe. The charter could also strengthen the possibilities for enforcing human rights and the rights of minorities throughout the region. Mr. Fischer, who was introduced to the Permanent Council as “the father of the Stability Pact,” referred to the pact as a “preventive task par excellence.” He added that, “the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe is pursuing an even more ambitious strategy under the auspices of the OSCE – to integrate a whole region into European structures.”

### **CiO warns of “climate of fear” in Belarus**

The Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk of Norway, issued a statement on 7 October welcoming the first steps towards negotiations between government and opposition in Belarus, emphasizing the plan for free, fair, and internationally recognized parliamentary elections in the year 2000. He noted, however, that meaningful negotiations could not be undertaken in a climate of distrust and fear. Therefore, he urged the Belarus authorities to clarify convincingly the disappearance of Victor Gonchar, acting Chairman of the 13th Supreme Soviet, the third leading political figure to disappear in unexplained circumstances in four months. He also demanded the release of former Prime Minister Chigir and urged the Belarus authorities to put an immediate stop to the growing harassment of independent newspapers.

### **United Nations DSG reviews co-operation with OSCE**

Reviewing joint efforts and enhancing future co-operation in conflict prevention and resolution was the main theme of discussion held on 7 October by the visiting United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, Louise Fréchette,



*Foreign Minister Nazarov of Tajikistan addressed the PC in October.*

with Kai Eide, Chairman of the Permanent Council of the OSCE, and Ján Kubiš, OSCE Secretary-General. Ms. Fréchette also addressed the OSCE Permanent Council. The United Nations and the OSCE have a track record of co-operation in joint crisis prevention, peace-keeping and long-term peace building. The two organizations have established field level co-operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Albania and the Commonwealth of Independent States, including Georgia and Tajikistan. The OSCE is the only regional organization with which the United Nations in 1993 concluded a Framework Agreement for Co-operation and Co-ordination. The discussions focused on the tasks ahead in peace-building in Kosovo. The Deputy Secretary-General was in Vienna to open the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, held 6 to 8 October.

### **Reinforced PC discusses Georgia and Moldova**

On 11 October, high-level experts from OSCE participating States met in

Vienna to focus on regional security issues within the framework of the “reinforced Permanent Council”. The meeting, under Norwegian Chairmanship, focused on the situation in Georgia and OSCE conflict resolution effort in the country, and the situation in Moldova, as well as the prospects for intensified OSCE efforts in conflict resolution, including both the issue of the status of the Trans-Dniestrian region of Moldova and the questions relating to the withdrawal of Russian troops from the area. The participants included Ambassador Jean-Michel Lacombe, Head of the OSCE Mission to Georgia, Ambassador William Hill, Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, and Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the Minsk Conference. Representatives of the Co-chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group were also present, as well as Ambassador Liviu Bota, Special Representative of the Secretary General to the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia.

### **Tajik Foreign Minister addresses PC**

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, Mr. Talbak Nazarov, addressed the OSCE Permanent Council on 13 October. In his statement Mr. Nazarov, outlined the recent developments in Tajikistan and addressed current issues under deliberation at the OSCE. Mr. Nazarov noted that Tajikistan regards the OSCE as a key organization responsible for the maintenance of peace and security in Central Asia, and welcomed the strengthening of relations between the Republic of Tajikistan and the OSCE. He stressed the need for further enhancing OSCE activities in Central Asia and strengthening the operational capabilities of the Organization.



## News from the field

*The OSCE currently has Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kosovo (FRY), Latvia, Skopje (FYROM), Moldova, and Tajikistan, as well as an Assistance Group to Chechnya, a Presence in Albania, an Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus, and a Project Co-ordinator for the Ukraine. The following are highlights from the work of some of these field operations during the past month.*

### **Media issues under spotlight in Kosovo**

In October, Media Affairs Officers from the Kosovo Mission visited Radio Kamenica, which is shortly to return to the air. Currently managed by KFOR, the station needs to be re-licensed in order to resume broadcasting on its former frequency. As well as advice about the licensing procedure, the station was offered assistance with staff training. Meanwhile, The Head of Mission and Media Development Officers held difficult discussions with former Radio-Television Pristina (RTP) employees. It was stressed that preferential treatment would be given to former RTP employees seeking to be hired by Radio-Television Kosovo (RTK), provided they met the criteria for employment in a modern high-tech operation. The Head of Mission stressed that a long-term strategy needs to be adopted and help with alternative employment would be on offer to those who failed to get hired by RTK, the European Broadcasting Union funded broadcasting service.

### **Tbilisi roundtable on early warning**

OSCE Mission to Georgia members took part in a roundtable on 'Early responses to early conflict warnings in the Caucasus', held in Tbilisi, Georgia, from 9 to 12 October. The roundtable, arranged by the East-West Institute, was attended by CPC Director, Marton Krasznai, who is also Chairman of the steering board of the Institute, as well as by OSCE Economic Co-ordinator, Tom Price. The aim

of the meeting was to improve local and international capabilities to react early to crises in the South Caucasus region.

### **Ad-hoc gender task force established**

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Central European Network for Gender Issues organized a meeting on 8 and 9 October in Budapest for women throughout South-Eastern Europe. It discussed ways of improving women's political participation in the region. Participants, including two from the BiH Mission, formed an ad hoc gender task force and sent a list of recommendations to the Stability Pact Special Co-ordinator. These included a suggestion that the new task force get a permanent seat on the Working Table on Democratization and Human Rights. Increased donor support for political campaigns and the building of democratic institutions promoting gender equality were also advocated.

### **Bishkek Centre in project to help farmers**

The OSCE Centre in Bishkek, is helping to plan a project which would provide legal advice to rural citizens, as a measure to avoid inter-ethnic conflicts. A workshop on 18 and 19 October, held in the Kyrgyz capital, examined the current situation of the country's agricultural law and identified concrete steps the project might take. The objective is to provide independent legal assistance and means of enhancing the rule of law. The southern part of the Jalal Abad district, a

densely populated rural area in southern Kyrgyzstan, susceptible to inter-ethnic conflicts was selected as project location. A budget of about \$130,000 is required. Contributing partners so far identified include the American Bar Association, ARD Cheechi Business Law Project and the OSCE. The pilot phase will run from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2003.

### **Economic reform urged for BiH**

Addressing faculty and students at the University of Sarajevo on 20 October, Ambassador Robert Barry, Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, speaking in his capacity as the OSCE Chairman-in-Office's special envoy for South-Eastern Europe, said the country must undertake fundamental economic reform if it is to take full advantage of the economic promise of the Stability Pact. Mr. Barry stressed that the pact offered a historic opportunity to develop a viable market economy and integrate into broader European economic structures, but only if it takes seriously the task of economic re-structuring. He identified a number of essential reforms if Bosnia and Herzegovina were to prepare itself for the challenges of a free market economy and greater regional economic integration. These include: eliminating the current system of payments bureaux, establishing a viable commercial banking system, bringing corruption under control, undertaking thorough tax reform, and pushing through with the process of privatization.

# Y2K - More than just a computer problem!

Two critical dates have gone by and the OSCE passed the tests with little or no disruption. But with 31 December approaching rapidly, the OSCE Y2K Task Force is making a concerted effort to ensure that all systems have been checked and the OSCE is ready to start the new Millennium.

“We are taking this matter seriously,” explained François d’Artagnan, who heads the OSCE Y2K Task Force. “This is not just a problem for the information technology people; it is a problem that could affect anyone who uses or relies on items with embedded computer chips.”

For example, the Y2K bug could affect computer systems used in accounting, telephone systems, and data transmission systems such as those used by banks and credit card companies. In addition to requiring compliance reports on all these systems, the Y2K Task Force is addressing arrangements for procurement, transport, utilities and business premises systems.

“All OSCE institutions, missions and offices will be required to submit reports verifying that they have examined the critical areas and contingency plans developed,” he added. “We also want to build up awareness among staff to ensure they are considering how the Y2K bug could also affect their personal lives.”

Media are regularly reporting on Y2K issues, and information is also available on many Internet websites. The OSCE has also established its own Internet web page that will provide information and links to other Y2K websites.

There are simple precautions individuals can take to make sure they are ready for the Year 2000. For example, most major airlines are expected to be Y2K compliant, but people travelling

over the New Year should be aware they could experience some disruption. “Staff members should take these factors into account when making their travel arrangements,” he added.

Although OSCE has received assurances that its financial institution is Y2K

## *Are you ready for 31 December?* **Personal Checklist**

- Have supplies to last for several days for yourself and those who live with you (i.e. non-perishable food, water, prescription and non-prescription medications).
  - It may be wise to have extra cash on hand in case electronic transactions (ATM, credit cards) cannot be processed.
  - Have extra blankets and warm clothing available. Consider acquiring alternate heating devices.
  - Have torches (flashlights) and extra batteries, candles, etc.
  - If your plans include operating a generator, ensure you have enough fuel to run it and safety procedures are followed.
- Keep your vehicle filled with fuel at all times after mid-December 1999.
- Check the OSCE website for more Y2K Information:

compliant, OSCE staff should not assume that all credit cards, automated teller machines and international banking transactions will operate normally at all locations worldwide.

Other things to consider include contingency plans for those with special medical requirements. It is also possible that electrical, water and sanitation systems may experience malfunctions.

“With a large number of staff and many working in missions and offices in

different countries, we believe it is best to have developed contingency plans for any possible disruption,” Mr. d’Artagnan explained. “After all, it is better to be informed and be prepared for any situation. Then, if something does cause a disruption, we will know what has to be done immediately.”

He noted that the OSCE Situation Centre in Vienna operates 24-hours a day and will be ready to receive reports of any problems experienced by the organization.

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## *Continuation from page 1*

partnership between the OSCE and other international organizations.

Also at Istanbul, Heads of State or Government plan to sign a newly adapted Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. Under CFE, often cited as the cornerstone of European security, the 30 signatory countries have reduced more than 50,000 pieces of military equipment, significantly contributing to a more secure and stable Europe. Intrusive inspection and verification requirements have contributed to unprecedented openness between the military’s of CFE countries. The updated Treaty would reflect the new security environment of Europe, allowing countries to adjust to a new era. Another significant military security agreement, the Vienna Document, will also be updated and signed at Istanbul. The Vienna Document lays out extensive confidence- and security-building measures for OSCE participating States.

In order to address current issues facing the OSCE, participants will also adopt a Summit Declaration. The Declaration is expected to focus attention on specific problems in the OSCE area.