

Secretariat Secretariat Secret



Activities of the Secretariat | Partnerships for Security and Co-operation

ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT

Based in Vienna, the Secretariat provides crucial support to participating States, the Chairmanship and the Organization's Fund Managers. About 330 staff members work in the Secretariat's different units. Despite considerable challenges in 2004, the Secretariat was able to fulfil its supporting role. The bold management reform started by the Secretary General in 2001 was completed. Thanks to the reform, the Organization improved its ability to implement and operationalize the political decisions taken by the participating States with speed and flexibility. However, the reform process needs to go further. The OSCE requires continuity, coherence and co-ordination, all of which have been advanced by strengthening the role of the Secretary General at the Sofia Ministerial Council.

Ensuring staff security. OSCE staff members often work under difficult conditions. Following the steps taken by the Secretary General, security awareness has increased across the Organization, along with visibly improved management of day-to-day security-related activities and respective monitoring. All security issues have been placed under the Secretary General's direct supervision, and a Security Management Unit was established in the Office of the Secretary General. A new Security Management System was brought into force in December to enable the effective and efficient conduct of the Organization's activities while ensuring the security, safety and well-being of the staff.

Conflict Prevention Centre. Providing advice to the Chairmanship and active support to all OSCE field operations are at the core of the Conflict Prevention Centre's (CPC) work. The Centre helped the Chairmanship monitor, among others, developments in Transnistria, Moldova and in the southern Caucasus with a view to strengthening efforts in the negotiations towards peaceful settlements of the conflicts there. Additional contributions were devoted to supporting the Chairmanship's specific initiatives, such as promoting education as a tool for conflict prevention. The CPC also remained a key pillar of the OSCE's politico-military dimension of security, providing its expertise to the Forum for Security Co-operation. It assisted participating States with field projects and assessment visits of small arms and light weapons and conventional ammunition. In the field of border management and security issues, a team of experts successfully conducted the first phase of the OSCE South Eastern Europe Cross-border Co-operation Programme.

Combating terrorism. Serving as the focal point for OSCE counter-terrorism activities, the Action against Terrorism Unit contributed significantly to the implementation of respective decisions taken by participating States, complementing the work of the UN in this top priority area. The Unit is leading OSCE efforts to support the ratification and implementation of the 12 universal counter-terrorism conventions and protocols through workshops and conferences. At the end of 2004, 33 participating States were parties to all 12 instruments.

Combating trafficking in human beings. The Secretariat strongly supports the Organization's approach in the fight against human trafficking, covering all three OSCE dimensions. Following the appointment of Helga Konrad as the Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in May, the Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit was established within the Secretariat. Serving as the focal point for co-ordination with other relevant organizations, the Unit's task is to render support to the participating States, the Special Representative, the Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General in the effective fight against human trafficking (see also page 19).

Policing. The Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU) further improved the capacity of participating States to address threats posed by criminal activity and assisted States in upholding the rule of law. Its Police Assistance Programme for Kyrgyzstan, for example, is due for completion in July 2005. Needs Assessment Missions were carried out in Armenia and Azerbaijan, with one planned for Georgia. The Unit also continued to contribute substantially to the follow-up work of the Ohrid Process regarding border-policing issues in south-eastern Europe. In addition, the SPMU sought to complement the work already being undertaken by the OSCE to combat trafficking in human beings.

Economic and environmental dimension. In 2004, following the adoption of the Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension at the Sofia Ministerial Council, the OSCE considerably increased its involvement in the economic and environmental dimension. It assessed the recommendations made at the 12th Economic Forum in Prague and suggested concrete follow-up measures in the areas of small business development, investment, human capacity-building, economic integration and anti-corruption. Since the 2004 Economic Forum, the OSCE has also been reviewing the economic and environmental commitments made by the participating States. A key partner in this effort is the UN Economic Commission for Europe, with whom the Secretary General signed a Memorandum of Understanding at the Sofia Ministerial Council. In addition, the OCEEA launched a manual on 'Best Practices in Combating Corruption', and the combat of money laundering and the financing of terrorism was strengthened. Following an initial assessment, the OSCE-UN Environmental and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) identified a number of specific environmental issues warranting international action. In July, NATO associated itself with the Initiative.

Raising the OSCE's public profile. The Press and Public Information Section launched the new full-colour 'OSCE Magazine', replacing the nine-year old 'OSCE Newsletter'. Featuring a substantial upgrade in form and content, the publication is available in English and Russian in printed and online versions. The OSCE website was redesigned and is scheduled to be re-launched in early 2005. Both measures aimed at attracting a wider target audience and making information about OSCE activities more easily available. Traditional and online media continued to be targeted

and serviced by PPIS press officers, while those with a close professional or academic interest were supported via an expanded visitors programme.

Finalizing the management reform. Initiated by the Secretary General in 2001, the bold management reform is approaching completion. The reform leaves the OSCE better prepared and equipped to support participating States, the Chairmanship and its fund managers in dealing with day-to-day operational issues and to turn political decisions into action. At the heart of the reform is the unified budget process, which is a key tool for the Permanent Council in directing and controlling the OSCE's work. It outlines concrete annual objectives and outputs for OSCE programmes.

To deliver best practice in the management processes, the OSCE has introduced a modern management system based on the latest information and communication technology, the Integrated Resources Management System (IRMA). This new system calls for assigning clear individual responsibilities, corresponding approval authorities and lines of accountability. The investment into IRMA – and its document management system, *DOC.In* – amounts to a total of €7.4 million, with substantial savings to be achieved through streamlined management processes. IRMA has received praise from the OSCE's external auditors and has drawn considerable attention from other international organizations.

Human resources management. The Department of Human Resources was actively involved in the development and implementation of IRMA components related to human resources activities. The primary mechanism for recruitment of seconded staff for field operations – the Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams (REACT) – was successfully linked to IRMA. For contracted posts in the Secretariat, Institutions and field operations, a web-based recruitment system was implemented, allowing candidates to apply online and speeding up the recruitment process. In addition, training increased in quantity and quality. The lack of legal capacity and privileges and immunities in most participating States continued to be a source of difficulties for the smooth operation of OSCE activities.

Gender issues. The main activity in the area of gender issues was the revision of the existing Action Plan for Gender Issues. The Senior Adviser on Gender Issues continuously assisted the informal Working Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking in the process, which resulted in the adoption of PC Decision No. 638 on the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. In addition, the guide for OSCE Staff on Gender Aspects in Post-Conflict Situations from 2001 was updated to ensure its use as a reference document for mission members in their gender-related work. The Secretariat also continued to promote and monitor compliance with the professional working environment policy by its own staff.

Internal oversight. In the past year, great strides were made in re-engineering and professionalizing the Office of Internal Oversight. Staffed with certified auditors, Internal Oversight has become an important tool in monitoring compliance with the regulatory framework and in providing assurance on the adequacy of internal controls throughout the Organization. The function of oversight, both internal and external, will be strengthened by the Audit Committee, established by the Permanent Council in December 2004. In using best practices, Internal Oversight relies on risk assessment methodologies to develop its audit workplan. The 2005 plan takes into account risks associated with activities and operations and also considers the priorities of the Organization as well as the need to balance the audit work among field presences, the Institutions, and the Secretariat. While audit work for adequacy of controls and compliance will continue to underpin the Internal Oversight programme, the Office will expand its activities to pursue the conduct of management audits and inspections, programme evaluations, and investigations. In addition, previous audit recommendations will be followed up to ensure compliance by management.

Co-operation with other international organizations. The Secretariat continued to strengthen links with partner organizations at all levels. The OSCE played an active role in the UN Security Council meeting with regional organizations on co-operation in the stabilization processes. Relations between the Secretariat and the EU were also further strengthened. Working ties with the Council of Europe were especially dynamic, and consultations with NATO continued at all levels.

Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. In co-operation with the OSCE Troika, the Secretariat continued to intensify relations with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. Mongolia was welcomed as a new Asian Partner for Co-operation, following the adoption of a Permanent Council Decision on 2 December 2004. For the first time, the OSCE reached out to a Partner State in election monitoring. In October, an OSCE Election Support Team of close to 50 election experts was sent to Afghanistan for the country's first-ever presidential election – a milestone for both Afghanistan and the OSCE.

Report of the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre

“The CPC combines direct support to field operations with a strong expertise in the politico-military dimension of security – it has thus become a unique model of successful interaction between geographical and thematic units. Partner States and organizations have demonstrated vivid interest in our conflict prevention model. The CPC’s experiences and expertise have been very much in demand this year.”

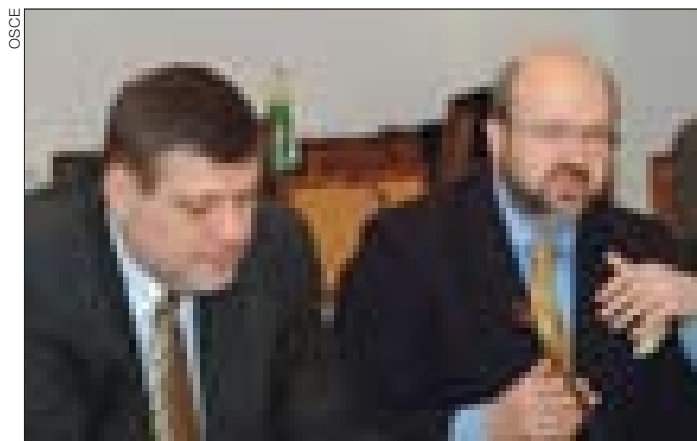
Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre

The Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) plays a key role in supporting the OSCE’s activities in the field, co-ordinating the activities of the field operations and assisting in the implementation of their mandates. It is also the focal point in the Secretariat for developing the OSCE’s role in the politico-military dimension. In particular, the CPC is responsible for supporting the Chairmanship, the Secretary General and the decision-making bodies in implementing OSCE tasks in the areas of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation.

The CPC comprises:

- the Mission Programme Section, which acts as the primary point of co-ordination and liaison with the OSCE field operations;
- the Project Co-ordination Cell, which provides support to field operations in the planning, development, and evaluation of extra-budgetary projects;
- the Operations Planning Unit, which plans future operations and identifies potential crisis areas by providing early warning and analysis;
- the Situation/Communication Room, which monitors developments in the OSCE regions and serves as an emergency crisis cell;
- the Forum for Security Co-operation Support Unit, which provides advice and expertise to the politico-military dimension of security.

In 2004, the CPC was at the centre of the OSCE’s efforts to improve the overall coherence of the Organization’s programmatic activities, to ensure adequate balance across the three OSCE dimensions and appropriate co-ordination with other international and sub-regional organizations. With its role of providing direct support to the organization’s field operations, the CPC was well placed to bring the field perspective into first dimension events it organized and co-chaired, such as the Annual Security Review Conference, the OSCE-UNODC Conference on Border Security and Management, a special meeting on de-mining and the Conference on the Implementation of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition. Conversely, the CPC had the opportunity to inject inputs from these events into the field through regular meetings with Heads of field operations.



CPC Director Ambassador Lamberto Zannier (right) and OSCE Secretary General Ambassador Ján Kubiš at a seminar of the South Eastern Europe Cross-Border Co-operation Programme in Vienna

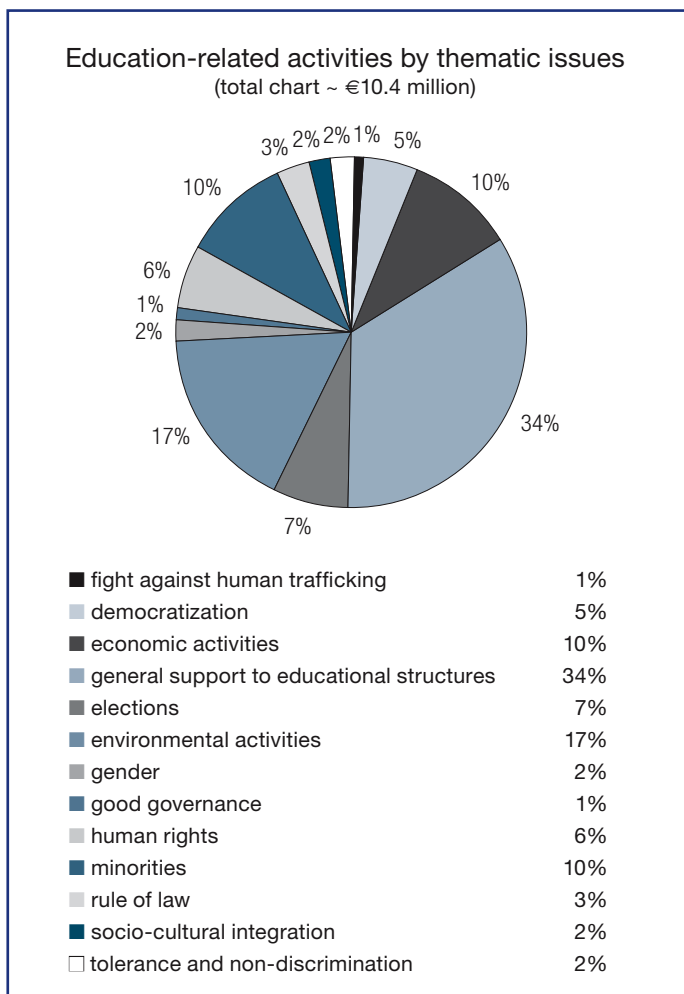
Liaising with OSCE field operations: the Mission Programme Section. The Mission Programme Section is the primary point of co-ordination between the OSCE field operations, the Secretariat and the Chairmanship. It consists of four regional desks, covering south-eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The Mission Programme Officers responsible for these areas provided advice to field operations on programmatic areas as well as policy and management issues and helped prepare visits by the Chairman-in-Office and other OSCE officials to the field. In several instances, early warning signals on developments in the field were issued to the Chairmanship and the delegations of the OSCE participating States.

A number of issues required specific attention by the Mission Programme Section in 2004. These included:

- co-ordination by the south-eastern Europe Desk of joint efforts by the OSCE field operations, the Institutions and the Chairmanship to hold a first meeting of local practitioners on witness issues related to war crimes proceedings, which took place in Serbia and Montenegro in November;
- monitoring by the Eastern Europe Desk of the crisis in Transdnistria following the closure of Latin-script schools and supporting the Chairmanship’s efforts in the negotiations to find a peaceful settlement;

- preparation by the Caucasus Desk of proposals for the Chairmanship for future action on conflicts; and
- together with the Operations Planning Unit, advice to the Chairmanship on education issues and assistance by the Central Asia Desk with the organization of a ministerial conference on 'Education as an Investment into the Future' held in Tashkent in April.



Co-ordinating extra-budgetary activities: Project Co-ordination

Cell. The OSCE field operations are increasingly implementing projects that are funded through extra-budgetary resources. The role of the Project Co-ordination Cell is to support the field operations in the planning, development and evaluation of these extra-budgetary activities. During the planning phase, co-ordination with OSCE Institutions and the Secretariat is especially important. In 2004, the Cell assessed a total of 121 extra-budgetary projects planned by field operations, representing a total value of more than €18.7 million (www.osce.org/osceprojects).

Based on a resource manual developed with the Department of Human Resources in 2003, the Cell contributed to training classes for all new staff, thus consolidating the OSCE's approach to management. In partnership with the OCEEA and the ODIHR, the Cell also organized a joint workshop to plan future activities in

Uzbekistan. The CPC thereby reinforced the co-operation among field operations, Institutions and the Secretariat.

In light of the Bulgarian Chairmanship's priority of promoting education as a tool for conflict prevention, the Cell produced a comprehensive review of all OSCE education projects by systematically pooling and analysing information on all initiatives in this area.

Expert advice for the Chairmanship: Operations Planning

Unit. The Operations Planning Unit is a key tool to support the Chairmanship and delegations in planning for future field operations and identifying potential crisis areas by providing early warning and analysis. The Unit also has a small analytical team, which prepared background papers and analysis. The team also played a major role in assisting the Chairmanship with the preparations for and follow-up to the Annual Security Review Conference held in June.

To further develop operational links with partner organizations, the Unit participated in the NATO Crisis Management Exercise (CMX 04) in March and the EU Crisis Management Exercise (CME 04) in May. It also observed the first NATO-Russia Procedural Exercise in September. The Unit actively shared its experiences with other international organizations such as the UN, which resulted in further improvement of operational liaison structures and will help respond more quickly and efficiently to developments in the field.

Dealing with border security and management. In 2004, the CPC established in the Operations Planning Unit a team of three experts to deal with border management and security issues. One of their main responsibilities was to conduct the first phase of the OSCE South Eastern Europe Cross-border Co-operation Programme. The Programme consists of a series of six seminars and workshops held in the region to promote cross-border management agreements on such issues as transition to border policing, joint training exercises, co-operation of law enforcement agencies, and 'blue border' (sea, rivers and lakes) issues. The seminars were well attended by senior members from south-eastern European border police authorities. The second phase of the programme, scheduled to begin in 2005, focuses on the more operational aspects of the agreements developed in the first phase.

Responding to requests from participating States, the team conducted assessment visits to Georgia and Central Asia to identify areas where the OSCE could assist in enhancing border management and security. In addition, the CPC gave active support to the informal OSCE Working Group on Borders and played a major role in the preparation and holding of a joint OSCE-UNODC Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security Issues in September.

Providing service 24 hours, seven days a week: the SitRoom.

The team of duty officers in the Situation/Communication Room (SitRoom) continued to provide round-the-clock information service and served as a vital point of contact for the Organization,

especially outside normal working hours. The SitRoom ensures timely dissemination of information during times of crisis, supports medical evacuation of staff if and when necessary, and provides an early warning function to the Secretary General through its continuous monitoring of electronic media and the Internet.

Forum for Security and Co-operation Support Unit. The Unit continued to support the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Chairmanship by providing expertise and detailed monthly and quarterly surveys regarding the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures by participating States. It also prepared and drafted substantive background material for important meetings in the politico-military dimension including the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting, the Annual Security Review Conference, and a special FSC meeting on the Implementation of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition.

In support of the FSC's activities in the field of small arms and light weapons, the FSC Support Unit produced a comprehensive overview of the destruction and export and import of all categories of these weapons in the OSCE area. Continuing a project begun in 2003, the Unit published the 'Handbook of Best Practices on Small Arms and Light Weapons' in all six OSCE working languages. A wide dissemination of the Handbook's provisions was accomplished through two regional seminars – in Ashgabad in May and in Skopje in July. The representatives of the Unit headed the OSCE team of experts to Belarus and Tajikistan for assessment visits, the first concrete steps towards the improvement of stockpile security and destruction of surplus small arms and ammunition in the OSCE area, which will be continued in 2005.

Improving information exchange: the Communications Network. The OSCE Communications Network, which provides direct communication links between the capitals of participating States, was further upgraded in 2004. The body responsible for oversight of the network, the OSCE Communications Group, continued to improve the system's efficiency, reliability, and usability, by beginning the transition to a new operating system and a simplified network architecture. Another new participating State, Malta, joined the Network, bringing the total number of connected OSCE States to 48. The upgraded Communications Network joins a number of initiatives to enhance the Organization's competitive edge and value in the challenge of conflict prevention.

www.osce.org/cpc



Inspecting surplus ammunition during an assessment visit to Tajikistan

To increase awareness of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security among parliamentarians from OSCE States, the CPC organized a conference on parliamentary oversight of armed forces. The event, which focused on the development of national practices in implementing parliamentary oversight of armed forces in a changing security environment, was attended by more than 100 parliamentarians and government officials from the 55 participating States.

Action against Terrorism Unit

Established in 2002, the Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) co-ordinates all OSCE activities in the field of countering and preventing terrorism. The Unit works closely with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (UNCTC), UNODC, and other international organizations. Its work includes providing capacity-building assistance to OSCE participating States in addressing current and emerging terrorist threats.

In co-operation with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the ATU organized the first large-scale international meeting on the threat of shoulder-fired missiles to civil aviation in 2004. As a result, several governments introduced concrete measures to strengthen airport security. The Unit and the ICAO also held the first-ever international conference to further the implementation of ICAO travel document standards.

Unprotected stockpiles of radioactive material represent another serious potential terrorist threat. Together with the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Unit explored areas where the OSCE might complement efforts to strengthen the safety and security of such material.

In direct support of the UN's global counter-terrorism efforts, the ATU co-hosted the Vienna follow-up conference to the UNCTC special meeting with international, regional and sub-regional organizations in March.

The Unit continued to support the ratification and implementation of the 12 UN anti-terrorism instruments. Workshops and bilateral consultations organized together with the UN and the ODIHR resulted in a five per cent rise in the ratification rate within the OSCE region in 2004, bringing it up to 88 per cent.

One of the ATU's key functions is to provide counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to participating States. With financial support from Germany and the United States, the ATU organized four sub-regional workshops on ways of preventing the forgery of travel documents. The workshops involved 99 experts from 26 OSCE capitals and international organizations.

To foster timely information exchange among counter-terrorism practitioners, the OSCE established a Counter-Terrorism Network'. The ATU maintains the Network and circulates a monthly electronic newsletter providing practical training and capacity-building information to all participating States.

The ATU co-operates closely with the OSCE informal Group of Friends on Combating Terrorism, which has become a useful medium for interaction between the Secretariat and participating States as well as a major forum for reviewing implementation of anti-terrorism commitments and developing the OSCE's response to emerging terrorist threats.

To avoid duplication of efforts, the ATU maintains an up-to-date inventory of all OSCE and non-OSCE counter-terrorism, border security and law enforcement programmes in the region. The ATU provides this information to OSCE programme planners and holds workshops to guide them on activities related to counter-terrorism in the region.

www.osce.org/atu

Reuters/Bogdan Cristel



Unprotected stockpiles of radioactive material represent a serious potential terrorist threat for OSCE States.

Strategic Police Matters Unit

“Policing is in some respects the perfect OSCE issue, bringing together security and human rights. An efficient, accountable police force that is trusted by the population it serves does not have to resort to brutality or torture to obtain information needed to solve crimes. ... When there is effective, democratically controlled policing, societies will be more stable and more integrated. We should not wait until crises deteriorate to the point where peace-keeping is required. We should do more to strengthen policing within States, where necessary with the support of the international community.”

Solomon Passy

The OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century adopted at the Maastricht Ministerial Council in December 2003 emphasizes the role of the Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU) in improving the capacity of participating States to address threats posed by criminal activity and to assist States in upholding the rule of law.

The Police Assistance Programme for Kyrgyzstan, comprising eight technical and community projects, began implementation in July 2003. It has progressed well and is due for completion by July 2005. The Kyrgyz presidential administration continued to relate the outputs of the programme to its long-term police reform plans. In Kazakhstan, the SPMU provided technical assistance to support the Kazakh Ministry of Internal Affairs' transition to intelligence-led policing and started discussions on developing new initiatives focusing on community-based policing and basic recruit training. In Armenia and Azerbaijan, the SPMU completed Needs Assessment Missions, which resulted in the design of specific Police Assistance Programmes for each of the two countries. In Georgia, the SPMU prepared to launch a Needs Assessment Mission in order to determine the basis for a future Police Assistance Programme.

The SPMU continued to contribute substantially to the follow-up work of the 'Ohrid Process on Border Management and Security' with regard to border-policing needs in the States of south-eastern Europe. One of the recommendations under Phase I of the OSCE South-Eastern Europe Cross-Border Co-operation Programme was the wish for assistance by the States to implement the different agreements drafted during this period. Phase II will focus on the operational level of the seven-State Border Police, and assistance from the SPMU is foreseen in criminal intelligence, criminal investigations and development of risk analysis.

Fight against human trafficking. The SPMU sought to complement the work already undertaken by the OSCE to combat trafficking in human beings by starting to develop a range of investigative strategies for police agencies, which will focus on offenders and evidence-gathering, as an alternative to relying on victim testimony alone. Trafficking in human beings involves a range of other serious offences, such as illegal immigration, forgery, corruption, and money laundering, all of which provide other opportunities to gather intelligence, initiate investigations and corroborate testimonies in order to prosecute traffickers. (For more on the OSCE's role in the fight against human trafficking, see page 19.)

In Moldova, the SPMU assisted with a Needs Assessment on the means to strengthen the capacity of the police to combat human trafficking. The project was developed based on the work begun by the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje.

In July, the SPMU organized a two-day workshop in Vienna for police experts on the subject of investigating sexual crime. The event represented a valuable opportunity to share acquired knowledge in the handling of sexual crimes and was the first of a planned series of workshops throughout the OSCE region. More than 60 police investigators from over 20 European and Central Asian countries and a panel of distinguished experts participated in the workshop.

More activities of the SPMU are presented in the Field Operations section.



Graduates of Kyrgyzstan's Police Academy at a ceremony in Bishkek in June

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

At the Maastricht Ministerial Council in December 2003, OSCE Foreign Ministers adopted a new Strategy Document for the OSCE Economic and Environmental Dimension. The document provides recommendations and commitments by the participating States aimed at addressing economic and environmental threats to security and stability in the OSCE region in the 21st century.

In 2004, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) focused on implementing the new Strategy Document while continuing its activities in several important areas, such as:

- preventing human trafficking through co-operation between the public and private sector;
- developing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);
- combating corruption;
- fighting money-laundering and financing of terrorism; and
- fostering co-operation on environmental issues.

Implementing the OSCE Strategy Document. The development of a business-friendly environment and the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises remained a key element of the Office's activities in 2004. At the same time, it extended its efforts in the field of human capital development in the areas of higher education and vocational training.

In the environmental field, the Office continued to promote the implementation of international environmental conventions. The Environment and Security Initiative, a three-year programme created by the OSCE, UNEP and the UNDP in November 2003, launched several new projects in the OSCE region. The Initiative's main focus is on risk assessment, policy development and institution- and capacity-building.

Economic activities

12th Economic Forum 2004. Education and institution-building were a top priority at the 12th Economic Forum held in Prague from 31 May to 4 June, which was entitled 'New Challenges for Building-up Institutional and Human Capacity for Economic Development and Co-operation'. Participants concentrated mainly on investment strategies and the requirements for developing market economies, above all professional skills.

In preparation for the Forum, the Office organized two seminars which focused on how to stimulate foreign and domestic investment and on the professional skills needed for developing a market economy.



Chairman-in-Office Passy and Czech Foreign Minister Cyril Svoboda at the OSCE Economic Forum in Prague

After assessing the recommendations made at the Forum, the Office launched several activities in the areas of SME development, investment, human capacity-building, economic integration and good governance. Together with the 2005 Slovenian OSCE Chairmanship, it also began preparations for the 13th Economic Forum, which will be on 'Demographic Trends, Migration and Integrating Persons belonging to National Minorities: Ensuring Security and Sustainable Development in the OSCE Area'.

Preventing trafficking in human beings. The Office continued its anti-trafficking programme, which targets both the demand and supply side of trafficking in human beings by promoting self-regulation of the private sector and raising awareness in so-called countries of destination, in particular in the West. The programme also includes an initiative to create economic empowerment opportunities for potential victims of trafficking.

"The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities is currently implementing a Code of Conduct for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism in Romania and Bulgaria. This Code was recognized by Western countries, NGOs and tourism operators as a valuable preventive and awareness raising tool to mitigate against the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children."

Marcin Świącicki, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Developing and strengthening small business. Small and medium-sized businesses are at the heart of job creation in market economies and in countries of transition. In 2004, the Co-ordinator's Office paid special attention to supporting the education of young people in the fundamentals of entrepreneurship in post-conflict regions and transitional economies. A particularly successful project is the Youth Entrepreneurship Seminar (YES) Programme, which is currently being implemented in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Uzbekistan.

Sharing best practices in combating corruption. The Office published a 'Manual on Best Practices in Combating Corruption', compiling the latest experience from around the world. The Manual serves as a resource tool for legislators, public officials, media organizations, NGOs and all those concerned about corruption.

Combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. The fight against money-laundering and the suppression of terrorist financing remained an important priority of the Co-ordinator's Office. In November 2004, the Office and the UNODC's 'Global Programme against Money-Laundering' organized a workshop on the issue in Georgia. The event was attended by representatives from national institutions, government ministries, the Central Bank, the office of the prosecutor-general, customs, the judiciary, parliamentary committees and the banking sector. Experts from the UN, the Council of Europe and the OSCE contributed to the event.

Environmental activities

Progress on the Environment and Security Initiative. After the signing of the OSCE-UNEP-UNDP Memorandum of Understanding in November 2003, the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) moved from the planning stage to implementation. Significant progress was achieved with regard to the ENVSEC methodology for identification of hot spots. In Central Asia, south-eastern Europe and the Caucasus, more than 40 projects were launched, tailored to deal with the identified environmental threats to security and encourage opportunities for co-operation (www.envsec.org).

In close co-operation with local experts and international partners, the organizations prepared reports on environment-related security concerns in south-eastern Europe and the southern Caucasus. In Central Asia, the regional assessment carried out during 2003 had identified the Ferghana valley as an environment and security 'hot spot'. During 2004, the second phase of the Initiative concluded with an in-depth assessment of the area, the creation of an environment and security monitoring system and the elaboration of a specific work programme for this sensitive region.

In July 2004, NATO agreed to associate itself with the Initiative.



Assistance with water resource management is an important element of the OSCE's activities in the economic-environmental dimension.

Fostering co-operation on transboundary river basins. The Co-ordinator's Office supported co-operation agreements on the Chu and Talas Rivers between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and on the Sava River between Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia and Montenegro. In the southern Caucasus, the Office worked together with the NATO Science for Peace Programme and OSCE field operations to re-establish a regional water monitoring system.

In Eastern Europe, the Office worked with the Environment and Human Settlements Division of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) to help bring about a co-operation agreement between Ukraine and Moldova (including the Transdnestrrian region) on integrated water resource management in the Dniestr river basin.

Further details on the OSCE's economic and environmental activities are described in the Field Operations section.

www.osce.org/eea

Senior Adviser on Gender Issues

The year 2004 was marked by the revision of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality complemented by continued efforts in gender mainstreaming, staff training on gender issues, and safeguarding a professional working environment free from any form of harassment and discrimination.

Recognizing a number of shortcomings in the implementation of the 2000 Action Plan for Gender Issues, especially in the fields of training, management, and recruitment, the Senior Adviser put the revision of the Plan at the top of her agenda in 2004. The informal Working Group on Gender Equality and anti-Trafficking, comprising representatives of the OSCE delegations, received substantial assistance from the Senior Adviser in revising the document. In December, the Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 638 on the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, followed by Decision No. 14/04 adopted at the Sofia Ministerial Council.

The new Action Plan stresses that gender mainstreaming – the process of taking into account both women’s and men’s concerns and experiences in the decision-making process – requires consistent, systematic attention to a gender perspective in all activities of the Organization. It also emphasizes that gender equality contributes to comprehensive security, which is a goal of OSCE activities in all its three dimensions.

In order to raise awareness of and build capacity in the integration of gender aspects into the work of the field operations, the Senior Adviser continued to train field staff on gender mainstreaming, women’s human rights, women and leadership, trafficking in human beings and the OSCE Code of Conduct. Training seminars were carried out for a total of 300 staff members in the Presence in Albania, the Missions to Serbia and Montenegro and to Moldova, and the Centres in Bishkek and in Almaty.

Making mission members aware of gender issues and human trafficking

The Code of Conduct for OSCE Mission Members is part of the Organization’s staff regulations and covers behaviour of staff members with regard to human trafficking. It refers to staff members’ relations with national authorities and underlines the importance of integrity, loyalty, impartiality and compliance with accepted human rights standards. In 2000, the Code was amended to take into account the problem of human trafficking in countries with a large international field presence. Field staff are made aware that using the services of a trafficking victim contributes to the profits of traffickers and the harm done to victims.

To help make gender mainstreaming a continuous and sustainable process, the Senior Adviser developed a questionnaire on gender analysis for field staff, outlining various gender-related components for project development. In addition, the 2001 Guide for OSCE Staff on Gender Aspects in Post-Conflict Situations was updated. Showcasing best practices, examples of lessons learned and



Women play a central role in conflict prevention and peace reconstruction processes.

relevant norms, the Guide serves as a reference tool for gender-related work in the field, highlighting the role of women in conflict prevention and peace reconstruction processes.

Working as a consultative network, the Focal Points for Gender Issues in field operations, the Senior Adviser and the ODIHR’s Gender Unit continued to share information and best practices. In co-operation with the ODIHR, the Senior Adviser organized an annual workshop for the Focal Points, which focused on practical experience, progress in women-oriented activities and operational needs.

Another priority for the Senior Adviser was the revision of the OSCE Policy on a Professional Working Environment. In response to individual requests for guidance and advice with regard to actual cases of policy violation, the Senior Adviser also provided expert assistance and support.

To further promote a professional and gender-sensitive management culture and working environment, the Senior Adviser focused in particular on the Mediators appointed in the OSCE field operations. A roundtable meeting resulted in a set of suggestions to change the OSCE professional working environment policy, which will be considered in the revision process.

Report of the Director for Management and Finance

A management revolution

With the launching of the completed Integrated Resource Management System (IRMA) on 1 January 2005, the OSCE will start to benefit from a profound management revolution. Simply put, IRMA relocates managerial power, placing it in the hands of the fund managers of OSCE field missions and Institutions. It accomplishes this by taking full advantage of an information system completely integrated with management tasks, empowering just two persons – the Fund Manager or designee and the Chief of Fund Administration – to mount operational programmes, budget for and authorize expenditures, evaluate progress and close out their operations once their programmatic goals are met.

Why the need for change? As it evolved from the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe into an organization with large field operations and Institutions, the demands made on the OSCE outstripped the original management mechanisms – so much so that, in 2000, the external auditors refused to certify the OSCE accounts without reservation. After a comprehensive review, in mid-2002, the Secretary General called for radical management reform. Taking into account the fact that the Permanent Council's political decisions found concrete expression in the Organization's operational and programmatic work, the Secretary General directed that a completely new management system needed to be constructed. It would be:

- speedy, to meet new political challenges;
- flexible, to adapt to rapidly changing environments; and
- transparent, to establish clear lines of authority throughout the OSCE system and ensure accountability.

And all this, while bringing a reduction in administrative support costs.

IRMA – A powerful tool for all elements of the Organization.

As IRMA, and its document management system, *DOC.In*, are based on off-the-shelf software applications, the total investment costs amounted to some €7.4 million. Annual administrative support cost savings should be running at an annual rate of some €15 to €18 million by 2006 – thus fulfilling the Secretary General's financial goal.

The approved Unified Budget, embodying the political priorities of the Permanent Council, represents the core tool by which the participating States direct and control the OSCE's work. IRMA will allow the Fund Managers, Heads of Missions and Institutions – working with their budgetary allocations – to implement fully the political will of the Permanent Council.

As part of the management reform process – and pending approval of the Financial Regulations by participating States – a new common regulatory framework will soon be introduced throughout the Organization. The new Financial Regulations and Rules are written in more concise language. Furthermore, some 220 instructions, circulars and directives have been replaced by 12 clear and tightly-drafted Financial/Administrative Instructions.

Gaining a Driver's Licence for the 'IRMA Dashboard' Prior to IRMA's launch, administrative and programme staff received extensive training. By 1 January 2005, some 3,500 person/training days had been dedicated to these sessions. Some 800 staff members



The Delegates Website/*Dashboard* is a new secure information service designed to assist OSCE Delegates in their decision-making. A key communication tool between participating States, the Secretariat, Institutions and Field Operations, it provides easy access to organization-wide information in an easy and transparent manner.



Baptism of Fire for IRMA: the 'Yellow Laptop' in Kabul, Afghanistan, as OSCE Communications Officer Victor Kryshevich logs on via satellite during the October 2004 presidential election.

can now perform all managerial and administrative tasks from an on-screen control-panel known as the *'IRMA Dashboard'*.

The *Dashboard* gives OSCE managers real-time information on the resources available. But just as car drivers do not need a sophisticated understanding of automotive engineering to control their vehicles, so project managers need only rely on the *Dashboard* to implement their programmes. For example, it includes easy-to-use recruitment and procurement applications. However, unlike most vehicles, the *Dashboard* also allows the 'driver's' progress to be monitored on a real-time basis by others in the Secretariat and in delegations, particularly those that have contributed extra-budgetary funds.

To ensure accountability to participating States and allow OSCE delegations access to reliable and up-to-date information on operational activities and management issues, the Delegates' Website was also improved and linked to a specially developed *'Dashboard for Delegations'*. It provides a common and secure platform that connects participating States with the Secretariat, Institutions and field operations.

The Yellow Laptop – a civilian rapid deployment capability.

IRMA is a powerful tool in the hands of a trained fund manager and a chief of fund administration. But the system is also inde-

pendent of location. Through a simple laptop with GPS capabilities, a small team could open a field operation from little more than a tent in any emergency.

The OSCE will soon be issuing laptops – identified with a bright yellow label – offering this possibility, with the purchasing power of a credit card that is limited only by the operation's fund. Yellow Laptops are thus a symbol of IRMA – responsive and adaptable to all contingencies. The success of the OSCE's management reforms will provide it with a civilian rapid deployment capacity, allowing participating States to react quickly to new political challenges.

Approval and kudos. OSCE external auditors from Sweden as well as the UK's National Audit Office have commended the management reforms culminating in IRMA. Interest in learning from the management reform experience of IRMA has also come from a number of the OSCE's partner organizations. Despite tight timeframes and ambitious goals, the implementation of the IRMA project began six months ahead of the three-year schedule. IRMA has responded, point by point, to the challenges set by the Secretary General in 2002. Starting with its implementation in January 2005, the Organization's efforts in the field of management and finance will concentrate on consolidating the reforms, increasing their acceptance among staff and making sure that the new management philosophy firmly takes root.

Prague Office

As the initial home of the CSCE Secretariat (1991), the Prague Office inherited the historical and archive collections of CSCE/OSCE conference documents and is today the oldest institutional unit of the Organization.

The core task of the Prague Office – also known as the Research and Documentation Centre – is to preserve, maintain and make available the physical non-current OSCE records and archives as required by the Organization. It has also become the depository of documents generated and gathered by OSCE Missions that have been closed down have or completed their mandates.

During 2004, the Office worked in very close contact with the OSCE Secretariat's Central Record and Document Management Unit (CRDMU), part of the Department of Management and Finance. As in previous years, the Office disseminated the 'OSCE Magazine' and other publications to almost 3,000 subscribers on the official mailing list. Prague Office staff also converted and posted large numbers of journals and decisions as well as statements on the public website (www.osce.org/docs/new_releases) in co-operation with the Press and Public Information Section as well as with the Documents Control Unit of the Conference Services Section. The Office offered these publications together with an average of 40 selected documents in both paper and digital format to 66 OSCE depository libraries worldwide.

Researchers. Seven years ago, the Researcher-in-Residence Programme was created within the Prague Office to give academics an opportunity to consult and study relevant OSCE conference or policy documents. In 2004, 14 researchers used the OSCE archives to conduct short- and long-term research projects. In addition to conference documents, researchers have access to an extensive CSCE/OSCE reference library which has recently been re-organized. This library includes over 30 masteral and doctoral theses based on research performed under the Research Programme.

International gatherings. The Prague Office supported the Office of the OSCE Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities in every preparatory and service phase of the 12th Economic Forum held from 31 May to 4 June, which was attended by a record number of almost 500 delegates.

On three occasions in 2004, meetings of the Minsk Group took place in Prague, and the Prague Office provided logistical support and practical assistance to participants.

Report of the Director for Human Resources

The streamlining of work processes and the strengthening of existing capacities guided the work of the Department of Human Resources in 2004. The Department was actively involved in further developing and implementing IRMA components that relate to human resources activities.

REACT – the primary mechanism for recruitment of seconded staff for field operations – was successfully linked to IRMA, while preserving the complete functionality of the original system and ensuring the rapid deployment of personnel for possible future large-scale operations.

For contracted posts in the OSCE Secretariat, Institutions and field operations, a web-based recruitment system under IRMA was introduced, enabling candidates to apply online and helping speed up the recruitment process. In total, 96 vacancy notices for contracted positions were issued in 2004, attracting 8,000 applications. Out of these, 374 candidates were invited for 61 interview rounds. Special consideration was given to including candidates from under-represented countries in the interview lists. Within the same period, 3,800 nominations for 560 seconded field positions were received and screened.

The implementation of the IRMA human resources module allowed the streamlining of personnel administration. All employee data is now stored in one system. In addition, an interim automated payroll system was implemented throughout the OSCE.

The Personnel Section continued to work on the classification of posts, which is part of an effort by the OSCE to make its human resources processes more transparent and equitable across the Organization. In total, more than 450 posts have so far been reviewed and classified. The Section also undertook initial classification of local positions in Croatia, Albania, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

Some changes and developments occurred in the OSCE's training activities. The regular, two-day induction programme to introduce new missions members to the Organization was expanded into a five-day general orientation programme, consisting of general induction and function-specific segments.

A new OSCE Training Strategy, approved in 2004 for the years covering 2005 to 2007, tasks the Training Section with increasing its support to pre-mission training programmes and institutions in participating States. In line with these requirements, the Section intensified its work with those States that are implementing the training dimension of REACT and organized a conference on training and recruitment in November. Among other issues, the meeting aimed at receiving feedback on how the OSCE can maximize its support to pre-mission training programmes and at updating the participating States' recruitment experts on OSCE field requirements.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION

Interaction between Organizations and Institutions in the OSCE Area

The OSCE's interaction with partner organizations and institutions is based on the Platform for Co-operative Security adopted at the Istanbul Summit in 1999, the relevant decisions of the Bucharest (2001) and Porto (2002) Ministerial Councils, and the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century, adopted at the Maastricht Ministerial Council in 2003. In all these documents, the OSCE participating States pledge to seek the development of political and operational coherence among all European bodies dealing with security threats and challenges.

In line with these decisions, the OSCE continued to strengthen political dialogue and information exchange with partner organizations in 2004. Development of synergies with the UN, the EU, NATO, the Council of Europe, and other regional and sub-regional organizations concerned with the promotion of security and stability in their regions was an important priority of the Organization. Its Secretariat, Institutions and field operations actively worked with their partners in pursuing this goal.

The Secretariat's Section for External Co-operation continued to be the focal point for fostering relations with partner organizations and institutions and the OSCE Partners for Co-operation. The Section conceptualized and organized high-level and expert meetings and seminars. It briefed and advised the OSCE Secretary General, the Chairmanship, the Troika, and the participating States on external co-operation matters and provided analytical support.

The Organization hosted the annual High-level Tripartite Meeting in Vienna in February between the OSCE, the UN, and the Council of Europe. The agenda of the meeting focused on ways to address threats to security and stability in the 21st century. As in previous years, the event was also attended by the European Commission, the Secretariat of the EU Council, the ICRC, and the IOM. The meeting was preceded by a working-level Target-Oriented Meeting, which concentrated on issues related to the southern Caucasus.

The Annual Security Review Conference held by the OSCE in Vienna in June provided a fruitful exchange of views and information on current major security issues, in particular anti-terrorism and border security and management. A number of organizations with security-related mandates participated in the two-day event, including the UNODC, NATO, the Council of Europe, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The OSCE also deepened its ties with international, regional and sub-regional organizations in the context of the international fight against terrorism. In co-operation with the UNODC, the Or-

ganization hosted the Follow-up Conference to the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Special Meeting in Vienna in March, an event attended by the EU, the Council of Europe, NATO, the CIS Anti-Terrorism Centre, the G8, and Interpol.

Highlighting the OSCE's co-operation with partners in security-related issues, a Joint OSCE-UNODC Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security was convened in September. The event underlined the participants' ability to provide assistance in capacity-building on border control and management issues. Representatives from 16 international organizations and institutions attended the conference in Vienna, including the UN agencies, the EU, the Council of Europe, NATO, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the CIS, the Shanghai Co-operation Organization, Europol, Interpol, the IOM, the World Customs Organization, and the Southeast Europe Co-operation Initiative (SECI).

In the area of good governance, the Office of the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities closely co-operated with the OECD, the UNDP, the Council of Europe, and the UNODC. The OSCE is also an observer in the International Network for Small and Medium Enterprises and has continued to strengthen its co-operation with the World Tourism Organization and the World Bank's South East European Enterprise Development to foster small business development.

On the parliamentary level, the OSCE's Parliamentary Assembly continued to co-operate with international parliamentary institutions such as the European Parliament and the Council of Europe's and NATO's Parliamentary Assemblies. Co-operation between 'Parliamentary Troikas', comprising both the OSCE's and the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assemblies and the European Parliament, was further strengthened in 2004. A Parliamentary Troika, which included the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Belarus, was engaged in an effort to promote dialogue and democratic development in Belarus. In south-eastern Europe, the parliamentary bodies joined efforts to establish a parliamentary dimension within the Stability Pact.

United Nations. The UN Secretary-General noted in his address to a UN Security Council meeting on co-operation between the UN and regional organizations in the processes of stabilization, held in New York in July, that the creation of "more institutionalized channels of co-operation would help ensure more efficiency and effectiveness, and perhaps even economies of scale." In pursuit of this goal, the UN intensified its dialogue with international and regional organizations.

The OSCE participated in this Security Council Meeting and in a number of other UN meetings. It also provided input to the UN High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. As a regional organization under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, the OSCE is an active participant in the follow-up process to the Fifth High-Level Meeting between the UN and regional organizations and the preparations for the Sixth Meeting.

Throughout 2004, the OSCE Secretary General held regular consultations with senior officials of various parts of the UN system. High-level contacts were extended to the respective inter-governmental bodies, the UN General Assembly and the OSCE Permanent Council. The OSCE Chairmanship addressed the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly on 'Co-operation between the UN and the OSCE'. The Special Representatives of the UN Secretary-General in Georgia, the UNHCR Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Executive Director of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, and the UNODC's Executive Director addressed the Permanent Council. Co-operation was further strengthened through regular working level contacts between Secretariat staff and their UN counterparts, such as the OSCE-UN staff level meeting that took place in New York in May.

In the context of its anti-terrorism co-operation with the UN, the OSCE held a Technical Experts Workshop on 'Countering the MANPADS (Man Portable Air Defence Systems) Threat to Civil

In the politico-military dimension, the Conflict Prevention Centre's FSC Support Unit worked closely with the UN Department on Disarmament Affairs on small arms and light weapons issues. The CPC participated in a number of events held by the UN Department on Disarmament Affairs, including a regional conference in May on the implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. In February, the implementation of the UN Register on Conventional Arms Transfers was discussed in the framework of the FSC.

The co-operation between the OCEEA and the UN Economic Commission for Europe on economic and environmental threats to security and early warning was further intensified with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding at the Sofia Ministerial Council meeting. In co-operation with the UNODC's Global Programme against Money Laundering, the OCEEA continued to run national workshops in interested participating States on combating money laundering and suppressing the financing of terrorism. Joint workshops were held in Albania and Georgia.

Under the auspices of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings¹, the ODIHR closely co-operated with UNICEF and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) on monitoring and assessing responses to trafficking in a follow-up project to the 2002 report on 'Trafficking in Human Beings in South-Eastern Europe'. The resulting project, the South-

"We are all vulnerable to new security threats, and to old threats that are evolving in complex and unpredictable ways. Either we allow this array of threats, and our responses to them, to divide us, or we come together to take effective action to meet all of them on the basis of a shared commitment to collective security."

Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General

Aviation Security at Airports' in Vienna, which was organized in co-operation with the International Civil Aviation Organization. The OSCE also promoted ratification and implementation of the 12 Universal Counter-Terrorism instruments and encouraged participating States to draft anti-terrorism legislation.

Daily consultations continued between the UNHCR Liaison Unit in Vienna and the OSCE Chairmanship, participating States, and the Secretariat. The UNHCR offered regular contributions to OSCE informal working groups, various high-level meetings and the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Sofia. For the first time, the UNHCR Representative and the OSCE Head of Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina jointly addressed the Permanent Council on the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

Other important activities were the preparations for the review meeting of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This work resulted in increased co-operation between the OSCE's Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, the UN Development Fund for Women, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), and the UNHCR.

Eastern European Regional Initiative against Human Trafficking (SEE RIGHTS), entered its final phase in 2004.

The ODIHR also worked with a number of other UN bodies, in particular the UNECE and the UNDP, on gender equality and co-operated with the UNHCHR in the field of human rights and anti-terrorism.

The High Commissioner on National Minorities continued to maintain regular contacts with relevant UN departments and co-operated with specialized UN agencies. For example, in the region of Samtskhe-Javakheti in Georgia, he joined forces with the UNDP on a project aimed at the social integration of the Armenian-speaking population. In Kyrgyzstan, he co-operated with UNESCO and the UNDP on education matters.

The partnership between the OSCE field operations and the UN is particularly strong in **south-eastern Europe**. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo is the institution-building pillar of the UN Mission in Kosovo and co-operates through inter-institutional working groups, task forces and principals' boards which meet regularly to co-ordinate policy, elaborate 'road maps', and decide on the division of labour. A large number of joint projects were implemented

¹ The Task Force ended its work on 30 October 2004. For more on the OSCE's work in the fight against human trafficking, see page 19.

throughout south-eastern Europe in each of the OSCE's three dimensions. For example, the Organization co-operated with the UNDP in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Serbia and Montenegro on the control and destruction of small arms and light weapons, and continued to support – together with the UN – inter-State co-operation regarding refugee return, anti-trafficking and co-operation with the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

In the **southern Caucasus**, the Mission to Georgia continued its support to the UN-led peace process in Abkhazia, Georgia. As in previous years, it seconded a staff member to the UN Human Rights Office in Abkhazia, Georgia. The Office in Yerevan closely co-operated with the UNDP on areas covering several dimensions, including on anti-corruption, the Ombudsman, elections, anti-trafficking and gender issues. The OSCE Office in Baku regularly discussed human rights issues with the UNHCHR, the ICRC, the Council of Europe, the IOM and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

The OSCE field operations in all three States provided support to the OSCE-UN Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) and organized together with the OCEEA and the national authorities consultations on the ENVSEC's southern Caucasus report. In October, the report was launched in Tbilisi under the title, 'Environment and Security: Transforming Risks into Co-operation – The Case of the Southern Caucasus'. The next step will be the preparation of preliminary work programmes by the authorities of the three countries. In July, NATO associated itself with the Initiative.

The OSCE Mission to Georgia co-operated closely with several international actors, in particular the UNDP, on the presidential and parliamentary elections held in Georgia in early 2004. The Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference maintained close contact with the UNHCR on the situation of refugees and internally displaced persons in the zone of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Additional synergies were also created between the OSCE and UN field operations in **eastern Europe**. In Ukraine, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator, together with UNICEF, USAID, and the British Council, helped arrange for an assessment on human trafficking issues. As in previous years, the Mission to Moldova was one of the principal co-ordinators of international efforts to strengthen local responses against human trafficking in the country. It hosted monthly technical co-ordination meetings, which were attended by UNICEF, UNIFEM, the IOM, the ILO, and the UNDP. The Mission also worked closely with UNICEF during the school crisis in the Transnistrian region of Moldova.

In **Central Asia**, the field operations established close relations with UN agencies to assist the five participating States in the region in complying with their commitments in all three OSCE dimensions. The co-operation also covered several regional projects such as the ENVSEC Initiative.

European Union. Strengthening co-operation between the OSCE and the EU was one of the Bulgarian Chairmanship's priorities. At the political level, both the Irish and the Netherlands Foreign Ministers and the EU Commissioner in charge of External Relations addressed the Permanent Council. Other speakers from the EU at the Permanent Council were the Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Head of the European Commission's Delegation to Croatia.

In addition, meetings of the respective Ministerial Troikas and the OSCE and EU Political and Security Committee Troikas took place. The OSCE Secretary General also participated in these Troika meetings. The Director of the OSCE Secretary General's Office addressed the EU's Working Group on the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The European Commission (EC) contributed to the work of the OSCE bodies through its delegation in Vienna. At the working level, the EU hosted the second EU-OSCE staff meeting in November.

In 2004, the European Commission and the ODIHR initiated a new programme in Central Asia, which included professional skills training for defence lawyers in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan conducted by the ODIHR under the programme's fair trials component. The OSCE is part of the steering board of the EC's Central Asian Border Service Initiative Group, set up under the framework of the TACIS Border Management for Central Asia programme. The Organization was also engaged in the review of implementation of the commitments made in the Way Forward Document signed by all participants in the Ohrid Border Process at the Ohrid Conference in May 2003.

An ODIHR expert took part in the EC's European Experts Group on Trafficking in Human Beings, which led to the introduction of National Referral Mechanisms in EU Member States. Together with the HCNM, the ODIHR undertook efforts to increase co-operation with the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.

The European Parliament participated in the ODIHR observation missions covering the presidential election in Georgia and Ukraine. The ODIHR continued its co-operation with the EC on the development of guidelines for media monitoring during election observation missions.

In **south-eastern Europe**, the OSCE missions worked closely with the EU representatives on issues of mutual concern, including judicial and police reform, democratization, institution-building, human rights and refugee return. In this region, both organizations have successfully contributed to fostering a climate that is conducive to stabilization, normalization and ultimately integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures.

In Albania, the OSCE Presence and the EU channelled technical and material assistance to the Albanian Ministry of Local Government and the Central Election Commission to improve the voters' register. Other areas of co-operation included prison reform and parliamentary support.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the OSCE Mission co-operated closely with the EU on reform-related issues, including education, public administration, human rights and the creation of a state-level Ombudsman institution. In addition, the organizations co-operated in establishing judicial and prosecutorial training centres in both Entities, enabling sustainable transfer of return-related issues to the local authorities, and supporting the country's Parliamentary Assembly Constitutional-Legal Committees. The Mission also worked closely with the EU Police Mission on anti-trafficking issues and via the Defence and Security Steering Group chaired by the Mission and SFOR.

In 2004, Croatia was granted candidate status by the EU. The mandate of the OSCE Mission to Croatia closely parallels the political tasks that Croatia must address for EU membership. Against this background, the OSCE has become an essential partner for Croatia in realizing this agenda. Co-operation between the EU and the

originally by the OSCE Mission to Georgia. Throughout 2004, the Mission worked on the finalization of agreements on the implementation of its EC-funded programme for refugee return and rehabilitation of structures in the zone of conflict. The programme is carried out in co-operation with the UNDP and the UNHCR. In the economic and environmental dimension, the Mission provided technical expertise to the EC-established Georgian European Policy and Legal Advice Centre to help the Government advance the labour code legislation.

In Armenia, the OSCE further strengthened co-operation with the EU, including through an anti-corruption working group of which the EC is a member. The working group is chaired by the OSCE Office. The OSCE Office in Baku regularly exchanged information with the various persons and structures representing the EU/EC, including the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus. The EU and EC representatives in Baku participated actively in

"I am committed to strengthening EU-OSCE complementarity. The European Commission will continue to work with and through the OSCE to strengthen security from innovative angles and to seek synergies, for instance regarding energy security, border management, good governance, and institution-building."

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy

OSCE also included joint efforts by the heads of the EC and the OSCE Mission together with the ICTY to promote strengthening of the monitoring of domestic and international war crimes prosecutions and the search for missing persons.

In Serbia and Montenegro, the OSCE Mission and the EU together devised a regional policy on refugees. In addition, a partnership was developed between the Mission and the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) on legal and judicial reform, media development and law enforcement activities.

In Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro, the OSCE Mission received funding by the EAR for a project that aims at enhancing the legal knowledge and professional skills of judges and prosecutors. Support was also given for other initiatives, such as the Bar Exam Training Project and the Out-of-Kosovo Voting Programme as well as for Radio Television Kosovo and the Kosovo Judicial Institute. The Mission also worked closely with the EC on legislation for the establishment of an Independent Media Commission.

The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje continued to foster its relationship in all security dimensions with the offices of the EU Special Representative (EUSR) and the EU Police Mission, *Proxima*. Co-operation with the EU was particularly close in police reform and the fight against organized crime as well as integrated border management strategies in the western Balkans.

In the **southern Caucasus**, field operations worked closely with the EU Special Representative. The EC continued to participate in the Joint Control Commission (JCC) on the settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, a co-operation which was initiated

meetings organized by the Office to discuss post-election developments. The two organizations also held regular information-sharing meetings on their respective project-based activities.

The Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference was in frequent contact with the EU Special Representative during 2004. He also briefed in Brussels various EU structures on the current situation with regard to the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

In **eastern Europe**, EU-OSCE co-operation was determined by developments in the region, with particular focus on Moldova and Ukraine. The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine and the EU collaborated on a number of thematic areas, such as judiciary reform and border issues as well as the fight against human trafficking. A project on 'Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Ukraine 2004–2005', funded by the EU, is being implemented by the IOM and the OSCE. The Co-ordinator and the EU also jointly organized election-related activities, including seminars for judges of first instance and appellate courts and training seminars for polling station officials.

The OSCE Mission in Moldova maintained regular contacts with the EU in support of the negotiation process for a political settlement of the Transdniestrian issue. It also co-operated closely with the EC, in particular on border management.

In Belarus, the OSCE Office participated in a number of ad hoc meetings with representatives of the EC delegation to Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus, based in Kyiv.

In **Central Asia**, co-operation between the OSCE and the EU was further strengthened. The OSCE Centre in Almaty organized several events with the EC delegation to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which included a joint roundtable on the draft media law and two research projects on illegal markets in Central Asia and on religious extremism. Together with the EU and the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, the OSCE Centres in Almaty and Bishkek organized a roundtable on comparative electoral processes in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Areas of co-operation between the OSCE Centre in Ashgabad and the EC included border management, small and medium-sized enterprise development and assistance to farmers' associations. Furthermore, the Centre developed and financed an English language and computer training course for Turkmen State Customs officials, complementing the TACIS Unit Support Programme for the State Customs Service of Turkmenistan.

In Kyrgyzstan, the EU funded the second phase of the OSCE's Police Assistance Programme.

Council of Europe. Relations with the Council of Europe featured prominently on the OSCE's external co-operation agenda in 2004. They were discussed in Sofia on 13 October at the meeting between the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the Norwegian Foreign Minister, who chaired the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers. The OSCE Chairmanship responded positively to an initiative by the Norwegian Chairmanship to strengthen synergy between the two organizations. In December, the OSCE Permanent Council adopted a decision to enhance co-operation with the Council, following which the OSCE-Council of Europe Co-ordination Group was established.

On 14 July, the seventh '3+3' meeting of Council of Europe and OSCE senior officials took place in Vienna. Participants discussed the fight against terrorism, trafficking in human beings and election observation as well as a number of countries and regions in which both organizations are active.

“Building Europe and spreading Europe’s message implies developing partnerships, dialogue and complementarity between international actors, and notably the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations.”

Walter Schwimmer, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

In their addresses to the OSCE Permanent and Ministerial Councils and the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, the two Secretaries General paid special attention to the pragmatic and open way in which the organizations co-operated during the year. The Council also participated actively in the three special OSCE events on tolerance and discrimination held in 2004.

The High Commissioner on National Minorities worked closely with the Council with regard to existing and draft legislation on national minorities in a number of OSCE countries. The ODIHR continued to participate on behalf of the OSCE in the ad hoc

Committee on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The ODIHR and the Council established an informal framework for the co-ordination of future activities on issues related to gender equality and women's participation in democratic processes. In addition, the ODIHR participated regularly in meetings of the Council's Committee of Experts on Terrorism. Co-operation on Roma and Sinti issues was also strengthened.

The Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities participated in a number of ODIHR election observation missions in 2004. These included:

- the presidential elections in Georgia, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, and Ukraine;
- parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan;
- municipal elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and
- the referendum in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Building on each other's specific strengths, the OSCE and the Council of Europe also engaged in concerted efforts in the field.

In **south-eastern Europe**, co-operation covered three main areas: education, democratization, and human rights and the rule of law. For example, the Council participated with both long- and short-term observers in the OSCE-supported 2004 Kosovo Assembly Election organized by the Central Election Commission Secretariat. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo and the Council jointly supported the UNMIK-PISG working group on local government reform and were active participants of the working group to pursue the development of a decentralization framework. The Mission also provided expert trainers to a Council of Europe 'training-of-trainers' programme for judges and prosecutors in Kosovo.

Both organizations focused strongly on the **southern Caucasus** and intensified their co-operation in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, with an emphasis on legislative reform, human rights and freedom of information. The OSCE Mission in Georgia co-operated closely with the Venice Commission in providing expertise

on draft constitutional amendments. The OSCE Office in Yerevan co-ordinated and co-operated with the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission on a number of issues in Armenia, including electoral legislation reform, constitutional reform, freedom of assembly, and police-related activities. The OSCE Office in Baku co-ordinated its work regularly with the Council of Europe's Special Representative in Baku on activities related, among other issues, to the Bar Association and legislative reforms.

In **eastern Europe**, co-operation was also strengthened in 2004. The OSCE Mission to Moldova and the Council of Europe worked

with education authorities on both sides of the Dniestr river to continue negotiations on the functioning of the Moldovan schools in Transdnistria. Following the suspension of the licence for the municipal broadcasting institutions, Antena-C and Euro-TV, both organizations worked hand-in-hand to address these issues and publish joint recommendations on the functioning of public broadcasting institutions in Moldova.

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. In his address to the North Atlantic Council on 21 January, the Chairman-in-Office reiterated that practical interaction in the field was a basic driving force behind NATO-OSCE co-operation. He also emphasized that efforts of the two organizations were complementary in conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation as well as in arms control verification, de-mining, the disposal of ammunition stocks and security sector reform.

Regular meetings between staff from the OSCE and NATO headquarters continued to strengthen inter-institutional dialogue in areas ranging from multi-dimensional issues such as counter-terrorism, small arms and light weapons and economic and environmental activities, to regional concerns such as co-operation in the Mediterranean dimension.

“Minister Passy and I myself have stressed the need for close co-operation between NATO and the OSCE. We have seen good examples lately, for instance in Afghanistan, and under present circumstances and in the present-day world and on the basis of the present-day threats, I think it is of essence that organizations such as the OSCE and NATO work closely together.”

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Secretary General of NATO

To further improve the operational knowledge of the decision-making process and crisis management procedures of both organizations, the OSCE was represented at the NATO Crisis Management Exercise in March and observed the first NATO-Russia Procedural Exercise in November.

In the political-military dimension, the OSCE provided expert briefings on its activities in the field of small arms and light weapons to the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Wassenaar Arrangement. The Secretariat fostered co-ordination with NATO on the implementation of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition and continued to actively participate in the Ohrid process on border management and security in south-eastern Europe, together with the Stability Pact, NATO and the EU.

In the economic and environmental dimension, co-operation between the two organizations continued on the ENVSEC Initiative, which NATO joined in July.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly took part in the ODIHR's election observation mission to the 2004 presidential election in Ukraine.

In **south-eastern Europe**, the two organizations worked together to promote the stabilization and the integration of countries in the region. This included supporting these countries in fulfilling the criteria for membership in the Partnership for Peace programme. Both organizations took part in regular meetings at principal level about inter-agency co-ordination and information exchange on developments on the ground. NATO's support of OSCE activities in the region extended in some cases to the provision of security and possible medical evacuation to OSCE field personnel.

Under the auspices of the Defence Reform Commission, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina led the implementation of the country's reform of the defence sector. The Mission and SFOR co-operated on issues related to the implementation of laws on export and import of arms and ammunition, visits to storage sites, destruction of arms and ammunition surplus stocks, support towards the restructuring of the armed forces and support in developing the country's defence budgets. Awareness-raising projects on anti-trafficking were also undertaken in co-ordination with SFOR.

In Serbia and Montenegro, OSCE-NATO co-operation focused on supporting defence reform and strengthening democratic control

of the defence and security sector. Concrete areas of co-operation included parliamentary oversight and border security issues. Following its involvement in the Ohrid process, the Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje participated in the NATO Rose-Roth seminar in Ohrid in September.

In **eastern Europe**, the Mission to Moldova continued to closely co-ordinate the monitoring of the removal of Russian military equipment from Transdnistria with the NATO Conventional Arms Control Co-ordination Section and the arms-control verification agencies of OSCE participating States. The OSCE Secretariat's Project Co-ordination Unit (PCU) co-operated with NATO in the field of social adaptation of ex-military personnel.

In the **southern Caucasus**, the OSCE field operations continued to participate in the South Caucasus River Monitoring Project, funded by the NATO Science for Peace Programme, the OSCE Office in Yerevan and OCEEA. The project is now in its third year of implementation. Following the decisions made at NATO's Istanbul Summit in June 2004, NATO appointed in autumn a Special Representative of the Secretary General for the Caucasus and Central Asia, whose mandate includes co-ordination of activities with other international organizations.

Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. OSCE field operations and Institutions continued to take active part in a number of initiatives conducted under the auspices of the Stability Pact. The Missions to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro, including in Kosovo, and the ODIHR, provided substantive contributions to the work of the Pact's Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings. Other areas of co-operation included small arms control and destruction, Roma and Sinti issues, media development, gender issues and women's participation in politics, human rights, economic co-operation and development, and defence and security issues.

The CPC co-operated closely with the Stability Pact, NATO and the EU in implementing the commitments made in the Ohrid Way Forward Document in the field of border management and security. It also participated in the Stability Pact's regular regional steering group meetings.

International Organization for Migration. Co-operation between the OSCE and the IOM continued at headquarters and field level. The IOM participated in the High-level and target-oriented Tripartite Meetings between the UN, Council of Europe and the OSCE in Vienna in February and in the Sofia Ministerial Council as well as a number of other OSCE conferences and events.

Both organizations worked hand-in-hand in the Caucasus and south-eastern Europe to combat human trafficking. In the Caucasus and Central Asia, co-operation focused on developing common approaches to migration policy. The OSCE Presence in Albania worked with the IOM and the NGO, *Save the Children*, within the Witness Protection Task Force. In Ukraine, the Project Co-ordinator worked in partnership with the IOM to implement a project on the fight against human trafficking funded by the EU. The Co-ordinator and the IOM as well as other international partners also worked together on a joint programme on human rights awareness and education. Together with the IOM, the PCU implemented the TACIS-funded project, 'Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2004–2005'. Activities carried out included awareness-raising campaigns, victims assistance and re-integration, training for law enforcement officials and the review of existing legislation.

International Committee of the Red Cross. At the headquarters level, the ICRC participated in the High-level and target-oriented Tripartite Meetings and a number of other OSCE conferences and events. This included the three OSCE events on tolerance and anti-discrimination held in 2004, the Sofia Ministerial Council meeting, and the annual OSCE Human Dimension Meeting in Warsaw.

The OSCE's field operations continued their interaction with the ICRC regional offices in Ashgabad, Baku and Tashkent. A good example of effective co-operation was the co-ordinated response of the OSCE Mission to Moldova and the ICRC office in Kyiv to the hunger strike of Andrei Ivantoc, a member of the 'Ilascu group' detained in Moldova's Transdniestrian region.

The Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference maintained close contacts with the ICRC with regard to the issue of the release of prisoners of war and other persons detained as a result of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Co-operation with other regional and sub-regional organizations and initiatives. The OSCE also serves as a forum for engaging other partners within its region. In 2004, there was continued interaction and co-operation with regional and sub-regional organizations such as the Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC), the Central Asian Co-operation Organization (CACO), the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Central European Initiative (CEI), the CIS, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), GUUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova), SECI, the South East European Co-operation Process (SEEC), and others. This included OSCE participation in a number of high-level events, including summit and ministerial meetings such as the CEI summit meeting in Portoroz in November. Regional and sub-regional organizations were also invited to participate in a number of relevant OSCE events and meetings. For example, the BSEC, the CIS and GUUAM participated in the Tripartite target-oriented meeting, while the CSTO, the CIS and GUUAM took part in the Annual Security Review Conference in June. The CIS and SECI attended the joint OSCE-UNODC Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security in September. The BSEC, the CACO, the CBSS, the CIS, the CSTO, GUUAM, SECI, and the SEEC also participated in the CTC-OSCE-UNODC meeting on counter-terrorism in March.

Accompanying the Chairman-in-Office on his Moscow visit in February, the Secretary General also met the CIS Executive Secretary and the CSTO Secretary General.

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Interaction with Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation and Organizations and Institutions outside the OSCE Area

Together with the OSCE Troika, the Secretariat continued to strengthen relations with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. Within the framework of dialogue and joint activities with the Partners for Co-operation, the External Co-operation Section continued to advise and support the Secretary General, the Chairmanship and the Troika members responsible for presiding over the respective meetings of the Mediterranean and Asian Contact Groups (see the Report of the Chairman-in-Office and the Reports of the Chairmen of the respective Contact Groups with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and Asian Partners for Co-operation). The Section represented the Secretariat through active participation in the meetings. Relations with regional organizations beyond the OSCE region continued to be pursued and developed in 2004.

Co-operation between the OSCE and the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. The need to enhance co-operation with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners was recognized in the 2003 OSCE Strategy on Addressing Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century. Based on this document, PC Decision No. 571¹ calls for further dialogue and co-operation with the Partner States. The participating States were tasked to identify additional fields of co-operation and interaction with the Partner States to enhance mutual security and encourage them to voluntarily implement OSCE norms, principles and commitments as a means to strengthen interaction with the OSCE. As part of this process, the Section for External Co-operation provided support to the Ambassador of Finland in his role as Chairman of the informal Group of Friends on the Implementation of PC Decision No. 571. A report containing concrete recommendations from the informal Group was presented to the Sofia Ministerial Council meeting. As a result, a Ministerial Council decision was adopted that underscored the importance of the report. It will provide a basis for further work with Partner States in 2005.

Two major events took place in Partner States. On 15 and 16 March, the **OSCE-Japan Conference** was held in Tokyo, focusing on the 'Search for Conflict Prevention in the New Security Circumstances – European Security Mechanisms and Security in Asia'. Participants discussed issues of common interest pertaining to security in Europe and Asia, combating international terrorism and addressing challenges to security stemming from trafficking in drugs, human beings and small arms.

The Secretary General and the Japanese Government's Special Envoy co-chaired the conference. In their conclusions, they highlighted many OSCE activities that could serve as useful models for Asia in enhancing preventive diplomacy. They also said that there was

scope for collaboration on the efforts undertaken by the OSCE and the **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)** in tackling transnational and non-traditional security challenges. The conference also proposed arranging joint events between interested partners in Asia and the OSCE related to trafficking in human beings and in small arms and light weapons.

The **Annual OSCE Mediterranean Seminar** took place in Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt, on 18 and 19 November. It discussed co-operative security, tolerance and migration against the backdrop of deeper interaction between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners. The Secretary General stressed that the multifaceted and cross-dimensional nature of threats prompted the OSCE to work closer with the Mediterranean Partners, acknowledging that all parties shared the same democratic values and principles. The seminar concluded with concrete proposals, including the provision of support to the Palestinian presidential election on 9 January 2005. The proposals serve as a solid foundation for the work programme with the Mediterranean Partners in 2005.

Prior to this event, the OSCE Secretary General was invited to address the **second Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean**, organized by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Rhodes on 1 October. The event brought together parliamentarians from the participating States and the Mediterranean Partner States. In his statement, the Secretary General stressed that the future of the Mediterranean and the Middle East was a concern that was shared with the Partners. He further acknowledged the importance of the Mediterranean dimension to European security. It was also stressed that maintaining a constantly open channel of communication was paramount to the success of the partnership.

In December, the OSCE welcomed **Mongolia** as a new Asian Partner for Co-operation. The Mongolian Foreign Minister's first-ever participation at a Ministerial Council meeting in Sofia confirmed the importance his country places on forging relations with the Organization. The Secretariat will work to deepen relations with Mongolia and to share expertise and experience on issues of mutual interest.

A highlight of the Organization's outreach activities in 2004 was the deployment of an **Election Support Team to Afghanistan**. For the first time in its history, the OSCE was actively involved in elections in a non-participating State. Following the invitation of Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai, the OSCE swiftly sent more than 40 people to the country. Working in a challenging environment, they carried out an effective and highly-praised operation while ensuring staff security.

¹ On Further Dialogue and Co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and Exploring the Scope for Wider Sharing of OSCE Norms, Principles and Commitments with Others

Co-operation with Organizations and Institutions outside the OSCE Area. Relations between the OSCE and regional organizations and institutions outside the OSCE area gained further dynamism during 2004. There was vivid interest among regional organizations to learn more about the OSCE and its norms and principles. Exchange took place within the conceptual framework for co-operation between the UN and regional organizations and on a bilateral level with the OSCE and regional organizations.

The Secretary General was invited to the inauguration of the Secretariat of the **Shanghai Co-operation Organization (SCO)** Secretariat on 15 January in Beijing. He met the SCO Executive Secretary, Ambassador Zhang Deguang, to discuss possible areas of co-operation. The OSCE was also present at the opening ceremony of the Executive Committee of the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure in Tashkent in June. An SCO representative participated in the July roundtable on extremism in Kazakhstan organized by the OSCE Centre in Almaty and the ODIHR.

In response to an invitation, the Chairman-in-Office participated in the Arab Summit held in Tunisia on 22 and 23 May. Representatives of the **League of Arab States** visited the OSCE Secretariat in May to familiarize themselves with the Organization's work on small arms and light weapons and on counter-terrorism. As a result of this visit and the expressed interest of the League of Arab States, the OSCE is translating the OSCE Handbook on Small Arms and Light Weapons into Arabic. A representative of the Arab League participated in the Sofia Ministerial Council meeting.

The Secretary General represented the OSCE at the 31st Session of the **Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)** of Foreign Ministers in Istanbul. An OIC representative participated in the 12th OSCE Economic Forum in Prague and at the Sofia Ministerial Council.

Responding to an invitation to participate as an observer in the Fifth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council and the Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the **African Union** in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in June-July, the OSCE was represented by a Troika representative, the Netherlands Ambassador based in Addis Ababa.

To further co-operate with the **ARF**, participants in the OSCE-Japan Conference were invited to come to an informal meeting on 16 March with the participants of the ARF Workshop on Preventive Diplomacy. During the meeting, the Secretary General shared his views on the outcome of the OSCE-Japan Conference, and the CPC Director presented an overview of preventive diplomacy tools in the OSCE.

At the working level, the OSCE and the **Organization of America States (OAS)** shared best practices and lessons learned on counter-terrorism. One concrete result of these efforts was the establishment of the OSCE Counter-Terrorism Network to replicate the OAS Inter-American Committee against Terrorism Network. For its part, the OSCE shared its experience, best practices and lessons learned while pursuing practical efforts in protecting human rights in the fight against terrorism. The Secretariat's ATU and the OAS Network co-operate through active information-sharing and co-ordination of meetings. The OAS also participated in the Joint OSCE-UNODC Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security.

A representative of the **Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia** participated in the Follow-up Conference to the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Special Meeting with international, regional, and sub-regional organizations, hosted by the OSCE in co-operation with the UNODC in Vienna.