



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe**

**Seminar**

**On**

***‘Experiences with Post-Conflict Rehabilitation Efforts’***

**Tbilisi, 26-27 January 2000**

**C O N S O L I D A T E D   S U M M A R Y**



## **Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe**

### **Preparatory Seminar for the Eighth Economic Forum**

### **'Experiences with Post-Conflict Rehabilitation Efforts'**

**Tbilisi, 26-27 January 2000**

#### **1st day**

- 0900      Registration begins
- 1000      Formal Opening of the Seminar
- Statement by the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia,  
            Mr. Georgi Bourduli
- Statement by the Austrian Ambassador for the South Caucasus and Central  
            Asia, Dr. Heidemaria Gürer, representing the OSCE Chairman-in-Office
- Statement by the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental  
            Activities, Mr. Thomas L. Price
- 1030      **Opening Plenary**
- Mr. Joe Owen, Head of Office, World Bank
- Mr. Irakli Machavariani, Personal Representative of President Shevardnadze on  
            Political, Security and Conflict Settlement Issues
- Mr. Petr Hlobil, CEE Bankwatch Network
- Mr. Robert Nowak, Economic Affairs Officer, UN/ECE
- 1115      Plenary Discussion of Keynote Addresses

1200            **Working Groups Commence**

**Working Group 1: Donors/Lenders**

Moderator:    Mr. Peter Havlik, Deputy Director, The Vienna Institute for International  
Economic Studies

Rapporteur:    Mr. Michael Richtsteig, Germany

Participants in this group will include not only representatives of donor States, but also of international institutions such as, for example, the following:

European Commission, USAID, Swiss/Turkish/Norwegian assistance agencies, EIB, EBRD, World Bank, IMF, UN/ECE, OECD, Soros Foundation, Shore Bank, etc.

**Working Group 2: Recipient States**

Moderator:    Ambassador Jean-Michel Lacombe, Head of the OSCE Mission to Georgia

Rapporteur:    Ms. Ingrid Kircher, OSCE Secretariat

Participants in this group will include, for example, representatives of the following States:

Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, etc.

**Working Group 3: Civil Society**

Moderator:    Mr. Claude Potelle, Economist, former President, European Strategic Planning  
Federation

Rapporteur:    Mr. Mark Tauber, USA

Participants in this group will include, for example, representatives of the following groups:

NGO's, journalists, academics, businesspersons, representatives of business associations, bankers, parliamentarians, etc.

WG 1 would be devoted to reports # 1 and 2

WG 2 would be devoted to reports # 3 and 4

WG 3 would be devoted to reports # 5 and 6

1330            Lunch break

1500            Working Groups resume for 90 minutes

WG 1 would be devoted to reports # 5 and 6

WG 2 would be devoted to reports # 1 and 2

WG 3 would be devoted to reports # 3 and 4

1630            Coffee break

1700 Working Groups resume for 90 minutes

WG 1 would be devoted to Reports #3 and #4

WG 2 would be devoted to Reports #5 and #6

WG 3 would be devoted to Reports #1 and #2

## **2nd Day**

0930 Working Groups resume for 90 minutes to discuss general experiences with post-conflict rehabilitation efforts, and to conclude previous discussions

1100 Coffee break

1130 First Closing Plenary Session to discuss and synthesize the separate sessions held previously.

Moderator: Dr. Kyriakos Revelas, European Commission

Rapporteur: Ms. Daphne Bergsma, Netherlands

1330 Lunch

1530 Second Closing Plenary Session to present the Rapporteurs' Reports and Chairman's Summary

1630 Formal Closing of Seminar

1900 Reception given by host government

NB: The reports presented at the working groups have been prepared by following OSCE field operations:

Report #1: OSCE Presence in Albania

Report #2: OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report #3: OSCE Mission to Georgia

Report #4: OSCE Mission to Moldova

Report #5: OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje

Report #6: OSCE Mission to Tajikistan

## Preparatory Seminar for the Eighth Economic Forum

### “Experiences with Post-Conflict Rehabilitation Efforts”

#### **CONSOLIDATED SUMMARY**

On 26-27 January 2000, the OSCE held in Tbilisi, in co-operation with the Government of Georgia, the final Seminar in a series of three designed to help participating States prepare for the Eighth Economic Forum. There was a high level of participation, with representatives of 30 OSCE participating States and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, several OSCE Missions and field Offices, the Secretariat, and numerous international organizations and NGOs from throughout the region.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Georgi Bourduli, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, who welcomed participants to the Seminar and emphasized the important contribution the OSCE can make to post-conflict rehabilitation efforts. Ambassador Heidemaria Gürer, who represented the Chairman-in-Office, also welcomed participants to the Seminar. She encouraged participants to make concrete suggestions for follow-up at the Eighth Economic Forum, to be held in Prague from 11-14 April 2000. The OSCE Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities observed that all OSCE participating States had, to various degrees, experienced conflicts and that conflict prevention mechanisms and approaches to post-conflict rehabilitation that had been successful in some regions of the OSCE might be identified and attempted in others.

During the opening plenary, participants recognized that economic prosperity and/or the lack of it was often linked to inter- and/or intra- State conflicts. They underlined that reconstruction and rehabilitation should contribute to building sustainable peace in a given conflict zone. The role of NGOs in post-conflict rehabilitation was emphasized and their importance in raising public awareness was stressed. Furthermore, participants recognized the relationship of the rule of law and good governance to post-conflict rehabilitation efforts and the strengthening of civil society.

This seminar featured a number of innovations which participants seemed to welcome, at least on a one-time basis. The three Working Groups were based on participation by different constituencies (donors/lenders, recipient governments, and representatives of civil society) discussing the same themes rather than by similar constituencies addressing different themes. Instead of inviting experts from other organizations to provide a basis for discussion, we asked six OSCE Missions to prepare papers and then make presentations which related their actual field experiences with conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation. And there was a closing plenary session designed to give participants an opportunity to synthesize the work done in the various Working Groups.

A number of common themes emerged from the discussions in the Working Groups. Among them were (a) the possibility of using economic tools to help resolve conflicts, in addition to the possibility of using them to help overcome the effects of conflict; (b) problems posed by refugees, both political and economic, and the related problem of a “brain drain”; (c) the difficulties transition countries face in trying to combat corruption, organized crime, and “the shadow economy” in the absence of sufficient tools with which to fight these things and in the absence of established traditions of the rule of law; and (d) the need for more cooperation, consultation, and coordination not only among donors, but also between donors and recipient States. The first three rapporteurs’ reports which follow detail the conclusions reached in each Working Group; the work of the closing plenary is reflected in the fourth rapporteur’s report.

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#### **Rapporteur's Report**

##### **Closing Plenary**

The purpose of the first closing plenary session was to try to synthesize the conclusions and recommendations of the perspectives of the three groups of actors: donors/lenders, recipient States and civil society. The three groups shared one common objective, namely to overcome a post-conflict situation in a sustainable way. In order to achieve this a balance should be found between the ambitions and limitations of the three groups.

The four themes addressed in the post conflict rehabilitation context, presented in reports prepared by six OSCE missions, were:

- the need for transparency, good governance and strong institutions to combat corruption;
- economic reforms as a means of promoting national reconciliation,;
- the impact of refugees;
- co-operation initiatives and small infrastructure projects as confidence building measures.

Common in the presentation of the results and recommendations of the three groups were the themes of fighting corruption, smuggling, and crime, overcoming the problem of "braindrain", co-ordination (among donors, between donor and recipient and between government and NGOs), importance of a regional approach, building a strong civil society and the need for transparency.

Concerning the kind of role the OSCE could play in post-conflict rehabilitation, it was stressed that the OSCE is not a financial organization but could act as a facilitator. The importance of the organization's use of a comprehensive concept of security was underlined: economic and social developments could be instrumental in reaching a solution in a political conflict. The catalysing role for the Organization through stimulating participation of representatives of civil society and various interest groups was also highlighted.

A representative of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina gave an example of how to improve involvement of local NGOs and local authorities through describing a project of grass root training of municipal authorities.

One participating State warned against general application of a regional approach, which can be a counter productive instrument in some cases.

Another participating State stressed the importance of the involvement of NGOs in post-conflict rehabilitation. A representative of an international organization added that the OSCE can play a useful role in providing a forum for NGOs.

A member of an OSCE mission suggested that the OSCE should develop a special format for reporting on economic and environmental developments.

The development of a “code of rules” on how to operate in situations of post-conflict rehabilitation was proposed by one participating State. Such a code should be based on a comprehensive approach to security, be non-discriminatory, proceed from international law and underline the importance of a sub-regional approach.

Finally, one NGO suggested an alternative approach to conflict resolution in which national interests do not dominate international conflict resolution efforts. Such an approach would, apart from a diplomatic dialogue, also include dialogues with other groups of the society.

It was concluded that further discussions were to take place in the framework of the forthcoming Economic Forum in Prague.

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#### **Working Group I**

##### **Donors/Lenders**

I. Working Group 1 discussed intensively six reports from OSCE Missions in the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia with representatives of donors and lenders. Although the reports identified different problems and positive developments in the respective host countries, similarities which prevent economic and social developments and hinder investments in these countries were identified during the discussion:

1. Corruption, smuggling and crime;

In most countries political will is a prerequisite for sustained economic reforms, but often political leaders have vested interests in companies and activities of the shadow economy. The subject of corruption was also seen in the context of activities related to foreign companies and international Organizations. In the group's view this aspect must be kept on the agenda.

In addition these countries are faced with the following problems:

2. braindrain and refugee and migrant problems
3. shadow economy
4. collapse of traditional economic links
5. existence of local separatist movements and weak State

The group recognized that until the vicious circle of the above mentioned problems can be mitigated and economic conditions improve, continuing international assistance for these countries is needed. The role of the OSCE, which is not a financing Organization, was seen largely as a facilitator which provides which provides the receiving countries with contacts with the international financing institutions. It was also the opinion of the group that it is cheaper for the international community to engage itself in conflict prevention than to supply assistance after a conflict has already occurred. It was also recognized that in some instances economic problems cannot be solved solely on a national level, but require a broader regional co-operation where parties agree and even international efforts.

#### II. Recommendations

1. With regard to fighting corruption and crime it was hinted that the successful project of the World Bank is a useful instrument which could be applied in the above-mentioned countries as well. To separate political leaders from their vested economic interests the introduction of a law of conflict of interests was seen as a possible solution. In fighting crime it was recommended to improve legislation on judiciary and reinforce the training of police personnel. The importance of not only passing good laws but also of implementing them was stressed. Local conditions have to be taken into account in the drafting of national legislation.



In order to combat smuggling the employment of international custom officers was mentioned as the highly successful Customs Office project (CAFAO) of the European Union indicates or the introduction of a joint border police.

2. In order to help prevent or reverse braindrain, the involvement of local resources and improved training of local experts could be instrumental.
3. The group held the view that shadow economy constitutes a threat if it endangers basic economic functions and thus hinders economic development. When overcoming a shadow economy the point was raised that employment must not be endangered but work places must be legalized.
4. In order to restore the collapsed traditional economic links and to create new economic links the concept of regional integration was recommended.
5. As one way to facilitate interests in common dialogue between a central government and a local separatist movement, the identification of common economic interests through both sides was mentioned.
6. With respect to international assistance it was stressed that local personnel resources should be more engaged and local conditions taken into account. Better co-ordination amongst donors was recommended for countries where this co-ordination is lacking and it was pointed out that sometimes small projects are more efficient than large scale projects. It was illustrated that too often reconstruction work is done but not rehabilitation work; funds should also be used to improve existing social and economic conditions. When drafting laws, the international community should see to it that also local lawyers were consulted and local conditions taken into account. The principle of subsidiarity was quoted as an important factor in order to avoid too high dependency on foreign assistance. The discussion showed that not more international assistance is needed but more timely and better focused or co-ordinated assistance. The thoughts were expressed that international assistance should only be given if the parties in conflict in the receiving State have come to an agreement.

The Group proposed to continue the discussion of these important issues at the Eighth Economic Forum in April in Prague, especially the overriding topic of strengthening the economic conditions in societies in transition.

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#### **Working Group II**

##### **Recipient States**

In Working Group II we had a very stimulating discussion on the reports presented by OSCE field missions, as well as on more general issues faced by recipient states. The following is a summary of the main issues and recommendations.

At the outset, several speakers pointed out that the term *post-conflict rehabilitation* did not adequately address all the situations discussed. In a number of cases conflicts were not yet resolved and economic assistance was one of the several instruments available to facilitate a process of conflict resolution. In this context the unique role of the OSCE was emphasized, given its comprehensive approach to security.

It was further noted that rehabilitation suggested the return to a previous stage, with several participants emphasizing that a return to previous economic structures was neither possible nor desirable. Reconstruction and reform needed to go hand in hand.

##### **Dynamics of conflict resolution: Priorities and Timing**

The following issues were discussed and a number of different opinions expressed. To what extent should economic assistance be linked to progress at the negotiation table? Should one aim for a political settlement first or could efforts at economic cooperation be initiated without such a political settlement, as such efforts might contribute to building confidence among the parties to the conflict.

Some speakers emphasized that the process needed to be considered as a whole, with economic rehabilitation going on at the same time as efforts to settle the political conflict. Others stressed that it was important to start with a political solution, as political instability was also seen as a key factor for a low influx of foreign capital.

##### **Joint Economic Projects**

It was felt that in certain conflict situations which were not yet resolved, the two parties could meet, with the assistance of the international community, to discuss joint economic projects. This would help to build confidence and thus contribute to laying the groundwork for progress in reaching a political solution. (This was the case, for instance, with the work between Georgians and South Ossetians on small infrastructure projects).

##### **Economic Cooperation and Conflict Resolution**

It was noted that willingness to cooperate by both sides depended in part on the nature and outcome of a conflict. In conflicts resulting in a military stand-off, where both sides were presented with conditions that satisfied them, chances to reach a compromise were more likely. Where secessionist forces had been victorious, they would be less prone to

cooperation. The question was raised whether it was possible to convince a separatist entity to return to the fold through “economic cooperation” backed by international aid.

The importance of addressing economic issues in efforts to resolve a conflict was stressed. It was noted that, in certain cases, such as Tajikistan, conflict settlement had not sufficiently taken into account the economic dimension.

### **Issues affecting recipient countries**

Corruption was considered a major problem for a number of countries. While corruption had existed before, it was pointed out that it had been exacerbated during conflicts and abrupt transitions to market economy. Poverty, weak institutions, especially weak law enforcement, or control of the economy by certain political parties, were referred to as contributing factors. Corruption also had a very negative effect on public opinion in donor countries and thus on donors.

Different types of organized crime such as smuggling across borders and trafficking in human beings were considered serious problems as a number of countries faced difficulties controlling their borders. Smuggling across borders also had a serious effect on state finances.

The problem of corruption needed to be addressed through increased transparency, socio-economic development and, very importantly, by strengthening the rule of law. Legislation combating organized crime and corruption needed to be complemented by effective implementation measures. The role of the media in providing information and thus helping to increase public awareness is also important.

A number of speakers pointed to difficulties regarding the availability of resources, especially energy. It was suggested that countries should look at cooperation on common trade projects such as gas, oil pipelines, water resources, transport infrastructure, etc. Another key problem which needed to be addressed was environmental degradation.

The effect of conflicts and transition to a market economy on social systems (health care, education) was stressed. It was felt that the negative impact manifesting itself in declining standards of health care, of education, growing unemployment was a matter of serious concern and needed to be addressed.

Brain drain was an important issue affecting a number of countries; as the problem of illegal immigration was an issue to donor countries, they should also be interested in supporting efforts to create incentives for people to stay.

### **Cooperation**

The need for cooperation was stressed by a number of speakers. This included cooperation within countries, among the parties to a conflict, and among countries of a particular region. In certain conflicts, efforts at genuine integration among the different regions of a country were important.

Several speakers stressed the need for regional cooperation, which, it was felt, could be a facilitating factor for political settlements. As countries of the region traded with each other, shared concerns and were interested in economic stability, regional cooperation was important. However, it was also important to take differences among the countries into

account and the different contexts in which conflicts occurred. In any case, regional cooperation needed to complement peaceful settlement processes and could not be considered a tool on its own.

### **Rule of law**

The importance of legislative reform, a strong and independent judiciary and a system of checks and balances was stressed. Donor support for projects aimed at legislative and judicial reforms as well as training was important.

### **Conflict prevention**

In general, more emphasis should be put on preventive diplomacy, as it is much more expensive to deal with the aftermath of conflicts.

### **Inclusion and strengthening civil society**

Local authorities and civil society needed to be strengthened and involved in rehabilitation programs.

It was also stressed that sometimes recipient governments themselves had created disincentives for investment. They had a tendency to mainly talk among themselves. It was important, however, to involve the business community and civil society.

### **Recipient countries: experience with donors and recommendations**

#### **Priorities and knowledge**

It was pointed out that donors prescribe priorities and procedures for their grants which are not those of the recipient countries. In addition, some international organizations imposed programmes without basing themselves on an in-depth analysis of the real situation in the particular country. Sometimes the projects were proposed by persons who had never visited the particular country and thus did not understand the situation. Donors needed to be directly involved in project implementation.

#### **Transparency and information**

The need for donors to communicate and share information with all those concerned was important.

#### **Donor coordination**

Donors should coordinate their activities. It was noted that some recipient countries had already established coordination structures and better coordination among different donors was expected, also with regards to specific priorities.

#### **Use of local expertise**

Donors should make more use of local experts and spend money locally in recipient countries rather than spending money in donor countries, although it was noted that for certain donor countries this was a sensitive issue.

#### **Successful rehabilitation projects / lessons learned**

Finally the importance of looking at and learning from successful projects in the midst of ongoing challenges was stressed. Several concrete projects, which had been successful, were mentioned. They included:

- Programmes in Tajikistan for the economic and social re-insertion of former combatants in the form of small loans to establish small-scale businesses (supported by the EC and UNOPS)

- Rebuilding infrastructure such as destroyed bridges between the conflicting sides in Moldova as important as small steps for confidence building.
- Cooperation between Georgians and Ossetians within the framework of small infrastructure projects funded by the EU and UNDP.
- Cross-border cooperation among border municipalities in Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia promoting reform of local administration undertaken with the support of the OSCE presences in the two countries.

### **The role of the OSCE**

The important role of the OSCE was emphasized by a number of speakers. The OSCE often facilitated contacts between parties to a conflict. Although it was not a donor organization, it could make its political influence felt and make recommendations to donors. Based on its experience in the field, it could help identify projects supporting conflict resolution and prevention.

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#### **Working Group III**

##### **Civil Society**

Discussants from government agencies, journalism, NGOs, PVOs, as well as international organizations, brought their experiences into a lively exchange on the problems of building civil society in a post-conflict environment. The discussion, initiated by OSCE representatives' reports from Moldova, Georgia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Albania, presented several common themes. The following points represent an attempt to synthesize the general discussion.

- Challenges of democratization, evolution to market economies, and establishment of the rule of law were present in all countries prior to conflict. Wars or violent confrontations only complicated the job of rebuilding shattered infrastructure and civil institutions and sharpened the already existing difficulty of attracting job-creating investment.
- Attracting investment, in turn, was further complicated by bureaucracies or powerful individuals who had profited from the dislocations of war-time economies. These groups did not want to lose their prerogatives and profits if true peace and civil society were established.
- Assistance programs are important as a means of raising the standard of living of vulnerable populations and restoring popular participation in the rebuilding of society. However, these programs can inadvertently foster corruption if the downstream effects of aid programs are not taken into account, or if assistance is given to corrupt establishments, or if legal reforms are not simultaneously undertaken to require public accounting for the use of assistance.
- NGO's and the press have a role to play in exposing corruption, holding governments accountable for use of funds, educating both public and professionals in international standards of legal and financial accountability, and nurturing new elites capable of running successful businesses and creating an investment-friendly environment where corruption is not tolerated as the norm but prosecuted as the exception.
- The terms "post-conflict" and "rehabilitation" need to be properly understood. In many places, "post-conflict" does not mean a formal end of hostilities, but rather a freezing in place of the conflict situation. Similarly, rehabilitation does not mean reconstructing the status quo ante.
- This situation – a cold peace -- retards the development of civil society and requires the generation of political will both from governmental and grass roots levels to move forward. Discussants noted some successes in joint actions among parties to a conflict to build such political will from the bottom up such as small joint business ventures; human contacts and exchanges; joint meetings of professionals, etc. Experience in Bosnia-

Herzegovina also presented possibilities for replication in this regard. Discussants emphasized that governments must endorse these efforts and take account of them in negotiations.

- In rehabilitating economies, nations must find new comparative advantages on which to build commerce and trade. This means reassessing their national assets and finding ways to attract both large-scale and small/medium enterprise investment. To do so, nations may need to pool resources and markets on a regional basis, or undertake an element of national coordination to maximize commercial value of their productive capacities. Once again, development of legal and financial law, and training of expert officials to implement it, especially judges, is essential.
- The OSCE can help civic associations by reminding participating States of their responsibility to respect the activities of NGOs, refrain from creating or tolerating an environment of harassment against them, and making best use of their suggestions and abilities.



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**FINAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**



## Participating States

### Albania

NANO Andi, Mr.	Advisor, Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Trade
ISLAMI Kastriot, Mr.	Member of Parliament

### Germany

RICHTSTEIG Michael, Dr.	Counsellor, Permanent Mission to the OSCE Email: <a href="mailto:osze@deubowien.at">osze@deubowien.at</a> (Attn.: Dr. Richtsteig)
VOGEL Wolfdietrich, Mr.	Ambassador, Embassy to Georgia

### United States of America

BANG-JENSEN Nina, Ms.	Executive Director/General Counsel Coalition for International Justice Email: <a href="mailto:nbang-jensen@cij.org">nbang-jensen@cij.org</a>
BATES Pamela, Ms.	Deputy Director, Multilateral Affairs, Office of Regional and Policy Affairs Email: <a href="mailto:batespm@state.gov">batespm@state.gov</a>
FAWCETT John, Mr.	Analyst/Relief Worker International Crisis Group Email: <a href="mailto:johnfawcett@compuserve.com">johnfawcett@compuserve.com</a>
ROSENBLATT Josiah, Mr.	Deputy Chief of Mission to the OSCE
SCOTT Robert, Mr.	OSCE Desk Officer, U.S. Department of State Email: <a href="mailto:scottrk@state.gov">scottrk@state.gov</a>
TAUBER Mark, Mr.	Political Counsellor, Embassy in Yerevan

### Armenia

ZAKARIAN Firdousi, Mr.	Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration Tel: 527322
AVANYAN Arthur, Mr.	Deputy Minister of Transport Tel: 5866010171 (mobile)
KHOSROEV Georgi, Mr.	Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador in Georgia
AGHAJANIAN Dziunik, Ms.	Head of Information Monitoring Division, Department of Policy Planning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
TEVANIAN Andranik, Mr.	Adviser to the Minister of Economy Tel: 595106
NERSESSIAN Varuzhan, Mr.	Desk Officer for the OSCE and EU, European Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tel: 566840
KAMALIAN Mher, Mr.	Senior Specialist of the Administrative Institution Department, Government Tel: 523679
KARMIRSHALYAN Vladimir, Mr.	Executive Director, National Centre for Democracy and Human Rights
ALAVERDYAN Larisa, Ms.	Executive Director, Foundation against the Violation of Law Tel: 568272

POGHOSIAN Gevorg, Mr.	Director, Institute of Law and Philosophy Tel: 573309
SHAKHNAZARIAN Nelson, Mr.	Leading Specialist, Institute of Economic Research, Ministry of Economy Tel: 225175
MKRTCHIAN Nerses, Mr.	Expert, Armenian Centre for National Studies Tel:528780
GRIGORIAN Marina, Ms.	Journalist, Voice of Armenia Tel: 392097
HARAPETIAN Gagik, Mr.	Journalist, Hayastani Hanrapetutiun
NAVASARDIAN Boris, Mr.	President of the Yerevan Press Centre Email: <a href="mailto:boris@ypc.am">boris@ypc.am</a>
HARUTYUNYAN Tigzan, Mr.	General Director of the Noyan Tapan Information Centre Email: <a href="mailto:nt1@noyan-tapan.am">nt1@noyan-tapan.am</a>

### Austria/Chairman-in-Office

GÜRER Heidemaria, Ms.	Ambassador to Central Asia and the Caucasus Email: <a href="mailto:heidemaria.guerer@wien.bmaa.gv.at">heidemaria.guerer@wien.bmaa.gv.at</a>
ATZLER Elke, Ms.	Minister, MFA, Vienna Email: <a href="mailto:elke.atzler@wien.bmaa.gv.at">elke.atzler@wien.bmaa.gv.at</a>
BERGER Eva, Ms.	Honorary Consul, Tbilisi Tel: 778215
HAVLIK Peter, Mr.	Deputy Director, Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies

### Azerbaijan

AMIRBAYOV Elchin, Mr.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PASHAEV Fikret, Mr.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
ABDULLAYEV Elmir, Mr.	Agency on the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of the Liberated Territories
ZEYNALOV Adil, Mr.	Agency on the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of the Liberated Territories
RUSTAMOV Emin, Mr.	Agency on the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of the Liberated Territories

### Belarus

ZDOROV Denis, Mr.	Second Secretary, Department of Ecological, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Email: <a href="mailto:mail@mfabelar.minsk.by">mail@mfabelar.minsk.by</a>
ROMANOVSKY Anton, Mr.	Member of National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus; President of Belorussian Red Cross Republican Committee Email: <a href="mailto:brc@home.by">brc@home.by</a> or <a href="mailto:redcross@un.minsk.by">redcross@un.minsk.by</a>

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

JURISIC Duska, Ms.	Journalist, OBN TV Email: <a href="mailto:duskaj1@yahoo.com">duskaj1@yahoo.com</a>
KALAJDZIC Verica, Ms.	Journalist,, RTV TV Email: <a href="mailto:vericak@rtvbih.ba">vericak@rtvbih.ba</a>

## Canada

LOTIN Henry, Mr.	First Secretary, Delegation to the OSCE Email: <a href="mailto:henry.lotin@dfait-maeci.gc.ca">henry.lotin@dfait-maeci.gc.ca</a>
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## Estonia

KEERD Birgit, Ms.	Attaché, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Email: <a href="mailto:birgit.keerd@mfa.ee">birgit.keerd@mfa.ee</a>
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## France

MUSSO Mireille, Mrs.	Ambassador, Embassy in Georgia Tel:99532
BARBIER Elisabeth, Ms.	Deputy Head of Delegation to the OSCE Email: <a href="mailto:elisabeth.barbier@diplomatie.fr">elisabeth.barbier@diplomatie.fr</a>

## Georgia

BOURDULI Georgi, Mr.	Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
MACHAVARIANI Irakli, Mr.	Personal Representative of President Shevardnadze on Political, Security and Conflict Settlement Issues
APTSIAURI David, Mr	Director, International Economical Relations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
AKHVLEDIANI Margarita, Ms.	News Manager Email:eranews@access.sanet.ge
CHOIKLI Serj, Mr.	Journalist, Iberia Times Magazine
DARCHIASHVILI David, Mr.	Member of the Board Email:cipdd@access.sanet.ge
DEKANOIDZE Khatia, Ms.	Advisor, Office of the President Email: khatiadek@hotmail.com
DEVDAIANI Aghi, Mr.	First Secretary, OSCE desk, Department of International Organizations
GIORGADZE David, Mr.	Assistant of the Coordinator of the Presidential Programme for the Implementation of the Scientific Potential on the University Basis
GIORGADZE Revaz, Mr.	Deputy Main State Coordinator of the Presidential Programme
GOGSADZE Zaal, Mr.	Head of Department of International Organizations
IMEDASHVILI Elena, Ms.	Director, Black Sea Press Association Email: bspress@access.sanet.ge
KAVILADZE Alexandre, Mr.	Deputy Director of "Kurortinvest"
KAKHISHVILI Nogzar, Mr.	General Director of the Scientific Enterprises "MIONI"
KAPANADZE Vaso, Mr.	Journalist, Resonance Magazine Tel: 943696
KHAKIASHVILI Nodar, Mr.	Senior referent, Trade Unions Agglomeration of Georgia, Tel: 380538
KERESLIDZE David, Mr.	Deputy Director, International Economical Relations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
KVASHILAVA Bakur, Mr.	Office of the President, Advisor on Foreign Policy
LATUASHVILI Giorgi, Mr.	President of "Kurortinvest"
MIKELADZE Givi, Mr.	Professor, Tbilisi State University, Member of the Business Academy
MIKELADZE Giorgi ,Mr.	Interpreter for the Fund for the Presidential Programme
MIKELADZE Teimuraz, Mr.	Main State Coordinator of the Presidential

	Programme for the Implementation of the Scientific Potential on the University Basis
MUKBANIANI Zviad, Mr.	Executive Director, Caucasus Links Email: <a href="mailto:links@caucasus.net">links@caucasus.net</a>
REKHVIASHVILI Romaz, Mr.	Chairman, Caucasian Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Studies Email: <a href="mailto:caucasus@geo.net.ge">caucasus@geo.net.ge</a>
SIKHARULIDZE Kakha, Mr.	Head of the OSCE desk, Department of International Organization
TCHITANAVA Tamar, Ms.	Second Secretary, OSCE desk, Department of International Organizations
VARDANASHVILI Teomuraz, Mr.	Head of the Economical and Investment Councils of the State Chancellery
KANSELAKI Irakli, Mr.	President, Association for the protection of consumer rights of Georgia Email: <a href="mailto:georgeng@access.sanet.ge">georgeng@access.sanet.ge</a>
TCHICHNA David, Mr.	Vice President, Association for the protection of consumer rights of Georgia

## Greece

SKRONIAS Vassilis, Mr.	Head of the Economic Section, Embassy in Georgia Tel: 955883
------------------------	---

## United Kingdom

HAYWOOD Nigel, Mr.	Deputy Head of UK Delegation to the OSCE Email: <a href="mailto:ukdel@netway.at">ukdel@netway.at</a>
--------------------	---

## Hungary

SIPOS Eva, Ms.	Third Secretary, OSCE Desk Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Budapest Email: <a href="mailto:esipos@kum.hu">esipos@kum.hu</a>
----------------	---

## Kazakhstan

SHAMSUTDIROVA Svetlana, Ms.	Chairman, Association of Entrepreneurs, Kazakhstan
SHERIPZHAN Nadyrov, Mr.	Head of Economical Security Department, Institute of Strategic Studies under the President
DAURANOV Ildar, Mr.	Director of Business Centre, Institute of Economic Research under Ministry of Energy, Trade and Industry
ANDREEV Andrey, Mr.	Chairman, NGO "Legal Initiative"
SESTAGER Aknazarov, Mr.	Chairman, NGO "Ecology Biosphere"

## Kyrgyzstan

PERFILIEV Boris, Mr.	President, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Kyrgyzstan Email: <a href="mailto:cci-kr@imfiko.bishkek.su">cci-kr@imfiko.bishkek.su</a>
----------------------	--

## the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

MARKOVSKI Jordan, Mr.	Deputy Minister of Finance, Economist, Ministry of
-----------------------	--

	Finance Tel.: +389 91 116 140 Fax: +389 91 116 313
DZAFERI Nazif, Mr.	OSCE Desk Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Tel.: +389 91 110 333 Fax: +389 91 115 790 Email:
TODOROV Zoran, Mr.	Head of Human Dimension Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
GAGACEV Tome, Mr.	Businessman
GOGOVSKI Gligorie, Mr.	Businessman

## Moldova

SEVEROVAN Adrian, Mr.	First Secretary, International Economic Organisations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Email: econdep@mfa.un.md
COTRUTA Victor, Mr.	Executive Director, REC Moldova Email: vcotruta@moldova.md

## Uzbekistan

ABDURKAHMANOV Abdulgafar, Mr.	Uzbekistan Ambassador in Baku, Azerbaijan
KAYUMOV Valikhan, Mr.	Associate, Joint Venture "TAKAS"
RAZAKOV Rustam, Mr.	Director, Centre for Ecology of Water Management

## Netherlands

BERGSMA Daphne, Ms.	Desk Officer, Security and Defence Policy Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Email: d.bergsma@dvb.minbuza.nl
BAIDASHVILI Irakly, Mr.	Netherlands Consulate Tbilisi
ROELOFS Sandra Elisabeth, Ms.	Assistant to the Honorary Consul of the Netherlands, Netherlands Consulate Tbilisi Email: <a href="mailto:sandra@caucasus.net">sandra@caucasus.net</a>

## Poland

BORAWSKI Petr, Mr.	Ambassador to Georgia
MALARSKI Marek, Mr.	Senior Expert, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Tel.: +48 22 523 95 90 Fax: +48 22 523 91 49

## Portugal/European Union

RUFINO Paulo, Mr.	Deputy Head of Delegation in Vienna Tel: 00431 5855051
REVELAS Kyriakos, Mr.	Principal Administrator, OSCE Unit, DG External Relations Email: kyriakos.revelas@cec.eu.int

## Romania

BOTA Liviu Aurelian, Mr.	Ambassador, Head of the Permanent Mission to the OSCE Email: mpromviena@magnet.at
KOSTEN Marius, Mr.	Consul, Embassy in Georgia Tel: 250098
LEONTE Gabriel Octavian, Mr.	Attache, OSCE Desk, MFA, Bucharest Tel: +4012307579 Email: dosce@mae.kappa.ro

## Russian Federation

RUDENKO Andrey, Mr.	Counsellor, OSCE Desk, Department for All-European Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Tel.: +7 095 244 45 34 Fax: +7 095 244 43 38
YEROKHIN Alexander, Mr.	First Secretary, Embassy to Georgia Email: sunrus@access.sanet.ge
TSYBIKZKAPOV Erdew, Mr.	First Secretary, Embassy to Georgia Tel: 955911

## Holy See

MADTHA Amboz, Mr.	Counsellor, Embassy to Georgia
-------------------	--------------------------------

## Sweden

TROEDSSON Anders, Mr.	Diplomat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Stockholm Email: Anders.troedsson@foreign.ministry.se
-----------------------	--

## Switzerland

CERRATTI Maurizio, Mr.	Desk Officer, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Berne Email: <a href="mailto:maurizio.cerratti@seco.admin.ch">maurizio.cerratti@seco.admin.ch</a>
DUERST Markus, Mr.	Agency for Development and Cooperation

## Ukraine

GRIDENKO Ivan, Mr.	Military Attache, Embassy to Georgia
--------------------	--------------------------------------

## OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation

### Israel

BEGASHVILI Irina, Ms.	Press Affairs
-----------------------	---------------

## OSCE Secretariat and Field Activities

### OSCE Secretariat

PRICE Thomas, Mr.	Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities Email: <a href="mailto:tprice@osce.org">tprice@osce.org</a>
KIRCHER Ingrid, Ms.	Senior Mission Liaison Officer, OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre Email: <a href="mailto:ikircher@osce.org">ikircher@osce.org</a>
HEISKANEN Janne, Mr.	Environmental Adviser Email: <a href="mailto:jheiskanen@osce.org">jheiskanen@osce.org</a>
FRIIS Ulla, Ms.	Senior Meeting Assistant Email: <a href="mailto:ufriis@osce.org">ufriis@osce.org</a>
HAYDN Martina, Ms.	Meeting Room Attendant Email: <a href="mailto:mhaydn@osce.org">mhaydn@osce.org</a>

### OSCE Presence in Albania

AHRENS Geert-Hinrich, Mr.	Ambassador, Head of Presence Email: <a href="mailto:osce-gha@icc.al.eu.org">osce-gha@icc.al.eu.org</a>
---------------------------	---

### OSCE Centre in Almaty

SCHÖNING Ulrich, Mr.	Ambassador, Head of Centre Email: <a href="mailto:osce@nursat.kz">osce@nursat.kz</a>
ACIKEL Asim, Mr.	Economic and Environmental Officer Email: <a href="mailto:osce@nursat.kz">osce@nursat.kz</a>

### OSCE Centre in Ashgabad

LEPRI Riccardo, Mr.	Economic/Environmental Officer Email: <a href="mailto:rlepri@ascetu.cat.glasnet.ru">rlepri@ascetu.cat.glasnet.ru</a>
---------------------	---

### OSCE Centre in Bishkek

VISAPÄÄ Markku, Mr.	Economic and Environmental Officer Email: <a href="mailto:mv@osce.it.kg">mv@osce.it.kg</a>
---------------------	---

### OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

COBLENTZ Marina, Ms.	Senior Political Advisor/Regional Dimension Email: <a href="mailto:marinac@oscebih.org">marinac@oscebih.org</a>
----------------------	--

## OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya

DORENWENDT Thomas, Mr.	Human Rights Economic Officer, Email: <a href="mailto:tdoren@gmx.de">tdoren@gmx.de</a>
------------------------	---

## OSCE Mission to Georgia

LACOMBE Jean-Michel, Mr.	Ambassador, Head of Mission
FARRELL William, Mr.	Economic Counsellor
ROBILLARD Yann, Mr.	Political Advisor
RASMUSSEN Klaus, Mr.	Political Advisor
SELEPEC Peter, Mr.	Mission Press and Protocol Officer Email: <a href="mailto:selepec@yahoo.com">selepec@yahoo.com</a>
HEINRICH Hans-Georg, Mr	Political Advisor
ARIOLI Maria Emilia, Ms.	Human Rights Officer

## OSCE Mission to Latvia

PIKKANEN Juha, Mr.	Political Officer Email: <a href="mailto:juha@osce.lv">juha@osce.lv</a>
--------------------	--

## OSCE Mission to Moldova

SIDOROFF Matti Olavi, Mr.	Public Relations Officer Email: <a href="mailto:msidoroff@osce.md">msidoroff@osce.md</a>
---------------------------	---

## OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje

SCHENKER Harald, Mr.	Mission Member Email: <a href="mailto:oscemsk@unet.com.mk">oscemsk@unet.com.mk</a>
----------------------	---

## OSCE Mission to Tajikistan

HRISTEA Traian, Mr.	Political Officer Email: <a href="mailto:traian@osce.td.silk.org">traian@osce.td.silk.org</a> or or <a href="mailto:traian@osce.tajik.net">traian@osce.tajik.net</a>
---------------------	--

## OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia

ROSHAN Yaqub, Mr.	Economic/Environmental Expert Email: <a href="mailto:myroshan@hotmail.com">myroshan@hotmail.com</a>
-------------------	--

## OSCE Office in Yerevan

REEVE Roy, Mr.	Ambassador, Head of Office Email: <a href="mailto:onaira@undp.am">onaira@undp.am</a> (Attn.: Mr. Roy Reeve)
EVERS Frank, Mr.	Economic Environmental Advisor Tel: 540708



## International and Intergovernmental Organizations

### United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

KHAN Hassan, Mr.	Head of Unit, Branch office Tbilisi Email: <a href="mailto:khanh@unhcr.ch">khanh@unhcr.ch</a>
------------------	--

### United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

NOWAK Robert, Mr.	Economic Affairs Officer Email: <a href="mailto:robert.nowak@unece.org">robert.nowak@unece.org</a>
-------------------	---

### UNOCHA

LOGAN Sarah, Ms.	Field Advisor Email: <a href="mailto:unocha@unocha.org.ge">unocha@unocha.org.ge</a>
------------------	--

### UNOMIG

DALE Catherine, Ms.	Special Assistant to the Special representative of the Secretary General
---------------------	--

### USAID

HORNING Carol, Ms.	Regional Chief Democracy and Governments
ROSENBERG Ruth, Ms.	Project Development Officer Tel: 529975

### International Committee of the Red Cross

BELLON Francois, Mr.	Head of Mission
----------------------	-----------------

### Southeast European Cooperative Initiative

KEENAN Willis, Mr.	UN/ECE Regional Adviser and SECI Coordinator Email: <a href="mailto:w.keenan@mbox.unicc.org">w.keenan@mbox.unicc.org</a>
--------------------	---

### World Bank

OWEN Joe, Mr.	Head of Office
SARGSYAN Vigen, Mr.	Public Affairs Specialist Tel: 524884

### United Nations Volunteer Programme

STAFFORD Kathy, Ms.	Community Facilitator
---------------------	-----------------------

## Non-Governmental Organizations ( NGOs )

### AFPLANE

#### Association française de stratégie et développement d'entreprise

POTELLE Claude, Mr.	Economist, former President of the European Strategic Planning Federation Email: eastwestcr@aol.com or <a href="mailto:cpotelle@aol.com">cpotelle@aol.com</a>
---------------------	--

### CEE Bankwatch Network

HLOBIL Petr, Mr.	Energy Coordinator Email: <a href="mailto:petr.hlobil@ecn.cz">petr.hlobil@ecn.cz</a>
KOCHLADZE Manana, Ms.	Georgia International Coordinator Email: <a href="mailto:manana@greens.org.ge">manana@greens.org.ge</a>

### CIPDD

DARCHIASVILI David, Mr.	Researcher
GURGENIDZE Paata, Ms.	Researcher

### International Confederation of Free Trade Unions

BORISOV Vadim, Mr.	Representative for the CIS Tel: +70959157899 Email: <a href="mailto:istudies@home.relline.ru">istudies@home.relline.ru</a>
--------------------	--

### Hilfswerk Austria

LOMSADZE Katino, Mrs.	Office manager Tel:221921
-----------------------	------------------------------

### Special Guests of the OSCE Mission

PARASTAEV Alan, Mr.	Director, South Ossetian Centre on Humanitarian Researches Email: <a href="mailto:key@ip.osgf.ge">key@ip.osgf.ge</a>
KOCHIEV Kosta, Mr.	Researcher, South Ossetian Centre on Humanitarian Initiatives and Researches Tel: 42381
GAGLOEVA Evelina, Ms.	South Ossetia, Advisor on Economic Issues
LAKERBAYA Zurab,	Political Scientist Tel: 995670
PLIEV Alan, Mr.	Economic Expert Tel: 432 92
RASMUSSEN Rexane, Ms.	Researcher
VOGL Doris, Ms.	Researcher, State University of Tbilisi Email: <a href="mailto:dorisvogl@hotmail.com">dorisvogl@hotmail.com</a>