



ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

THE SECRETARY GENERAL

**ANNUAL REPORT 2001
ON OSCE ACTIVITIES**

(1 November 2000 - 31 October 2001)

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This Annual Report has been prepared by the Section for External Co-operation in the Office of the Secretary General. OSCE institutions and field operations have provided the respective information on their activities.

Formatting and editing: OSCE Conference Services
Cover design: Regional Program Office - Vienna

SEC.DOC/3/01
26 November 2001

Original: ENGLISH

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INTRODUCTION

The reporting period, from 1 November 2000 to 31 October 2001, saw another year of development and consolidation for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The end of the period under review was marked by an unprecedented tragedy, the outrageous criminal terrorist attacks against the United States, which reinforced the Organization's determination to make full use of all its instruments and mechanisms, including those set forth in the Platform for Security Co-operation in the field of co-operative security, to fight the plague of terrorism, as part of a global coalition against it. Participating States have expressed their clear determination to elaborate a detailed plan of action to combat terrorism at the Ministerial Council meeting due to take place in Bucharest on 3 and 4 December 2001. Furthermore, an International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terrorism will be held in Bishkek on 12 and 13 December 2001.

As a pre-eminent instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict rehabilitation, the OSCE continued to expand its activities and commitments during the period under review. In 2001, the OSCE opened a mission in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), substantially enhanced the Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje and realized the return of the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya.

The need to develop co-ordinated responses to the persisting challenges to European security in all its dimensions, which was the driving force behind the Charter for European Security adopted at the Istanbul Summit of 18 and 19 November 1999, has unfortunately once again been confirmed, not only by the tragic attacks against the United States, but also by the persistence and the resurgence of problems and conflict in the OSCE area. The OSCE response, in particular the work of the OSCE missions in the field, is enhanced by close interaction with partner organizations, as was the case for example with the OSCE activities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. There close liaison primarily with NATO and the European Union, was required

in order to bring about a political settlement and to harmonize each organization's action in support of the settlement, under European Union co-ordination, while also engaging such other partners as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Council of Europe. The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje is exemplary of the OSCE's ability to respond to developments in crisis areas swiftly and effectively, in close concert with the host country, using a wide range of tools and mechanisms.

The year under review was also a year of consolidation, following the restructuring of the Secretariat that took place in the previous reporting period, in the wake of the Istanbul Summit. The new management structures have become a reality and, for example, in October enabled the Organization to increase the number of monitors and other mission members deployed to Skopje by over 150 in a matter of weeks. The Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams/Mission Staffing Information System (REACT/MSIS) concept was put into operation on 2 April 2001 and is now fully functional. It gives the participating States, supported by the Department of Human Resources in the Secretariat, the ability to identify experts accurately and quickly and to deploy them rapidly to the field.

The fall of the Milosevic regime in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the country's subsequent admission to the United Nations and the OSCE, on 2 and 10 November 2000, respectively, marked a momentous turn in favour of stability and democratization. The OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) was formally inaugurated on 16 March 2001, with a mandate to "...provide assistance and expertise to the Yugoslav authorities at all levels [...] in the fields of democratization and the protection of human rights", and also to "assist in the restructuring and training of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary". It operates in very close co-operation with the authorities of the FRY, as a true partnership and joint venture. The successful multi-ethnic training of ethnic Albanian officers and their reintegration into the police forces of the FRY in southern Serbia, and the adoption of a multi-ethnic policing approach in Serbia and the FRY as a whole will

be one of the key indicators of transition to stability and democratic reforms.

After two years of consistent advocacy by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo of increased participation by the people of Kosovo in administration at all levels, as well as of de-politicization and professionalization of public institutions, the Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self Government was promulgated on 15 May 2001, and the country was deemed ready to hold general elections on 17 November 2001. Holding genuinely inclusive elections, fully respecting United Nations Security Council resolution No. 1244, poses one of the greatest challenges of the post-conflict rehabilitation of Kosovo. Thanks to the efforts of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and its partners, coupled with appeals by the authorities of the FRY and Serbia, large numbers of Kosovo Serbs have registered to vote and, hopefully, will take part in the elections.

Establishing a strong and credible Kosovo police service remains a major challenge facing the international community, and the OSCE Mission's programme of police education has already made a significant contribution to strengthening the rule of law. By December 2001, an estimated total of 5,700 officers will have been trained since the start of the programme, 16 per cent of whom are minority representatives. The OSCE's effort towards post-conflict rehabilitation includes the Institute for Civil Administration, established by the OSCE Mission in February 2000. The Institute has worked to create a professional civil service by training more than 3,200 senior and middle-management civil servants in principles of democratic governance.

The OSCE Presence in Albania continued its contribution towards achieving a lasting stability in Albania through political brokerage and monitoring, as well as promoting a strengthening of the legitimacy of democratic government institutions and of civil society. The OSCE Presence also continued to chair the Friends of Albania group, an informal and open-ended group of interested donor countries and international organizations, which aims at reinforcing and focusing international support for Albania.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the OSCE Mission remains at the forefront in fostering respect for human rights, the rule of law,

inter-ethnic tolerance, democratic institutions and democratic control of the armed forces. In the November 2000 elections, for the first time since the war, non-nationalistic governments with reformist platforms were elected at both the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina and at that of one of its entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Furthermore, for the first time, political parties have been able to compromise on key legislation, as was the case with the adoption of the Election Law in August 2001. The OSCE now stands ready to hand over responsibility and ownership of the elections process to the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The OSCE's work over the past year has been largely influenced by a maturing of the local institutions and overall prevailing positive developments: the return of refugees continued to accelerate; responsibility for the administration of elections and for the entity Ombudsman offices is being transferred to the local authorities; and overdue key legislation such as the Election Law was adopted. The situation in the country continues to be affected by a high number of refugees and internally displaced persons. While the rate of repossession of property has significantly increased in the past year (double that of the previous period), this has been particularly noticeable in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the Republika Srpska of Bosnia and Herzegovina still lagging. However, in all parts of the country, the rate of return has failed to increase compared to what the rate of repossession might indicate *prima facie*.

Following dramatic changes in the political situation in Croatia in 2000, the OSCE Mission to Croatia has increased its efforts in support of the country's first steps towards integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures. The Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union was initialled on 14 May 2001, opening up new and momentous challenges for the country. The OSCE has been very active in helping Croatia to meet its OSCE commitments to the return and reintegration of refugees, and in particular in promoting cross-border return to and from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures for Croatia means accomplishing a thorough reform of both legislation and institutions such as local government, the judiciary and the police, to

bring them into line with international standards. The OSCE Mission stands ready to support the authorities in their efforts to modernize.

Nearly two and a half years after the withdrawal of its international personnel from its offices in Grozny, the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya was able to return to its offices in Znamenskoye in northern Chechnya. The return marks a significant improvement in the Group's ability not only to assist in providing humanitarian aid and assistance to those afflicted by the conflict, but also to implement other parts of its mandate.

Apart from the return of the OSCE Assistance Group to its offices in Chechnya, the period under review saw a consolidation of the OSCE engagement in the Caucasus following the opening, in the previous period, of new OSCE Offices in Baku and Yerevan, coupled with the start of a border monitoring operation by the OSCE Mission to Georgia on the border between Chechnya, in the Russian Federation, and Georgia.

In its second year of operation, the OSCE Office in Yerevan concentrated its efforts on co-ordinating efforts by the international community to assist the Armenian Government in putting in place a strategy to combat corruption. Armenia's accession to the Council of Europe at the beginning of the year also brought about the Office's involvement in activities related to the reform of legislation required to bring it into compliance with Council of Europe standards. Furthermore, the Office was instrumental in bringing about Armenia's ratification of the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.

Following Azerbaijan's accession to the Council of Europe, the OSCE Office in Baku became increasingly involved in institutional reform and capacity building. With a whole host of new legislation still to be implemented, the Office faces a challenging task in conducting public awareness initiatives, as well as training and professional development seminars for public officials called upon to implement the new legislation.

The period under review marked the second year of enhanced border monitoring operations by the OSCE Mission to Georgia.

Despite hostile weather and geographical conditions in the area, the Mission successfully conducted monitoring along the border between Georgia and the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation. The Mission was also engaged in the negotiations for a settlement of the conflict in the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict. Some positive developments took place during the year, notably the agreement concerning the creation of a Russian-Georgian agency to finance economic rehabilitation programmes in the zone of conflict, to be funded from the respective State budgets. Although an agreement was not reached on issues such as the return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons, a dialogue is going on, and that in itself is a major achievement.

The OSCE's engagement in the Baltic-Black Sea region continued through its field operations in Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Moldova and Ukraine. The OSCE Mission to Estonia is very actively promoting a model of multilingual education, an issue which is of particular importance to the Russian-language community in Estonia. In the period under review, the main focus of the OSCE Mission to Latvia continued to be on citizenship and naturalization issues, with a view to supporting the more than 500,000 Latvian residents who still have the status of non-citizens. The OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus continued to implement its mandate to assist the Belarusian authorities in promoting democratic institutions and in complying with other OSCE commitments, especially in the field of elections and freedom of the media.

The OSCE Mission to Moldova was one of the main actors in the renewal of negotiations for a political settlement between the Republic of Moldova and Transdniestria. Furthermore, the Mission is closely following implementation of the agreement on the complete withdrawal of Russian troops from the country, while at the same time executing a number of projects aimed at encouraging contacts and reconciliation on both sides of the Dniestr.

In Kyiv, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator oversees the work of a team of international and local experts assisting the authorities of Ukraine in adapting legislation, institutions and processes to the requirements of a modern democracy, based on the rule of law.

The OSCE's interest in the Central Asian region has further increased in 2001. The OSCE Centres in Almaty, Ashgabad, Bishkek and Tashkent and the Mission to Tajikistan have been very active in developing a regional approach through the organization of a number of regional conferences and seminars on issues such as water resource management (Dushanbe), freedom of the media (Dushanbe) and translating policy into effective environmental law (Almaty). Throughout the year, the OSCE has been very actively helping countries in the Central Asian region to cope with the many economic and environmental challenges facing them. Other areas in which the OSCE's efforts across the region have continued to include trafficking in drugs, weapons and human beings; reform of the judicial and penitentiary systems; the media; freedom of religion; gender issues; and ratification and implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information; Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.

The OSCE's renewed commitment to Central Asia was further corroborated by the appointment, on 16 May 2001, of Ambassador Wilhelm Höynck as Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia. At the request of the Chairmanship, Ambassador Höynck has taken an active part in the organization of the International Conference Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terrorism, to be held in Bishkek on 13 and 14 December 2001.

These and other activities deployed by the OSCE in the field have in the past years led to an unprecedented growth in human and financial resources. Such growth requires ever more decisive steps to improve the management and accountability of the whole Organization, including its field operations. The need for financial rigour and transparency must be reconciled with the need for flexibility and rapid deployment, as well as the overriding imperative to fulfil political tasks and objectives as set forth in the mandates.

Improvements in the budgetary processes, management and accountability were at the forefront of the activities of the Secretary General as the chief administrative officer of the OSCE, together with building of the capacity and capability for planning and

rapid action and more effective support for the field.

Efforts by the Secretariat to improve overall management continued. Proposals submitted during the reporting period, such as the new draft financial regulations or proposals on project activities funded from extra-budgetary resources bear this out. Moreover, the OSCE is undertaking an in-depth review of its internal management and information technology support.

Work processes, internal controls and information systems, including the procurement and fixed-asset management systems, are currently under review. At the end of the process, it is expected that a comprehensive, cost-effective strategy for an integrated resource management system will be conceptualized and implemented. The review is being undertaken in close co-operation with the Informal Financial Committee, participating States, institutions, missions and all sections of the Secretariat.

The Internal Oversight Section in the Secretariat presented its first work plan following the adoption of its strengthened mandate, and during the reporting period, the Section has been increasingly active in its oversight and audit functions.

The Secretariat has assisted the Chairmanship further in preparing for working groups and negotiations aimed at reaching an agreement on legal capacity and privileges and immunities for the OSCE. It has produced a working paper, serving as a basis for discussion, which focuses on a convention granting the OSCE international legal personality, legal capacity and the privileges and immunities usually accorded to international organizations. Another paper draws attention to a number of serious problems the OSCE is encountering due to the lack of legal personality, especially in respect of potential liabilities.

The establishment of the Department of Human Resources provided a significant opportunity to rationalize and focus activities related to the management of the Organization's human resources.

Among the priorities established by this Department are the development of a common set of staff regulations for all categories of staff, improvements in the recruitment and

selection procedure, greater emphasis on the importance of training, especially for local staff in the missions, and the rationalization of personnel entitlements. This effort aims at modernizing the human OSCE's resource management, above all by standardizing working conditions and establishing just and equal treatment for all categories of OSCE staff and bringing in a more credible, transparent system of recruitment, reflecting the wishes of the participating States and the end users of the Department's services within the OSCE.

Realizing the objectives relating to REACT, as set out at the Istanbul Summit, has been posing a formidable, complex challenge to both the Organization and the Secretariat. Much additional work will need to be done, but with the system now functional and available to all participating States, field missions and Secretariat staff, the Organization has at its disposal a powerful instrument that takes full advantage of sound business practices and modern information technology alike. For the REACT system to attain full functionality will take time, effort, support and participation from the OSCE participating States.

The Operations Centre provides for significant planning and co-ordination capacity within the OSCE Secretariat, and it has assisted in the development of a number of recent mission deployments and enhancements, notably in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The OSCE has continued to integrate a gender aspect into its work and to take into account equal rights for women and men throughout as field operations activities. All field activities have appointed one of their staff members as a focal point for gender issues. These focal points are tasked with co-ordinating with the Gender Adviser of the Secretariat and the Gender Unit of the ODIHR in the implementation of the Action Plan for Gender Issues and are continuing to develop programmes aimed at increasing the participation of women in all aspects of civil society.

To further the implementation of the decisions adopted at the Istanbul Summit and in view of the OSCE's interest in an enhanced role in police-related activities, an experts' meeting on these matters was convened on 28 and 29 June 2001 in Vienna. Among other

things, it studied the possible establishment of a new post of Senior Police Adviser under my office. The discussion on this issue is continuing.

The Secretariat has organized a comprehensive discussion on improving the OSCE's visibility and corporate image and the public's receptivity to it and concrete steps to this end are being prepared.

The challenges posed by the implementation of the Platform for Co-operative Security have led to an unprecedented number of reciprocal high-level contacts and meetings with partner organizations and institutions. In this context, the OSCE's relations with the United Nations, the European Union and the European Commission, the Council of Europe and NATO have undergone considerable developments. For example, a number of new staff-level and working-level meetings are being organized by the External Co-operation Section with United Nations Headquarters and the United Nations Development Programme. A number of further practical initiatives, based on the principles of the OSCE Platform for Co-operative Security, are also under way, with a view to enhancing pragmatic operational co-operation between the OSCE and other international organizations and institutions, especially where it counts most: in the field. Details on the co-operation and co-ordination with international partners can be found in the Secretary General's *Annual Report on Interaction Between Organizations and Institutions in the OSCE Area*.

Long-established consultations with partner organizations such as the tripartite meeting with the Council of Europe and the United Nations Office at Geneva and other bodies of the United Nations system, the Target-Oriented Meeting, together with working-level meetings, are a primary tool for identifying potential areas of co-operation. The "2+2" high-level meetings with the Council of Europe have become "3+3" meetings with the Presidents of the two Parliamentary Assemblies joining the Chairmen and the Secretaries General. With regard to the International Organization for Migration, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on the occasion of a first visit by its Director General, Mr. Brunson McKinley, to the OSCE on 30 August 2001. Other more specific agreements were concluded with NATO and some other partners.

Relations with the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, currently comprising Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, as well as the Partners for Co-operation, namely, Japan, Korea and Thailand, were further expanded in 2001, following the acceptance, on 9 November 2000, of Thailand as a new Partner for Co-operation. An OSCE Mediterranean Seminar was jointly organized with the Republic of Croatia on the topic "The Implementation of OSCE Economic and Environmental Dimension Commitments: the OSCE Experience and its Relevance for the Mediterranean Region."

For the first time, both Japan and Korea co-hosted OSCE conferences. The OSCE-Japan Conference 2000 took place in Tokyo on 11 and 12 December 2000, on the topic "Comprehensive Security in Central Asia – Sharing OSCE and Asian Experiences". The OSCE-Korea Conference 2001 took place from 19 to 21 March 2001 in Seoul. The topic of the conference was "The Applicability of OSCE Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in North-East Asia".

Discussions, led by the Romanian Chairmanship, have taken place on the strengthening of the Economic and Environmental dimension. The concrete results and agreements provide additional guidance and will give greater visibility and responsibility to the new Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities. This will allow the Co-ordinator to assist the Chairman-in-Office even better in ensuring the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments in the economic and environmental dimension and to strengthen the ability of the OSCE to address economic, social and environmental aspects of security, at the same time while acting as an OSCE catalyst for international co-operation in these areas, and engaging international organizations, international financial institutions, regional groupings and businesses and non-governmental organizations.

Turning to yet another area of OSCE activities, one issue of growing concern for the OSCE region is the threat posed by the spread of small arms and light weapons. At the Vienna Ministerial Council meeting, the Organization adopted what is arguably the most comprehensive document on small arms agreed

by any international organization. The OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons brings together norms, principles and measures to regulate manufacture and trade; to improve co-operation in law enforcement; to secure and reduce stockpiles of weapons; and to incorporate measures relating to small arms into conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation activities.

In the year of its tenth anniversary, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has further consolidated its democratization and election observation programmes. The ODIHR today is the lead agency in Europe in the field of election observation, and is a highly respected partner in the field of democratization. In the reporting period, the ODIHR's Anti-Trafficking Project Fund, established in mid-February 2001, has greatly enhanced the ODIHR's efforts to combat trafficking. The fund is an important source of financing for OSCE field operations, and enables them to expand their initiatives in this field. The ODIHR also consolidated its increased efforts to improve the situation of Roma through the activities of the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues. For example, in December 2000, the Contact Point successfully organized the first-ever meeting of Roma parliamentarians and elected officials in Europe. The meeting was aimed at developing strategies to increase the participation of Roma communities in the political life of the countries in which they reside.

On 1 July 2001, the new OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), Rolf Ekéus of Sweden, assumed Office. He took up the baton from Max van der Stoel of the Netherlands who, nevertheless, has not left the OSCE entirely, after many years of excellent and ground-breaking work. Mr. van der Stoel was appointed by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office as his Personal Envoy with the mandate "to facilitate a dialogue and provide advice for a speedy solution of the current crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". Prior to his new appointment, High Commissioner van der Stoel was actively engaged in that country, in particular, in the setting up of the South-Eastern Europe University.

In the short period of his tenure thus far, High Commissioner Ekéus has focused

specially on such areas as the Estonian State Language Laws, education conducted in the Russian language in Ukraine and teaching of the Moldovan language for school pupils from minority communities, as well as the situation of Hungarian minorities abroad, with special reference to the Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries adopted by the Hungarian Government in June 2001. Furthermore, following the dramatic changes in the political landscape in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the former and the current High Commissioners were both able to take a more proactive stance, *inter alia*, by paying several visits to Belgrade. In particular, High Commissioner Ekéus, in co-operation with the Federal Ministry of National and Ethnic Communities, started supporting some minority-oriented projects, such as the establishment of a group of experts on minority education and the creation of a youth centre in Bujanovac in southern Serbia.

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media devoted special attention to the situation in Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, the Caucasus and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In April 2001, the third Freedom and Responsibility Yearbook, for 2000/2001, was launched. The Yearbook traditionally outlines the activities of the Representative and his Office. In addition, this year's edition provided a forum for authors from the Caucasus, Europe, Russia and other countries to present their individual views on freedom of expression and peace in the Caucasus. The second book in the series "In Defence of the Future" was published, also concentrating on the Caucasus. Essays by 26 leading Caucasian and Russian authors were collected. This was the first time that such a joint reflection on the future of the region had been published.

Among other activities by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the organization of an international round table on the protection of journalists in conflict areas, which took place in Berlin on 6 November 2001, is worthy of note.

The President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Adrian Severin of Romania, was elected for a second term at the Annual Session of the Parliamentary Assembly. President Severin has been very active in promoting parliamentary dialogue and implementation of OSCE commitments by participating States. This year, for the first time, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly took part in the "2+2/3+3" meetings. The parliamentary *ad hoc* working groups and democracy teams are a growing dimension in the Parliamentary Assembly. The work of the Democracy Teams on Belarus and on Moldova has intensified. The latter in particular joined efforts with the Finnish *Eduskunta* Parliament in the organization of an international seminar on self-government in Helsinki. Among other activities by the Assembly, the organization of an international conference on migration in Sintra, Portugal, in which more than 100 parliamentarians from over 40 countries participated, deserves mention. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has also devoted considerable effort to promoting the democratic values of transparency and accountability. A new *ad hoc* Committee on promoting transparency and accountability in the OSCE was created at the Tenth Annual Session of the Assembly. Throughout the reporting period, President Severin has been actively engaged in a debate on reform of the OSCE's decision-making process, with particular focus on the role of the Assembly as the democratic foundation of the Organization.

ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD

OSCE PRESENCE IN ALBANIA

OSCE's mandate in Albania since 1997 has been to prevent conflict through political brokerage and monitoring, while contributing to stability by strengthening the legitimacy of democratic government institutions and the vibrancy of civil society. The Presence was also tasked with ensuring co-operation between international organizations that were providing advice and assistance in Albania. At the end of 1997, the OSCE Permanent Council adjusted the mandate to provide for flexible co-ordination of the international community's efforts, and in 1998, the Friends of Albania began acting as a clearing house for information on international efforts in Albania in support of a coherent international strategy. Over the past year, co-ordination has more often taken place with the participation of the Government of Albania.

While the region continues to be troubled, Albania has made considerable progress since the establishment of the OSCE Presence in 1997, when the initial task was crisis management. However, democratization as a goal must include the consolidation of legitimate executive, judicial and legislative institutions, as well as the strengthening of a civil society and a viable economy. To that end, the Presence continues to be welcome in Albania and is pleased to continue to help Albania achieve a lasting stability that will permit its integration into Euro-Atlantic structures.

The staffing table of the OSCE Presence in Albania (including drivers, security guards and cleaners) currently comprises 137 positions, although some are not yet filled. Of these, 45 posts are for international staff members and a further 92 are to be filled by national staff. The field stations account for 26 international and 32 national posts.

Co-ordinating framework: Friends of Albania Group. Since October 1998, the Friends of Albania Group has supported the activities of the Presence. The Group was set up in the aftermath of serious rioting in Tirana. It brings together representatives, at both the national and the international levels, of

approximately 38 participating States and international organizations active in providing financial support, technical assistance and other forms of co-operation to Albania.

Apart from the political direction achieved in the local and international plenary meetings of the Group, much of its work occurs in technical meetings. In 2000, the Friends of Albania Group Secretariat in the Presence reorganized the Group at the technical level to reflect the structure of the Stability Pact, in order to facilitate the harmonization of on-going international assistance with newly developing initiatives at the regional level. This structure recognizes the lead role played by both the World Bank and the European Commission in the Stability Pact under Working Table II, and thus, in the context of organizing donor co-ordination in the economic development sector in Albania. During the year, the Secretariat particularly emphasized Table III issues (security, justice and home affairs) such as action to combat corruption, trafficking in human beings, asylum/migration and demilitarization, since these have been highlighted as key issues in past plenary sessions of the Friends of Albania Group.

The fifth International Friends of Albania Conference took place on 2 March 2001 in Brussels under the joint chairmanship of Sweden, representing the European Union Presidency, and Romania, representing the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office. This meeting was held back-to-back with the Consultative Group Meeting on Albania on 1 March 2001 organized by the World Bank and European Commission. The conclusions of the Friends welcomed the constructive and stabilizing role that Albania continued to play in the region and recognized the progress of reforms achieved by the Government of Albania since the meeting in 2000 in Vienna. The document outlined four priorities for the Government, to be tackled within the next year: (1) ensuring properly organized, timely and well-run parliamentary elections; (2) enhancing the fight against organized crime, including trafficking in and smuggling of human beings; (3) strengthening the rule of law and furthering the fight against corruption; and (4) maintaining progress on economic reform, including creating a favourable investment and business climate. In

support of these conclusions, the Presence has organized many of its activities along the lines of these priorities in order to assist the Government in better accomplishing its goals.

Support for the Government. Thanks to the excellent access to and working relations with Prime Minister Ilir Meta and now the 'Meta-2' Government, the Presence is in a unique position to be able to provide assistance and support to the Albanian Government. Main targets of the new Government include an intensification of the fight against organized crime, corruption and all kinds of trafficking; improvement of legislation and its implementation; and consolidation of the institutions of the rule of law. None of this can be achieved without a further in-depth and in-breadth reform of the public administration. The Presence is currently using its expertise and contacts, and closely working with the Government in all these fields. The Presence has maintained good working relations with the political parties and emerged from the recent general elections with a good relationship with the opposition as well.

Electoral process and voter registration. In preparation for the June parliamentary elections, the Presence provided political, legal and technical assistance to the Government and to the Central Electoral Commission. In December 2000, the Presence hosted a multi-party round table on the implementation of the recommendations by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human rights (ODIHR) arising out of the October 2000 local elections. In co-operation with the ODIHR, the Presence was successful in ensuring the implementation of most of these. The renewal of the Commission, following the resignation of the Chair and two other members, as well as the signing of an accord for electoral co-operation by the two main parties, led to greater professionalism in electoral administration and an improved political climate. The role of the Presence was, therefore, to support and advise local actors and to facilitate dialogue. The Presence was also a partner in the Voter Registration Project led by the Central Electoral Commission and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems and assured donor support for this project through voluntary contributions to the OSCE. The Presence worked closely with the ODIHR prior to deployment of the election

observation mission. During the mission proper, the Presence provided logistical support and advice.

Parliamentary observation. The Presence has continued to observe the workings of parliament, the plenary sessions and commission debates. This has proven most useful in strengthening relations with Albanian political parties represented in parliament, pinpointing the areas where the legal officers of the Presence have themselves provided or have acted as intermediaries to obtain concrete assistance for the process of drafting of legislation. The Presence has worked closely with the Albanian drafters of laws regarding elections, the State police, the civil service, expropriation, radio and television broadcasting, NGOs, etc. The Presence has excellent working relations with the newly elected speaker of parliament and his staff. Plans are being made to broaden this co-operation with parliament.

Local government and decentralization. The Presence continued to monitor and support all phases of the implementation of the national decentralization strategy. To this end, it has maintained close links with the Ministry of Local Government and, through the field station network, with local authorities throughout Albania. The Presence has monitored the passage of key legislation and provided input and advice on specific laws. With the transfer of competencies under way, the Presence has monitored all phases of the budgeting process. In co-operation with local and international partners, the Presence organized decentralization round tables to facilitate consultation of local government authorities on policy-making. The opening of the Tirana Liaison Office completed the already extensive coverage of local government units by the field station network and has greatly enhanced our capacity in this field.

Rule of law, judiciary and human rights. The Human Rights Office and the Legal Counsellor's Office have as their priority, both currently and over the past year, the co-ordination of the efforts of international organizations operating in Albania to assist the Government in the production of a national plan of action on trafficking. The OSCE Presence is the co-ordinating body for international efforts to combat trafficking in Albania. To that end, it is considered vital to

keep other international organizations and NGOs, as well interested bodies outside the country, informed of the work being done in the country. Aside from regular meetings and either *ad hoc* or more formally constituted Friends of Albania meetings, the Presence produces a weekly newsletter distributed to international organizations and NGOs working on trafficking issues.

One of the year's successes was the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding between the OSCE, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration, the International Catholic Migration Commission and the Albanian Government concerning the pre-screening of trafficked women and illegal migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

The field stations provide local knowledge and day-to-day contacts at all levels throughout the country. The Human Rights Officer also works closely with field stations in monitoring detention facilities and courts.

The Legal Counsellor's Office has completed a series of round tables, in co-operation with the field stations. These brought together representatives of the public prosecutor, the police and the judiciary in eight of the ten prefectures in Albania to discuss issues of concern and recommend action to be considered at the national level. Concerns included the gathering and preservation of evidence and witness protection.

Other efforts of the Legal Office include a review in the area of domestic violence, a civil service monitoring project, new legislation on the Albanian Telegraphic Agency, and an *amicus curie* brief in a case on *juvenile law*, specifically adoption, which is considered vital as a precedent in Albania. The Office has maintained good links with legal officials, and is working with them on the redrafting the Law on the High Council of Justice. The Human Rights Office maintains a close link with the people's advocate, and has referred approximately a hundred cases to him.

Legal analysis and monitoring. In September 2000, the prevalent impression in the Albanian Government was that new legislation was required. In order to investigate this idea, the OSCE conducted a legislative review that compiled and analysed certain provisions of the *Criminal Code*. It was

concluded that there was no requirement for extensive further legislation, and that the provisions in place were perfectly adequate, if properly used, to permit prosecution. A number of gaps were identified, particularly in the area of asset forfeiture and witness protection. Partly as a result of this review, the claim that further legislation was urgently required was dropped, and the Government shifted its emphasis from writing new legislation to implementing already existing laws.

NGO support. The NGO Office started the implementation of a three-year project for establishing a national network of Civil Society Development Centres, in five locations throughout Albania. The Centres will provide office and meeting facilities to civil society and the Albanian centre managers will provide consultation and organizational development training for all NGOs and Community-based organizations. The Presence's strategic partner in this project is the Netherlands Development Organization. The project is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Development Co-operation.

Gender/Women's Rights and Anti-Trafficking Education Project (WRATE). A grass-roots campaign was begun in November 2000 to raise the awareness of Albanian women and men to Albanian women's rights under international human rights conventions and domestic law, and to illustrate how trafficking is an abuse of those rights. Sixteen Albanian trainers trained by the OSCE have conducted 49 seminars for 735 people in the last six months. The WRATE project is supported by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) through a Swiss donation.

Media development and press and public information. The Press and Public Information Office covers a range of activities in two main categories: public relations for the Presence and media development with Albania. The on-going functions and image of the Presence are communicated by the Press and Public Information Office to both the Albanian public and the international community. The Office is also particularly active in providing the Albanian parliament with advice and expertise during the on-going process of reform of media legislation, in close consultation with the media NGOs in the country. Special co-operation was provided to the National Council of Radio and Television Broadcasting to assist them in

monitoring the election coverage of both the local and the recently completed national elections. The Press and Public Information Office works with Albanian media throughout the country to assist reporters with advice and, when necessary, investigate complaints and mediate controversies, especially between the media and Government institutions.

Environmental issues. The Economic and Environmental Officer worked in close co-operation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) when the post-conflict environmental assessment of Albania was prepared, pointing in particular to the need for a Ministry of the Environment. After the publication of this report, the Economic and Environment Officer lobbied Government, parliament and environmental experts with the recommendations of the report. In particular, with support from the Regional Environmental Centre, she prepared a brochure for it on institutions dealing with the environment in neighbouring countries, in order to advocate the creation of a Ministry of the Environment. The new Government has recently created such a Ministry. The Economic and Environmental Officer has helped to raise public awareness by producing a three-part television series on the problem of municipal waste. This was partly sponsored by the Presence's NGO Office and the Soros Foundation. Together with the Netherlands Development Organization, she also co-ordinated, an environmental advocacy platform for NGOs and the Parliamentary Commission for Health and the Environment. She has now started to prepare a brochure on the connection between environmental issues and those relating to human rights and justice. In addition together with environmental NGOs, she has been trying to lobby the Ministry of Education for the introduction of environmental education into the school curriculum. Finally, she prepared a background report for the field stations on the legislation concerning standards for earthquake-proof construction, so that they are in a position to monitor the implementation of these regulations.

Economic issues. The Economic and Environmental Officer continued to work closely with the Ministry of Economic Co-operation and Trade in the framework of the Stability Pact and has become a member of

the working group that is preparing a new national strategy for sustainable tourism. This sector was recently upgraded, when the new Government decided to integrate the former Tourism Development Committee into what is now called the Ministry of Public Works and Tourism. In order to help establish a better business climate by supporting the rightful concerns of the business community, the Economic and Environmental Officer has begun to facilitate dialogue between the Government and the foreign and local business associations, the bankers association, and the chambers of commerce. These efforts have recently received a positive response from the Minister of Finance. She also continued to provide background reports on the grim situation regarding electricity, drawing attention to the need for reform in this important sector. She continues to be a member of the working group for the national poverty reduction strategy programme, which is a comprehensive development initiative of the Government of Albania, with a top-down, bottom-up participatory approach. She has also been a focal point for development agencies, advising them in which sectors and geographic areas there is most need for involvement. At the request of several members of parliament, she has been co-ordinating a weekly round table with parliamentarians, academics and businessmen to discuss ways to identify and prepare leaders for business and administration.

Weapons-collection programme. The Presence Headquarters and the field stations continue to monitor the Government's weapons-collection programme. The public awareness campaign and the provision of additional resources for the police to carry out the programme have, on the whole, been inadequate. However, some regions have demonstrated that they take the programme more seriously than others. As of September 2001, about 170,000 weapons had been collected out of an estimated 618,000 military and police weapons that were looted in 1997. This means that large numbers of weapons, and associated material, remain unaccounted for, heightening the risk of armed incidents, although many of the weapons will have been moved to other countries since 1997. The police believe that in Albania there are well over 100,000 weapons held illegally, but they are confident that a large proportion of

this number can be collected during the next 12 months. Usually, between 25 and 35 people a month are victims of violent incidents involving weapons. The parliamentary decision to extend the initial voluntary phase of the collection programme for a further two years provoked condemnation; however, if the awareness campaign and the police efforts were to be given the necessary financial and logistical boost, this voluntary time-frame should be reduced.

Security. During the deployment of the ODIHR election monitoring mission during June and July 2001, the Field Station Co-ordinator and the Military Liaison and Security Officer worked very closely with the various ODIHR departments. This helped to ensure the monitors' safety and security and to help them with administrative support throughout the country during the election period. Close liaison is maintained with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and in turn, with the police, military and civil authorities, with a view to giving assistance and advice on the administrative procedures associated with the weapons-collection programme. The Military Liaison and Security Officer and the Field Station Co-ordinator routinely advise the Head of Presence on matters related to safety and security within the country and on cross-border issues, and keep in regular contact with OSCE missions in neighbouring countries.

Field stations. Following proposals in 1999 for the establishment of field stations in all 12 regions (formerly prefectures) of Albania, the Presence is represented in 11 locations around the country, including Tirana. An enhanced field station in Shkodra covers the remaining region of Lezhe. Currently, stations are located in the regional capitals: Shkodra, Kukes, Peshkopi, Korca, Gjirokastra, Vlora, Durres, Elbasan, Fier and Berat, and there is a Liaison Officer in Tirana. This new deployment provides OSCE representation throughout Albania, while at the same time satisfying the Albanian Government's request for the OSCE to become more involved in the Government's decentralization strategy. This spread of assets continues to be of great value to many regional aspects of the Presence's wide mandate, and the field stations are positioned to respond to events that occur anywhere in the country. Among other things, the field stations monitor

human rights cases, judicial matters, decentralization topics, trafficking, crime and corruption, economic and environmental issues and the Government's weapons-collection programme. More recently, the field stations have been involved with helping to establish substantial regional meetings on such issues as the decentralization of the water industry.

OSCE MISSION TO BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

As the primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation in Europe, the OSCE plays a major role in the creation of a stable, peaceful and democratic Bosnia and Herzegovina. The mandate of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina was established on 18 December 1995. Since then, the Mission has implemented programmes aimed at organizing and supervising elections; facilitating and supporting the establishment of a viable electoral system; promoting democratic values, a vibrant civil society, good governance and free media; monitoring and enhancing the implementation of property laws and the return of refugees; and implementing arms control and confidence and security-building measures.

While Bosnia and Herzegovina has now addressed many of its immediate post-war humanitarian problems, it continues to face several long-term challenges, such as fostering respect for human rights, strengthening the rule of law, promoting inter-ethnic tolerance, creating democratic political institutions from the municipal to the State level and ensuring democratic control of the armed forces. Under the auspices of the Dayton Accords, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina remains one of the key implementing agencies responsible for helping Bosnia and Herzegovina make the transition to democracy.

In 2001, the OSCE Mission to BiH continued its programmatic activities in elections, human rights, democratization, regional stabilization, the media and press and public information.

The Mission's work over the past year has been much affected by a maturing of the local institutions, a reduction in funding and a need

for the international community to streamline its efforts.

The Mission overall is working on a policy of nationalization of positions and transfer of responsibility for functions to the appropriate local entities, and has been strategically targeting those areas where the Mission is strongest for programme implementation, in an effort to maximize the impact of the limited resources available. This trend will continue over the coming year.

In 2001, there were a few political setbacks such as the outbreak of violence in Banja Luka and Trebinje in May 2001, during ceremonies marking the beginning of the reconstruction of mosques, or the boycott of the legal institutions by the Croat Democratic Union (HDZ). However, positive developments prevailed overall: the return of refugees continued to accelerate and the percentage of property claims settled increased.

Following the November 2000 elections, Bosnia and Herzegovina has, for the first time, had a non-nationalistic reform-oriented Government at the State and Federation levels. For the first time also, political parties have been able to compromise on key legislation such as the adoption of the Election Law in August 2001. With the successful passage of the Election Law, the Mission will hand over responsibility and ownership of the elections process to the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Elections. In November 2000, the Mission finalized preparations for general elections and conducted them as instructed by the Permanent Council (PC.DEC/350). The Mission continued its refinement of the election process, including many of the provisions of the draft election law in the provisional rules and regulations for the administration of the November 2000 elections.

The nationalization of key posts and branches of the Elections Department continued as well. The formal and operational training of the national staff will be crucial as the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina take over the administration of future elections within the country. Further, the administration components of the election process have been streamlined for efficiency and effectiveness in an effort to maintain sustainability once the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina are administering elections.

The failure of the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to pass the draft election law continued to hinder the nationalization process. Although the international community set deadlines for the authorities to pass it, the process became politicized and stalemated. In an effort to encourage the authorities to assume responsibility for and ownership of the election process, the Mission announced that, after conducting the November 2001 elections, it would not administer any further elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In late August 2001, the Alliance parties and supportive Serb parties finally achieved a compromise on the long disputed and contentious issue, adopting a Permanent Election Law. The mission now is preparing to transfer the election administration to the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is also assisting in the creation of a secretariat of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Election Commission, which will be responsible for the technical preparations and for administration of future elections.

The Mission will provide the necessary support for the new Elections Commission and will act as an adviser in the transfer of skills and technology to the new Commission, and it is continuing its efforts to simplify the voter registration process. It is developing a comprehensive training strategy to meet the needs for mastering the election administration process in time for Bosnia and Herzegovina's next elections, to be held by October 2002.

Human rights. The Mission has continued to pursue its efforts in support of property law implementation. Greater emphasis has been placed on solving alternative accommodation cases and addressing the failure of housing authorities to identify and budget for alternative accommodation for temporary occupants who are unable to return to their pre-war homes. This new strategy has encouraged local housing authorities to evict anyone occupying a property in violation of property laws and has made it possible to use vacated State-owned unclaimed property for alternative accommodation. This strategy also compels the municipalities to process claims in chronological order. Over the year, the rate of implementation has increased steadily, by one to two per cent each month, with some regional variations. Approximately one-third of all claims have been settled, as compared to

one-sixth a year ago. This number is impressive, considering that nationwide, property claims continue to be filed at a rate of between 1,000 and 2,000 each month.

The Mission is also implementing an exchange of information between municipalities regarding properties claimed, in order to significantly accelerate property law implementation. Following the good results achieved by a pilot project developed in the canton of Sarajevo, the Mission is expanding the initiative by sending trainers to each of the 180 housing offices in Bosnia and Herzegovina to facilitate the standardized exchange of information. In the spring of 2001, it began a new project of placing data entry clerks in municipal housing offices to help overburdened and under-resourced housing officials to organize files, create chronological lists and introduce good practices.

Human rights officers are fully engaged with local authorities and are continuing to monitor the human rights situation through the Mission's 26 field offices. The Mission has adopted a policy of systematically gathering information on judges and prosecutors who have failed to bring their housing situation into full compliance with the property laws, in order to submit this information to the competent bodies responsible for reviewing their appointments. Human rights monitors have also been deployed to municipalities requiring special attention to investigate human rights violations, monitor property commissions and address other concerns as they arise.

Pursuant to its mandate under Annex 6 of the Dayton Peace Accords, the Mission is continuing to work actively with all the domestic human rights institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Mission's support for the entity ombudsmen has concentrated on operational support (funding), support for the development of substantive capacity and preparations for the transition and transfer of fully functional and sustainable institutions to domestic responsibility

The ongoing transfer of responsibility from the OSCE to domestic responsibility is being facilitated through negotiations over memoranda of understanding with each entity government designed to transfer full budgetary responsibility for facilities and staff, with OSCE agreement to help secure voluntary contributions, where required, from OSCE

participating States. The memoranda also foresee, *inter alia*, full sustainable financial autonomy for the ombudsman institutions; a level of salaries linked to those for the highest judicial organs, in line with international norms; and a minimum number of field offices. The Mission is intensively negotiating with the entity governments on the enactment of adequate legal provisions and on inclusion of all the above provisions in the memoranda.

The Mission is also working with other members of the international community including the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Council of Europe, on the merger of the Human Rights Chamber and the Constitutional Court. Several meetings have been held during the year to discuss the viability and process of merger. It is expected that this work will continue into early 2002.

The Mission has increased its efforts in the area of sustainable return. Human rights officers are involved in monitoring non-discriminatory access to employment, utilities and education, in particular the policy of two schools under one roof (integrated schooling) and teacher diversity. The Mission is actively participating in initiatives to reform the legal and judicial system under the lead of the International Judicial Commission. It is supporting the process for a comprehensive review of judges and prosecutors by submitting substantiated complaints about alleged judicial misconduct received from its field offices to the competent review bodies. Human rights officers interact regularly with the judiciary and prosecutors in property matters and cases involving return-related violence and discrimination in access to employment and utilities that impact on the sustainability of return. Human rights officers also monitor trials related to corruption and war crimes.

Regional initiatives have been pursued through the Stability Pact and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), such as issues related to the rights of Romani persons and trafficking in human beings. Regarding its involvement with Roma issues, the Mission has been active in implementing and developing projects as part of the Roma under the Stability Pact Programme. In doing so, the Mission is continuing to co-operate closely with Romani NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina and with the

office of the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, as well as the Council of Europe. In an effort to enhance its Roma-related activities, the Mission will hire a Roma affairs officer for a six-month period. Concerning its activities to counter trafficking, the Mission, in co-ordination with the International Human Rights Law Group, has submitted two projects to the ODIHR Anti-Trafficking Fund. It is also considering expanding its role to include the monitoring of trials related to trafficking, given its expertise in this area, as well as its large human rights field presence.

Democratization. The primary objective of the Democratization Department during the reporting period has been to improve the post-electoral capacity and performance of elected officials and the institutions that they work in. To complement this, special emphasis has been placed on transparency, accountability and activities to combat corruption, in support of the High Representative's economic reform programme.

The Municipal Infrastructure Finance and Implementation (MIFI) Project has expanded, and has targeted 34 municipalities which have benefited from a broad range of "best practices" activities in municipal management, which are tailored to the specific needs of each municipality. Seminars, workshops and field visits have included priority technical assistance in areas such as capital planning, public budgeting, strategic planning and parliamentary procedures, and were complemented by on-site visits by OSCE public finance advisers. Focusing on technical policy areas, the project helped the Mission to establish good working relations with municipal officials throughout the country, including a number of formerly hard-line municipalities in the Republika Srpska (such as the municipality of Doboj).

The Mission's experience indicated that many problems and weaknesses in local governance are a direct result of inefficiency and mismanagement in public administration at the level of the cantons. Thus, in 2001, the Cantonal Administration Project (CAP) was introduced as a public administration reform project. The project's primary objectives are to promote the efficiency, transparency and accountability of cantonal governments by targeting executive and legislative authorities

alike. Although full project implementation was delayed as a result of late implementation of cantonal election results, on-site technical assistance started in the areas of financial management, organizational restructuring, administrative culture and human resource management in three cantons (Zenica-Doboj, Central Bosnia and Posavina). Support for the cantonal legislature has been initiated with training sessions on the roles and responsibilities of assembly members in one canton (Posavina). Implementation of organizational management reform has been swift in the canton of Zenica-Doboj. Politically, the Cantonal Administration Project helped bridge the conflict between the hard-line Croat nationalistic party, HDZ, and the international community (in the cantons of Posavina and Central Bosnia) and gave support to reform-oriented new Alliance-for-Change governments (canton of Zenica-Doboj). Democratization work with both municipal and cantonal governments has additionally led to an increased focus on problematic inter-governmental relations and financial transfers, for which the Mission has suggested possible solutions with the assistance of experts on fiscal federalism.

Recognizing the importance of empowering the marginalized Bosnia and Herzegovina State institutions, the Parliamentary Support Project was launched in early 2001 and provides technical support and training to enhance State parliamentarians' knowledge of procedural and policy matters and to strengthen the work of parliamentary staff. Thus, activities have focused on programmes of legislative capacity-building, the role of the speaker and the collegium, the relationship between the Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee, assessments of needs in respect of staff, training and materials in the Secretariat, and the criteria for the effective functioning of committees. In addition, the project facilitated cross-party consensus in technical policy areas and led, for instance, to a joint report by the Finance and Budget committees of both houses of parliament on the findings of the Supreme Audit Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In September 2001, work with the Finance and Budget Committees and the Gender Equality Committee was extended to the equivalent committees in the entity legislatures serving as

a prototype for future State-entity parliamentary co-ordination and legislative harmonization.

The Mission also continued to promote women's political empowerment and strengthening of political parties. The Political Development Programme encompasses three projects that share the aim of reinforcing democratic structures within political parties and encouraging co-operation between politicians regardless of party affiliation, with a special emphasis on women politicians. The Women in Politics Project continued to support women politicians' visibility and improved the post-electoral capacity of women municipal councillors.

The Political Resource Centre (PRC) Project, with 11 Centres throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, the newest of which was opened in Bihać in September 2001, supports active voter outreach by political parties and enhances the political education of the public. Building on the success of the Project in previous years, the Centres remain key in the democratization strategy to promote pluralism of political parties and outreach of moderate political parties into areas dominated by a single party in the run-up to the general elections of 2002.

Activity in the Intra Party Democracy Project resulted, *inter alia*, in the visit of 14 Norwegian political party representatives to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Conservatives, socialists/social democrats, liberals and Christian democrats met with local political parties of similar orientation. After having initiated this first exchange of experiences, the Mission has bestowed ownership of the process on local parties, which will pay a return visit to Norway in November 2001. The Democratization Department will address one of the principal recommendations of the assessment visit by Norwegian politicians by focusing on strengthening youth branches of local political parties in the remainder of 2001 (and in 2002). The Mission's strategy will include capacity-building measures at multiparty and single-party levels, based on a needs assessment of the youth branches of the individual parties.

Media affairs. Through the Department of Media Affairs, the Mission has worked to develop the conditions necessary for democratic and pluralistic media free from political persecution. In support of this aim, the

OSCE has continued its involvement in the Free Media Helpline and the Press Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, providing a point of contact for journalists who feel threatened or intimidated in the course of their work. The Mission is working to identify appropriately qualified local NGOs which would be trained and equipped so that the responsibility of the Helpline could eventually be transfer to them.

In 2001, the Department continued implementing its media laws and standards project. The Mission played an integral role in the drafting and adoption of the Freedom of Access to Information Act in both entities in May 2001. In February 2001, the draft Defamation Act was released to the public in a series of public information meetings that targeted the media, legal practitioners and members of government. The Mission is continuing to monitor implementation of this legislation and is providing assistance at both the entity and the State levels in implementation of these new laws.

The Mission also successfully completed the transfer of Radio FERN to the Public Broadcasting System in May 2001. The transfer included staff, physical assets including a digital studio production system and nationwide transmission infrastructure, programming, and technical expertise.

Since the targeted degree of domestic capacity had been achieved, with a view to avoiding any overlap in the international community, the Department of Media Affairs ceased to exist as an independent department as of 1 July 2001. The number of international staff has been reduced and residual activities are continuing under the Democratization Department.

Press and public information. In the reporting period, the Press and Public Information Department continued to promote and enhance the Mission's public profile and to disseminate OSCE policy and other information to the public and the media.

In 2001, the Public Information Unit has been developing public information materials designed to educate the public locally and internationally regarding the activities carried out by the Mission. The Mission ran a campaign against corruption in the weeks before the general elections in 2000 to make

the public aware of this problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Mission has worked closely with SFOR, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund on the design of a campaign which includes the slogan, “*Manji Vojni Troškovi – Veći Životni Standard*” or “a lower military budget means a higher standard of living.” The goal is to increase public awareness of acceptable levels of defence spending and to encourage citizens and politicians to demand more affordable military establishments. The campaign was launched in late October 2001.

Finally, the Unit has developed a public information campaign, which was launched in September 2001, designed to nurture and develop a “Bosnia and Herzegovina” identity. With a special focus on youth, the campaign aims to encourage active youth involvement in the country’s civil, economic and political life, as the attitude of youth will be a key factor in the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a State.

Regional stabilization. The Regional Stabilization Department is continuing to work under the mandates outlined in the Vienna (Article II) and Florence (Article IV) Agreements, and instructions and guidelines set forth by the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The activities focus on transparency, co-operation and confidence-building between the Entity Armed Forces and disarmament, and troop reduction in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The resources currently allocated for defence budgets in both entities far exceed the international norms for what’s necessary for protection, and this causes undue strain on the already fragile budgets of the entity governments. In an effort to promote greater transparency and civilian control of the military and to illustrate the inflated nature of the military budgets, special emphasis has been placed on an audit of the Armed Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is anticipated that the results of the audit will provide the necessary information for developing a policy for reduction of expenditure and civilian control. The Mission acts as co-chair with

SFOR on the Joint Restructuring Steering Board.

The Mission has participated in the analysis of exchanges of military information and notifications between the armed forces in order to monitor and report on compliance with Articles II and IV. It has continued with joint inspections, including a visit on behalf of the Personal Representative to a military base, aerial observation flights supported by the Czech Republic in May 2001 and an aerial observation flight as a disaster response exercise intended to enhance the ability of the armed forces to provide assistance to the civilian authorities in the event of a civil emergency or natural disaster.

In order to facilitate further progress towards military stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Mission has sponsored seminars and workshops on confidence and security building issues. Key issues addressed by these seminars, and by the Mission more generally, include strengthening democratic control of the military, enhancing transparency in defence budgets and promoting reductions in military forces. The Mission has worked on the formation of consultative commissions to promote dialogue among military personnel from both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has also organized a seminar on military medical services and emergency medicine with experts from the German armed forces, at which matters relating to civil-military co-operation were discussed. Finally, the Mission has developed code-of-conduct seminars for battalion and company commanders as well as junior officers, which focused on integrating professional military personnel into a democratic society.

OSCE MISSION TO CROATIA

Pursuant to Permanent Council Decision No. 424, of 28 June 2001, the Mission to Croatia, which was established in 1996, currently has 100 international staff members serving at the headquarters in Zagreb, three co-ordination centres in Vukovar, Knin and Sisak, 14 field offices and four sub-offices. By PC Decision No. 112, of 18 April 1996, the Permanent Council assigned the Mission the tasks of providing assistance and expertise to the Croatian authorities at all levels and

interested individuals, groups and organizations in the field of human rights and minority rights, and of assisting in and advising on the full implementation of legislation. Furthermore, the Mission was mandated to monitor the proper functioning and development of democratic institutions, processes and mechanisms. PC Decisions Nos. 176, of 26 June 1997, and 239, of 25 June 1998, amended the mandate of the Mission, authorizing it to assist with and to monitor the implementation of Croatian legislation and agreements and commitments entered into by the Croatian Government on the two-way return of all refugees and displaced persons and on the protection of persons belonging to national minorities. Following the withdrawal of the United Nations Police Support Group in the eastern part of Croatia formerly administered by the United Nations in January 1998, the OSCE agreed to deploy up to 120 OSCE police monitors to the area in a Police Monitoring Group. The latter ceased its operations on 31 October 2001, on the Mission's recommendation (PC Decision No. 373, of 21 September 2000), acknowledging the new political environment that followed the parliamentary and presidential elections in 2000.

Pursuing its enhanced mandate, the Mission's main activities in the reporting period were related to the process of sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons, the strengthening and promoting of civil society and the rule of law and involvement in regional activities of the OSCE and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, particularly regarding return and trafficking in human beings.

Country-wide local elections were conducted in May 2001. New electoral legislation was adopted shortly before the elections, embodying most of the recommendations presented by the international community. Though the issue of minority representation was reflected, some of the procedural aspects of its implementation remain to be clarified. The Constitution was also amended in March 2001, still in connection with the local elections, to abolish the upper house of parliament (representing the interests of the counties). Amendments to the Law on Regional and Local Self-Government and other legal acts have initiated a decentralization process in Croatia in line with

European standards. However, there are some indications that local and regional units of government will face financial difficulties in discharging their new tasks.

The Mission continued its co-operation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) on election and Roma issues. In the run-up to the local elections, the Mission facilitated contacts between the ODIHR and the Croatian authorities, and also provided support to the ODIHR Election Observation Mission. The fruitful relationship established by the latter with election administration officials was retained by the Mission in the post-elections period.

Where appropriate, the Mission provides input for or participates in human dimension meetings or other conferences and seminars conducted under the auspices of the ODIHR. The Head of Mission and the Head of Political Affairs, for instance, attended the ODIHR Human Dimension Seminar on Election Processes in Warsaw at the end of May 2001.

In the reporting period, the Government has taken the first steps towards integrating the country into European and Euro-Atlantic structures, in particular by initialling the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union on 14 May 2001. However, the need remains for more decisive progress in reforming all the legislation covered by the Mission's mandate. In particular, additional efforts will be necessary in the field of property legislation to overcome structural deficiencies inherited from the previous regime. To this end, increased co-operation between the Government at all levels and the Mission, together with other international partners, continues to be of the utmost importance for accelerating the fulfilment of Croatia's international commitments.

In 2001, the Mission has continued to work closely with the experts of the Council of Europe to help the new Government move Croatia closer to its goal of full compliance with the commitments undertaken on accession to the Council of Europe in 1996. Mission staff are in regular contact with Council of Europe legal and human rights experts on important areas of legal reform, as well as media and telecommunications, local governance and minority rights.

To strengthen the rule of law and the administration of justice at all levels, Mission experts have also lectured at seminars and workshops jointly sponsored by the Mission and the Council of Europe or the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The primary focus of these activities was the education of lawyers, judges and law students about the European Convention on Human Rights. In March 2001, the Mission organized an educational seminar in Zagreb for Croatian judges and local NGOs on the Convention, including procedures for pursuing claims with the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. In October 2001, the Mission will contribute to a joint seminar in Belgrade together with OSCE sister missions, aimed at informing the public about the Croatian legal system and procedures for pursuing claims with the European Court of Human Rights.

Mission experts also participated in conferences on topics ranging from Roma issues, through compensation for nationalized property in Croatia, to independence and impartiality of the judiciary. Mission experts also attended the conference held in Zagreb in April 2001 on challenges of the minority policy in Croatia, organized by the Serb National Council and co-funded by the Mission, the ODIHR and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. In June 2001, Mission representatives participated in the supplementary human dimension meeting in Vienna on promoting tolerance and non-discrimination. The Mission's human rights experts continued to work with the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, providing briefings to the High Commissioner on his visits to Croatia and consulting with legal experts in the High Commissioner's office on legislative and programmatic initiatives. The High Commissioner visited Croatia in January and April 2001. In January, he met with high-level Government officials and representatives of the Serb community. Mission representatives accompanied him on a visit to the war-affected area of Lika (north of Knin). In April 2001, he attended the above-mentioned conference in Zagreb.

As in previous years, monitoring of the Croatian Government's implementation of its commitments to the return and reintegration of

refugees and displaced persons continues to be a major focus of the Mission's activities. According to Government claims, of the over 300,000 Croatian Serbs who left Croatia between 1991 and 1995, more than 80,000 had registered as having returned to and within Croatia between the end of the conflict and 1 August 2001.

The Mission has noted some positive steps taken by the Government to demonstrate its will to fulfil its obligations and resolve outstanding return-related problems. For instance, a nationwide survey of private property reallocated under the 1995 Law on Temporary Take-over and Administration of Specified Property, which was rescinded in 1998, was conducted. More than 21,000 decisions concerning approximately 18,500 private houses were reviewed, leading to some 1,200 ministerial instructions to housing commissions to order illegal occupants and (most) beneficiaries of reconstruction assistance to vacate properties that they are occupying illegally or as multiple occupants.

However, the return of Croatian Serbs continues to be hindered by the lack of a comprehensive and transparent legal regime on repossession of private property, lost occupancy/tenancy rights and discriminatory access to reconstruction aid, including that for damage caused by so called "terrorist acts". The Mission has continued to raise these issues with the Government while offering its assistance in changing current legislation and policies.

On the repeated advice of the Mission and other international community partners, a joint working group for legislation consisting of the Croatian Government and the international community was established in June 2001. The Mission contributed to the drafting of a non-exhaustive list of issues to be addressed by the joint working group, pertaining, for example, to the reform and the application of current legislation crucial to the return process.

The Mission continues to actively monitor the Government's commitments to cross-border return between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. The Government, for example, has expressed the intention to set aside the rights to alternative accommodation of those who have reposessed their property or received reconstruction assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Co-ordination activities with other members of the international community are well established. In conjunction with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Mission continues to co-chair three Area Return Facilitation Groups (in Knin, Sisak and Vukovar), aimed at enhancing co-operation on return issues among international and local organizations. Held twice monthly, these meetings include cross-border international partners. As in previous years, the Mission has organized visits of the Article 11 Commission¹ to areas of concern. The visits were accompanied by high-level Government officials who were able to witness problems on the ground at first hand.²

Lastly, the Mission has continued to serve as an OSCE focal point on return in the framework of the Stability Pact's Steering Committee on Return Matters and has actively contributed to the drafting of an Agenda for Regional Action, which was officially launched in June 2001 in Brussels, to be implemented in the coming two years.

On 12 and 13 June 2001, the Mission attended the fourth meeting of the Stability Pact's Working Table on Security Issues in Zagreb. The Mission is also continuing to contribute to OSCE efforts to combat trafficking of human beings in south-eastern Europe, especially prevention of trafficking of women from, in and through Croatia. In this context, throughout 2000 and 2001, the Mission participated in the Vienna annual regional meetings and preparatory meetings of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, as well as in other seminars and conferences with its international partners in Croatia. The Mission supported and participated in an anti-trafficking conference jointly sponsored by the International Organization for Migration and the International Catholic Migration Commission, on 21 and 22 March 2001. The Mission was invited by the ODIHR to participate in the

OSCE regional anti-trafficking seminar in Kosovo on 13 and 14 September 2001 in order to find common strategies to implement the OSCE anti-trafficking guidelines and the Vienna ministerial decision on enhancing the OSCE's efforts to combat trafficking.

The Mission acknowledges the sustained efforts by the Ministry of the Interior to reduce the number of police personnel and to restructure the police into a more effective peacetime law enforcement tool, as well as its plans for an already overdue upgrade in performance and training standards for police. Concerns over proportional minority representation within the police ranks that will improve services and be part of institutionally supported goals are currently being addressed. These efforts will have a direct impact on the personal security of those affected by ongoing return and integration programmes.

Targeting specific needs, the Mission has provided direct consultation as a professional partner of the Ministry of the Interior on management, training, and personnel concerns. The Ministry's ambitious restructuring goals are further aided by the Mission, which co-sponsors a quarterly round table of international organizations and NGO representatives to co-ordinate donor training initiatives for law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges. The Mission will be focusing on the implementation of these goals.

At the beginning of February 2001, the parliament adopted a new Law on Croatian Radio and Television Broadcasting (HRT). The Law includes several recommendations made by the Mission and the Council of Europe, such as the privatization of the third television channel and the change in the composition of the HRT Council, from State and party officials to representatives from civil society. Delays in establishing the board of management and appointing a new director of HRT illustrate that the pace of media reform is still sluggish. Moreover, the draft Law on Telecommunications, which is crucial to the work of private broadcasters, has not yet been submitted to parliamentary procedure. The draft was presented to the Mission and analysed by the Council of Europe in October 2000. The Mission and the Council of Europe have recommended to the Government that the broadcasting regulator be an independent body, free of political control.

¹ A group of resident Ambassadors, based on Article 11 of the Erdut Agreement.

² For more details please refer to the Secretary General's *Annual Report 2001 on Interaction between Organizations and Institutions in the OSCE Area*.

In the field of the media, the Mission organized a conference on freedom of the media in south-eastern Europe in co-operation with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Council of Europe. The conference took place in Zagreb from 28 February to 2 March 2001, in the framework of the Stability Pact, and was attended by approximately 100 media professionals and guests from 17 countries.

In April 2001, the Mission attended a roundtable on 'hate speech' organized in Rovinj, Istria, by the Croatian Helsinki Committee, in co-operation with the Zagreb-based Centre for Transition and Civil Society Research and the Sarajevo Law Centre. Participants included journalists, former editors-in-chiefs and well-known intellectuals and academics from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia and Yugoslavia.

After funding approximately 120 democratization projects in 1999 and 2000, the Mission has developed a Peacebuilding Programme for Conflict Prevention for 2001. Its strategic objectives are to promote NGO capacity-building and community-based grassroots activities in fields such as the role of women in civil society, youth and civic initiatives, local self-government and good governance, as well as reconciliation and inter-ethnic awareness. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints, the NGO capacity-building programme, run by the International NGO Training and Research Centre (Oxford, UK), started only at the end of April 2001, and grassroots activities began in July. Among others, projects involving youth, aimed at achieving local youth participation in civic initiatives, peace-building and inter-ethnic reconciliation, have been implemented in eastern and western Slavonia and the Knin area.

Through permanent contacts and co-ordination with the donor community, the Mission has enhanced its activities by co-sponsoring projects. Other projects that cannot be financed by the Mission are proposed to interested donors, embassies and delegations in Vienna through the Mission databank. This databank was presented on the Mission's web site at the end of September 2001.

In conclusion, the Head of Mission and other senior Mission members held numerous meetings with high-ranking representatives of

international organizations and institutions on the occasion of their visits to Croatia, e.g., the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Former Yugoslavia, the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings and high officials from the Council of Europe.

In January 2001, the Head of Mission participated in the annual heads of missions meeting convened by the Chairperson-in-Office in Bucharest, and in July 2001, in the one convened by the OSCE Secretary General in Vienna. In addition, he attended the regional meeting of heads of missions from south eastern Europe in Belgrade in March 2001 and hosted the following one in September 2001.

OSCE MISSION TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

The OSCE Permanent Council decided by its Decision No. 401 of 11 January 2001, to establish a new Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with a broad mandate designed to:

“...provide assistance and expertise to the Yugoslav authorities at all levels, as well as to interested individuals, groups and organizations, in the fields of democratization and the protection of human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. In this context, and in order to promote democratization, tolerance, the rule of law and conformity with OSCE principles, standards and commitments, the Mission will also assist and advise on the full implementation of legislation in areas covered by the mandate, and monitor the proper functioning and development of democratic institutions, processes and mechanisms. In particular, the Mission will assist in the restructuring and training of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary”.

Other areas specifically referred to in the mandate include the provision of advice and support, in close co-operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(UNHCR), to facilitate the return of refugees to and from Yugoslavia, as well as the return of internally displaced persons to their homes within Yugoslavia; assistance in the fields of confidence- and security-building measures and other politico-military issues; and assistance in the area of the environment.

According to the Permanent Council decision, the initial mandate of the Mission extends until 31 December 2001; prolongation will be subject to a new decision by the Permanent Council.

On 17 January 2001, Ambassador Stefano Sannino of Italy was appointed as Head of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Mission was formally inaugurated in Belgrade on 16 March 2001, at a ceremony attended by the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, following the signature earlier that day of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The authorized strength of the Mission has initially been established at 30 international staff members. In line with the emphasis in the Mission's mandate on consultation and partnership with the Government and NGOs, the Mission also has an unusually large number of national staff experts and advisers working alongside their international staff colleagues in all departments. The total number of national staff is currently 55, including 22 support staff. The Mission is now structured into four core programme departments dealing with the rule of law and human rights, democratization, law enforcement and the media, as well as the Office of the Head of Mission and a Department of Administration and Finance which, provides services to all the other departments of the Mission.

In addition to the above, 32 non-core international project staff have been authorized to support the Southern Serbia Multi-Ethnic Police Training Programme. To date, 19 international police trainers have been appointed, as well as 22 local support staff, based at the Serbian Police Training School in Mitrovo Polje.

Mission Activities in Belgrade

Since the Mission was inaugurated in March 2001, the principal focus of its activities

has been to identify, in discussions with Government representatives, national and international NGOs, bilateral donors, and other international organizations (in particular, the Council of Europe, United Nations agencies, the World Bank and the European Union) a set of programmes around the mandated core tasks of legislative reform and institution- and capacity-building. Particular emphasis has been placed not only on building a common agenda and partnership with the Government, but also on building relationships between the Government and civil society. As a result, in several areas, the Mission has succeeded in bringing together for the first time around the same table Government representatives, NGOs and interested national and international parties to discuss and agree on common projects and plans.

On the basis of these initial contacts and discussions, it has been decided to concentrate on reform of the judiciary and the police; the retraining of public administrators at the central and local levels; the strengthening of the parliamentary dimension; support for the creation of a national ombudsman/peoples' advocate institution; the fight against trafficking in human beings; transparency of the media and the transformation of the national radio and television system into a public broadcasting service; the establishment of an environmental ministry and the drafting of environmental legislation; and assistance to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the implementation of its commitments regarding confidence- and security-building measures.

Activities in a number of these areas have already begun, and action plans have been initiated for each of the core departments of the Mission, which will form the basis of the Mission's activities for the remainder of 2001 and for 2002.

The main activities started by the Mission in its first six months are outlined below. Activities in Southern Serbia are reported separately.

Rule of law/human rights. Based on the conclusions of a round table on judicial reform, held in Belgrade in April 2001, and sponsored by the Mission and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), a programme has been devised for the establishment of a national institute for the ongoing education and retraining of judges,

prosecutors and lawyers. The programme includes the creation, in partnership with the Government, of an internationally funded 'bridging fund' to supplement, for a limited period, the salaries of judges and prosecutors; a project to establish a professional bar association and an association of public prosecutors; and various other projects to enhance the effectiveness of the State Prosecution Service. The Mission has also received bilateral donor support to fund a section within the Rule of Law Department to translate republican and federal legislation into English.

Pursuant to the recommendations of a round table on the establishment of an ombudsman institution in Yugoslavia, which was organized with assistance from the Greek and other international ombudsman institutions, the Mission has agreed with the Government on a programme which will include legislative support, expert advice, study visits, and a public awareness campaign.

A programme for penal reform has also been agreed on with the Serbian authorities, and has been presented to international donors, based on recommendations of a needs assessment visit to Serbian prisons made by Council of Europe and OSCE/ODIHR experts in May/June 2001. Proposed activities include legislative review, study visits and professional training.

Based on the Mission's ongoing monitoring of mass grave sites in Serbia, a proposal has also been submitted to international donors for practical assistance to this exercise, as well as for the longer term establishment of a centre for forensic medicine in Belgrade.

The Rule of Law Department has also begun the recruitment of staff to provide the ability to respond to the legal, institutional and capacity-building implications of the efforts of the Serbian and Federal Governments to counter corruption.

Democratization. In April 2001, the Mission organized a round table in Belgrade, under the auspices of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, leading to the establishment of a cross-sectoral national mechanism consisting of Government and NGO representatives to tackle trafficking from and through Yugoslavia. The Mission, together with the International Organization for

Migration, has been supporting this national mechanism in drafting national referral and shelter regulations and procedures.

A parliamentary support action plan has been drawn up, with partial donor funding, to strengthen the democratic functioning and capacity of parliamentary institutions and political parties at the federal, republican and provincial levels. Activities include regulatory and training assistance to the offices of the parliamentary speakers, members of parliament and parliamentary staff, through seminars, networking with other parliamentary institutions and *ad hoc* activities.

A 'train-the-trainers' project is in preparation as part of a programme of assistance to local government to improve its efficiency and prepare municipal officials for the forthcoming decentralization, with particular emphasis on Southern Serbia, Sandzak and Vojvodina. The programme also includes support for setting up a national Civil Administration Institute.

Mainly within the context of the Stability Pact Gender Task Force action plan, various initiatives have also been launched by the Mission, aimed particularly at promoting the role and status of women in politics and in the workplace.

Law Enforcement. The Mission's law enforcement activities have to date largely been divided between support for the establishment of a multi-ethnic policing element in Southern Serbia and the work of the Mission's police consultant.

The police consultant was appointed in February 2001 to carry out a comprehensive study of policing in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and recommend the changes and international assistance needed to modernize policing along European lines, and to integrate the police services of the FRY into the international police community. The report was completed in July 2001, and will form the basis of the Mission's ongoing support to police reform in the FRY.

The media. In addition to its activities to support the development of multi-ethnic media in Southern Serbia and other minority areas, the Mission's Media Department has been identified as the co-ordinator for national and international support for the transformation of the Serbian Radio and Television Service into a

public service broadcaster, and, in particular for the reform of its news room. Assistance has also been provided on a continuing basis into the drafting of new broadcasting, public information and licensing laws and regulations, with support from the Council of Europe, and national and international donors and NGOs.

The environment. The Mission's main achievement to date in this area has been to assemble an international donor and advisory constituency in support of the efforts of the Serbian authorities to draft new environmental legislation to European and international standards. The Mission has also provided advice and support on the public consultation and institutional and capacity-building aspects of the legislation. Progress has been made in promoting 'town twinning' on environmental issues.

Confidence- and security-building measures. Based on the recommendations of a round table held in Belgrade in March 2001 under the joint auspices of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre and the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a programme has been launched for the destruction by the Yugoslav Army of stockpiles of surplus small arms and light weapons. Close working relationships have also been established with the Yugoslav military in a number of other areas, particularly related to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's intention to apply for membership in the NATO Partnership for Peace programme.

Public affairs. The Mission attaches particular importance to public affairs and 'outreach' to the population beyond Belgrade. These activities are mainly carried out through the Spokesperson's office. In particular, the Mission's web site is gaining in importance as a vehicle for disseminating knowledge of the OSCE and the Mission. Coverage of the Mission's involvement in multi-ethnic policing in Southern Serbia has been frequent and favourable, contributing to a more objective understanding of the OSCE, which until recently suffered from negative perceptions of its role in Kosovo in 1999. Outreach to the regions has been enhanced through regular visits by a senior staff member. An additional project for a joint documentation and resource centre in Belgrade is being developed with the Council of Europe.

Mission Activities in Southern Serbia

The other main focus of the Mission's activities since the early start-up phase has been its work in support of inter-ethnic co-operation in Southern Serbia. This is an important example of the conflict-prevention and confidence-building capability that the OSCE can offer in the region.

Before the Mission's creation, negotiations had been initiated under the auspices of NATO and the European Union to bring an end to the conflict in the Southern Serbian municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja between ethnic Albanian fighters and Federal Republic of Yugoslav/Serbian security forces. As part of a negotiated package of politico-military and civilian confidence-building measures, designed to bring about a cease fire and stabilization in the area and allow the progressive return of forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the administrative border with Kosovo, OSCE was invited, in late March 2001, to devise and implement a plan for the training of a new multi-ethnic police force in these municipalities, to rebalance the ethnic Albanian component.

With valuable support from the Kosovo Police School, the Mission's Law Enforcement Department initially launched two pilot phases of police training for a small number of ethnic Albanian recruits and local Serb officers in Bujanovac. In parallel, a plan was drawn up, with the approval of the Permanent Council (PC.DEC/436), for a third phase of 12-week basic training courses, each accommodating up to 100 ethnic Albanian and Serb trainees. By the time the programme has been completed in May 2002, 400 new police officers will have been trained for the region, 60 per cent of them of Albanian ethnicity. Based on experience in Southern Serbia, the Law Enforcement Department has begun to develop a multi-ethnic policing approach for Serbia as a whole, including Sandzak and Vojvodina, and possibly Montenegro.

The Mission, with the Yugoslav/Serbian authorities, has also launched a human rights sub-committee of the co-ordinating body for Southern Serbia, as a confidence-building and conflict-prevention mechanism. A start has also been made on multi-ethnic media development in Southern Serbia, with the appointment of

Serb and ethnic Albanian media monitors resident in the region, and the training of local journalists. The Mission is also preparing to launch similar programmes in Sandzak and Vojvodina.

Montenegro

Although the mandate of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia applies in principle to the territory of both of the Federation's constituent republics, the authorities in Montenegro no longer recognize the jurisdiction of the FRY on their territory, and were not a party to the agreements setting up the Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In the interim, the presence of the OSCE in Montenegro has been assured by the OSCE/ODIHR Podgorica Office, which was established there on an *ad hoc* basis in 1999.

Since its creation, the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has worked closely with the ODIHR Office in Podgorica. Some success has already been achieved in the areas of policing, through the study visit to Montenegro of the Mission's police consultant, and in the field of action to combat trafficking, through the participation of a senior Montenegrin representative in the round table sponsored by the OSCE in Belgrade in April 2001.

On 31 December 2001, ODIHR funding for the OSCE/ODIHR Office in Podgorica will cease. The Office will thereafter either close or become a branch of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The latter option would be a rational development of the Organization's existing mandate in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to ensure that the reform activities initiated by the Office continue.

Subject to confirmation by the Permanent Council, the Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has begun preparing for this change to take effect from 1 January 2002. Thereafter, the Mission will aim to build on the work already carried out by the Podgorica Office, and to broaden as appropriate the scope of existing activities, with particular attention to policing, action to combat trafficking, and the enhancement of media transparency.

OSCE MISSION IN KOSOVO

After two years of promoting democratic governance and justice and institution building, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo is now consolidating the progress made. The Mission has shifted its emphasis to focus on long-term sustainability by streamlining newly created institutions. In this task, three key policy notions have served as a foundation for all the Mission's programmes. Firstly, the promotion of Kosovo's ownership of the newly-established institutions has been essential. The Mission has consistently advocated participation by the people of Kosovo at all levels of administration. All newly created structures have a built-in strategy for handover to the people of Kosovo of all ethnic communities, rather than a continued reliance on international staff. The second principle is that of depoliticization and professionalization. After a decade of thoroughly politicized governance, the Mission has contributed to depoliticizing Kosovo's public institutions, including the civil service, the police, the judiciary, the public media and the education system. This has implied introduction of new merit- and performance-based standards for recruitment and dismissal, promotion, incentive systems and training. Finally, in all its efforts, the Mission has endeavoured to contribute to the quality of the policies and process of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) by mainstreaming democratic processes and emphasizing transparency, popular participation and respect for human rights.

Democratization. The Department of Democratization has focused its activities on supporting and developing Kosovo's civil administration, political parties and civil society, with the overall aim of strengthening Kosovo's structures, institutions and democratic values. The Institute for Civil Administration has worked to create a professional public sector by mainstreaming principles of democratic governance. More than 3,200 trainees have graduated since the start of the Institute's programme in February 2000. Throughout 2001, the Institute has conducted short- and medium-term courses in local governance for senior and middle management staff. It has also delivered a seminar for chief executive officers and

municipal assembly presidents and organized training seminars in Norway, France and Germany for the newly appointed executives. Another important training seminar focused on the role of the opposition.

Another aim of the Democratization Department has been to strengthen the organizational capacity of Kosovo's political parties, helping them to develop their policy platforms and prepare for central elections in November 2001. During 2001, the Mission has focused on those parties which demonstrated that they are viable and have a popular mandate. Political party consultative fora were re-established at the central and local levels, as a mechanism for exchanges of information on issues related to electoral preparations. Seminars covered municipal policy, municipal self-governance and urban planning, and there were also workshops specifically designed for women and youth. The Mission also continued to provide support to political parties representing ethnic communities. To allow for the sustainability of party activities, the Mission's Political Party Service Centres continue to operate and provide facilities to political parties, while co-sponsoring training programmes to help parties and independent candidates develop structures and ensure sustainability.

The Mission has continued to support the development of non-political structures, such as citizens' groups and local NGOs, and serves as a focal point for the donor community. The NGO/Civil Society Development Division has concentrated on citizen participation and reconciliation. The Mission has also organized issue-oriented conferences and capacity-building training with NGO committees including those involving women and youth, and professional associations. Also, a fundamental merit of the Division is the fact that it has provided impartial space and information and logistical support through the NGO resource centres and, in mixed and ethnic community areas, community centres. To foster the development of a sustainable NGO community in Kosovo, the Mission has continued working with an NGO forum and NGO association whilst ensuring that resources and training continue to be concentrated on viable NGOs working in the field of human rights, reconciliation, empowerment of ethnic communities and women.

Human rights. The Mission is the lead agency responsible for monitoring human rights as well as assisting in building local capacity for undertaking human rights advocacy. The Mission also regularly reports on general concerns such as freedom of movement, freedom from discrimination and trafficking. Throughout 2001, training by the Division focused on three core areas: in-service training to develop the skills and abilities of field officers; external training for key target groups such as journalists and civil servants; and the support of training and promotional activities in the field.

The Mission's monitoring activities permit the identification of areas where domestic legislation and weaknesses within the judicial system are problematic, and it seeks to address such problems by making recommendations. Human rights officers identify critical areas for promoting and protecting human rights, which include Kosovo's legal system, while legal system monitors gather information and analyse on the responses of the relevant police services and security forces and cover court proceedings from the point of arrest, through pre-trial hearings, to indictment and trial. In April, the second six-month review of the justice system in Kosovo was published, providing a factual and constructive analysis of structural problems within the justice system. Finally, to address the issue of property rights, the Division monitors cases of illegal occupancy, eviction and allocation of housing, including monitoring the work of municipal authorities and the Housing and Property Directorate.

Another human rights issue that is a priority is the trafficking of persons. Pursuant to the promulgation of an UNMIK regulation on combating trafficking, in January 2001, the Mission has held various regional round tables and offered legal training on the issue to judges, lawyers, police officers and NGOs. In a central co-ordination role, the Mission has monitored all aspects of the work to counter trafficking in Kosovo. Specifically, it has established standard operating procedures for victim assistance. It has also worked through its regional focal points on trafficking to continually train both the Kosovo Police Service and UNMIK Police in the standardized procedures.

The Division remains actively engaged in the protection and promotion of the rights of ethnic communities. Seven joint OSCE/UNHCR assessment reports have been published to date. In addition, the creation of the position of Senior Legal Adviser on Minorities, in March 2001, has entailed the spelling out of objectives in the areas of education, health and employment. The Mission also participated in the Joint Committee on Returns and "go-and-inform" visits in Montenegro and Southern Serbia with internally displaced persons.

Rule of law. The Rule of Law Division develops democratic institutions in support of the rule of law and the administration of justice by supporting and training legal NGOs, the Kosovo Bar Association and candidates for the bar examination. It also provides logistical and material support to the Kosovo judiciary and has played an important role by assisting with the establishment of several key institutes.

The Kosovo Judicial Institute, which was granted its own premises in Prishtinë/Priština in March 2001, is responsible for the training and education of judges and prosecutors. The Institute organizes workshops, seminars and information sessions for judges, prosecutors and defence counsel in a number of areas such as investigation proceedings, the judiciary and human rights standards, property issues and war crimes. The Institute has also assisted in the organization of field studies and exchange programmes for members of the local judiciary as well as training local members of the judiciary who will themselves become trainers at the Institute.

In 2001, the Kosovo Law Centre, established by the Mission, has taken a leading role in reforming the curriculum of the Law Faculty at Pristina University. The Centre has also developed exchange programmes for students with other European universities and has facilitated scholarships for legal talent to study abroad. It has organized and hosted seminars and workshops for Kosovo's legal community and has prepared six compilations of applicable law in English, Albanian and Serbian and published the law journal, *Kosovo Legal Studies*. In 2001, the Centre also opened the first professionally-run law library in Kosovo.

The Mission, in collaboration with the Kosovo Bar Association, created the Criminal

Defence and Resource Centre, in April 2001, in order to provide immediate legal expertise in applying international human rights standards in individual cases and to strengthen the capacity of local defence lawyers. The role of the Centre is to ensure that authorities protect the rights of the accused at every stage of the criminal process and make sure that the law is fairly and impartially applied.

Since the inauguration of the Ombudsperson Institution in November 2000, all legal persons in Kosovo have the right, without threat of reprisal, to make complaints to this independent office concerning human rights violations or actions constituting abuse of authority by any public authority in Kosovo.

Media affairs. The Mission has actively promoted the renaissance of Radio-Television Kosovo (RTK) as a public and independent broadcaster, and has been actively involved in the recast of the Broadcasting Regulation into two draft regulations. The first regulation, currently under final review, will establish an Interim Media Commission to replace the Temporary Media Commissioner, providing greater local input into licensing, funding and monitoring of broadcasters. The second regulation establishes a legal and funding structure for RTK, as well as a Board composed of both internationals and Kosovars to oversee its operation. The Mission has supported the development of RTK, which now broadcasts seven hours daily in Albanian and Serbian, with news and programming in Bosnian and Turkish, to help it professionalize its staff and safeguard its editorial independence from political influence.

With regard to broadcast system transmission in Kosovo, the Kosovo Terrestrial Transmission Network is now broadcasting four radio channels and three television programmes, RTK, KohaVision and RTV-21, to approximately 80 per cent of the population. Despite problems caused by the closing of the border between Kosovo/Yugoslavia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, site preparation for the remainder of the system is continuing. The Mission is negotiating with donors, including the United States Agency for International Development and the United Nations Development Programme (representing the Japanese Government), to ensure that the integrated plan is acceptable to all parties. At the start of 2001, the licensing

process continued with competitive hearings in each of the municipalities, as the Mission met with all licensed broadcasters in Kosovo to explain the applicable licensing requirements and respond to broadcasters' concerns. The Mission also worked on an administrative directive establishing a licensing fee for RTK, and final consultations on this are now underway.

Pending the establishment of an operational self-regulatory system and an interim media commission, the Mission is providing systematic evaluation of adherence to the print and broadcast codes by monitoring Kosovo's radio and television stations, as well as its daily newspapers, at both the central and the local levels. The Mission supported efforts by the Temporary Media Commissioner to fine two Kosovo Albanian dailies, *Bota Sot* and *Epoka e Re*, for infringements of the temporary print code, while at the same time providing legal advice and administrative assistance. The imposition of fines by the Temporary Media Commissioner has appeared to have a salutary influence, and there are indications that the general tenor of media content has moderated.

In addition to providing technical, logistical and programming support to media outlets, the Mission is continuing training and consultations with radio stations. A total of 165 broadcast and print journalists have participated in the training organized by the Mission this year. The Mission continued its joint activities with the European Centre for Broadcast Journalism, to deliver training in journalism and media management skills to Kosovo broadcasters. The Mission and the *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung* collaborated on basic media training for Roma and a programme development project jointly organized with the Centre was also held for ten Roma radio journalists. Throughout 2001, the Contingency Fund has continued to be a tool that the Mission uses to assist the development of media outlets and journalists among the non-Albanian communities. Free distribution of magazines to Serbian school children continued, with the commercial sales of Serb publications resuming in June 2001, after security issues had been resolved.

Elections. In the aftermath of the October 2000 municipal elections, in accordance with the approved OSCE budget mandated for use in capacity-building projects,

the Elections Department, during January and February 2001, focused on three issues: training for members of the Municipal Election Commissions, professional development for international and local Mission staff, and planning for the gradual handover of election administration. On 1 March 2001, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Hans Haekkerup, asked the OSCE participating States to prepare for possible Kosovo-wide assembly elections. Subsequently, the Mission was tasked with preparing an operational plan for voter registration and elections. Thus, the focus was shifted from capacity-building and training projects to planning for registration events and an election. With the promulgation of the constitutional framework for provisional self-government, on 15 May 2001, and the supplementary election budget approved by OSCE Headquarters, the Mission was able to prepare for voter service activities, which started on 30 July 2001. While the municipal elections last year were a benchmark in the progress towards self-government as defined by United Nations Security Council resolution 1244, they were tarnished by the non-participation of the Kosovo Serb minority. In the absence of freedom of movement and with virtually no returns of internally displaced persons from Serbia, Kosovo Serb politicians opted for a boycott but, after the changes in Belgrade took root, were appointed into various municipal assemblies.

With regard to the forthcoming Assembly elections, the Mission is actively pursuing the inclusion of those communities that boycotted, or only partially engaged in, the 2000 municipal elections. The Mission has devoted considerable resources to registering members of these communities who reside both inside and outside Kosovo and to encouraging them to register and participate in the general elections in November 2001. The Mission established a special task group with mobile teams who have reached out to communities of internally displaced persons in Serbia and Montenegro, as well as to the Kosovo Serb community inside Kosovo. The Mission has also made substantial efforts to contact Yugoslav and Republican politicians and party leaders to solicit their support for both voter and political party registration. Given the imperative of holding genuinely inclusive elections, the Mission has

actively conveyed the message that participation is a must if Kosovo Serbs wish to safeguard their interests and have a say in the course of events in Kosovo. Thanks to these efforts, large numbers of Kosovo Serbs have registered to vote.

The promulgation of the Constitutional Framework on 15 May 2001 paved the way for Special Representative Haekkerup, in consultation with the Mission, to announce that the general elections would take place on 17 November 2001. Developed over nine weeks of unremitting discussions in which the Mission took part, the election regulation, which is within the guidelines laid down by United Nations Security Council resolution 1244, covers the powers and responsibilities of the provisional institutions of self-government, the powers and responsibilities reserved to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and details of the institutions of an assembly, and of the executive and judicial branches. While the Constitutional Framework represented a fair compromise, a full consensus was reached on all the issues pertaining to the electoral provisions of the Constitutional Framework recommended by the Mission, including a single constituency, proportional representation, a closed party-lists system and a cut-off date of 1 January 1998 for voter eligibility. The Mission advocated the introduction of 20 seats in the 120-member Assembly set aside for representatives of non-Albanian ethnic communities to ensure that vulnerable communities are adequately represented in the future Assembly. The Mission also strongly advocated the participation of women candidates in the electoral process and, through the Central Electoral Commission, ensured that female candidates account for one-third of the candidates included in the top two-thirds of each political entity's list.

The Central Election Commission was reconstituted in March 2001. Nine local and three international experts were appointed on the recommendation of the Mission. The Commission has been responsible for making recommendations to the Special Representative on the basic rules necessary for the conduct of elections. Also, it is responsible for certifying those political parties which submitted their applications between 20 June and 20 July 2001

and wish to participate in the elections on 17 November.

Police education and development. By September 2001, a total of 16 courses for basic recruits had taken place, and approximately 4,100 Kosovo Police Service Officers had graduated from the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) school and had been deployed throughout Kosovo. At any one time, there are more than 650 students at the school, both basic recruits and KPS officers, in various training programmes. The goal of training an initial tranche of approximately 4,000 officers was met in May 2001 and another 1,700 officers are to be trained by December 2001. On an average, the previous courses have comprised 19 per cent women and 16 per cent minority representatives.

After the 12-week basic-training course, the candidates undergo a minimum of 15 weeks of field training by specially trained UNMIK or KPS Field Training Officers. The school has also undertaken a series of other training programmes. Some of these are: recertification training, supervisor and management training, and advanced and specialized training, including courses on criminal investigation, traffic accident investigation, emergency response driving and training certification, which trains selected police officers to become trainers themselves.

JIAS Department for Democratic Governance and Civil Society. The Mission continued assuming responsibility for the joint leadership of one of the 20 administrative departments created under the agreement on the Joint Interim Administrative Structure of December 1999. The Department consists of five substantive units, which continue to monitor the developing governance structures in order to detect and redress developments that retard the establishment of a modern, transparent and accountable governing system.

The Department's Equal Opportunity Bureau designed the Joint Interim Administrative Structure employment survey, which addresses under-representation of and employment barriers to certain groups of people within the departments. The Human Rights Policy Bureau launched a consultation initiative to help ensure effective human rights promotion through the Joint Interim Administrative Structure. The Department also provided advice on the drafting of a new

administrative direction concerning NGO registration and reporting. Since assuming responsibility for the registration of political parties in February 2001, The Department has been active at all levels of registration, from education on the procedures to processing of registration forms.

OSCE SPILLOVER MONITOR MISSION TO SKOPJE

The reporting period was marked by the numerous challenges that emerged as a result of the activities of the ethnic Albanian armed group operating initially along the northern border, and eventually also in the Tetovo and Kumanovo regions, posing the hitherto most serious threat to the stability of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. During the first quarter of the year, the situation was covered by the Mission's eight international staff. In April, the number of international staff increased to 16 and in early July to 26, pursuant to Permanent Council decisions to enhance the Mission's monitoring capacity (PC.DEC/405 and 414, respectively). On 6 September 2001, the number was increased to 51 by Permanent Council Decision No. 437. In order to be able to fulfil the tasks envisaged in President Trajkovski's plan to overcome the crisis, which includes more extensive monitoring, as well as assistance in the implementation of Annex C of the Framework Agreement, the Permanent Council decided on 29 September 2001 (PC.DEC/439) on an enhancement of the Mission by a further 159 international staff, including 72 confidence-building monitors, 60 police advisers, 17 police trainers and 10 support staff, with a mandate that runs until 31 December 2001. The focus of the Mission will be on monitoring the general situation and providing police advisory services and training, but also on other issues regarded as essential under Annex C of the Framework Agreement, such as inter-ethnic relations and media development. Relevant activities, such as the role of the OSCE in the redeployment of security forces to the areas affected by the crisis are determined in close co-operation with the Government. In addition, the Mission stands ready to assist the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in

preparation of the elections which are expected to take place early 2002.

In order to facilitate the political dialogue, the Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, also appointed a Personal Envoy, first, Ambassador Robert Frowick of the United States, and as of July, Max van der Stoel of the Netherlands, the former High Commissioner on National Minorities, to serve as a separate, albeit complementary, institution. Mr. van der Stoel participated in the Ohrid discussions, in close co-ordination with the European Union Special Envoy, François Léotard, and the Special Envoy of the United States, James Pardew. The talks led to the Framework Agreement, signed by the main political parties on 13 August 2001 and endorsed by the Parliament in September 2001, which rejects the use of violence in pursuit of political aims and calls for respect for the country's territorial integrity. The Framework Agreement proposes a political solution achievable through constitutional and other legal compromises, as well as by increasing minority representation in the public administration.

During the first quarter of the year, the Mission liaised with partner institutions and monitored the crisis area, in close co-ordination and co-operation with the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as well as members of diplomatic missions in Skopje. When the crisis spread, the Mission was asked to monitor the situation from field stations which were established in the Tetovo and Kumanovo areas, subsequent to the first enhancement in April 2001. Throughout the crisis, the Mission has kept the Chairmanship and the Permanent Council informed on an almost daily basis.

The Mission was instrumental in the setting up of a Crisis Management Centre in the Ministry of Defence. The fruitful co-operation with the Centre, as well as the intense efforts of the OSCE field team helped to solve the water problem in the Kumanovo region, caused by the closing of the vaults of the dams located in areas controlled by the ethnic Albanian armed group, which affected a population of nearly 100,000. As another confidence-building measure, the Mission has also accompanied and monitored humanitarian convoys to areas affected by the crisis.

During the second quarter, the Government asked the Mission (in co-operation with the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM)) to monitor compliance with the cease-fire agreement, which took effect on 5 July. Subsequently, the Mission initiated daily co-ordination meetings with partners, such as representatives of the EUMM and NATO, and the defence attachés of diplomatic missions. The Mission provided extensive input in the preparatory phase prior to the deployment of the NATO Task Force Harvest Mission.

In co-operation with the ODIHR, the Mission has organized crisis management seminars, with the participation of experts from the United Kingdom Royal Ulster Constabulary, and funded by the Norwegian Government, taking place in areas affected by the crisis. The objective of the seminars has been to increase and improve communication between local chiefs of police and local authorities, in order to minimize tensions in ethnically mixed or minority-dominated areas, and to optimize the response to the situation.

In order to increase the knowledge and understanding of its mandate, members of the Mission have toured the country together with representatives of the European Union and NATO. Local community leaders (mayors, municipal councillors and intellectuals) have been informed about the roles and activities of the respective organizations, particularly relating to the Framework Agreement.

Other activities of the Mission in 2001 have revolved around police training, the population census, decentralization and provision of assistance to the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) in preparing the establishment of the South East European University in Tetovo.

In co-operation with the ODIHR, the HCNM, and partner organizations, the Mission has examined the Law on the Census with a view to promoting a smooth procedure, acceptable to the whole population.

The Mission has been active in promoting local government reform by increasing the dialogue between domestic and international actors. As a result, an informal donor group was created in January 2001, comprising the Mission, interested local diplomatic missions, national development agencies, the United

States Agency for International Development, the Delegation of the European Commission and the United Nations Development Programme. Discussions have focused on decentralization as a potential cornerstone of a political solution to the crisis, the time frame for the legislative process and the matching of municipal competencies with the necessary fiscal resources.

Since September 2001, the Mission has been in an intense planning phase. The objective is to ensure that mandated responsibilities, both in terms of monitoring and in terms of the confidence-building measures in the areas outlined by the Framework Agreement, can be carried out effectively and without delay. Discussions with partner organizations, such as the European Union and its monitoring mission on the ground, EUMM, the Council of Europe and NATO, are aimed at ensuring co-ordination and an effective division of labour. Following the departure of the operation Task Force Harvest, the focus of field teams shifted from cease-fire monitoring to confidence-building measures intended to facilitate the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, implemented jointly with the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other partners. In order to ensure the security of monitors, NATO has deployed the force Operation Amber Fox, as the successor to Task Force Harvest. The decisions about the operational mode and the co-operation between all the organizations participating in this effort were laid down in Permanent Council Decision No. 439 and in a series of meetings in Brussels between the OSCE, the European Union and NATO.

OSCE MISSION TO ESTONIA

In the period under review, the OSCE Mission to Estonia witnessed no changes in either mandate or staffing strength. The Mission also continued to maintain a presence in its sub-offices in Narva and Johvi. One Mission member visited Narva every week, whereas the Johvi sub-office was open by appointment.

In November 2000, the Mission received a set of guidelines from the Austrian

Chairperson-in-Office, requesting it to focus its attention on certain issues, such as:

- The Language Law - amendments to the Language Law in the private sector and implementation thereof;
- The Law on Parliamentary Elections and the Law on Local Elections - both laws into conformity with international standards by removing language requirements for candidates who run for political office;
- The Ombudsman - support the establishment of a regional office of the Estonian Legal Chancellor/Ombudsman in northeastern Estonia;
- Integration - monitor and support further implementation of the State Integration Programme;
- Identify and remove obstacles to naturalization, family reunification and residence permits.

Throughout 2001, the Mission has maintained close and regular contacts with the Estonian authorities and representatives of minority groups on the issues covered by its mandate and has reported on progress concerning the guidelines. In this connection, the Mission has actively supported the implementation of the amended Language Law. In particular it should be noted that a decree for the use of Estonian in the private sector was adopted by the Estonian Government in May 2001. The Mission is now trying to assist the Language Inspectorate in organizing a seminar for the Estonian language inspectors on the international legal aspects of the Law and on their daily activities in this respect. The Seminar, which will take place on 7 and 8 November 2001, is being organized in close co-operation with the Language Inspectorate and the Estonian Law Centre in Tartu.

The Mission also maintained close contact with the office of the Legal Chancellor/Ombudsman, in particular the newly opened office in the northeast of the country, and followed developments in detail. It was also in touch with the office of the Minister for Population Affairs and other ministries dealing with issues within the Mission's mandate.

Furthermore, in keeping with its mandate, throughout the period under review, the Mission has pursued its activities in the field of

education, which is of particular importance to the Russian-speaking community in Estonia. The conversion in the secondary education system from Russian to Estonian as the language of instruction, which will begin in 2007, has been a matter of great concern and intense debate in the country. In mid-2000, the Law on Upper Secondary Schools was amended and will now allow for languages other than Estonian to be used as the language of instruction in 40 per cent of the subjects taught, taking those concerns into account to a large extent. The Mission has undertaken special efforts to support a calmer and more informed debate, *inter alia*, by providing experts on education in Estonian and Russian with the opportunity to study various European models of multilingual education. Among other things, the Mission organized two conferences on education in March 2001, while a seminar on the methodology of language teaching was organized in Narva in September 2001. The Mission, co-operating closely with the Ministry of Education, the Presidential Round Table on National Minorities and other representatives of minority groups, has also continuously supported the ongoing debate on the implementation of the conversion and the steps necessary on the way to 2007.

The Mission has constantly supported NGOs by providing free legal advice and legal representation on issues relating to citizenship, residence, family reunification and other matters within the Mission's mandate. In this connection, the Mission has undertaken the translation and publishing of a book on human rights in Estonian which should serve as a reference guide for researchers and law students.

As in other years, the Mission has shared its specific knowledge on, *inter alia*, regarding the Law on Aliens, the Language Law, the Citizenship Law, and minority education issues, with the diplomatic community and researchers who have special interests in these matters. In particular, the Mission has worked closely with other OSCE institutions, especially the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, in these fields. It maintained contacts with the Council of Europe and other relevant international organizations. Finally, the Mission is a member of the European Union

PHARE Steering Committee and regularly attends meetings of the Committee.

OSCE MISSION TO LATVIA

The mandate of the OSCE Mission to Latvia is focused on citizenship issues, but the Mission has gradually extended its attention to a wider range of social integration issues. There are four main areas of interest: citizenship and non-citizens issues, language and education, the Latvian Government's integration programme and the protection of rights regime.

The activities of the Mission increasingly relate to institutional support. This change has taken place since the major legislative tasks of the past have now largely been addressed.

Citizenship, naturalization, non-citizens issues, stateless persons. To increase the naturalization rate and to ensure a sustainable interest among the non-citizen population in acquiring citizenship, the Mission, together with United Nations Development Programme and the Latvian Naturalization Board, has initiated two projects in the autumn of 2001. One was launched in September 2001, and provides candidates for naturalization with free language training, while the other one is a public awareness programme promoting citizenship through advertising and direct mail, and will be launched in the latter part of the year. The projects have been financially supported by Canada, Germany, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. The funds for the two projects - approximately USD 500,000 - have in the main been raised by the Mission.

In addition, the Mission has urged changes in the regulatory process governing naturalization. On 5 June 2001, the Latvian Government adopted two decrees in line with recommendations from the Mission. These changes involved a reduction in the general application fee from LVL 30 to 20 (i.e., from USD 48 to 32) and recognition of language proficiency examination certificates from minority schools as the language certificates required for naturalization.

The Mission has continued to act as a facilitator for resolving individual cases related to residence status and citizenship. These cases come to the Mission's attention in various

ways. Some are referred to the Mission indirectly, others are raised in person, either in the Riga office or during the regular Mission road-trips around the country. A few cases are discussed in the Trilateral Military Pensioners' Commission, of which the Head of Mission is a member. The number of persons facing difficulties with their legal status has decreased substantially over the past years.

In order to gain a better understanding of attitudes towards citizenship issues and the motivation behind the choices that Latvian residents make regarding their citizenship, the Mission co-funded an opinion study, *Towards a Civil Society*, which was very well received after its presentation in May 2001.

By the end of June 2001, some 545,000 Latvian residents, or approximately 23 per cent of the population, were classified as non-citizens. The rate of applications is now declining, and the Mission is seeking to reverse the trend.

Language. Following interventions by, *inter alia*, the Mission and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, the regulations for implementation of the State Language Law were amended in November 2000. One purpose of these amendments was to limit the applicability of the Language Law in the private sector to instances where a legitimate public interest is involved. The Mission has also provided advice on other legislation that concerns language issues, and is continuing to pursue a few remaining legal issues.

The Mission is following the implementation of the State Language Law. As part of a move towards institutional support, the Mission has decided to engage in a project with the Latvian State Language Centre to develop a manual of practices for the Latvian language inspectors.

The Mission has raised the issue of language requirements for elected officials at the highest political level, and is continuing to follow relevant cases before the United Nations Human Rights Committee established under the International Covenant and Civil and Political Rights and the European Court of Human Rights.

Education. The Mission has had extensive contacts with the Ministry of Education and Science and NGOs concerning the planned

introduction of Latvian as the main language of instruction in secondary schools, which is foreseen for 2004. Members of the Mission have made several visits to minority schools.

In order to have a better basis for giving advice, the Mission has decided to commission a survey on attitudes towards educational reform among parents, teachers and students. The Mission is also considering providing support for an information booklet on educational reform.

Social Integration Programme. The Mission has provided advice on various aspects of the Social Integration Programme that was adopted by the Cabinet on 6 February 2001, and on the design of the administrative structure to support it that was passed by parliament on 5 July. The Mission participates in the Consultative Council on the Social Integration Programme under the Ministry of Justice.

The adoption and implementation of a comprehensive Social Integration Programme leads into other activities of the Mission. Projects related to citizenship and naturalization that have been generated by the Mission are now included as parts of the Programme.

Ombudsman Institution. In April 2001, the Mission and the United Nations Development Programme Office in Latvia invited a team of international and Latvian experts to assess the mechanisms for protection of rights and good governance in Latvia. The Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission served as secretary to the group. Support was provided by Canada, Finland, and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

The experts recommended short-term measures to strengthen the existing National Human Rights Office and further institutional and legal changes for the longer term. The report was presented to the President on 31 May 2001, and to the public at a seminar in early June. The full text of the report was published in the official Government gazette, *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. In a letter to the Head of Mission, the Minister of Justice subsequently endorsed the recommendations contained in phase I of the report as a road map for streamlining the work of the National Human Rights Office.

Publication of Book on minority rights. The Mission and the ODIHR have supported the

publication of a survey on the minority situation in Latvia by the Human Rights Institute of the Law Faculty at the University of Latvia. This book, which is the second one in the same series supported by the Mission, is intended both as a source of information and for use as a teaching material for law students.

Mission members maintain a regular and unimpeded dialogue with representatives of the Latvian authorities, including the country's top political leaders. There are extensive contacts with the parliament, including participation in sessions of the standing committees. There is a particularly close working relationship with the Naturalization Board and the Department of Citizenship and Migration Affairs. The Mission's visits to different regions of Latvia permit it to maintain a network of contacts throughout the country.

The Mission maintains contacts with various NGOs. In many of its projects, crucial roles are foreseen for NGOs.

OSCE ADVISORY AND MONITORING GROUP IN BELARUS

The OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus (AMG) was established in 1997 with the task of assisting the Belarusian authorities in promoting democratic institutions and in complying with other OSCE commitments, and of monitoring and reporting on this process (PC.DEC/185). According to the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 18 December 1997, the Group with its five international members enjoys diplomatic status. It has access to everyone, and everyone has access to it. It advises the Government, the opposition and NGOs. In the Istanbul Summit Declaration, adopted by the OSCE Heads of State and Government on 19 November 1999, this co-operation was applauded (in paragraph 22) as an important contribution to the solution of the constitutional controversy in Belarus and for the development of political dialogue in order to pave the way for free and democratic elections. In the same Paragraph the AMG's co-operation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly was also welcomed and the necessity was stressed of removing all remaining obstacles to the dialogue by

respecting the principles of the rule of law and the freedom of the media.

In 2001, the Belarusian Government endeavoured to constrain the legal and administrative conditions for the activities of the AMG by trying to impose restrictions on the financial support to domestic election observation networks, imposing strict conditions for the project, "Youth and Democracy" and countenancing a public and KGB campaign against the AMG's consultative activities in preparation for the presidential elections, in support of the advisory council of opposition parties and the coalition of democratic alliance candidates.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not respond to proposals put forward by the AMG at the beginning of 2001, for the establishment of a working group of specialists from Belarus and from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Venice Commission on the Electoral Code. In addition, by means of presidential decree No. 8, dated March 2001, it was made difficult for international NGOs to provide financial support to democratization projects of local NGOs and individuals. The implementation of decree No. 8 has the *de facto* effect of restricting the monitoring of human rights violations, support for democratization projects and activities by youth and women's organizations. The authorities also rejected the previously accepted OSCE financial support for the independent domestic election observation network that had been established for the parliamentary election in 2000 and was to be expanded for the presidential elections in 2001.

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office and a great number of OSCE participating States deplored these developments and continued to express their support, by way of voluntary contributions, for AMG activities within the existing framework.

Although many institutions of the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as foreign ministries of countries in Europe, Asia and Africa, were invited by the Belarus authorities to observe the presidential elections in September 2001, a similar invitation to the ODIHR was delayed without explanation. Eventually, an invitation was sent to the ODIHR in mid-August, and a limited election observation mission was deployed three and a

half weeks before election day, instead of six as originally planned.

On 10 September 2001, the Chairperson of the Central Election Commission declared the following official results of the presidential elections:

Voter turnout:	83.86% of registered voters (7.3 million)
Lukashenko:	75.65%
Goncharik:	15.60 %
Gaidukevich:	2.48 %
Spoilt ballots:	2.20 %
Against all	3.37 %

The International Limited Election Observation Mission (ILEOM) of the parliamentary delegations of the European institutions (European Union, OSCE, Council of Europe) and of the OSCE/ODIHR stated, however, that the 2001 presidential election process had failed to meet the OSCE commitments for democratic elections, as well as those of the Council of Europe. Furthermore, the independent domestic election observation documented many violations of the Electoral Code and falsification of the official results.

Notwithstanding the negative assessment of the elections, the ILEOM report acknowledged the emergence of a broad based democratic opposition within civil society and stated that the country's isolation would not be conducive to strengthening democratic development. Political structures have emerged within civil society, giving rise to a centrist democratic block. At the grass root level, young people dominate the domestic observation networks and are very active in the new political and social opposition groups. The emergence of a political alternative, against the will of the State apparatus, is exemplified by the existence of structures like the Alliance for a New Belarus, established in 2001 to serve as a catalyst for the nomination of a single opposition candidate for the presidential elections, and the Advisory Council of seven (now eight) opposition political parties, established in 1999 for the conduct of negotiations with the Government. The creation in 2000 of a country-wide and independent election observation network, which proved its effectiveness both in 2000 on the occasion of the parliamentary elections and in 2001 on the occasion of the presidential elections, is also illustrative of a growing

public involvement in the future direction of the country.

One further challenge to Government control came from the official Federation of Trade Unions, headed by Vladimir Goncharik. The Federation, in fact, co-sponsored the collection of complaints against Government violations of the International Labour Organization conventions prohibiting Government interference with trade union activities. The Federation acted jointly with the free trade unions in Belarus and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in submitting the complaints collected to the International Labour Organization.

After the elections, the OSCE and the Belarusian Government publicly committed themselves to renewed co-operation to defuse tension stemming, for example, from the accusations of double standards in the OSCE levelled during the November 2000 Ministerial Conference, from the ODIHR assessment of the parliamentary elections and its Observation Mission at the 2001 elections, from the unresolved issue of the Belarusian seat in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and from the AMG's financial support for the domestic election network and the definition of its mandate and the scope of its activities.

Advisory activities. In the spring of 2001, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rejected AMG democracy-building projects, such as domestic election observation and Youth and Democracy, which were submitted by the AMG for consultation in accordance with the consultation requirement for mission projects adopted by the OSCE Permanent Council on 14 December 2000 (PC.DEC/399). The AMG continued, where and whenever possible, to prepare and implement its projects in co-operation with official organs.

In particular, the AMG has been implementing a number of projects sponsored by the European Commission and the ODIHR aimed at strengthening democracy building, good governance, the rule of law and the protection of individual human rights. Some examples include connecting the non-governmental European Humanities University in Minsk to the network of universities and academic institutions around the world and establishing a Centre for European and Transatlantic Studies in the same institution. The latter involves a master's

degree programme in international relations, a publication series, *Crossroads*, in Russian and in English and a research department, which identified a first research project to receive international funding, entitled "European Integration and European Union Enlargement: Challenges and Opportunities for Belarus, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine". Other projects are related to prison rehabilitation, political party development, youth and society, legal aid and human rights and peaceful conflict resolution. A follow-up programme for the years 2002 and 2003, amounting to EUR 800,000, was presented to the Belarusian authorities for consultations and will be finalized before the end of the year.

Monitoring activities. The legal department continued to closely monitor and report on human rights compliance by Belarus and to assist citizens in distress as a consequence of the deficiencies of the current judiciary system. In co-operation with other human rights organizations, the AMG continued to conduct courses for public defenders and representatives in many regions of the country.

The Mission regularly monitors the media situation and reports on opposition groups' lack of access to State-controlled electronic and print media. It also monitors and reports on the economic and legal situation of the independent media, which depend on foreign financial support for their survival. In May 2001, a workshop on freedom of the media for representatives of the independent Belarusian media was conducted in Vienna by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. The workshop was initially to take place in Belarus, but after a visit to Belarus by the Representative had been cancelled because of the Government's denial of a visa to his senior adviser, the location was moved to Vienna.

<p>OSCE ASSISTANCE GROUP TO CHECHNYA (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)</p>
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The OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya was established by the Permanent Council on 11 April 1995 (PC.DEC/35), with a mandate which includes promoting respect for human rights, facilitating the delivery of international humanitarian aid, providing assistance for the

speedy return of refugees and displaced persons, and promoting a peaceful resolution of the crisis and stabilization in the Republic. The Assistance Group regularly reports on the situation regarding internally displaced persons (IDPs), as well as on political, military, economic, environmental and human rights issues.

Throughout the reporting period, the immediate priority of the Assistance Group's activities was to establish the conditions required for the return of its international staff to the application area. To this end, once discussions with the Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Federation had been discontinued at the end of 2000, negotiations started in March 2001 with the Ministry of Justice to contract servicemen of the special Criminal Law Enforcement Department (GUIN) unit for the protection of the Assistance Group in Chechnya. Following an assessment visit to the Northern Caucasus and extensive negotiations with Government officials, a Memorandum of Understanding was eventually signed on 13 June 2001 with the Ministry of Justice, which undertook to ensure the security of the Assistance Group office in Znamenskoye. On 15 June, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office reopened the Assistance Group's Office in Znamenskoye and underscored the need for full implementation of the Group's mandate, as approved in April 1995 by the OSCE Permanent Council.

After its redeployment, the Assistance Group concentrated on normalizing its presence in Chechnya following an absence of more than two years. To this end, it maintained relations with the federal authorities in Moscow and established new contacts with local and federal authorities in Chechnya and adjacent regions. For example, permanent contacts were maintained in Znamenskoye with the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for Human and Citizen's Rights in the Chechen Republic. Thus, the Assistance Group kept itself informed of the latest developments in the political, economic and human dimension fields.

On 3 April, the Assistance Group attended parliamentary hearings organized by the Parliamentary Commission on Normalizing the Socio-Political Situation and Human Rights in Chechnya, where the problems of a safe and

speedy return of the internally displaced persons to their permanent places of residence were discussed.

In June, the Human Dimension Officer of the Assistance Group took part in an informal round table on post-conflict reconstruction in Chechnya, in Lovik, Sweden. The round table was attended by Russian Federal and Chechen officials and individuals from multilateral organizations, European Union governments and Chechen and international NGOs, as well as western and Russian experts, who participated in their personal capacity. The purpose of the round table was to discuss security and economic issues in Chechnya. A document outlining common ground identified by participants was disseminated to a target group of policy makers.

On 29 August, the Assistance Group visited Grozny and met representatives of the Chechen administration. The discussion concentrated on the general situation in the Republic and internally displaced persons living in Ingushetia. The Chechen officials complained that the main obstacle to the return of internally displaced persons was the fact that humanitarian aid was not being delivered to Chechnya, rather than a lack of security.

The large number of internally displaced persons in Chechnya and adjacent regions such as Ingushetia remained a major source of concern throughout the reporting period. The Assistance Group conducted assessment visits to IDP camps in Ingushetia and Chechnya, also meeting with responsible federal and local officials.

The Assistance Group closely co-operated with human rights organizations, such as Memorial and Human Rights Watch, regularly exchanging information on the human rights situation in Chechnya. Documented instances of human rights violations in Chechnya were regularly reported by the Assistance Group to the participating States.

Since the reopening of the Office in Znamenskoye, written complaints have regularly been received concerning the fate of persons who have allegedly been kidnapped or killed (201 and 24 cases, respectively). The vast majority of reported cases refer to young males, and 77 of them are alleged to have taken place in 2001, most frequently at military checkpoints or at the victims' homes. The

complaints usually blame the Russian armed forces, frequently identifying the units. Occasionally, abuse, torture and robbery are also reported.

One of the tasks of the Assistance Group is to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to the victims of the crisis. The Assistance Group regularly participated in co-ordination meetings with United Nations agencies in Nazran/Ingushetia and in Moscow, and closely co-operated with international organizations and NGOs. It participated in a seminar on the United Nations consolidated appeal process for humanitarian aid organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Moscow.

Before and after its return to Chechnya, the Assistance Group sought to identify programmes geared towards the post-conflict social, psychological and professional rehabilitation of victims. Given the limitation of financial resources, programmes were targeted at children and young people, who represent the most vulnerable and affected group. Projects were funded under the Assistance Group's budget, as well as through voluntary contributions from participating States and private companies.

THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE ON THE CONFLICT DEALT WITH BY THE MINSK CONFERENCE

Implementation of the mandate of the Office of the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office is closely connected with the tasks dealt with by the Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs. It is also directly linked to progress in negotiations on the cessation of the armed conflict in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh and on the signing of a peace agreement. After four meetings of the two Presidents between November 2000 and April 2001, in early 2001 some progress appeared to have been made in this respect. However, in the beginning of May, after a visit to the region by the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, the next scheduled meeting was postponed, in order to allow both Presidents more time to prepare their own

citizens for any future concessions having to be made in order to achieve a lasting peace agreement. The Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan eventually met two more times, in the search for a common approach to a resolution of the conflict. The meetings of the Presidents are of vital importance for progress in the negotiation process.

It should be noted that, during this period, the Office of the Personal Representative was an important factor in the promotion of the peace process on the ground. It remained active among the parties and maintained contact on all sides and at all levels of political and military circles. Information obtained through these contacts was forwarded to the Chairman-in-Office to keep him abreast of all developments related to the conflict. The Office has functioned as a messenger between the parties. It also filled the role of co-ordinator of events organized at different levels. In addition, the Office helped to make the arrangements for the visit of the Chairman-in-Office in February. Apart from its responsibilities towards the Chairman-in-Office, the Office plays a key role in support of the activities of the Co-Chairs, most of all when they visit the region. This support normally takes the form of liaison with the various parties and the various embassies. This is especially true in Nagorno-Karabakh, where the embassies in Armenia and Azerbaijan have no representation.

Monitoring of the ceasefire usually takes place twice a month, and contributes to stability along the front lines. A total of 19 monitoring activities have been conducted, of which six have been on the Azerbaijani-Armenian border and 13 on the line of contact. During the reporting period, all the parties have from time to time requested that monitoring be carried out at specific points in order to reduce local tensions. Monitoring activities provide the Chairman-in-Office and members of the Minsk Group with valuable information relating to the situation on the ground. They also provided opportunities for the Co-Chairs to observe the situation for themselves. In December 2000, the Co-Chairs crossed the border from Nakhichevan, in Azerbaijan, to Armenia by vehicle. In May 2001 they crossed the line of contact on foot, from Azerbaijan into Nagorno-Karabakh, and in July 2001, they crossed the other way.

Monitoring also serves as an important confidence-building measure. Local commanders of the opposing sides are given the opportunity to communicate, using the OSCE's radio equipment, and consequently have an opportunity to clear up misunderstandings. When monitoring is carried out on the border, representatives of the local authorities can be brought together. During the meetings, they try to solve some of the acute problems faced by the local population because of the close proximity of the front lines.

With regard to humanitarian issues in general, the Office maintained its contacts with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international organizations and NGOs. However, it devoted special attention during the reporting period to the fate of civilians and military personnel who had been detained for illegally crossing borders. Last year, the parties agreed to promptly release new prisoners of war and civilians after they had been detained. From January to September, a total of nine detainees were handed over. On the last occasion, one civilian and one serviceman were released. All the releases were carried out under the aegis of the ICRC, in accordance with the rules governing such matters and, each time, the Office co-operated closely with the ICRC.

The Office, as the sole permanent body on the ground, is the source of information for the Chairman-in-Office, OSCE structures and also for other organizations. Many high-level delegations and organizations are briefed by the Office on developments in the peace process. During this period, those briefed included the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany, J. Fischer, the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

HIGH-LEVEL PLANNING GROUP

The High-Level Planning Group (HLPG) was established in accordance with the decisions of the Budapest Summit of Heads of State and Government of the participating States of the OSCE (then CSCE), which took place in 1994, with the aim of intensifying

action in relation to the conflict dealt with by the Minsk Conference.

Under its open-ended mandate, adopted by the Chairman-in-Office on 23 March 1995, the HLPG makes recommendations to the Chairman-in-Office on developing a plan for the establishment, force structure requirements and operations of a multinational OSCE peacekeeping force, and in addition, makes recommendations on, *inter alia*, the size and characteristics of the force, command and control, logistics, allocation of units and resources, rules of engagement and arrangements with contributing States.

The Head of the HLPG is appointed by the Chairman-in-Office, to whom he reports directly and from whom he receives directives. He is responsible for implementation of the HLPG's mandate and for organization and management of the HLPG's work and its staff. He liaises, as appropriate, with the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the Minsk Conference and contributing States.

The HLPG is composed of military staff seconded by OSCE participating States and non-military staff employed by the OSCE Secretariat. The initial strength of the HLPG was 35; the current strength is nine.

Through planning activity, the HLPG has developed a concept for an OSCE multinational peacekeeping force, to be deployed in the area of conflict. This concept comprises four options, of which three are a mixture of armed peacekeeping troops and unarmed military observers and the fourth is an unarmed military observer mission.

In the spirit of its mandate, the HLPG continued to maintain and expand contacts with international bodies and institutions in order to improve its current information; in addition, it continuously adapted the concept through fact-finding missions, and as a result, updated the four options.

At the beginning of the year, in accordance with its mandate, the HLPG was given new guidelines by the Chairman-in-Office that included, *inter alia*, the following: the earliest resumption, if deemed opportune, of logistics reconnaissance in order to update the knowledge of the possibilities throughout the area; the preparation of general studies, given

the need to improve the current options; liaison and visits to relevant missions and organizations related to peacekeeping operations; participation in monitoring tasks on the line of contact organized by the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office; and support for the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, as required. Moreover, following the peace talks in Key West, Florida, it appeared that the HLPG might be asked to prepare the development of a small military observer mission.

To date, among other things:

- An amendment to the command and control concept was developed in order to ensure the utmost efficiency in the military main chain of command on the ground;
- A simplified planning methodology for a military peace operation was issued as a preliminary study for the development of the small military observer mission;
- A comprehensive document on future co-operation between the HLPG and the Secretariat unites concerned was submitted to the Chairman-in-Office;
- The costs of all current operations were revised simultaneously, thus ensuring a unified methodology;
- A handbook on the conflict dealt with by the Minsk Conference was complemented by a new chapter (pre-arrival information for new mission members).

In accordance with the recommendations of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, and in view of the delicate situation in the area of conflict, the HLPG could not carry out the proposed logistics reconnaissance. On the other hand, participation in the monitoring tasks on the line of contact continued, and the HLPG has participated in nine monitorings since November 2000.

Since October 2000, the HLPG has briefed high-ranking visitors on the current planning process, including Secretariat staff at the senior management level, the new French Co-Chair of the Minsk Group, the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office and military advisers of the OSCE.

During the year, members of the HLPG attended seminars on peace support operations, conferences on confidence- and security-building measures and meetings relating to humanitarian and children's issues.

As a military expert, the Head of the HLPG joined the OSCE delegation headed by the Secretary General, and travelled to Key West for the peace talks at the beginning of April 2001. HLPG officers have also visited military training centres to assess their usefulness to the HLPG and the OSCE in the event of an operation in the area of the conflict dealt with by the Minsk Conference.

The HLPG is confident that it will be possible to adapt current plans to the needs of a future mission in the area of conflict. In accordance with the directives of the Chairman-in-Office, it is preparing to provide assistance and support to the head of mission, the force commander and the mission operational staff in the field, in the event of deployment of a mission.

OSCE OFFICE IN YEREVAN

The period under review covers the second year of operation of the Office in Yerevan. The staff of the Office consists of six international officers and six full-time and one part-time Armenian employees.

The mandate of the Office covers all aspects of OSCE activities in the political, economic, environmental and human dimensions.

Economic and environmental dimension. During 2001, one major priority has been the continuation of work directed towards the putting in place of a strategy to combat corruption in Armenia. In 2000, the international community asked the Office to co-ordinate activities in this area. Following discussions with the President and the Prime Minister, agreement was reached with the Armenian authorities on the establishment of a joint governmental and international task force, the aim of which was to draw up a detailed anti-corruption strategy document. In 2001, the Armenian Government established a Cabinet-level Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister, to review and supervise this activity. The goal is to finalize the strategy document by the end of the year. This document will contain detailed proposals for legislative, institutional and public-involvement measures, together with a detailed work programme. It will also include mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of activities.

The World Bank made a grant of USD 300,000 to the Armenian Government to support this work. This is the first such grant that the World Bank has made to a national government for activities to combat corruption. The Government has produced a concept paper, setting forth the broad outlines of the strategy, which is to be discussed in detail with the joint task force and civil society during the latter part of the year.

The Office has also worked with the local chapter of Transparency International to create a coalition of NGOs and media representatives to participate with the Government and the international community in the work ahead.

In the economic and environmental sphere, the Office scored a major success in 2001 with the ratification by Armenia of the Aarhus Convention. The Office worked extensively with the National Assembly, the Ministry of the Environment and non-governmental organizations to secure this result. Together with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the Office is involved in the organization of a regional conference on the Convention, which will take place in Yerevan in November 2001.

The series of economic round tables initiated by the Office with participation by the public and private sector continued throughout the year. Four background reports on economic and environmental themes were produced. The Office continued to act as a catalyst, bringing together local players and international partners in a series of working meetings to discuss investment and economic and environmental questions. Representatives of the Office co-ordinated the Armenian contributions to the OSCE Economic Forum in Prague and its preparatory meetings and participated in OSCE seminars in Vienna and Berlin.

Human dimension. Armenia's accession to full membership of the Council of Europe at the beginning of the year led to an increase in the Office's workload. Since the Council of Europe is not represented in Yerevan, the Office acted as a channel of communication between Strasbourg, the National Assembly and the Government. Many of the commitments undertaken by Armenia, in respect of the introduction of new legislation or amendment of existing laws, are also in the mainstream of the Office's mandate, and it has therefore been necessary to keep the Office for

Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) informed of progress and involved in developments. In particular, the Office has been very active regarding issues related to amendments to the Electoral Code and its provisions on human rights and legislation on the establishment of the ombudsman institution, the police, the media, political parties, reform of the penal system and alternatives to military service.

During the year, the Office continued to implement five ODIHR projects related to registration of permanent citizens, public awareness of human rights, training in human rights monitoring for NGOs, education in tolerance and prison reform. These projects had been initiated before the establishment of the Office in February 2000, but progress had been slow. During 2001, a package of three laws covering the new system of registration was drafted and submitted to the Government for approval. Regular television programmes, studio discussions and radio broadcasts have been produced on a range of human rights issues. The training project for NGOs will be concluded in the autumn and the Minister of Education has agreed to include education in tolerance in the secondary schools' curriculum.

The Office has also found partners to launch new initiatives. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) contributed to the voter registration project in order to expand the coverage of the new legislation to refugees. Jointly with the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, the Canadian International Development Agency and the Netherlands Helsinki Committee, the Office has developed and is implementing projects in the areas of prison training, gender issues and democratization of law-enforcement agencies. The collaboration with the Canadian International Development Agency has resulted in the publication of the first text book on gender issues in the Armenian language.

In co-operation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office completed a research project on human trafficking in 2001. Based on the results of this work, the next steps will be to work with Government agencies to initiate legislation in this area. There has already been a positive response from the ministries concerned.

OSCE OFFICE IN BAKU

Thereafter, there will be a need to address the question of providing support structures for returning victims of trafficking. Training of law-enforcement and border-control officers in matters related to both trafficking and asylum cases will be the subject of a further joint project with UNHCR, the IOM, the ODIHR and the Office.

Work has also continued on the legislation establishing the Office of the Public Defender of Human Rights and, more particularly, on means of supporting the institution once it is established, early in 2002. At the initiative of the Office, a round table on torture and abuse was held in Yerevan in July 2001 with the assistance of the ODIHR. This brought together, for the first time, officials and representatives of lawyers unions and non-governmental organizations; it resulted in a series of concrete recommendations for acceleration of the reform process.

During the year, the Office researched and issued a background report on the religious situation in Armenia. In that context, work has begun with the relevant ministries on the issues of conscientious objectors, alternatives to military service, general respect for religious freedoms, tolerance and non-discrimination.

The Office is continuing to seek out and support proposals for regional co-operation. It actively assists the recently established regional associations of journalists, lawyers, women's groups and young professionals. Together with Transparency International, a regional meeting of anti-corruption NGOs was organized in Yerevan in September 2001. Representatives from the OSCE Mission to Georgia and Office in Baku, Azerbaijan, also attended.

During 2001, the Office hosted a visit by the Chairman-in-Office and was included in the delegation of the Chairman of the Committee of the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe. Briefings were given to the European Union Troika and the European Union delegation to the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement meeting in Yerevan. The Office organized the visit of the Foreign Minister of Portugal and assisted the Foreign Minister of Estonia during his visit.

Throughout 2001, the Office has continued to enjoy a close, effective working partnership with all levels of the Government, the National Assembly and civil society in Armenia.

In 2001, the Office continued to expand its partnerships with governmental, parliamentary and civil-society organizations in Azerbaijan on a wide range of issues in the political, economic, environmental and human dimensions. The Office also strengthened institutional co-operation with the Council of Europe, United Nations agencies and other international organizations. Particular attention was paid to developing good working relations with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

A great deal of attention was devoted to the operationalization of security-related issues, including matters of concern for Azerbaijan on the agenda of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). Emphasis was placed on follow-up activities in connection with the Forum's concern with the control of small arms and light weapons, and on the provision of support to regional preparations for the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, held in July 2001. In that context, active support was provided to a bilateral seminar sponsored by Azerbaijan and Switzerland, which was held in Baku in June 2001. Consideration was given to conducting training activities on the local application of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. The Marshall Foundation was approached regarding a seminar of interest to Azerbaijan on operational aspects of conflict management and rehabilitation. These activities were pursued in co-operation with Government institutions, mainly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Defence Ministry.

The Office's constant efforts to respond to ongoing and emerging concerns of the host country in the light of the OSCE priorities were reinforced in the talks with the Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during visits to Baku by high-level OSCE delegations, including the visit of the Chairman-in-Office in March, the regional heads of missions meeting in April, and the visit by a delegation of the Portuguese Foreign Ministry in early July, which the Office organized and for which it provided logistical support.

Human dimension. The wide network of contacts with Government organizations established during the first few months of the Office's operation has been further expanded and consolidated. To enhance the implementation of the work programme, a group of Friends of the OSCE was formed. This innovative consultative arrangements designed to co-ordinate and facilitate direct communication between the Office and a broad range of Government institutions and civil society. The Office has provided assistance and consultation for the Group on the implementation of their projects.

In close working contacts with Internews-Azerbaijan, an NGO based in the United States, and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFM), the Office monitored issues related to the freedom of the press and of the media, in particular in connection with suppression of a number of local newspapers and television stations. The Office initiated a round table on the broadcasting law in co-operation with Internews-Azerbaijan. Subsequently, the Office took an active part in a conference on television and radio broadcasting regulations organized by the Council of Europe and the Office of the President. The round table, conducted with the assistance of an independent media expert and sponsored by the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media, focused on an improved framework for licensing television stations and on establishment of an independent non-political licensing commission. The resulting draft of the Media Law was presented for further recommendations at a Council of Europe conference. The final conclusions of the two events provided input for the process of modernization of the media legislation, which is slated for completion in the autumn. This issue was also the focus of the round table on the media situation in Azerbaijan, which was organized by the Office in the framework of the assessment visit by members of the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media.

The issue of alleged political prisoners has been of serious concern to the Office, in particular the case of Elkhan Pasha Abbasov. At the request of the Chairman-in-Office, regular consultations were held on the issue with the Office of the President, the Ministry of

the Interior and the Ministry of Justice. As a result of the joint efforts of the international community, Mr. Abbasov was recently pardoned by a Presidential Decree.

Also of concern have been the plight of the Society of Karabakh War Disabled, the hunger strike and the recent trial of some of its members charged with attempted destabilization of the political situation. The Office raised the issue in a series of meetings and consultations with the Government, as well as with representatives of the diplomatic missions in Azerbaijan. It was generally recognized that the need for further bilateral discussion of the issue with the host country was obvious.

The beginning of the year under review was marked by Azerbaijan's accession to the Council of Europe, an event of paramount significance to the country. The Office was in close contact with the Council of Europe on issues related to membership and was instrumental in briefing the visiting high-level Council of Europe delegations on political developments in the country. Further contacts focused on the intensification of co-operation on a number of issues, including monitoring of the Council of Europe commitments undertaken by Azerbaijan, among them prevention of torture, national minorities, alleged political prisoners and establishment of the ombudsman institution. The idea of out-posting an expert from the Council of Europe Secretariat to the Office in Baku is strongly supported by the Office and seems to be ultimately feasible.

Support for institutional legal reform and capacity building plays a central role in connection with Azerbaijan's membership in the Council of Europe. Although substantial achievements have been made in legal reform, much remains to be done in strengthening the rule of law. The challenges arising out of the implementation of a vast number of new laws need appropriate attention. The public needs to be made more aware of the reforms and officials need training in the implementation of new laws. The Office consults with the Council of Europe and the ODIHR on ways in which it can support Azerbaijan's objectives in this regard.

The Office has had a wide array of consultations with partner organizations. In the framework of its gender-awareness activities

and in co-operation with the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the Office held a round table on gender issues with international donors. A joint OSCE/IOM anti-trafficking project aimed at assisting the Government in its efforts to combat trafficking in human beings has been drafted. The Office co-operates closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on migration issues, in particular in the area of economic and social rights of internally displaced persons. Co-operation with the ODIHR is being pursued in relation to a regional project involving the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. The Office has been engaged in the training programme on human rights monitoring and reporting organized by the Polish Helsinki Foundation and the ODIHR, which is aimed at capacity building of local NGOs concerned with human rights.

Azerbaijan's civil society, which is essential in the Office's mandate, has proved to be a vital source of information and co-operation. The Office conducted a series of round tables with NGOs focusing on issues of registration of NGOs, prison conditions, the Government policy towards NGOs, and the ombudsman function. The Office was instrumental in providing the ODIHR with a translation of the draft law on the ombudsman for further expertise. An expanded seminar on the issue, scheduled to take place in November 2001, will bring together human rights NGOs and Government officials in a discussion of the proposed modalities for interaction with the ombudsman.

A systematic survey among NGOs representing the interests of national minorities was completed and a round table was organized with concerned NGOs, Government institutions and representatives of the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

Experience with the electoral process during the parliamentary elections suggests that particular attention should be paid to issues having a bearing on election disputes before and after polling day. After consultations with the Government, the Office intends to organize two round tables on this topic.

Since the establishment of the Office, a significant number of individual cases of complaints have reached it. A database for the

registration of such complaints has been created, and part of the caseload has been referred to the Council of Europe.

Economic and environmental dimension. A major effort in the economic and environmental dimension has been focused on supporting initiatives by the Government and the international community for strengthening good governance in Azerbaijan. The Office has initiated discussions on efforts to combat corruption with the Government and NGOs. Support has been given to Transparency International in their efforts regarding the role of ethics in the business community.

Special emphasis is being placed on the non-oil sector of the economy, and particularly on the rural agricultural sector. The Office has worked to call attention to the economic potential, development needs and initiatives in regions of Azerbaijan in which IDP poverty alleviation is not an issue.

In the environmental area, the Office has been working with the Regional Environmental Centre, the World Bank, and local NGOs to highlight the major environmental concerns in Azerbaijan, namely the Soviet-era oil pollution, and water purification. In addition, the Office is working with the other OSCE offices in the region and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to organize a regional conference on the implementation of the Aarhus Convention.

Particular attention was given to strengthening the OSCE mandate on regional co-operation issues. In September 2001, the Office participated in a regional conference on measures to combat corruption in Yerevan. Further joint activities among the three OSCE offices in the region will be explored later in the year, focusing on cross-border trading issues, harmonizing of border regulations and good governance.

The operational capacity of the Office has been impaired by the two recent vacancies (the posts of Head of the Office and Democratization Officer), which may be expected to affect the Office's efficiency of implementation of ongoing projects and the activities scheduled for the remainder of the year.

OSCE MISSION TO GEORGIA

In the period under review, the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Georgia to observe and report on movements across the border between Georgia and the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation was prolonged by the Permanent Council until 15 November 2001 (PC.DEC/406). This task was carried out in addition to other regular tasks of the Mission, which include promoting negotiations for peaceful political settlements of the conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia; monitoring and promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Georgia, including South Ossetia and Abkhazia; and promoting the development of civil society and democratic institutions. The authorized strength of the Mission is 62 international staff, of which 42 are border monitors.

Georgian-South Ossetian conflict. Some positive signs can be seen in the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict settlement process. The military and security situation, for example, is stable; the movement of people and goods across ethnic divides has increased; and a grass-roots rapprochement, with practical and pragmatic working relationships among ethnically intertwined villages, is emerging.

After a pause of almost two years, the eleventh plenary session of the Joint Control Commission (JCC) was held in Vladikavkaz in April 2001. The European Union took part for the first time. This session was followed by several meetings of the Commission's co-chairmen. The Mission was active throughout this process, participating in all the plenary and committee sessions, as well as the discussions preceding them. The Mission emphasized that the JCC sessions, although limited to security, economic and refugee issues, should not be separated from the political dialogue, but should be conducted in tandem to maintain the momentum in the negotiation process. On military and security issues, the sides agreed on the establishment of a Special Co-ordination Centre and a joint police body, as well as on various measures to enhance security in the area of conflict. On economic issues, the sides reached two agreements. The first concerns the creation of a Russian-Georgian agency to finance economic rehabilitation programmes in the zone of conflict. The agency will be funded out of the

respective State budgets and from other sources. The second agreement relates to the establishment of a Georgian-South Ossetian agency to attract funding from international donors and investors.

Following consultations with the delegation of the European Commission in Tbilisi, the Mission forwarded a proposal to the OSCE Chairman-in-Office for the establishment of a fund to bring about a considerable enhancement of the activities of the JCC Secretariat, in order to revitalize, and infuse a new impetus into, the negotiation process.

The Joint Control Commission session in April was followed by a fifth meeting of the group of experts on political issues. Consultations were conducted in the summer by the Mission and the Joint Control Commission co-chairmen, as well as the OSCE Chairmanship, culminating in a visit to Georgia by the Chairman of the Permanent Council, Ambassador Liviu Bota, in August.

The sixth meeting of the group of experts took place in Bucharest from 14 to 19 September 2001. Agreement was reached, *inter alia*, to continue negotiations on a mutually acceptable solution to the problem of State legal issues between the parties and on the definition of the role of international organizations in the settlement process and the importance of rehabilitation projects carried out by the European Commission. Both President Shevardnadze and the South Ossetian leader, Ludvig Chibirov, considered the meeting a step forward in the settlement process. Mr. Chibirov stressed that such an on-going dialogue would have been hard to envisage a year or so earlier.

After extensive consultations in September and October 2001, in which the Mission was also involved, the Joint Control Commission co-chairmen met in the Mission's Tskhinvali field office on 25 October. On this occasion, the parties agreed on the general modalities for providing financial assistance, mostly through European Union funds, to the Joint Control Commission, as well as to the group of experts. Such assistance will allow the sides to hold regular meetings, thereby injecting a new dynamism into the conflict-settlement process. Funds will be channelled through the Mission, which will conclude memoranda of understanding with donors on the use of these contributions.

Despite the Mission's efforts, no agreement was reached concerning the programme on return, integration and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons. One of the obstacles is that a long overdue draft Law on Restoration and Protection of Housing and Property Rights of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons is still to be adopted by the Georgian parliament.

In general, the military situation remained calm and stable. However, crime is a matter of growing concern and isolated incidents in 2001 illustrate that, despite a calm surface, minor episodes could spark off ethnic confrontation and lead to violence.

Co-operation between the Georgian and South Ossetian law-enforcement authorities has been reinforced through the establishment of a Special Co-ordination Centre in Tskhinvali, which is staffed with police officials from both sides. The Centre was equipped thanks to donations from the Norwegian Government. Additional equipment has been pledged by the European Union. Both donations are placed under the Mission's auspices and are a concrete response by the international community to positive developments in the zone of conflict, such as the on-going programme of voluntary hand-over of small arms and light weapons. From the start of the programme, in January 2000, over 980 weapon units and 197 kg of pure explosives have been collected, and a significant proportion of them was destroyed. The Mission monitors the hand-over programme and is present at destruction events.

Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. In mid-November 2000, a UN/OSCE Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) was dispatched to the Gali District, following extensive consultations with the UN, the two sides and the Mission. This took place pursuant to the Istanbul Summit recommendation to send a mission to assess conditions for the safe, secure and dignified return of refugees and internally displaced persons to the Gali District. The JAM's final report recommended opening a human rights office in Gali. In August, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the Mission, submitted a concept paper to the Abkhaz authorities, concerning the modalities for a branch in Gali of the human rights office in Abkhazia, Georgia. These include

secondment of OSCE personnel to the Gali office.

A session of the Co-ordinating Council headed by the United Nations was held in January, and a meeting on confidence-building measures took place in Yalta in March; both yielded little progress towards reaching agreement on key documents on return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and peace and non-resumption of hostilities. The Group of Friends of the UN Secretary-General has been working on a draft document on distribution of constitutional competencies and the status of Abkhazia. The document has not yet been submitted to the two sides. The two sides did, however, agree on a document requesting, *inter alia*, the OSCE and other participants in the peace process to act as guarantors of non-resumption of hostilities and secure refugee return.

After April 2001, the peace process came to a virtual standstill due to a deterioration in the situation on the ground, with killings, kidnappings and armed skirmishes in and near the zone of conflict. In April and July, the Abkhaz side cancelled its participation in planned meetings of the Co-ordinating Council. In August, the parties seemed to be ready to resume the dialogue, but then further skirmishes in the Kodori Valley in October resulted in the third cancellation in six months of a Co-ordinating Council meeting. On 8 October, a UN helicopter on patrol in the Kodori Valley was shot down and nine UN staff were killed, including five UN observers.

As far as human dimension activities in Abkhazia are concerned, the Mission currently has a portfolio of eight projects in Abkhazia. These include media projects, such as exchange of Georgian and Abkhaz newspapers and news-agency bulletins (via the Internet); exchange of journalists and doctors; training of Abkhaz women NGO leaders; and a human rights training programme for youth. The projects are co-ordinated by the Mission's Human Rights Officer at the UN Human Rights Office in Abkhazia, Georgia (HROAG), in Sukhumi.

Border monitoring. The Mission's border monitoring mandate was extended by the Permanent Council until 15 November 2001 (PC.DEC/406). The team base at Girevi was closed for the winter due to extreme weather conditions and lack of winter accommodation

facilities. On 6 November 2000, the border monitoring winter plan came fully into effect, and monitoring was conducted from the team bases in Omalo and Shatili. In general, patrolling during the winter period, both on the ground and in the air, was made difficult by adverse weather conditions.

On 14 March 2001, a violation of Georgian airspace by an unidentified aircraft took place, with a possible dropping of unexploded ordnance near Girevi. Accordingly, patrolling ceased in the area. An official Georgian investigation of the incident revealed that the area was clear on 23 June, and patrolling activities were resumed.

The team bases have been upgraded. In May 2001, the team base at Girevi was opened with a tented camp. A containerized camp was installed in July. Construction of the new team base in Shatili was completed in September 2001.

Throughout the reporting period, the situation in the monitored area remained calm and stable, with no crossings of the international borders observed. The OSCE presence in the border area has contributed to dampening down a potentially volatile situation. However, with general uncertainty still prevailing, increased tension may exacerbate the situation.

Human dimension. While several legal reforms were enacted in 2000, their implementation is still lagging. Similarly, there has been faltering implementation of the obligations laid down by the Council of Europe in 1999. Some negative tendencies were recorded in respect of human rights and democratization.

The Code of Criminal Procedure was reformed in July 2001, to bring it into compliance with international human rights standards. Major provisions included the right of a witness to a lawyer, the right to be assisted by a lawyer from the moment of detention and the right to ask for a medical examination. Moreover, an important step forward was the creation of a supervising council of NGOs to monitor the situation in the penitentiary system.

The Mission continues to maintain close contact with the Office of the Public Defender and has been supportive of its work. At the recommendation of the Mission, an ODIHR legal consultant is conducting a review of the

Office's work. In February, the Public Defender's Office presented its annual report to parliament, referring to a deterioration in the penitentiary system. Occurrences of arbitrary behaviour by State officials and violations of the rights of women and children were denounced. Violations were attributed, *inter alia*, to widespread corruption, a low level of awareness of human rights and wholesale neglect by domestic courts of international conventions ratified by Georgia.

The situation of religious minorities has worsened, despite a clear official policy by the Georgian authorities of allowing religious diversity. An increased number of cases of harassment, defamation and violent attacks, especially against Jehovah's Witnesses, has been reported. Instigators, often Orthodox extremists, appear to act with impunity. Furthermore, measures laid down by the Council of Europe in 1999 in connection with the planned repatriation of the Meskhetian population deported in 1944 continue to lag behind schedule.

Amendments to the Election Law and the Bill on Local Self-Government were adopted last summer. In connection with the upcoming local elections in November 2001, an ODIHR needs assessment mission visited Georgia in mid-September. As in previous years, the Mission provided practical support and seconded Mission members to various regions during the elections, including Georgian-controlled territory in South Ossetia.

The Mission has successfully supported a total of 16 initiatives and projects through the Head of Mission fund in the areas of the media, gender, ethnic groups, religious groups, IDPs, civic diplomacy, human rights, youth and children and the rule of law. Moreover, the Mission has continued regularly to facilitate and fund an exchange of official newspapers between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides (see above).

External donors are the major source of finance for most of the Mission's projects. A project on a journalists' forum has reached its third year. At the end of 2000, Armenian, Azerbaijani and also Nagorno Karabakh journalists joined the forum. In 2001, the southern Caucasus International Association of journalists was created. It is a non-governmental organization, which will be registered in Strasbourg and will have a

provisional head office in Tbilisi. Its aim, *inter alia*, is to enhance professionalism in journalism and journalists' rights. This is the first regional association of its kind in the OSCE area that transcends not only ethnic, but also State, boundary lines. The Mission has also conducted a project on co-operation between Georgian, Abkhaz and South Ossetian specialists in drug addiction, organizing training seminars in both Warsaw and Georgia. Throughout 2001, the Mission has also assisted a research and analysis project on Samtskhe-Javakheti for the High Commissioner on National Minorities.

On 28 and 29 June 2001, the Mission hosted the first meeting of human dimension officers from all the OSCE field missions in the southern Caucasus, for the purpose of discussing common approaches in dealing with human rights issues such as individual complaints, internally displaced persons and religious and ethnic minorities, as well as in developing regional projects. The initiative was followed by a regional workshop on corruption and its impact on society for economic and environmental dimension officers, held in Yerevan in September 2001.

The Mission has co-operated closely with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the American Bar Association (ABA) to develop a cross-organizational strategy for combating trafficking in human beings in Georgia, and has initiated a donor co-operation mechanism with other international organizations.

OSCE Voluntary Fund. Starting in 2000, the Mission supported the Ministry of Defence of Georgia in assessing projects to be financed through the OSCE Voluntary Fund to alleviate the consequences of the Russian military base withdrawals. The Mission provided a preliminary assessment of several projects before forwarding them to the OSCE Secretariat. In particular, the Mission facilitated a project for the neutralization of liquid missile fuel in the village of Meria in West Georgia. In the summer of 2001, the Head of the Mission initiated a number of fund-raising meetings in Vienna and Tbilisi, seeking sponsorship for the above project. In October, the Mission received a final pledge that international funding would be forthcoming.

OSCE MISSION TO MOLDOVA

During 2001, the OSCE Mission to Moldova played an important role in the renewal of the negotiations for a political settlement between the Republic of Moldova and Transnistria. In December 2000, after a break of almost six months in the negotiating process, representatives of the two sides and the three mediators, including the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the OSCE Mission to Moldova, met in Budapest. In the first months of 2001, the Mission took part in a tripartite meeting of mediators in Kyiv, and in March hosted a meeting of the sides in its Tiraspol office in March.

However, the negotiations for a political settlement were fully re-energized only after the overwhelming victory of the Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova in the early parliamentary elections on 25 February 2001, and the election of Party head Vladimir Voronin as Moldova's third President on 3 April. President Voronin established achievement of a settlement of the Transnistrian question as one of the top priorities of his administration, and a regular schedule of top-level negotiating meetings began with a meeting between President Voronin and Transnistrian leader Smirnov in Chisinau on 9 April. The Mission, reinforced by senior-level representation from OSCE Troika member Portugal, has taken an active part, along with fellow mediators Russia and Ukraine, at all levels in these resumed negotiations.

Members of the Mission participated actively in the work of the Joint Control Commission (JCC), the body responsible for implementing the July 1992 cease-fire agreement and supervising the joint peacekeeping forces in the security zone. In April 2001, the members of the JCC requested that the Mission provide an analysis of the quantity of heavy weapons required for the work of the peacekeeping forces in the security zone. The Mission organized an assessment visit by military experts from several participating States, and produced an analysis calling for the elimination of heavy weapons from the security zone. This study prompted

further discussion of balanced reduction of weaponry deployed between the sides.

At the request of JCC delegations, the Mission also proposed to the then President of Moldova Lucinschi and Transdnestrian leader Smirnov discussion and adoption of confidence-building and transparency measures between the sides as a means of reducing tension and enhancing security. To support and facilitate this discussion, in September, the Mission and the George C. Marshall European Centre for Security Studies jointly sponsored a seminar in Grainau, Germany, on Confidence Building and Peacekeeping in Transdnestria, with participation by JCC delegates and other senior officials from Moldova, Transdnestria, Russia and Ukraine. Mission members also participated regularly in other JCC activities, such as observation of withdrawal of troops and equipment from the security zone and inspections of the joint peacekeeping forces.

Mission members closely followed the issue of withdrawal of Russian arms and equipment from Moldova, and maintained close contact with the Commander of the Operative Group of Russian Forces (OGRF), based in Tiraspol. In November 2000, the Head of Mission agreed with Russian Federation Foreign Ministry and Defence Ministry officials on procedures for the use of the OSCE voluntary fund to defray expenses incurred in the withdrawal or destruction of Russian arms, ammunition, equipment and troops from the Transdnestrian region of the Republic of Moldova. The Head of Mission and Russian Federation Deputy Minister of Defence Isakov exchanged letters formalizing these procedures in Moscow in May.

In November and December 2000, Mission members observed and verified the loading and withdrawal of one echelon of dual-use military equipment from the OGRF base in Tiraspol. In June 2001 the Russian Federation began reduction operations in respect of Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty-limited equipment (TLE) located at the OGRF base in Tiraspol. In accordance with agreed procedures for use of the OSCE Voluntary Fund, Mission members and visiting CFE inspectors observed and verified all these reduction operations. In July and September 2001, the Head of Mission authorized the first two disbursements from the Voluntary Fund to the Russian Federation

Ministry of Defence as reimbursement for the operations conducted and verified to date.

In June, representatives of the Mission, the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence, and the Transdnestrian industrial complex signed a tripartite agreement on establishment of a working group to investigate the possibility of industrial reprocessing and disposal of some of the ammunition at the Russian depot at Colbasna. The OSCE delegation in the working group included General Bernard Aussedat of France, who is to head the planned OSCE assessment mission for Colbasna. The tripartite working group identified over 26,000 tons of ammunition suitable for reprocessing and disposal (out of over 40,000 tons). On 30 September, the working group produced recommendations to OSCE Voluntary Fund participating States on further steps to eliminate the munitions at Colbasna.

The Mission promoted, facilitated and sought support for a number of projects which would encourage contacts and reconciliation between authorities and citizens on the left and right banks of the Dniestr River. For example, the project to repair the Gura-Bicului Bridge, inspired by the Mission, and funded by the European Union, was completed in September 2001, thus reopening the main highway between Chisinau and Odessa. The Mission was able to locate support for installation of computerized connections and communications between the Moldovan parliament and the Transdnestrian supreme soviet, in support of ongoing efforts to harmonize legislation between the two sides.

In close co-operation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Team on Moldova, the Mission continued its support for an active programme of contacts and co-operation between parliamentarians on both sides. The Head of the Team on Moldova, Finnish MP Kimmo Kiljunen, and several Team members took part in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly group of observers during the parliamentary elections in February 2001, and had separate meetings with leaders of the Moldovan and Transdnestrian legislative bodies. In May, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly sponsored a seminar held in Helsinki and the Finnish Åland Islands on local self-government. The seminar was attended by parliamentary leaders and delegations from Moldova and Transdnestria, as well as OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

President Severin and parliamentarians from Russia, Ukraine and Romania. The Team on Moldova was also instrumental in the adoption of a special resolution on Moldova at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly meeting, which took place in July in Paris.

Following visits by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities to Moldova (HCNM), the Office of the OSCE HCNM and the Mission together established with the appropriate Moldovan authorities a pilot programme to train teachers of the State language as a second language for the four main areas in Moldova densely settled by persons belonging to national minorities. By the late summer of 2001, this programme had begun to turn out significant numbers of such teachers.

The Mission continued its involvement in a wide range of other issues in the human dimension. Mission members participated actively in the establishment of a nationwide anti-trafficking co-ordinating committee, including representatives of the Government, international organizations and NGOs, and together with the ODIHR provided expert support for the Moldovan parliament in the drafting and adoption of anti-trafficking legislation. The Mission followed the elections to the supreme soviet in Transdnistria in December 2000, and documented significant deficiencies in these elections. Mission members played a key role in the ODIHR Election Observation Mission for the Moldovan parliamentary elections by arranging and conducting observation of attempts by Moldovan residents in Transdnistrian-controlled territory to vote in these elections.

The Mission actively supported the development of, and contacts between, non-governmental organizations on both sides of the Dniestr. The Mission closely followed the intervention of civil authorities, particularly from Tiraspol, in the dispute over the replacement of the head of the Seminary at the Noul Neamt Monastery in Chitcani, and urged a peaceful resolution of the issue. The Mission also conducted an extensive investigation of allegations of massive terror and human rights violations by an unauthorized military group in the village of Chitcani, and produced a detailed report documenting the failure to act of police officials and the Joint Control Commission and

Joint Military Command organs charged with maintaining civil order in the security zone.

The Mission continued its direct engagement in developments in the case of the Ilascu group, several members of which are serving sentences in Tiraspol prison on charges of murder and terrorism. Together with the representative of the new President Voronin, the Mission visited Mr. Ilascu and the others in his "group" in the Tiraspol prison shortly before his dramatic release in early May 2001. The Mission is continuing to press for the release of the other members of this so-called group.

As in previous years, the Mission received and responded to a very large number of petitions and complaints on a wide variety of subjects from Moldovan citizens on both sides of the Dniestr River. Given the dramatic increase during 2001 in the volume of the Mission's work, especially of tasks connected with the withdrawal or destruction of Russian arms and ammunition, the Mission has requested that its authorized level of seconded international Mission members should be increased to nine.

OSCE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR IN UKRAINE

The mandate of the Project Co-ordinator, established in 1999, consists in planning and implementing co-operation projects with the relevant authorities of Ukraine. In the reporting period, the Project Co-ordinator further developed these programmes with a view to the overall aim of assisting Ukraine in adapting its legislation, institutions and policies to the needs of a modern democracy based on the rule of law, under conditions of globalization and taking into account the microelectronic revolution. Thus, the Project Co-ordinator continued to focus on supporting the rule of law as an overarching priority. The office is currently staffed by the Project Co-ordinator and two seconded international staff members, as well as two experts (one international and one Ukrainian) and six local support staff.

Projects were financed to a considerable extent by voluntary contributions from OSCE participating States. In addition, by its Decision No. 399, of 14 December 2000, the Permanent

Council approved the amount of EUR 210,000 for project activities, responding to one of the key lessons learnt after the establishment of the Project Co-ordinator, namely that sufficient start-up funding is a decisive prerequisite for the successful implementation of the mandate.

A notable event in the period under review, although not directly related to the mandate of the Project Co-ordinator, was the OSCE Seminar on Preventive Functions of the OSCE: Experience, Possibilities, Tasks, held on 8 and 9 October 2001 in Kyiv. This Seminar was organized jointly by the OSCE and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, with the active support of the Project Co-ordinator and his office. The Seminar was attended both by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and by the OSCE Secretary General. On this occasion, the Chairman-in-Office discussed co-operation with Ukraine in the framework of the OSCE with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, who opened the Seminar. On the margins of the Seminar, the Chairman-in-Office also met with the President as well as the Prime Minister of Ukraine.

With respect to the Project Co-ordinator's priorities, a crucial development in the reporting period was the expiration, on 28 June 2001, of the five-year period of application of the transitional provisions of the Ukrainian Constitution. By this date, the court system and judicial procedures were required to be brought in line with the Constitution. A special focus was therefore placed on activities supporting the amendment of relevant legislation as well as the publicizing and implementation of it.

Adaptation of legislation. As the main activity in this field, the Project Co-ordinator continued to implement the project entitled, "Comprehensive Review of Human Rights Legislation", aimed at bringing Ukrainian legislation in line with European and international standards. From a review of existing legislation in the initial stage, emphasis was gradually shifted to the provision of assistance in drafting new legislation. In this connection, a special project provided assistance to the Ukrainian authorities in reforming the country's residence registration system to make it compatible with democratic standards.

With the aim of making new legislation work, the Project Co-ordinator supported the

competent authorities in publicizing it, also providing judges and other law practitioners with guidance on its application. Similar activities were also carried out regarding the provisions of relevant international conventions to which Ukraine is a party.

Strengthening of the institutions. The Project Co-ordinator continued to provide technical assistance to institutions that are crucial to the rule of law, such as the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court and the Ombudsman of Ukraine. Special emphasis was placed on facilitating the exchange and dissemination of information, particularly on rulings of the highest courts and their jurisprudence, by making use of an Internet-based database. A substantial project was also launched to assist the Supreme Court in establishing an administrative court system.

Specific issues related to the rule of law. Some other issues related to the rule of law also received attention during the reporting period: freedom of the media, trafficking in human beings and legal norms in the military sphere. They were addressed by specifically targeted projects. Concerning the media, international standards relating to the freedom of the media were publicized among journalists, judges and law practitioners, as well as the public, by means of publications, seminars in the regions and television broadcasts. As regards the fight against trafficking in human beings, the Project Co-ordinator continued his co-operation in this area with the Kyiv office of the International Organization for Migration, focusing specifically on prosecution and the development of the witness protection programme, together with law enforcement agencies. In addition, in co-operation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the support and development of regional counselling and information hotlines continued. In the military sphere, two approaches were explored: first, to provide technical and expert support with a view to the establishment of a military police in the Ukrainian Armed Forces, and, second, to publicize international humanitarian law and international standards among the officers of the Ukrainian Army through a series of lectures at the National Academy of Defence and a series of seminars in garrisons throughout the country.

Good governance and transparency. In 2001, several projects have been launched with the aim of improving good governance and transparency by providing, *inter alia*, assistance in the establishment and maintenance of Internet web sites by regional and local authorities, assistance to the Public Prosecutor in combating corruption and assistance in the application of the principles of the Aarhus Convention by regional authorities in respect of local environmental problems.

OSCE MISSION TO TAJIKISTAN

A year and a half after the General Peace Agreement was officially declared as implemented and after holding parliamentary elections, the Republic of Tajikistan is slowly recovering from the post-Soviet transition, civil war and a difficult process of nation building. The OSCE Mission to Tajikistan supports the country in its efforts at modernization and post-conflict rehabilitation. Its mandate includes maintaining contacts with and facilitating dialogue between regionalist and political forces in the country; promoting respect for human rights; promoting and monitoring adherence to OSCE norms and principles; assisting in the development of legal and democratic institutions and processes; and regularly reporting on these matters. On 14 December 2000, the Permanent Council approved an enhancement of the Mission by the addition of four international staff members (three seconded and one contracted), bringing the total authorized strength to 15 (PC.DEC/399). Authorization to open a field office at Khorog, in a rather inaccessible part of the country that needs strong OSCE support, has been sought from the authorities of Tajikistan.

At the borders, the war in Afghanistan is a permanent source of instability, especially due to major problems with refugees and drugs trafficking. Difficulties exist with other neighbouring countries regarding water, energy, transportation and minorities, although joint commitments in the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization do help to reduce tensions. Inside the country, respect for human rights, the rule of law, political party pluralism, the separation of powers and the

freedom of the media are praised at the highest level; nevertheless much remains to be done, especially in parts of the country that are still outside the control of the central authorities. In the sphere of the economy and the environment, the post-Soviet transition and ensuing process of unbridled accumulation of capital continue to hamper the emergence of a true market economy. The transition continues to be affected by a reluctance on the part of the authorities to openly admit the magnitude of the environmental difficulties confronting Tajikistan.

In the course of the year, the Mission has received visits by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, the Secretary General, the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia.

Human dimension. In the human dimension, the Mission has been active in promoting both awareness of human rights and legal reform. Through the Legal Assistance Programme of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Mission has been supporting and advising the authorities on reform of the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, to bring them into compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In this context, a round table was jointly organized with the ODIHR. In October 2001, a co-operation agreement was signed with the Government of Tajikistan, whereby the Mission and the ODIHR will play a major role in advising the Government on redrafting the Administrative Code. Both the Mission and the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly addressed the Tajik authorities, offering support in reviewing the Election Law with a view to overcoming shortcomings highlighted by the ODIHR report on the general elections held in 2000.

Following the success in previous years, a two-week summer camp on human rights and modern democracy for university students from Sught Province in northern Tajikistan was organized in September 2001. Public debate on human rights issues was stimulated through the organization of a number of seminars on topics such as human rights in pre-trial investigations, child protection and the rights of the child.

From 22 to 27 October, a week of human rights cinema was organized in Dushanbe, with the co-operation of the Russian organization Stalker. The Mission has also been active in exchanging views with the Government on the abolition of the death penalty and of exit visas and the transfer of responsibility for prison administration from the Ministry of the Interior to that of Justice. Furthermore, it has successfully negotiated with the Government to declare an amnesty to mark the tenth anniversary of independence. A street law clinic was opened with the support of the ODIHR on 24 September 2001, and a concert of classical music was organized in the country's only women's prison, in Khujand, on 25 October. The latter was preceded by a seminar on human rights for female prison inmates. Finally, on 25 and 26 October, an international conference on the role of advocacy in a democratic society was organized by the League of Women Lawyers of the Republic of Tajikistan with the support of the Mission. The conference was attended by lawyers and representatives of the Government and the parliament, as well as representatives of NGOs from Tajikistan, other Central Asian countries and Russia. During the conference, participants discussed human rights advocacy and the activities of human rights NGOs and their role in the legislative process.

In addition to the activities described above, the Mission has successfully supported the case of 58 Tajik citizens who had been expelled from Uzbekistan and continues to monitor the situation of Tajik refugees from the civil war who are trying to return home from Kyrgyzstan.

Freedom of the media. In November 2000, the Mission helped to organize a regional conference in Dushanbe, under the auspices of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. The outcome of the conference was the Dushanbe Declaration on Freedom of the Media. The Mission has been active in promoting regular monthly meetings among journalists to debate ways of implementing the Declaration, and dialogue between the press and the authorities, while also starting a survey of existing media laws, supported by members of the emerging civil society. The project to rehabilitate local newspapers Project was expanded to four newspapers in Gorno-Badakhshan. The project provides a mix

of initial material support, advisory services on editorial and financial management and training on issues such as the code of ethics, media laws, access to information and marketing. A series of six monthly round tables on reform of media law were jointly organized with Internews. The round tables were sponsored by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and aimed at fostering a process of consultation on this topic between the Government and civil society groups, leading to the presentation of a draft law to parliament. Finally, the Mission has established an information hotline for foreign journalists in Dushanbe.

Political parties and civic education. Opposition parties complain that the Government obstructs their activity and prevents them from registering their candidates. The Mission has been actively supporting them by organizing monthly meetings of leaders of political parties, thus promoting an exchange of experience and of information on common problems. A conference on the role of party pluralism in a modern democratic society was also organized in March 2001. In October 2000, the Mission began the implementation of a six-month civic education programme, starting with a seminar on journalism for youth. It was aimed at teaching the pupils the place and role of journalism in a democratic society. The main goal of the programme is to increase the Tajik people's awareness of human rights and freedoms, democratic norms and standards and principles underlying the building and functioning of a civil society.

Gender issues. Through the Women's Support Group Programme, the Mission's gender issues officer has been supporting over 28 groups, which means a total of over 500 women. Training was offered on a variety of topics, such as economic empowerment and business skills, leadership, and raising of gender awareness through the media. Seminars and round tables on violence against women and trafficking in human beings were organized and a report was published jointly with the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). In the summer, work started on drafting a report on the status of implementation by Tajikistan of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination against Women. On 20 September, the Mission hosted a charity sale for the women of Garm in its premises.

Economic and environmental dimension.

The Mission has been active in promoting the Aarhus Convention in Tajikistan. On 23 February, a round table was organized as a follow up to the regional conference that took place in May 2000 in Dushanbe. Representatives from various ministries and prominent environmental NGOs participated in the round table, which made an excellent contribution to improving public consultation mechanisms in Tajikistan. Since the ratification of the Convention in June, the Mission has closely liaised with the Ministry of Environmental Protection to agree on an action plan to make the public aware of it.

On the advice of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, the Republic of Tajikistan also joined the International Atomic Energy Agency in September 2000. The Mission responded by organizing a number of training seminars for members of the district administration and other professionals on the dangers of nuclear waste and necessary precautions. The Mission actively participated in the organization of an international conference on water resources in Central Asia and its rational utilization, held in Dushanbe in October 2001.

The Mission has also been very active in promoting drugs awareness and prevention of drug abuse. To this end, a number of seminars were organized for students as well as teachers, police, parents and other members of civil society. The topics of the seminars ranged from drug abuse and the risk of AIDS to prevention and rehabilitation.

OSCE CENTRE IN TASHKENT

On 14 December 2000, the OSCE Permanent Council renamed the OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia, and it is now called the OSCE Centre in Tashkent. This decision was taken in recognition of the change in focus of the office's activities. The original focus of the OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia, established in Tashkent in 1995, was to link the five Central Asian countries of Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan more closely to the OSCE. In 1998,

the OSCE established centres in Almaty, Ashgabad and Bishkek. A Mission to Tajikistan had already been deployed in 1993. As a result of this expanded presence in the region, the focus of the Liaison Office's activities shifted to Uzbekistan, and the Permanent Council formalized this in its decision.

In the reporting period, the Centre developed activities in all the OSCE dimensions, in conformity with its mandate, and guided by the OSCE principles of indivisible and comprehensive security. It continued to maintain close co-operation with State institutions, local non-governmental organizations and international organizations. The Centre has intensified its monitoring and reporting function, in this connection providing the OSCE Secretariat and other OSCE institutions with regular information on developments in Uzbekistan.

The Centre facilitated the organization of several high-level OSCE visits to Uzbekistan. In March, a presentation on "the OSCE and Central Asia: Current Challenges and Future Practice" was organized at the National University of Uzbekistan for visiting members of the United States delegation to the OSCE. The presentation was well received. In April, the Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador Kubiš, visited Uzbekistan. He met with Foreign Minister Komilov and other high-ranking Uzbek officials. A wide range of issues related to regional security and stability, as well as co-operation between the OSCE and Uzbekistan, were discussed.

In June, the Chairman-in-Office's Personal Representative on Central Asia, Ambassador Wilhelm Höyneck, visited Uzbekistan as part of his tour of Central Asia. He met with representatives of the Government, other international organizations and NGOs. As a concrete result, an International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terrorism will take place in Bishkek on 13 and 14 December 2001. The conference is the follow-up to the conference that took place in October 2000 in Tashkent. In addition, in the latter part of the year, training workshops on small arms and light weapons (SALW) will be offered to each of the Central Asian countries, including Uzbekistan.

In September 2001, the Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal, Jaime Gama, visited Uzbekistan. He met with Foreign Minister Komilov and other high-ranking officials to discuss bilateral and OSCE-related issues in preparation for his future capacity as Chairman-in-Office.

Representatives of the Centre participated in a number of round tables and seminars, and delivered lectures and briefings. In this connection, the Centre attended a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Germany, Joschka Fischer, who was briefed on the political situation in Uzbekistan. The Centre also began organizing the OSCE Speaker's Series and Club at the National University of Uzbekistan in Tashkent. Speakers include members of the Centre as well as expert guests. One meeting focused on the interrelation between environmental and political issues. Another one focused on opportunities for students to study abroad and techniques for searching the Internet for such information. The Centre was also represented at the conference on "The OSCE and Political Islam: the Case of Central Asia", organized by the Centre for OSCE Research in Hamburg, Germany.

Human dimension. The Centre implemented programmes that were included in its regular budget, as well as other projects supported by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), on topics such as the rule of law, NGO development and gender issues.

In the field of the rule of law, the Centre, in co-operation with the ODIHR, organized follow-up training on international legal standards for judges, prosecutors, advocates and investigators, with a focus on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its application in Uzbekistan's criminal procedures and judicial system. The aim was to provide these law enforcement officials with knowledge and understanding of fair trial procedures, and to encourage the use of international mechanisms and standards. A total of more than 100 law practitioners were trained in two sessions held in May and August 2001. The sessions lasted three and a half days and took place in four cities of Uzbekistan: Bukhara, Tashkent, Samarkand and Ferghana.

The Centre, with the support of the ODIHR, completed a cycle of training sessions as part of the human rights monitoring and reporting programme, aimed at strengthening the capacity of local human rights activists in the governmental and non-governmental sectors. Twenty participants from different parts of Uzbekistan have been taking part in the three-phase course, led by three trainers from Russia and Poland with long backgrounds in human rights. The training programme was extremely successful. In particular, it served as an interactive forum to develop a dialogue between human rights activists working in the governmental and non-governmental spheres. In the first course, from 19 to 23 April, the trainers introduced monitoring instruments and techniques, as well as international standards and mechanisms for the protection of human rights. In the second session, from 9 to 13 June, the main focus was on procedures for submitting communications about violations to United Nations bodies. The participants discussed real cases, and the trainers assisted them in identifying which monitoring instruments could be used.

The Centre continued working with women's NGOs to help them increase their understanding and knowledge of women's rights, and assume a larger role in the transformation of civil society. The first session of this year's training programme was held in Samarkand in July and provided an introduction to basic concepts of human rights. A second session on monitoring and reporting on human rights, especially women's human rights, was held in September. The primary goal of the training is to facilitate the work of NGOs in their democracy-building and human rights efforts.

Based on the training programme, the Centre and the Open Society Institute/Soros Foundation launched a series of talk shows that were broadcast on State television. The discussion focused on how culture and tradition affect human rights and the equality of women. Participants in the training sessions on monitoring and reporting on women's human rights were invited as speakers.

Since 1999, the Centre and the Open Society Institute/Soros Foundation have been organizing quarterly meetings of women's NGOs from all regions of Uzbekistan. Each meeting is devoted to a topic related to the

situation of woman in society, but also provides the opportunity to discuss specific actions and strategies among women's NGOs, the long-run, aim being to establish a broader women's NGO movement. The eighth women NGO strategy development forum was held in September 2001. Approximately 100 women leaders from all over Uzbekistan representing women's organizations, the media, NGOs and focal points in State and municipal agencies, as well as international organizations, participated.

Besides project implementation, the Centre was engaged in trial monitoring and in responding to individual complaints of human rights violations. For each individual case considered, the Centre reviewed the complaint in its entirety and sent it to the appropriate national authority, the Ombudsman's office, the Ministry of Justice or the Prosecutor-General's office, requesting their consideration. The national authorities, in particular the Prosecutor's office, the National Security Service and the Supreme Court, have been responding in writing to these requests more and more frequently.

During the reporting period, the Centre continued to monitor trials. In May 2001, a total of 95 people were accused of taking part in illegal religious activities, in particular of being members of the illegal religious organization *Hizb-ut-Tahrir*. Almost all were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for allegedly attempting to overthrow the constitutional order, disseminating leaflets containing threats to public order and organizing or participating in an illegal religious organization and criminal community. Due to its limited capacities, the Centre was unable to obtain full information on all the trials of this kind.

The Centre has been actively involved in economic and environmental issues. For example, it arranged for the participation of a delegation in the Ninth Economic Forum, which took place May 2001 in Prague. At the Forum, the Centre presented a report on developing and implementing existing international instruments, focusing on its activities related to the Aarhus Convention.

Economic and environmental dimension. In the economic field, activities were concentrated on promotion of the development of small and medium businesses through the continuation of

a series of training workshops in the provinces. Workshops on the development of small and medium businesses were conducted in Karchi, Nukus and Termez. A follow-up training series is planned, on simplifying small enterprise credit regulations; legislation on small and medium enterprises; marketing, accounting and financial management; and opportunities for small and medium enterprises to attract foreign investment.

The Centre has been involved in a number of activities related to promotion of the implementation of the Aarhus Convention. These activities include the establishment of an expert working group on the Aarhus Convention, which the Centre set up jointly with the American Bar Association's Central and East European Law Initiative. The group includes representatives from the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Justice, the parliament, and an environmental NGO. The group will work on reviewing existing national legislation for compliance with the Aarhus Convention and preparing a draft implementation programme and draft procedural regulations. In addition, the Centre has begun a series of training workshops on the Aarhus Convention in the provinces for Government officials and NGOs. In this framework, The Centre is actively promoting the development of a network of local environmental NGOs.

The Centre has also become involved in issues related to the drought in western Uzbekistan, and is working to promote an effective response to this crisis while maintaining links with international organizations and the Government of Uzbekistan on these matters.

Finally, in order to provide a foundation for the economic prosperity of Uzbekistan's youth, the Centre has taken steps to establish an OSCE information and resource centre at the Faculty of Social and Political Science of the National University of Uzbekistan, which will open up students' access to the global information network.

The Centre continues to look for opportunities to facilitate Uzbekistan's transition to a free market economy and to assist in solving the country's environmental problems.

OSCE CENTRE IN ALMATY

In the third year of its existence, the OSCE Centre in Almaty, Kazakhstan, continued its activities in all the security dimensions dealt with by the OSCE.

During the reporting period, several high-level visits of OSCE officials helped to improve mutual understanding between the Organization and the authorities of Kazakhstan. Notable among these were the visits by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana; the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Adrian Severin; and the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia, Ambassador Höynck.

Contacts with universities and research institutes were expanded and on several occasions the Centre sent representatives to give talks on OSCE involvement in Central Asia.

Human dimension. The Centre is continuing to monitor the current situation and to promote human rights. During the reporting period, the Centre, together with the ODIHR, implemented a number of projects, as foreseen in a Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Government of Kazakhstan in 1998. The training programme in monitoring of human rights was designed to build the capacity of human rights NGOs in Kazakhstan. The programme was divided into three phases, and, accordingly, three training seminars were organized, two of them on monitoring and international human rights law and the third one on concrete project proposals provided by the participating NGOs. The project on raising awareness of women's rights set a long-term goal of increasing women's participation in politics. As part of the project, the Centre organized a train-the-trainers seminar in July 2001. The newly trained trainers held follow-up seminars in the regions of Kazakhstan. In the context of the Legislative Alert and Assistance Programme, the Centre assisted both the Government of Kazakhstan and local NGOs and advised them on the contents of a proposed amendment to the Law on Freedom of Religion and Religious Associations. ODIHR experts drafted a review of proposed amendments in March 2001, while the Centre organized a round table in the

parliament of Kazakhstan in April on the same topic. As a result of the debate, the Government decided to withdraw the amendments from parliament. Among the other laws and draft laws that were reviewed in the context of this programme was the law on the judicial system and the status of judges. An assistance project aimed at the creation of a Judicial Training Centre to enhance the capacities of the judiciary in Kazakhstan was also initiated. ODIHR experts provided advice on the development of curricula and the integration of international standards into them. The Centre and the ODIHR provided materials, supported a conference on the implementation of court judgements in October 2001 and organized a study trip to a judicial training centre in Sofia, Bulgaria, in November 2001. Further projects included the Prison Service Training Project, which concentrated on capacity building at the prison staff college in Pavlodar. A visit to the college by an expert was arranged in May, and training for teachers on prison management and human rights took place in November. Materials and advice on the development of curricula were also provided.

The Centre, jointly with the ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, continued the Round Table on Elections process, consisting in a series of round tables to discuss a reform of Kazakhstan's election law in order to address findings in the ODIHR's final report on the 1999 presidential and parliamentary elections that they fell short of OSCE commitments in respect of elections. The process brings together representatives of Government, parliament and civil society. The second and third round tables in the process were held in January and June 2001, respectively. The fourth and final round table is scheduled to take place in November 2001, after which a summary table of proposed amendments to the election law will be submitted to parliament.

The Centre was closely involved in developments regarding the media situation, monitoring Kazakhstan's compliance with commitments undertaken as an OSCE participating State and taking initiatives such as organizing a seminar on strengthening co-operation between the mass media, law-enforcement bodies and the court system; issuing recommendations on basic principles of

co-operation between the mass media and State bodies; and translating and disseminating an analysis of proposed amendments to the Law on the Mass Media, which was commissioned by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. Some of the OSCE recommendations were eventually incorporated in the Law.

Finally, the Centre supported the work of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in Kazakhstan, for example, in holding a seminar on monitoring inter-ethnic relations in May 2001. The High Commissioner came for a farewell visit to Kazakhstan, also in May.

Politico-military dimension. In the political dimension, the Centre participated as an observer in several meetings of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), organized by the Government of Kazakhstan. These meetings were devoted to work on the final document, to be signed at the first CICA Summit, scheduled to take place from 8 to 10 November 2001. The document will reconfirm the member countries' commitment to building a safer and more secure Asia and will provide for the establishment of the organization's institutional framework.

Economic and environmental dimension. The Centre assisted the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities in organizing a Seminar on Transparency and Good Governance in Economic Matters, held in Almaty in November 2000. This was the first preparatory seminar for the Ninth Economic Forum.

In the latter part of 2000, two environmental projects were implemented, in which Government officials, parliamentarians and NGOs participated. The first was a seminar organized in Astana with the financial support of the ODIHR on access to information, public participation in decision making and access to justice in environmental matters, focusing on aspects of legal reform designed to secure implementation of the Aarhus Convention. The second was a regional workshop on translating policy into effective national environmental law, which was held in Almaty and sponsored by the German Government.

In May 2001, a workshop to train journalists on economic matters was conducted as a follow-up to the preparatory seminar for

the Economic Forum. A round table was held, also in May, with the aim of allowing NGOs, parliamentarians and the Ministry of natural resources and environmental protection to exchange views and investigate the need to systematize all environment-related legislation under one unified environmental code. The round table led to the creation of a working group on the environmental code. Further workshops on the role of NGOs and the Government in implementing the Aarhus Convention were organized in June in the Akmolinskaya and Pavlodar regions.

A workshop on poverty reduction was conducted in Uralsk in August 2001. Representatives of NGOs and governmental and international organizations discussed a possible strategy for combating poverty in west on Kazakhstan. On 19 and 20 October 2001, a seminar on nuclear waste was held in Almaty, aimed at giving a voice to civil society in the discussion on the Government's plans to import and store nuclear waste. Future plans include one more workshop on the Aarhus Convention in the Atyrau region of western Kazakhstan and a workshop on economic security in the era of globalization in the latter part of the year.

The Centre is continuing to monitor the economic and environmental situation in Kazakhstan regularly and several fact-finding visits were conducted to Astana, Pavlodar, Uralsk and Atyrau.

OSCE CENTRE IN ASHGABAD

The Centre in Ashgabad has been functioning since January 1999, in accordance with Permanent Council Decision No. 244. The Centre has five international and six local staff members.

In the reporting period, the Centre expanded its activities in the various OSCE dimensions. In particular, it has started holding events outside the capital and has included more officials from the welayat (region) administrative centres in events held in Ashgabad.

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, visited Ashgabad on 8 June 2001, as the last stop on his trip through Central Asia. He was received by President Saparmurat Niyazov and held

talks with the Chairman of the *Mejlis* (parliament) and the Foreign Minister. During the talks, an agreement in principle was reached on expanding co-operation between the OSCE and Turkmenistan. It was agreed that the Centre and the Government of Turkmenistan would elaborate a number of projects to be implemented in 2002.

On 18 June, the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia, Ambassador Wilhelm Höynck visited Ashgabad to consult with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Director of the National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and the Centre on possibilities for co-operation between the OSCE and the Government of Turkmenistan. The purpose of the visit was to enable Ambassador Höynck to introduce himself in his new role. The projects discussed included a conference on countering extremism to be held in Bishkek as a follow-up to the Tashkent Conference that took place in October 2000, training for border officials, and training workshops on small arms and light weapons.

The issue of the delimitation of the Caspian Sea featured prominently in Turkmenistan's foreign relations during the reporting period. A summit of the five Caspian littoral States to settle the issue was postponed twice during the spring. Eventually, all five had agreed to a summit in Ashgabad in October, but during the summer, frictions intensified, particularly between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan and Iran and Azerbaijan. The disputes between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan centred on ownership of certain offshore oilfields. Relations between the two countries were complicated by their inability to resolve a long-standing dispute over settlement of Azerbaijan's debt to Turkmenistan for natural gas. The Centre continually monitored and reported on developments.

The Centre held a seminar in April for Government officials, journalists and others on the history and role of the OSCE. The Deputy Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre was the keynote speaker, with additional presentations on the human and economic and environmental dimensions and the OSCE in Central Asia by the Centre's international staff. This was followed in September by a seminar on the same topic, held

in the Caspian port of Turkmenbashi, for local officials and NGO members. On this occasion, the guest speaker was the Head of the Democratization Unit of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), with the Centre's staff repeating their earlier presentations.

Politico-military dimension. In 2001, the Centre started a series of events on aspects of regional security, beginning in February with a seminar for Government officials on the politico-military dimension of the OSCE. In view of the importance to Turkmenistan of its neutral status (as recognized by the United Nations), a symposium on neutrality in the world today was organized on the eve of the tenth anniversary of the country's independence, on 15 and 16 October 2001. Speakers were invited from neutral participating States of the OSCE, who shared their countries' experience, emphasizing the importance of coupling neutrality with democracy.

Human dimension. At the end of January, the Centre and the Ashgabad office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees repeated their very successful introductory course on international human rights law that had first been held in 1999. In January 2001, most Government officials taking part in the course were from outside Ashgabad. A small number of journalists and NGO members were also able to participate. The course was followed in February by an advanced course for officials and staff members of the National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights who had participated in the 1999 course.

The issue of a memorandum of understanding between the ODIHR and the Government of Turkmenistan remains unresolved. The Centre and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs reached an agreement in the form of an exchange of notes on the implementation of some joint projects in various OSCE dimensions.

There were no known cases of arrest for obvious political reasons, and two of the known political prisoners were granted an amnesty. The Centre is continuing to follow the fate of the two other prisoners sentenced at least partially on political grounds (Muhametkuli Aymuradov and Baptist activist Shageldy Atakov).

The situation of unregistered religious communities deteriorated sharply, as courts ordered evictions of persons accused of holding worship services in large groups in their homes, and some believers felt they had no choice but to emigrate. By the summer, a number of Protestant congregations had ceased holding regular worship services. Their gatherings in small private groups, however, continue. The imprisonment of Jehovah's Witnesses for refusing military conscription continued.

The authorities of Turkmenistan agreed to receive ODIHR expert S. Ferrari to discuss issues of religious freedom. Mr. Ferrari prepared an assessment report after a visit to Turkmenistan in April 2001. The Centre seeks to continue the dialogue with the authorities on the issue of freedom of religion. To this end, a specialist in law enforcement reform was invited by the Centre in August to conduct a needs assessment as the basis for future projects.

The Centre sponsored some grassroots seminars and workshops on human rights and environmental education that were organized by local NGOs. It also financed the publication of teaching aids for an NGO providing civil-society education. Turkmenistan's oldest registered NGO, the Dashoguz Ecological Club, regained its registration. The Centre continues to monitor the situation of these NGOs, particularly that of the Dashoguz Ecological Club.

Publications by the Centre, including a collection of international and Turkmenistan laws protecting human rights and a booklet on the OSCE in the Turkmen language, as well as some ODIHR publications, have been disseminated to students of the Turkmenistan State University and the Turkmen-Turkish University and other members of civil society. Copies of each new publication by the Centre are delivered to various libraries and institutions.

On the eve of Turkmenistan's Constitution Day, the Centre and the National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights conducted a round table on the legal aspects of constitutions, with the assistance of the German and British ambassadors to Turkmenistan.

Economic and environmental dimension. It is in the environmental sphere that the

Government of Turkmenistan has continued to be a most willing to co-operate with the OSCE. As a follow-up to the regional workshop on the Aarhus Convention May 2000, the Centre organized a series of round tables in the *welayat* administrative centres and the city of Turkmenbashi, on the Caspian Sea. The aim of the series is to inform a wide range of Government officials and NGOs, at both the national and the local levels, about the Aarhus Convention, and to formulate and discuss proposals for its implementation in Turkmenistan. The proposals are to be compiled and submitted to the Ministry for Environmental Protection. Further projects to stimulate implementation of some of these proposals are also foreseen. Additional activities include sponsoring an environmental education workshop and the publication of brochures on the Aarhus Convention.

As a follow-up to the Conference in October 2000 in Tashkent which was jointly organized by the OSCE and the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNODCCP), the Centre will hold a seminar in November on educating young people regarding the threat of drug addiction. The seminar is to be sponsored jointly with the Ashgabad office of UNODCCP.

In the economic field, the Centre has initiated co-operation with the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the European Union programme of technical assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) on the preparation of a national economic forum, a World Bank initiative which is scheduled for November 2001. Other concrete activities are currently under discussion with the World Bank's liaison office in Ashgabad.

OSCE CENTRE IN BISHKEK

By its Decisions No. 245, of 23 July 1998, and No. 339, of 10 February 2000 the Permanent Council defined the operational modalities of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek and decided to establish a field office in Osh. The mandate of the Centre includes, *inter alia*, promotion of the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments and co-operation by the Kyrgyz Republic in the OSCE

framework, with special emphasis on the regional context, in all OSCE dimensions.

In the reporting period, the Centre continued its activities related to advocacy and training in the political and human dimensions. Activities relating to the economic and environmental dimension were strengthened. Important regional issues and initiatives have emerged, requiring increased attention, relating to such matters as trafficking in human beings and narcotic drugs and small arms and light weapons. The Centre maintained working relationships with academic institutions, the media, NGOs, political parties, civic associations and the business community. It also continued to engage interns in its everyday work, renewing its agreements with two universities on the assignment of interns.

Following the presidential elections in October 2000, the authorities tightened their control of the media, political parties and NGOs. Criticism by the election observation mission concerning flaws and shortcomings was met with dissatisfaction by the authorities. The Centre, however, continued to emphasize the importance of co-operation with the Government and Kyrgyz society in order to improve the observance of basic human rights in the country. The Government has been increasingly concerned about evolving regional issues. Although in comparison with militants' activities in the previous year, the summer and autumn of 2001 were relatively quiet, events in Afghanistan have affected Kyrgyzstan's approach towards regional co-operation. The Government has focused on finalizing the Comprehensive Development Framework 2001-2010, which is aimed at improving, *inter alia*, the socio-economic situation in Kyrgyzstan, and starting its implementation.

The Centre continued facilitating contacts between the Government and OSCE officials and institutions. It assisted a Kyrgyz parliamentary delegation to the annual session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Paris from 6 to 10 July 2001, and another delegation to the session of the Parliamentary Assembly Standing Committee on Migration in Portugal from 9 to 12 October 2001. Assistance was extended in August 2001 to Kyrgyz observers to the presidential elections in Belarus. The Kyrgyz delegation to the Ninth Economic Forum received funding and support through the Centre in May 2001. During the regional

heads of mission meeting in Bishkek in April 2001, the Secretary General held informal discussions with representatives of the Government. The Centre facilitated and organized further visits and meetings of OSCE officials in Kyrgyzstan, such as the visit of the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the High Commissioner on National Minorities in May, and that of the Chairman-in-Office in June.

Politico-military dimension. The Centre assisted the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office during his working visit to Bishkek in June 2001, and in the subsequent preparations for a follow-up conference to the conference on security and stability in Central Asia that took place in October 2000 in Tashkent. As a result, an International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terrorism will take place in Bishkek on 13 and 14 December 2001. The Centre was the joint organizer of the international conference, "Central Asia – United or Divided?" held in Bishkek in June 2001. In connection with its monitoring and observing mandate, the Centre produced analytical reports on border disputes, landmine issues and the security situation in southern Kyrgyzstan. Analytical and informative reports were also produced on the activities of radical religious parties in Kyrgyzstan, on the Round Table on Religious Radicalism in Southern Kyrgyzstan that took place in February 2001 and on the Shanghai Five expert meeting in Bishkek, in February 2001.

Human dimension. The Centre has actively monitored the cases of political opponents and human rights activists, the most visible among them being the trial and conviction of F. Kulov, leader of the opposition party *Ar-Namys*, and the trial, conviction and pardon of T. Turgunaliyev, an opposition politician accused of plotting against the President of the Republic.

A series of informal meetings were held on the Ombudsman Law and the establishment of an ombudsman institution with the parliamentary Human Rights Committee and NGOs in December 2000 and January 2001, resulting in a round table on the ombudsman on 12 February 2001. The Centre provided support to the ODIHR expert on freedom of religion

during his negotiations with the authorities and NGOs in Bishkek from 14 to 17 March 2001. Follow-up meetings were held in April and August. The Centre continued monitoring the revision of the Electoral Code, after the first round of discussions on the proposed amendments to it in June 2001.

The Centre has continued monitoring cases of restriction of the freedom of the media in Kyrgyzstan. In discussions with the authorities, the Centre has voiced its concern in several cases. It has also provided direct support and assistance to selected media outlets. Training events were also organized for media representatives, including a sub-regional seminar media law and professional ethics for journalists, organized in co-operation with the international NGO Internews, in Bishkek in March 2001, and a training seminar for judges and journalists on media law issues, in Issyk Kul in September 2001. The field office in Osh jointly organized and co-funded two training events for local journalists in October 2001, as part of the ODIHR project on legal support for journalists.

Economic and environmental dimension.

The Centre participated in three preparatory seminars for the Ninth Economic Forum: in Almaty in November 2000, in Brussels in January 2001 and in Bucharest in March 2001. A Kyrgyz delegation participated in the first and last seminars. The Centre also attended the Forum itself, along with a six-strong official delegation representing a wide spectrum of Kyrgyz society. The field office in Osh organized a subregional seminar on environmental security in May 2001. During the preparatory work for the seminar, the Aarhus Convention was translated, printed and distributed in the Kyrgyz language. The Centre continued preparatory work for a regional conference on barriers to small and medium businesses. A meeting for the formulation of substantive programmes was held in Issyk Kul early in September 2001. Preparations also continued for the informal donor conference on assistance for preventive action in respect of the radioactive waste sites at Maili Suu. The Centre held discussions with the United Nations Development Programme in April and August 2001, in order to explore possibilities for co-operation.

Regional issues. The Centre organized a regional heads of mission meeting, with

specific emphasis on economic and environmental issues, in Bishkek from 22 to 25 April 2001. The meeting was also attended by the Secretary General, who was on a working visit to Kyrgyzstan. A set of regional initiatives were identified, and the Centre in Bishkek was assigned main responsibility for water management issues, radioactive and chemical waste problems and trans-boundary trade questions.

OSCE ASSISTANCE WITH BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL AGREEMENTS

The OSCE Representative to the Estonian Government Commission on Military Pensioners

The review of applications for residence in Estonia by foreign former military personnel and their dependants continued in accordance with a new mode of work, which divides the responsibilities for review between the Commission on Military Pensioners and the Department for Migration and Citizenship.

While the Department for Migration and Citizenship is attending to the bulk of routine cases (i.e. mostly requests for extension of five-year residence permits), the Commission has been focusing on critical problem cases that can lead to refusals, as well as on initial applications and requests for permanent residence permits. This has relieved the Commission of the burden of routine business not requiring OSCE involvement.

To streamline its work, the Residence Permit Review Commission was converted from a Government body into an expert commission. The Chairman is no longer required to be of ministerial rank, and the position of deputy has been established, so that the Chairman can be replaced in his absences. As a result, the continuity of Commission sessions has been improved.

The Commission has been successful in reducing the number of short-term residence permits (six months to three years) from about 2,500, as previously reported, to 1,030 in the current reporting period, while increasing the

number of holders of longer term (4-5 years) residence permits. All told, there are now some 11,200 persons with temporary residence permits.

During the reporting period, there were 23 refusals of residence permits, mostly issued to beneficiaries of the Russian Officer Resettlement Programme of the United States Agency for International Development.

In a crucial ruling, the Estonian State Court (supreme court) stated that two paragraphs of the Law on Aliens which do not allow exceptions to be made as regards the issuance of residence permits to aliens who were formerly affiliated with foreign intelligence services, and therefore had been declared a threat to the security of Estonia, were unconstitutional and declared void. The Court ruling will inevitably lead to changes to the Law on Aliens and has a direct impact on the work of the Commission and the Government as the decision-making body.

A growing number of retired servicemen and dependants have applied for permanent residence status. While the authorities have acceded to such requests for widows, divorcees and children above 18 and on contractual lists, applications from ex-military personnel have been rejected on the basis of existing laws. In a recent ruling, the Estonian State Court, citing international law, pointed out that it was not unconstitutional to refuse permanent residence status to aliens.

On balance, satisfactory headway has been made in accommodating an increasing number of applicants with long-term permits, thereby reducing the number of holders of short-term permits. Shifting this ratio even more towards long-term permits is the goal. However, a significant number of problematic cases, both pending and new, remain to be solved.

Article II of the Dayton Peace Accords

Agreement on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Implementation of the Agreement on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in Bosnia and Herzegovina during this reporting period can be assessed positively. Minor political disturbances continue to affect implementation occasionally, but the Parties,

and their political leaders, continue to show a strong resolve to implement this agreement in its entirety.

The most successful provision of this Agreement is Measure XI, Programme of Military Contacts and Co-operation. In 1998, the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office hosted a Seminar on Military Support to Civilian Authorities in Cases of Man-Made or Natural Disaster. This Seminar resulted in numerous follow-on activities related to military-civilian co-operation in cases of emergencies. In December 2000, another follow-on initiative, a Seminar on Emergency Medicine in Cases of Man-Made or Natural Disaster, was held in Sarajevo. This Seminar brought together relevant medical and senior military personnel in Bosnia and Herzegovina along with their counterparts from several Western European countries to discuss how best to provide military support in emergencies.

In addition, three seminars on the Code of Conduct were held at various locations throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina during the reporting period. The target audience was mid-level officers and senior non-commissioned officers, and the focus was on introducing them to the OSCE Code of Conduct and to the ways in which OSCE participating States have integrated this Code into their military doctrines and are implementing it in practice. The Parties to the Agreement consider these seminars invaluable. Reports from the officers who have conducted the seminars are very positive, noting lively exchanges of points of view among the participants.

Another Measure XI activity that continues to prove successful is aerial observation exercises. The Parties have developed a protocol and measures that allow them to use military aircraft to support humanitarian operations. The original goal of this regime was to provide a mechanism to support a risk-reduction measure in the Agreement, but the mandate was broadened to encompass humanitarian assistance requirements. Aerial observation exercises will probably continue for the foreseeable future.

For several years, the Parties have been encouraged to practice even greater transparency with regard to their respective military budgets. Information on foreign

military support has been forthcoming for two years now, but many people thought that an audit of the different defence budgets would be crucial in order to allow the Parties to move forward with developing realistic budgets and defence postures. In that regard, on 13 December 2000, the Joint Consultative Commission decided to proceed with an audit of the defence budget of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Republika Srpska abstained from participation until the audit was completed in the Federation and time had been allowed to study the report. At the time of writing, the audit had been completed in the Federation and the report was under review by the Office of the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office and the staff of the Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The report should be presented to Federation authorities in the near future. Meanwhile, Republika Srpska completed their own internal audit and provided the report on it to the Personal Representative. This report is also under review by the Personal Representative and the Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The audit of the Federation can be considered a milestone on the path towards the goal of greater transparency, stability and peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During the next reporting period, the Personal Representative will encourage the Parties to show even greater transparency in their defence budgets, to continue supporting the Code of Conduct seminars, to continue full implementation of the Agreement, and to continue developing State-level institutions.

Inspections, in accordance with the Protocol on Verification, have proceeded almost without incident. One inspection was interrupted because of political turbulence in the region and another was not fully completed because of a co-ordination problem with SFOR. The OSCE and SFOR subsequently refined their policies and guidelines to allow greater flexibility. That having been said, in subsequent meetings of the Joint Consultative Commission, the Parties viewed these interruptions as minor and felt that, in principle, the spirit of the Agreement was being met. The OSCE continues to lead a number of inspections each year (40 per cent) and provides assistants to all other inspections.

As of 1 June 2001, the Parties demilitarized their equipment held in historical collections,

and as each year passes, they provide more accurate and detailed exchanges of information.

In February 2001, the Parties held the third Review Conference to review implementation of the Agreement. During this Conference, a new Protocol on Existing Types of Equipment was adopted. The Parties also approved a new Protocol on Aerial Observation and updated the Protocol on Visits to Weapons Manufacturing Facilities. In addition, they agreed to update the Agreement, by incorporating the relevant decisions taken by the Joint Consultative Commission and during the three Review Conferences since January 1996.

Finally, the Joint Consultative Commission remains a productive body, capable of taking and implementing decisions. At any given time, a number of working groups are in existence to resolve issues raised during Commission meetings or to refine existing protocols or procedures.

The next reporting period should show even greater transparency and openness among the Parties to the Article II Agreement and hopefully will reflect further progress towards the goal of reducing equipment levels among the Parties to the Article IV Agreement.

Article IV of the Dayton Peace Accords

Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control

Implementation of this Agreement is proceeding satisfactorily. Political turbulence in the region affected implementation over the past two years, but during this reporting period, a certain stability has emerged and the Parties are able to focus on difficult implementation issues, namely, inspections by the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina and discussions on exempted equipment and voluntary reductions of holdings of equipment in the five categories. There is therefore reason to anticipate that political turbulence will not be as great in the future. Inspections have proceeded without incident. OSCE assistants participate in almost all the inspections, with observer status.

The body that oversees the implementation of the Agreement, the Sub-Regional Consultative Commission, met three times during this period. The last meeting took place in October 2001. Two major issues require

resolution. The first is inspections by the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is a purely political problem, one that can be resolved easily if the Parties choose to do it. The second issue concerns an effort by the Personal Representative, and certain OSCE countries, to encourage the Parties to reduce their levels of exempted equipment, as well as to consider lowering their ceilings in the categories of equipment outlined in the Agreement. Progress is anticipated on these two issues during the next reporting period.

The overall outlook and assessment regarding the implementation of the Article IV Agreement is very positive. The Parties continue to assert their desire to implement the Agreement in its entirety and are considering a food-for-thought paper that proposes voluntary measures that would increase confidence and transparency.

Article V of the Dayton Peace Accords

Negotiations on regional stability in south-eastern Europe under Article V of Annex 1-B of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The negotiations under Article V were finalized on 18 July 2001, when the 20 participating States reached consensus on a Concluding Document. This ended a long negotiation process. The decision to go on with Article V was made at the Sixth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Copenhagen (1997), two years after conclusion of the Dayton-Paris Accords. It took one more year to reach consensus on a mandate for the negotiations.

The Concluding Document is less than many participating States originally anticipated at the beginning of the negotiations. For instance, there is no arms control linkage with the countries of the Dayton Accords Article IV. This reflects the changed political situation in the region, notably the admission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the OSCE.

The Concluding Document does contain a number of voluntary confidence- and security-building measures that will in the main build on those found in the Vienna Document 1999. These are tailored to regional requirements and can be considered an

augmented catalogue of guidelines, which the participating States can utilize in accordance with their own security requirements. In addition, a commission of the 20 participating States was formed to review the implementation of these measures. The measures are expected to go into effect on 1 January 2002.

The Concluding Document also laid the foundation for co-operation with the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

Thanks to the political will and flexibility of the 20 participating States, the negotiations ended successfully. The Concluding Document effectively ends the Dayton-Paris process, since Articles II and IV were negotiated in 1996 and have been implemented since.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE OSCE

The OSCE regional strategy and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe process entered a new phase of its evolution and it is expected to bring about tangible results for the region. Promoting and supporting the adoption and the implementation of concrete institutional and economic reforms within the framework of the Stability Pact remains a priority for the OSCE. Through its field operations, the Organization is deeply involved in encouraging the countries of the region to co-operate and directly contribute to the solution of their common problems of reconstruction and democratic development in the framework of the Stability Pact.

With a view to making better use of the adopted OSCE regional strategy, as enshrined in the Istanbul Summit Declaration³, the

³ In the Istanbul Summit Declaration, the Permanent Council was tasked "to develop a regional strategy to support its aims", and on 16 March 2000, the Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 344, on a regional strategy for South-Eastern Europe. Under the OSCE regional strategy, projects have

Romanian Chairman-in-Office appointed Greek Ambassador Alexander Rondos as his Personal Representative on the relationship between the OSCE and the Stability Pact. Apart from participating actively in all three Working Tables of the Stability Pact, Ambassador Rondos delivered his preliminary views before the Permanent Council on 31 May 2001. As he was recently appointed Chairman of Working Table I, there are high expectations of an even closer relationship with the Stability Pact.

The two meetings of heads of missions in south-eastern Europe – in Belgrade, on 15 and 16 March 2001 and in Bezanec, Croatia, on 24 and 25 September 2001 – helped to promote a coherent regional strategy. Organized by the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna, the Meetings attracted a strong participation on behalf of the Chairmanship, the OSCE Troika and the OSCE institutions, and were attended by representatives of all OSCE missions in the region. The Chairman-in-Office also attended the heads of missions meeting in Belgrade.

OSCE missions, field presences and institutions have been very active in contributing to this co-operation, in particular on issues such as return of refugees and internally displaced persons, combating of illegal trafficking and organized crime.

Senior officials of the Stability Pact continued to provide regular informative reports. Thus, the Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Bodo Hombach, reported to the Permanent Council in Vienna on 11 October 2001; on that occasion, he was accompanied by senior experts from the Stability Pact Secretariat in Brussels. The former Chair of Working Table I on Democratization and Human Rights, Panagiotis Roumeliotis, also reported to the Permanent Council, on 10 May 2001.

The OSCE successfully leads the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings under Working Table III, and assists in the work of the Gender Task Force under Working Table I. The Chair of the Gender Task Force, Sonja Lokar of Slovenia, addressed an informal open-ended meeting in Vienna,

been developed based on the expertise of the OSCE missions in the region.

updating the participating States on the projects under implementation. OSCE field operations in south-eastern Europe continue to provide logistical and administrative support to the Gender Task Force. This kind of working relationship has also recently been established with the OSCE Mission to Moldova. Furthermore, as of September, the OSCE is also for the first time represented in the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme Task Force by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

The Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings held its inaugural meeting in Vienna, on 18 September 2000. The Task Force is chaired by the former Austrian Minister for Women's Issues, Helga Konrad. In December 2000, on the margins of the High-Level Political Signing Conference for the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, the Task Force organized the signing of the Palermo Anti-Trafficking Declaration by Government ministers from the countries of the Stability Pact. Government ministers and representatives committed their countries to implementing effective programmes of prevention, victim assistance and protection, legislative reform, law enforcement and prosecution of traffickers. The Task Force also elaborated a multiyear anti-trafficking action plan for South-Eastern Europe. The Task Force has provided both governments and NGOs with guidelines for the establishment of national action plans, assisting them in determining an appropriate framework for co-ordination. The Task Force can provide the framework for local initiatives, while ensuring that there is a regional and international component in each link in the anti-trafficking chain.

The Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme is the basis for environmental policy in south-eastern Europe, and the main environmental component of Stability Pact Working Table II. The Programme's Task Force has as members the ministries of the environment from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Romania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and as observers representatives of donor countries, international organizations and

NGOs. Its main objective is to facilitate the implementation of the priority policy components of the Programme in south-eastern Europe. Of particular interest to the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities are institution building, policy development and environmental civil society capacity building. To achieve these objectives, the Task Force promotes activities aimed at assisting south-eastern European countries to co-operate in identifying and addressing regional as well as national environmental priorities and at facilitating their integration into the process of economic reconstruction to promote stability and sustainable development. Its participation in the Task Force places the OSCE in a good position to promote confidence-building activities and national and regional stability. The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, in co-operation with the delegation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, succeeded in raising funds for a project in support of environmental legislation and institution-structuring in Serbia. The project is to be implemented by the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The focus continued to be on the implementation of projects aimed at involving and strengthening local capacities, based on the practical experience of the OSCE on the ground, such as: the regional Association of Election Officials; the regional Legal Aid Network; the regional legislative web site; and a prison service reform project in countries and regions of south-eastern Europe.

The Romanian Chairmanship hosted the Second Regional Conference for South East Europe on 25 and 26 October 2001. Last year's Conference, held in Brussels in March 2000, launched a set of quick-start projects and programmes of a regional nature. The objective of this Second Regional Conference was to focus on the status of the various donor-supported programmes, on progress made in developing new strategies within the Working Tables of the Stability Pact and on the process put into place by key actors to channel donor resources to the Stability Pact priority areas. The regional conference was co-chaired by the World Bank and the European Commission and was organized by both institutions, with the Special Co-ordinator of

the Stability Pact and the Romanian Government.

The OSCE projects proposed under the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, that were accepted for inclusion in the list of quick-start projects presented to the Regional Funding Conference in March 2000, are currently at different stages of implementation, depending to some extent on the transfer of the funds pledged.

The Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia

On 16 May 2001, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, appointed Ambassador Wilhelm Höynck as his Personal Representative for Tasks in Support of the Participating States in Central Asia. Ambassador Höynck, who was the first Secretary General of the OSCE from 1993 to 1996, already served in a similar capacity in 1999 during the Norwegian Chairmanship.

At the end of June, the Personal Representative travelled to the five OSCE participating States of Central Asia with a view to preparing a report requested by the Chairman-in-Office, which was submitted on 30 July 2001. In the report, it is argued that while activities of the OSCE in the human dimension should remain at the centre of the Personal Representative's activities, there is a need to enhance the Organization's visibility in the other two dimensions. The work of the Personal Representative should not create a new structure within the OSCE, but should reinforce and add a regional dimension to ongoing activities of the OSCE presences in the region, as well as those of the OSCE institutions. The report by Ambassador Höynck contained a preliminary work plan for the year 2001 with concrete projects in line with this approach. Ambassador Höynck has been invited to address the Permanent Council in December 2001.

Following the request of the Chairmanship, the Personal Representative engaged actively in the preparatory process for a conference dealing comprehensively with the issues of terrorism and violent extremism in Central Asia, which is scheduled to take place on 13 and 14 December 2001 in Bishkek,

following an initiative by the Government of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan. The conference is a follow-up to the international conference held on 19 and 20 October 2000 in Tashkent, which focused on an integrated approach to counter drug addiction and trafficking, organized crime and terrorism in Central Asia. The conference in Bishkek will focus specially on the topic “Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terrorism.”

OSCE INSTITUTIONS

OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS (ODIHR)

In the year of its tenth anniversary, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) continued to consolidate its democratization and election observation programmes. The ODIHR today is the lead agency in Europe in the field of election observation and a highly respected partner in international efforts to help countries in transition in the OSCE region to build sustainable democracies in which human rights and the rule of law are respected.

Elections

Election observation

The observation of elections in the OSCE area remained one of the ODIHR's top priorities in the past year. Based on its unique methodology, the ODIHR observed nine elections throughout the OSCE region during the reporting period.

These included the parliamentary elections in Serbia (23 December 2000), Azerbaijan (5 November 2000 and 7 January 2001), Moldova (25 February 2001), Montenegro in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (22 April 2001), Bulgaria (17 June 2001) and Albania (24 June, 8 and 22 July 2001), the presidential and parliamentary elections in Romania (26 November 2000), and the local government election in Croatia (20 May 2001). In addition, the ODIHR conducted a limited election observation of the presidential election in Belarus (9 September 2001).

A final report, including detailed recommendations for action to improve an electoral framework, was issued following each observation mission. All final reports are available on the ODIHR web site, at www.osce.org/odihr.

During its election observation activities, the ODIHR co-operated closely with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as well as with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament in order to ensure that the international community

delivered a joint, clear and consistent message in its electoral assessments.

Technical election assistance

Based on its mandate, which was reinforced by the 1999 Istanbul Summit decision to commit participating States to follow up on election-related ODIHR recommendations, the Office continued to focus on technical assistance projects aimed at improving the electoral framework before or after an election.

During the reporting period, the ODIHR provided comments on the electoral code of Armenia, the election code and regulations on parliamentary elections issued by the Central Election Commission of Kazakhstan and the referendum law of Montenegro in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

In January 2001, the ODIHR participated in the second of a planned series of four round tables on elections in Kazakhstan. The participants agreed on the need to amend the existing Election Law to promote independent election commissions and a fully transparent process during the vote count and tabulation process.

The ODIHR also participated in a conference organized by the International Foundation for Election Systems on the draft Election Code of Georgia, held in Tbilisi in February 2001. The conference was an important step in a sequence of activities that eventually led to the adoption of a unified Election Code by parliament in August 2001.

A round table on amendments to the Election Code of Armenia was organized by the Parliamentary Commission for Legal and State Affairs, the Central Election Commission, the ODIHR and the OSCE Office in Yerevan and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission in Yerevan in February 2001. There was general agreement among the participants about the changes to be made to the Code.

In May, the ODIHR and the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia met with representatives from the Serbian election administration, and NGOs and international experts in Belgrade to launch a discussion in Serbia about the reform of the election

legislation. The discussion was a follow-up to recommendations made in the ODIHR report on last year's Serbian parliamentary election. While acknowledging the in-country expertise available in Serbia, the OSCE expressed its readiness to assist the authorities with improving the election legislation.

Also in May, a working meeting attended by representatives of five domestic observation organizations, the National Democratic Institute and Electoral Reform International Services, was held in Slovakia to discuss the development of guidelines for domestic observers in the OSCE region. Following the meeting, a first draft of the guidelines was produced. The draft guidelines were further discussed at a meeting attended by 23 domestic observation organizations in Warsaw, on the margins of the Human Dimension Seminar on Election Processes. The work on the guidelines is expected to be completed by the end of 2001.

The OSCE/ODIHR published Guidelines for Reviewing a Legal Framework for Elections and Guidelines to Assist National Minority Participation in the Electoral Process, both in English and in Russian. The Guidelines for Reviewing a Legal Framework for Elections were developed in collaboration with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA). The Guidelines to Assist National Minority Participation in the Electoral Process were developed in conjunction with the International IDEA and the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

Human Dimension Seminar on Election Processes

This year's Human Dimension Seminar on Election Processes was held in Warsaw from 29 to 31 May. Participants assessed the lessons learned from experience during the past decade, including the OSCE's involvement in the promotion of democratic governance in the OSCE region through technical assistance and election observation. The discussion also focused on the correlation of democratic elections, the rule of law and good governance with economic development; electoral events and stability; and elections and the fundamental freedoms of expression, association and assembly. There was general agreement on the need to improve the political follow-up to reports and recommendations made by ODIHR

election observation missions. The participants acknowledged the important role of non-partisan domestic observation organizations, at the same time expressing concern about the increasing level of obstacles to operating effectively that these organizations face in some participating States.

The participants endorsed the ODIHR observation methodology, and welcomed efforts to include monitoring of gender and minority issues. They strongly supported the ODIHR proposal for the establishment of a special fund based on voluntary contributions from participating States to enhance the participation of election observers from developing democracies in ODIHR observation missions.

Assistance to democratization

The most diversified area of the ODIHR's activities has been its democratization work. More than 80 projects have been developed in 2000 and 2001 to assist the participating States with implementing their human dimension commitments. The main focus areas were the rule of law, prevention of torture, assistance to ombudsman institutions, migration and freedom of movement, gender equality, combating of trafficking in human beings, freedom of religion, and assistance to civil society. The ODIHR has continued to focus on the adoption of national legislation which is in compliance with international standards and commitments, as well as implementation of recently adopted laws. Many projects also emphasize training and consciousness-raising regarding human rights provisions. In addition, the ODIHR has both successfully continued its grassroots project initiative to encourage the development of small-scale democratization projects, and undertaken a similar project initiative to combat trafficking in human beings. Both programmes are being implemented directly by the OSCE field operations, often in co-operation with local NGOs, with ODIHR support.

While the ODIHR's democratization activities focused on Central Asia, the Caucasus and south-eastern Europe, several projects have also been implemented in a number of other OSCE participating States, including Germany, Russia and Belarus. In several countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus, Memoranda of Understanding

signed with the governments in these regions have provided a framework for ODIHR projects and follow-up work. The implementation of these projects remained one of the ODIHR's top priorities.

Rule of law

The ODIHR continued its assistance in building the rule of law in the OSCE area through a wide variety of projects and activities.

The ODIHR continued its assistance to legislative reform in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, to bring domestic laws into conformity with international standards such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In addition, the ODIHR also provided expert advice on numerous draft laws covering a range of human dimension topics in Central Asia and facilitated their discussion at NGO-government round tables based on a regional project to review legislation in Central Asia on an as-requested basis.

The ODIHR started an assistance project with the Judicial Training Centre in Kazakhstan with a view to enhancing the capacities of the judiciary in the country. This includes expert advice on curriculum development and the integration of international standards applicable to Kazakhstan into the training programme. In Uzbekistan, the ODIHR continued its joint training for judges, prosecutors and defence lawyers on criminal justice standards laid down in international human rights treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Training programmes for prison personnel were continued in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. Through assessment visits, the ODIHR defined the scope of future prison training activities in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. In addition, the ODIHR was closely involved, in partnership with the Council of Europe, in the transfer of the penitentiary system from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Justice in Armenia and in Azerbaijan. This activity included developing a training programme for prison personnel.

The ODIHR started to develop a Manual on alternative sentencing in Uzbekistan in partnership with the Constitutional and Public

Law Institute and the training institute of the Ministry of the Interior. The manual will be used to train judges, prosecutors and defence lawyers. In addition, the ODIHR co-sponsored a regional conference and a training course on alternative sentencing, organized by Prison Reform International, for participants from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, which took place in Bucharest.

As an additional tool for the promotion of the rule of law, the ODIHR carried out a number of projects involving national human rights institutions such as ombudsman offices. The ODIHR sent experts to conduct staff training, provided advice on draft laws and participated in discussions of drafts with relevant governmental and non-governmental actors. Such projects were carried out in Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

In the field of legal education, the ODIHR started projects to develop legal clinics in Osh, Kyrgyzstan and in Tajikistan. Both clinics began operating in the autumn semester of 2001.

The ODIHR closely co-operated in many of the above projects with intergovernmental partners such as the Council of Europe, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Programme, as well as with international non-governmental organizations such as the American Bar Association, the Constitutional and Public Law Institute and Prison Reform International.

Prevention of torture

Guided by its Advisory Panel for the Prevention of Torture, the ODIHR continued its efforts to help combat torture in the OSCE region. The Panel played a valuable role in providing input and ideas for the ODIHR's activities to combat torture.

In the context of the rule of law programme, the ODIHR's anti-torture programme focused on legislative reviews in the context of the United Nations Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, in order to help participating States bring their domestic systems into compliance with their international treaty obligations. In addition, the ODIHR worked with prison administrations in the OSCE area, concentrating on the

establishment of sustainable training structures in line with international standards and best practices. Other priorities include supporting the development of new tactics in the fight against torture and facilitating access by civil society to penitentiary systems as a preventive safeguard against abuse.

The ODIHR also worked with a number of OSCE field missions (in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Ukraine) on public awareness activities on the occasion of the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture (26 June), and supported a number of small-scale local initiatives, as well as the translation of campaign material into Russian for the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims.

A round table workshop, in which key government officials and representatives of non-governmental organizations participated, was held in Armenia. The workshop was jointly organized by the OSCE Office in Yerevan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and focused on ways to make the United Nations Convention Against Torture a useful tool in fighting ill-treatment and on the establishment of a system of preventive safeguards against torture. The participants concluded with a list of recommendations to be followed up in the future in order to prevent torture effectively.

Trafficking in human beings

In 2001, the ODIHR continued to implement projects in key priority areas of activity, including gathering and exchange of information, increased co-ordination and co-operation, institution-building and NGO capacity-building. These projects aim to raise awareness, to provide technical assistance to governments, to build the capacity of NGOs and to promote greater co-ordination of efforts to combat trafficking between governments, NGOs and international organizations.

The ODIHR's efforts to combat trafficking have been enhanced by several new secondments. The Adviser on Anti-Trafficking Issues in Warsaw has been joined by an Officer on Anti-Trafficking Issues. The Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, who is based in Vienna, has also seen her capacity strengthened with the addition of two secondments in 2001. The Anti-Trafficking Unit and the Task Force

continue to be actively engaged in advocating for relevant government reform and in developing projects in the areas of prevention, protection of victims and prosecution of traffickers. Following NGO government round table events in 2000, the ODIHR has moved on to implement projects in several OSCE countries that foster increased communication and co-operation between various actors.

Furthermore, the ODIHR formally announced the establishment of the Anti-Trafficking Project Fund in mid-February 2001. The initiative to create the Fund was supported by a generous contribution from the United Kingdom. In addition, Cyprus, Monaco and Sweden have contributed to it. The Fund is managed by the ODIHR and was established in order to encourage the development and implementation of initiatives to tackle trafficking in human beings and associated human rights abuses. Through this new mechanism, the ODIHR provides support and funding to OSCE field operations to enable them to enlarge their initiatives to combat trafficking. Field operations should be actively involved in implementation of the projects under this initiative. The Anti-Trafficking Project Fund is intended to help ensure that funding is available on a more regular basis for priority initiatives to combat trafficking carried out by the ODIHR and OSCE field operations.

Civil society and public awareness

The ODIHR continued to conduct assistance projects aimed at developing and strengthening civil society in countries in transition. Through its project of assistance to civil society, the ODIHR supported initiatives in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan to foster dialogue between civil society groups and government on a variety of topical human dimension issues ranging from children's rights to freedom of the media. These meetings proved to be an effective means for discussing sensitive human rights issues and adopting decisions for follow-up action.

The ODIHR, jointly with OSCE field operations in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, started implementing a training programme for NGOs on human rights monitoring and reporting. The programme is based on a successful pilot project that was implemented in Uzbekistan in 2000 and has been designed to improve the monitoring and reporting

capabilities of local human rights NGOs, to increase the number of existing national human rights monitors, to develop co-operation and co-ordination between human rights activists and to improve information-sharing and networking. The training programme for the Central Asian States is part of a two-year joint programme with the European Commission for promoting human rights and democratization in Central Asia. The training is conducted by trainers from the Polish Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, an NGO with extensive experience in the professional training of human rights activists.

The ODIHR, together with the OSCE Office in Yerevan, also developed and implemented a programme aimed at promoting awareness of human rights through the production and broadcasting of television programmes on relevant legislation and selected human rights topics. Local representatives of civil society and Government representatives and international experts were invited to contribute to the programmes.

Gender

The ODIHR continued to work to promote the equality of women and men, to advance the human rights of women and to foster the active participation of women in society and in democratic structures.

The ODIHR developed a portfolio of gender projects in Central Asia, the Caucasus and Albania, focusing on women's participation in decision-making, the promotion of legal literacy regarding women's rights and the prevention of violence against women, including law enforcement training, legal aid and monitoring of women's rights. In 2001, the ODIHR has been implementing a total of ten gender projects in eight countries (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan).

In addition to gender-specific projects, the ODIHR has mainstreamed gender in its various programmes, including election observation operations, the anti-trafficking programme, rule-of-law projects and monitoring activities.

Migration and freedom of movement

In the field of migration and freedom of movement, the registration of permanent residents, human rights training for border officials and the problem of internal

displacement were among the ODIHR's top priorities during 2001.

In Armenia, the ODIHR assisted the Government in developing legislation governing an efficient population-registration system. This programme seeks to ensure that a new registration system, replacing the so-called *propiska* system, fulfils OSCE commitments on freedom of movement and choice of residence and adheres to international standards of non-discrimination. A similar project was also conducted in Kyrgyzstan, where the ODIHR, in co-operation with the Bishkek Migration Management Centre, has supported the development of a Law on Internal Migration.

A project on reform of the registration system also continued in Ukraine. This project produced positive results, in that Ukraine significantly relaxed the registration requirements for most foreigners visiting the country.

The ODIHR continued to be involved in the training of border officials in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. In 2001, the ODIHR, in co-operation with the International Organization for Migration, assisted a new border guards training centre in Baku, Azerbaijan. An ODIHR expert on curriculum development visited Baku, where he made recommendations on the development of future training programmes for Azerbaijani border guards.

As a follow-up to the Regional Workshop on Internal Displacement in the South Caucasus, which took place in May 2000, the ODIHR supported a review of legislation in the three countries of the southern Caucasus. The review was conducted by local NGOs, assisted by a well-known international lawyer.

Freedom of religion

The Contact Group of the ODIHR Advisory Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief met in June in the Hague to discuss activities of its three working groups, which focus on conflict prevention and dialogue, legislative issues and education in tolerance and awareness.

In February, an expert round table on the draft law on the status of religious organizations took place in Albania. This meeting was the first step in the implementation of an ODIHR project aimed at

developing a draft law. The ODIHR also assisted with the development of a law on the status of religious communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina that would provide equal protection for all religious communities. Members of the Advisory Panel carried out legislative reviews of draft laws on religion in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and submitted the results of their reviews to the authorities.

In April, a member of the ODIHR Advisory Panel held a series of meetings in Turkmenistan in order to establish a dialogue with the authorities on international standards regarding religious liberty.

As a follow-up to the recommendations of the expert round table on tolerance for ethnic and religious groups in Armenia, which took place in May 2000, Advisory Panel experts prepared educational materials on tolerance for Armenian secondary schools, which are to be used as teachers' manuals.

The ODIHR also contributed to the launch of a legislative database on freedom of religion or belief, which includes relevant legal and other documents from OSCE participating States.

Focus on South-Eastern Europe

During the past months, the ODIHR carried out a wide range of activities in south-eastern Europe. Two projects were implemented under the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and the OSCE Regional Strategy for South Eastern Europe. The first project, a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the ODIHR, which began in 1997, provided assistance for the reform of the prison services in Albania, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), with an emphasis on regional co-operation. The assistance took the form of ongoing expert advice and training, and study visits. As part of the second project, the ODIHR developed and launched a regional legislative web site, intended as a reference and research tool for legislators, government officials, lawyers, NGOs and other interested groups.

Other projects and activities in the region include conflict-resolution workshops with the police, the army and mayors as well as development of the police training curriculum in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; awareness-raising and

capacity-building for women in the political sphere in Montenegro in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; the translation into Serbian and printing of "As Seen, as Told" (vols. 1 and 2) for use in several OSCE missions; civil society and legal reform projects in Montenegro in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; as well as projects on Roma and Sinti and combating trafficking in human beings. Kosovo continues to be an area of special concern for the ODIHR.

The ODIHR Office in Montenegro continued to operate in 2001. With a staff of five internationals, its assistance to the Montenegrin authorities has been strengthened. The Office has been active in all fields of the ODIHR mandate, including elections, legal reform, the strengthening of civil society, trafficking in human beings, municipal assistance and reform, and gender issues. The Office liaises closely with other international organizations in Montenegro, such as the European Union Monitoring Mission, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross. It is entirely funded by voluntary contributions.

Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues

Within the framework of two larger ODIHR projects on Roma and Sinti, namely, the project on Roma and elections and the project on Romani political participation, the first ever meeting of Roma parliamentarians and elected officials in Europe was organized by the ODIHR in co-operation with the Czech Foreign Ministry in December 2000. The purpose of the meeting was to develop strategies to increase the participation of Roma communities in the political life of the countries they live in, drawing in particular on the experience of Roma who have already been elected to office. Other activities in this areas focused on increasing the participation of Roma in elections by various means, including the organizing of training courses and production of guidelines for Roma voters, and arrangement for the participation of Roma in election observation missions.

Another focus of the ODIHR Contact Point's work in 2001 was on strengthening the institutional mechanisms for the effective implementation of basic civil and political

rights of Roma in south-eastern Europe. The activities included efforts to promote the right to participate in elections; training courses; and assistance with the establishment of local Roma contact points in municipalities, ombudsman offices and other national agencies. The ODIHR also supported the broadcast of television programmes focusing on Roma rights by local TV stations.

The ODIHR and the Council of Europe started to implement a large-scale joint programme under the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe which aims at empowerment of Roma as full participants in post-crisis management, good governance and development of sustainable civil society in south-eastern Europe. Under the joint programme, which is largely financed by the European Commission, the ODIHR focuses on three main objectives: (1) to address the difficulties of Roma in crisis or post-crisis situations; (2) to generate a "Roma-to-Roma" process of self-organization, sustainable community development and participation in civil society; and (3) to train and empower Roma, women and men, as activists and community workers.

The ODIHR Contact Point continued to broaden its clearing-house function by facilitating the exchange of information among governments, international organizations and NGOs, and intensified its efforts to document and analyse the situation of Roma and Sinti in crisis areas.

Also, the ODIHR Contact Point has increasingly been requested to assist governments and other actors with their efforts to develop national and international policy-making on Roma.

Throughout the year, the ODIHR Contact Point organized and/or provided substantial input at numerous meetings on Roma and Sinti issues at the national and international levels.

Monitoring of implementation

During the past year, the ODIHR continued to follow and analyse developments relating to the implementation of OSCE human dimension issues. In its function as a resource to the OSCE on human dimension issues, the ODIHR alerted the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to serious deteriorations in human rights, and made specific recommendations for action.

In the context of its monitoring of, and activities to support, implementation of human dimension commitments, the ODIHR also contributed to preparing and organizing the OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings which took place in March 2001 on Freedom of Expression, in June 2000 on Promoting Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, and in October 2001 on Human Rights: Advocacy and Defenders, as well as the OSCE/ODIHR Seminar on Election Processes in May 2001 and the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting held in Warsaw in September 2001.

The ODIHR continued to provide technical support to the Special Representative of the Russian Federation for Human Rights in Chechnya, Vladimir Kalamanov.

The ODIHR co-sponsored the Young Voices Poll, a survey of the views of children and adolescents in Europe and Central Asia about basic issues of politics, human rights and society. The Poll was developed and co-ordinated by UNICEF in preparation for the planned Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the Rights of the Child in New York.

Having been mandated by the participating States to disseminate information on the human dimension, the ODIHR published a comprehensive compilation of OSCE human dimension commitments, entitled "OSCE Human Dimension Commitments: A Reference Guide", an update of the background paper on the death penalty in the OSCE area and a number of other reports on various human rights and democratization issues. All this and other information is also available on the ODIHR's further expanded web site at www.osce.org/odihr.

<p>OSCE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES (HCNM)</p>
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On 1 July 2001, the new OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), Rolf Ekéus of Sweden, assumed Office. The torch was passed on to him by Max van der Stoep, who, until the last day of his mandate, continued his engagement with regard to a wide range of subjects in the OSCE area. As soon as he had taken up his functions,

the new HCNM, in accordance with the mandate, embarked on trying to identify and seek early resolution of tensions involving national minority issues.

During the reporting period, the HCNM concentrated in particular on the issues described below.

Croatia

The High Commissioner visited Croatia from 7 to 9 January 2001. He discussed issues connected with refugee return, such as repossession of property, alternative accommodation, a new wave of arrests of suspected war criminals in the Baranja area in the Danube region and the implementation of the Amnesty Law. Substantial progress has been achieved in many areas relevant to the HCNM's involvement. However, even with political will, logistical problems, particularly concerning housing and occupancy rights, remained.

The Office of the HCNM, in co-operation with the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, has been involved in assisting the Croatian authorities in drafting the new Constitutional Law on Minorities. The High Commissioner noted that many of his recommendations have been incorporated into the draft law, but unfortunately it is far from certain whether the draft will be adopted with the required two-thirds majority in parliament.

The High Commissioner returned to Croatia on 5 April 2001 to address a conference organized by the Serb National Council. The event was designed to support the draft Constitutional Law on Minorities.

The Office of the HCNM is funding and monitoring, the Knin Legal Aid Project through the Project Unit, and a similar project in the Danube region in co-operation with the Joint Council of Municipalities. The projects aim at providing legal aid and representation in courts and during administrative procedures for members of minority groups (mostly Serbs and returnees), in order to help them return to their apartments and houses and to recover their property.

Estonia

In Estonia, the High Commissioner extended expert advice for the elaboration of an implementing decree on employment in the private sector under the State Language Law

adopted in June 2000. This decree was adopted in May 2001. In a letter, he stressed that he trusted "that interpretation and application of the decree will be in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Language Law." He also discussed with the authorities issues related to election laws and language certificates.

The High Commissioner has continued to follow the implementation of the integration and State language programmes and the naturalization processes in Latvia and Estonia.

Georgia

The HCNM continued to pay special attention to Samtskhe-Javakheti, an economically under-developed region bordering on Armenia and Turkey. Members of the Armenian minority who account for 95 per cent of the population in the region, are mainly oriented towards Armenia and do not associate a guarantee of their security with the Georgian State and its armed forces, but with the presence of Russian forces in the region. The expected closure of the Russian military base in Javakheti, which is currently the main source of income in the region, would aggravate these problems.

In December 2000, a monitoring network was set up in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region. Eleven correspondents write monthly reports on the political, social and economic situation, focussing on its impact on inter-ethnic relations and the relations between the national minority and the Government authorities. The reports are sent to a co-ordinator in Tbilisi who compiles a monitoring report, which is translated and distributed by the OSCE Mission to Georgia both to the Georgian Government and to the Office of the High Commissioner. This procedure ensures that early warning responses will be given if necessary.

At the request of the Georgian Government, the HCNM also initiated a project in support of the economic development and stabilization of the region. In order to attract international donors for project funding, the HCNM co-operates with national and international NGOs and collects data concerning the country's economic development and possible projects.

The Office of the HCNM also continued to provide financial support to the Media Project. In 1999, it provided funding to Studio Re, a local company that produces television

documentaries, to develop a series of documentary videos on ethnic minorities. The project seeks to sensitize the public to minority issues, to promote respect for minority rights and to engage members of minority groups in civil society (third sector) activities.

Hungary

During the past year the High Commissioner visited Hungary several times in order to gauge the position of the Hungarian Government on the status of members of Hungarian minorities abroad (particularly in Romania, Slovakia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). This issue became particularly acute when the Hungarian Parliament passed an Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries, on 19 June 2001. This Act was criticized by some neighbouring countries. Rolf Ekéus paid one of his first visits as High Commissioner to Budapest and Bucharest in July 2001 in order to gain a better understanding of the purpose of the law and its practical implications. In subsequent months, he kept an eye on this issue and encouraged Hungary to discuss aspects of the law's implementation with neighbouring States.

Kazakhstan

In May 2001, the High Commissioner undertook a visit to Kazakhstan to discuss a range of issues with Government officials and representatives of local minority communities. A survey of existing and proposed legislation on minority issues was undertaken by a group of international experts in the autumn of 2001. In 2000 and 2001, the Office of the HCNM continued to support a project designed to monitor inter-ethnic relations in Kazakhstan, and in June 2001, sponsored a seminar in Almaty devoted to discussing the experience gained in conducting monitoring projects. Local organizations were commissioned to carry out surveys of inter-ethnic relations in regions of northern and southern Kazakhstan. The Office of the High Commissioner continued to work with the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan and provided assistance for the creation of the Assembly's web site.

Kyrgyzstan

The High Commissioner visited Kyrgyzstan in May 2001, and met with numerous officials and minority representatives to discuss a range of issues affecting the

southern part of the country. In 2000 and 2001, the Office of the High Commissioner continued to support a project to monitor inter-ethnic relations in the Ferghana Valley. The monitoring provided the Government of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the OSCE with regular and detailed information on and analysis of inter-ethnic relations in different regions of Kyrgyzstan. A series of seminars designed to train regional officials in the management of inter-ethnic relations and minority issues was conducted through 2000 and 2001, together with the Academy of Management under the President of Kyrgyzstan. The Office of the High Commissioner continued to work with the Assembly of the People's Representatives of Kyrgyzstan and support was provided for the Assembly's web site and the bulletin, *Ethnic World*.

Latvia

In Latvia, the High Commissioner paid particular attention to measures to increase the number of candidates for naturalization. He also gave advice during the elaboration of the Code on Administrative Violations with regard to violations of the language laws. He discussed certain provisions of the election laws and the ratification of the Framework Convention with the authorities.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Owing to the flare-up of tensions in the country, the HCNM has been actively trying to prevent a further exacerbation of inter-ethnic tensions. For this purpose, he made several visits to the country. His main priority was to maintain an inter-ethnic dialogue and to see what steps could be taken to build confidence between the Albanian and Macedonian communities. During his visits, he discussed a number of issues, including the Constitution, the decentralization process, linguistic rights, education, access to the media and the participation of minorities in public life. At the beginning of April, he organized a meeting on the planned census (scheduled for May 2001) in the country. It was subsequently agreed that the census would be postponed until October 2001.

Taking into account a long engagement of Max van der Stoep, the outgoing High

Commissioner, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on 1 July 2001, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office appointed him as his Personal Envoy, with the mandate "to facilitate a dialogue and provide advice for a speedy solution of the current crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

The HCNM has been actively involved in the setting up of the South-Eastern Europe University, a project launched on his initiative. The High Commissioner has concentrated on the project as a means of improving inter-ethnic relations in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. He offered advice on the new Law on Higher Education, and a business plan for the establishment of the South-Eastern Europe University was prepared under his guidance. On 29 and 30 November 2000, the board of the international foundation set up to plan and oversee the creation of a new private institution of higher education in Macedonia was constituted in Zurich, Switzerland, under the auspices of the then High Commissioner, Max van der Stoep. He was also appointed President of the Board. On 11 February 2001, the High Commissioner addressed an official ceremony in Tetovo to mark a start of the construction of the University premises.

The High Commissioner also promotes and supports the so-called Transition Year Programme, which was initiated in 1997 at his recommendation by the Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations (now the Project Unit in the Office of the HCNM). The programme seeks to increase the number of members of the Albanian minority being admitted to university by providing intensive examination preparation courses in the Macedonian language for Albanian-minority students in the fourth year of secondary school. At present the programme reaches all seven secondary schools giving instruction in the Albanian language.

Moldova

The Office of the HCNM intensified its engagement in Moldova during the past year. In October 2000, the Office, in co-operation with the OSCE Mission to Moldova, the Moldovan Government and a local NGO, began a project (supported by voluntary contributions from OSCE participating States) for training teachers of the Moldovan language. The project is designed to improve the teaching

methods of teachers who teach Moldovan as a second language, and is aimed at teachers of the fifth to ninth grades in schools which have large numbers of pupils from minority communities. A methodology was developed (with the assistance of Moldovan and international education experts); teachers were trained; manuals were produced, and in the autumn of 2001, the methodology was introduced in a large number of minority schools. The High Commissioner's Office has also been monitoring and providing recommendations on legislation affecting persons belonging to national minorities. Particular emphasis was placed on language legislation.

Romania

The elections in November-December 2000 changed the political landscape in Romania. The High Commissioner monitored the way in which these changes affected inter-ethnic relations, particularly between the Hungarian minority and the ruling Social Democratic Party. The High Commissioner was encouraged by early initiatives taken by the Government to respond to minority interests, in particular by the adoption of a law on reform of the public administration in January 2001, which allows for the official use of minority languages in communities where minorities account for at least 20 per cent of the population. The HCNM was also encouraged by the development of a strategy for improving the situation of the Roma. Bucharest was one of the first places that the new High Commissioner, Rolf Ekéus, visited after he became High Commissioner in July 2001. He was particularly interested in developing good relations with the Romanian Government, in their capacity as OSCE Chairman-in-Office, and in hearing the grievances raised by the Romanian Government in relation to the Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries, adopted by the Hungarian Government in June 2001.

The Russian Federation

In 2000, the High Commissioner was invited to undertake a review of the provision of education in the Ukrainian language in Russia and of education in the Russian language in Ukraine. Following a fact-finding mission by a group of international experts, the High Commissioner communicated his

recommendations to both Foreign Ministers in January 2001.

Slovakia

In the Slovakia, the High Commissioner has been closely following a number of developments which have affected inter-ethnic relations and, by extension, the cohesion of the Government coalition, which includes a party representing the interests of the Hungarian minority. In the autumn of 2000 and early in 2001, Max van der Stoep, together with two international education experts, visited Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra to discuss ways of improving the training of teachers in the Hungarian language. The Slovak Government has given its support to the creation of a separate faculty to provide instruction in the Hungarian medium. The University Senate, however, has yet to ratify and implement this idea. Encouraged by the High Commissioner, the Government signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. When problems relating to the reform of the public administration threatened to break up the coalition in the summer and autumn of 2001, the new High Commissioner, Rolf Ekéus, visited the Slovakia and familiarized himself with the situation. He was also interested to learn about the Slovak Government's reaction to the Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries adopted by the Hungarian Government in June 2001.

Turkey

The High Commissioner continued his efforts to gain the approval of the Government of Turkey for a visit to that country. In spite of a meeting with Foreign Minister Çem on the margins of the Ministerial Council Meeting in Vienna, the Turkish Government continued to decline this request.

Ukraine

The High Commissioner visited Kiev from 5 to 7 December 2000 to discuss education and related issues in Ukraine. In January 2001, the High Commissioner forwarded recommendations on education using Russian as the medium of instruction in Ukraine to the Ukrainian Foreign Minister. In January 2001, the Office of the High Commissioner provided an assessment of the draft Law on the Development and Use of Languages in

Ukraine. The Ukrainian Government requested an analysis of a number of other draft laws.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

The suspension of the former Yugoslavia from the OSCE drastically limited the possibilities for involvement by the HCNM in recent years. The political changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its accession to the OSCE have opened up possibilities for a more pro-active involvement by the High Commissioner. He visited Belgrade from 11 to 13 December 2000, at the invitation of the Federal Minister for National and Ethnic Communities. The main objective of this visit was to initiate a discussion with the new Yugoslav authorities and representatives of minorities regarding the protection of minority rights.

During the following months, the HCNM also had the opportunity to visit Novi Sad, the capital of Vojvodina, and Novi Pazar, the capital of Sandzak.

From 5 to 8 April 2001, the High Commissioner organized a Seminar in Baden, Austria, for representatives of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, NGOs and minorities with the participation of experts (both international and from Yugoslavia).

The new High Commissioner, Rolf Ekéus, visited Belgrade on 4 and 5 July 2001, to address a regional ministerial conference on national and ethnic communities in south-eastern Europe. On the margins of the conference, the HCNM met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for National and Ethnic Communities of the Federal Republic.

In co-operation with the Federal Ministry of National and Ethnic Communities, the HCNM is supporting some minority-oriented projects:

- Establishment of a group of experts who will assess educational issues related to minorities and analyse existing curricula and school materials with reference to the history, culture and customs of minorities;
- Creation of the youth centre in Bujanovac (southern Serbia).

REPRESENTATIVE ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA (RFM)

In April 2001, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media presented his third *Freedom and Responsibility-Yearbook 2000/2001*, which outlined in detail the activities of the Representative and his Office, and also provided a forum for authors from the Caucasus region, Europe, Russia and other countries to present their subjective views on freedom of expression and to discuss such issues as a search for peace in the Caucasus.

The *Yearbook* also contains an overview of the Representative's country-related activities.

Country-related issues

Azerbaijan

On several occasions, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media intervened with the authorities concerning cases of harassment against media outlets. He raised the cases of the ICBS-SARA Broadcasting Agency, DMR TV and Mingecevir TV. One of the Office's advisers made an assessment visit to Azerbaijan from 18 to 21 June 2001 to obtain first-hand information about the media situation, which had been of concern to the OSCE. An intensive exchange of views took place with journalists, Government officials and media NGOs. Cases of "structural censorship" were discussed, among them the high price of newsprint, distribution problems and insufficient access to information. The electronic media faced serious obstacles relating, for example to the essential matters of licensing and frequency-allocation.

Belarus

The Representative continued to focus on the media situation in Belarus throughout the reporting period. On 10 January 2001, he wrote to Foreign Minister Mikhail Khvostov regarding the Magic publishing house, whose printing equipment had been sealed by the tax authorities. On 12 April, he informed the Foreign Minister that he continued to be concerned about problematic developments which were certainly affecting the journalistic media climate in Belarus. The Representative cancelled an official visit to Belarus scheduled

for 25 April 2001 because of heavy-handed interference in the independence of this OSCE institution by the Government, which denied an entry visa to one of the Office's advisers.

On 31 May 2001, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group organized a public workshop in Vienna on Freedom of the Media in Belarus. This programme brought together journalists, governmental experts and international NGOs. Among the topics were: structural problems of the independent media, information security policies and the State authorities, the upcoming presidential elections and support for the independence of the media. The Representative urged the journalists to play a role in building the future of their country in Europe and was satisfied with the frank and constructive exchange of views which took place between governmental and non-governmental media. The Office published a brochure compiling the various presentations which were made at the workshop for distribution in Belarus.

Georgia

The report on the Current Media Situation in Georgia was prepared by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media in March 2001. The report stressed that the Georgian media legislation and the Constitution provided for freedom of the press. However, even as the independent press grew increasingly active, the Government continued to constrain some press freedoms.

On 25 June 2001, the Representative intervened with the Georgian Foreign Minister regarding the serious harassment of the staff of *60 Minutes*, a highly respected and popular investigative television programme broadcast by the independent *Rustavi-2* television company. It appeared that a story on misappropriation of public and World Bank funds within the Ministry of Health was the reason for taking the drastic action of removing *60 Minutes* from the air for the first time in its two years of existence. The programme was later allowed back on air.

On 27 July, the Representative wrote to the Foreign Minister expressing his great sadness regarding the murder of journalist Georgi Sanaya, a news anchor for *Rustavi-2*.

Italy

Throughout the summer of 2001, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media raised the issue of the challenge to freedom of the media in Italy arising out of the concentration of control of television broadcasting in the hands of a democratically-elected government. The separation of the control over the private television network from his obligations as Prime Minister announced by Silvio Berlusconi would have a lasting effect on the work of the Representative's Office in all the OSCE participating States. A good and acceptable solution in Italy could set an important example in the future of how to disentangle government control and the independence of media for all the participating States. On the other hand, an unacceptable half-way solution, which might be interpreted as a hidden non-separation, might allow leaders in some of the newly emerging democracies to misuse the example of Italy and insist on at least partially controlling the media.

The Russian Federation

In January 2001, Freimut Duve visited Moscow and St. Petersburg in the Russian Federation. The main purpose of the visit was the presentation of the OSCE freedom of the media book, *The Caucasus: In Defence of the Future* (see below under Special projects). The Representative provided an overview of the Office's work during the past year at a meeting at the Moscow State University School of Journalism with a group of Russian journalists, foreign correspondents, students and faculty. He also had a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Education and discussed the Ministry's proposed programme against racism and "hate speech." In St. Petersburg, the Representative participated in a round table on freedom of the media at the Union of Journalists, which was attended by leading journalists from the St. Petersburg city and Leningrad regional press corps.

In late February 2001, Anna Politkovskaya, a reporter for Novaya Gazeta, was detained by Russian troops at a checkpoint in Chechnya. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media intervened with the Russian Foreign Minister and the Office of the Assistant to the Russian President. She was released soon afterwards.

The OSCE Representative closely followed the hostile take-over of NTV, Russia's only independent national television network, in the spring of 2001. On several occasions, the Representative raised his concerns regarding this matter with the Government.

The Representative actively followed the case of Olga Kitova, a correspondent for the regional newspaper Belgorodskaya Pravda. After publishing a number of stories on the miscarriage of justice in Belgorod and on some questionable privatization activities, she was actively harassed, both physically and mentally, by the local police and prosecutor. On two occasions, she was arrested, she suffered breakdowns and several times was hospitalized. She is charged under five articles of the Russian criminal code and at the time of writing her case was in court.

Tajikistan

On 12 July 2001, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media addressed the OSCE Permanent Council on the case of Tajik journalist Dododjon Atovulloyev, who was detained at a Moscow airport on 5 July in response to an extradition request addressed to Russia by the Tajik authorities. Mr. Atovulloyev, who was on his way from Hamburg to Tashkent to attend a meeting, was wanted in Tajikistan for "publicly defaming the President," and for "advocating the overthrow of the Government" in an article published in the Russian newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*. The Representative raised his case on 6 July in Paris at the Plenary Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. He also discussed Mr. Atovulloyev's situation with the Tajik authorities and made several public statements. Mr. Atovulloyev was later released from custody and left Russia for Germany.

Ukraine

Throughout late 2000 and early 2001, the OSCE Representative was actively involved in pursuing the case of Georgiy Gongadze, an on-line editor initially believed to be missing. In early 2001, the authorities acknowledged that he had probably been murdered. The Representative raised this matter in different fora on many occasions. His Office conducted a special investigation into the case and issued its findings in a report to the Permanent Council on 8 February 2001.

Over the past months, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, together with the Ukrainian Government and the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, has been working on developing several projects that will enhance the understanding of European standards in the area of freedom of the media in the country.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

After the victory of democratic forces in Yugoslavia in October 2000, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media visited Belgrade, where he met with officials and journalists to discuss the challenges to the media after the fall of the Milosevic regime. The Office of the Representative was also part of the OSCE Special Rapporteur Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, from 3 to 5 December 2000. Office staff participated in drafting the media mandate of the newly established OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

In June-July 2001, the OSCE Representative took up several cases with the Yugoslav Government, including the murder of Milan Pantic, a reporter for the daily newspaper *Vecernje Novosti*, who was killed in the Central Serbian town Jagodina.

Special projects

Protection of journalists in conflict zones

Leading media professionals and officials from OSCE participating States, the United Nations and the Council of Europe met in Berlin on 6 November 2001 at a round table organized by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany to discuss protection of journalists in conflict areas. The round table was the second step in this respect taken by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. He had held a meeting on the subject with journalists and non-governmental organizations in London, in September 1999.

The media and corruption

Journalists from Eastern and Western Europe and experts met on 4 December 2000 in Prague for a one-day round table organized by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. Harassment, threats and libel charges on the one hand, offerings of bribes or subsidies on the other, as well as “censorship

by killing” as a dramatic method of silencing investigative journalists, were some of the dangers and challenges faced by journalists when combating corruption. All these issues were discussed in detail at the round table.

Central Asia Media Conference

On 14 and 15 November 2000, more than 90 journalists from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, along with OSCE media officers and media specialists, met in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, for an international conference organized under the auspices of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. The conference focused on libel legislation, media law, new technologies and the role of the media in the development of civil society.

Reconciliation in Southeast Europe

A Conference on Free Media in South-Eastern Europe, organized by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the Council of Europe and the OSCE Mission to Croatia, was held in Zagreb from 30 February to 2 March 2001. The Conference brought together media professionals from most of the countries in south-eastern Europe. It provided insight into the differences and similarities throughout the region. Through debate and discussions, the participants were able to exchange ideas and promote reconciliation and inter-ethnic tolerance. The organizers hoped that the participants in the Conference would build upon the experience. A set of recommendations was adopted by the Conference, with the main emphasis on promoting freedom of expression and the protection of journalists against attacks and other forms of harassment.

In Defence of the Future in the Caucasus

From 21 to 26 January 2001, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media visited Tbilisi, Georgia, as well as Moscow and St. Petersburg in the Russian Federation, accompanied by the former OSCE Personal Representative to the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the Caucasus, Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini. The main purpose of the visit was the presentation of the OSCE freedom of the media book, *The Caucasus: In Defence of the Future*, which was published in November 2000 in three languages: Russian, English and German. This

volume, the second in the series *In Defence of the Future*, is a collection of essays and articles by 26 well-known Caucasian and Russian authors devoted to the theme of the present-day situation in the Caucasus and the search for possible ways of resolving the conflicts. In both Russia and Georgia, there was keen interest in this unique volume, which represents a cultural *première*, since for the first time writers from cultures and peoples in the Caucasus were invited to contribute to a book on the future of the region.

OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, created as part of the institutionalization of the CSCE at the 1990 Paris Summit, occupies a unique place in the structure of the OSCE. The Assembly's primary task is to support the strengthening and consolidation of democratic institutions in the OSCE's participating States, to develop and promote mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts, and to contribute to the development of the OSCE's institutional structures and of relations and co-operation between existing OSCE institutions. A dialogue aimed at further strengthening ties and co-operation between OSCE's inter-governmental and parliamentary branches has usually been positive and productive. The President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has continued to participate regularly at the political level in the OSCE, including in Ministerial Troika meetings and in the OSCE Ministerial Council. He has also addressed the Permanent Council on two occasions. The Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and other senior experts from the Assembly's International Secretariat, located in Copenhagen, have worked closely with the OSCE Secretariat and the other OSCE institutions.

Vienna Ministerial Council

A delegation from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, headed by President Adrian Severin, attended the Eighth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council, in Vienna, on 27 and 28 November 2000. In his address to the Ministerial Council, president Severin

underlined the dangers of double standards and the temptation of some States within the OSCE to see themselves as judges or teachers. He mentioned in this regard the workings of the OSCE institutions, and said that although the OSCE is in many ways the standard-bearer of the democratization effort, issues such as a lack of transparency and accountability within its decision-making process undermine its efforts.

President Severin urged the OSCE, and particularly the Permanent Council, to be more open, more transparent and more accountable. He reminded the Ministers that the Parliamentary Assembly has stated on several occasions that there needs to be greater openness, transparency and accountability in the OSCE, including an adjustment of the decision-making procedure as well as an opening of the Permanent Council to the press, and through the press to the public. He concluded that, as an Assembly of more than 300 directly elected parliamentarians, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is pleased to provide the democratic foundation which is so crucial for the OSCE's success.

Annual session

At its tenth Annual Session in Paris in July, the Assembly focused on "European Security and Conflict Prevention: Challenges to the OSCE in the 21st Century". Nearly 300 parliamentarians from more than 50 countries met to deliberate and adopt the Paris Declaration, which covers a wide range of political, economic and human rights issues and includes resolutions on specific topics, such as abolition of the death penalty; prevention of torture, abuse, extortion or other unlawful acts; combating of trafficking in human beings; combating of corruption and international crime; and freedom of the media, as well as resolutions on south-eastern Europe, the northern Caucasus, Moldova and Ukraine. The Assembly also unanimously adopted a resolution on strengthening transparency and accountability in the OSCE. The latter resolution proposes that, "before making major decisions, to be defined in future consultations, the Ministerial Council should take into account the opinion of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and explain how it has affected the result." Furthermore, it recommends that, "as long as the OSCE complies with the strict consensus rule, it must not be possible to participate in the decision-making process

secretly and that objections to any proposal must be made known to any interested OSCE participating State or OSCE institution.”

In keeping with established practice, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, along with the OSCE Secretary General and the leaders of OSCE institutions, addressed the Annual Session and answered questions directly from the floor. The Session was addressed by the Presidents of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and the Assembly of the Western European Union, and the Vice-President of the European Parliament. A representative of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States also attended. Adrian Severin of Romania was re-elected by acclamation as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. The Assembly also elected three Vice-Presidents: Congressman Alcee Hastings (United States); Kimmo Kiljunen, MP (Finland), and Ahmet Tan, MP (Turkey), all for three-year terms. Senator Jeremiah Grafstein (Canada) was elected to serve a two-year term as Treasurer. In the First General Committee, András Bárony from Hungary was elected Chair, Yiorgos Lillikas from Cyprus was elected Vice-Chair and Theo van den Doel from the Netherlands was elected as Rapporteur. In the Second General Committee, Jacques Floch from France was re-elected as Chair. Oleg Bilorus from Ukraine was re-elected as Vice-Chair and Barbara Haering from Switzerland was re-elected as Rapporteur. In the Third General Committee, Gert Weisskirchen from Germany was re-elected as Chair, Ms. Elena Mizulina from the Russian Federation was elected as Vice-Chair and Svend Robinson from Canada was elected as Rapporteur.

Annual briefing in Vienna

Every winter, the Standing Committee, which is composed of the heads of delegations to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, meets in Vienna at the OSCE premises in the Hofburg Congress Centre. This briefing provides parliamentarians with the latest information about OSCE activities, while answers to questions from the floor ensure a vital direct link between members of parliament and the OSCE leadership. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, the OSCE Secretary General and the heads of other OSCE

institutions met with the members of the Standing Committee of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in January 2001 and briefed them on the latest developments in the Organization’s work. At the meeting, the members of the Standing Committee debated the results of the Ministerial Council Meeting in Vienna, as well as reports on the Assembly’s election observation missions in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.

Election observation

The Parliamentary Assembly has continued to make important contributions to the OSCE election observation efforts. The Co-operation Agreement between the Assembly and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, signed in Copenhagen in September 1997 by the Chairman-in-Office and the President of the Assembly, was designed to enhance the working relationship between these two important OSCE institutions. Under this Agreement, the Chairman-in-Office, on the basis of nominations by the President of the Assembly, has appointed senior members of parliament as his/her special representatives to lead election monitoring operations and to present the conclusions of the observer teams. Since December 2000, the Assembly has carried out election monitoring missions in Serbia (December 2000), Moldova (February 2001), Montenegro (April 2001), Albania (June 2001) and Belarus (September 2001). All of these missions were led by the President or a Vice-President of the Assembly as the Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly also intends to send a team of parliamentarians to monitor the elections in Kosovo in November 2001.

Presidential activities

During the past year, the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Adrian Severin, has continued to be engaged in numerous activities aimed at increasing the Parliamentary Assembly’s role in promoting parliamentary dialogue and the implementation of OSCE commitments by participating States, whilst helping to develop and promote mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts in the OSCE area. President Severin, in order to fulfil these objectives, has devoted special attention to inter-institutional dialogue and co-operation within the OSCE

and to the need to improve the Assembly's co-operation with the other OSCE institutions, while strengthening the Organization's institutional coherence. The President has maintained regular contacts with the political and diplomatic leaders of the Organization, and has regularly participated in various fora, including meetings of the Troika, the Ministerial Council and the Permanent Council. On such occasions the President of the Assembly, representing the OSCE parliamentarians, has called attention to the need to enhance transparency and accountability in the Organization's procedures and decision-making mechanisms.

At the same time, President Severin, who was re-elected for a second term as President of the Assembly at the tenth Annual Session in Paris in July 2001, has devoted his efforts to strengthening the links between the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and other parliamentary bodies, in particular the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament, especially in the areas of parliamentary co-operation in south-eastern Europe, election monitoring, and operational and conflict management activities.

In the autumn of 2001, President Severin intends to pay official visits to Central Asia and the Caucasus.

***Ad hoc* committees, working groups, democracy teams**

During the past year, the work of the democracy teams or parliamentary teams, which has added a new and growing dimension to the activities of the Parliamentary Assembly, has been intense and has made a positive contribution to the overall work of the OSCE. During repeated visits to Minsk, the *ad hoc* Working Group on Belarus has continued to pursue its aim of facilitating dialogue between the Government and the opposition in Belarus, which it is hoped might result in the conduct of free and fair elections and further the development of democracy. The Parliamentary Team on Moldova visited the country during the elections on 25 February 2001. Resolving the status of Transdniestria is a particular priority of the Parliamentary Team, which has urged political dialogue among all the parties concerned. The Democracy Team on Kosovo paid its third visit to the area in May 2001 after

the chair of the Team, Mrs. Rita Süßmuth, MP (Germany), had held talks with Government leaders in Belgrade.

During the tenth Annual Session in Paris, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly established an *ad hoc* committee to promote transparency and accountability in the OSCE, in accordance with a resolution approved unanimously at the Session.

Meetings, conferences and seminars

From 28 to 31 May 2001, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Finnish Parliament (*Eduskunta*), in close co-operation with the OSCE Mission to Moldova, jointly organized a seminar on self-government held in Helsinki and Mariehamn, Finland, which was initiated by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Parliamentary Team on Moldova. The event brought together parliamentarians from nine countries (Canada, Finland, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and Ukraine), as well as other high-level personalities from international and national institutions (the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the authorities of the Finnish Åland Islands and a number of diplomats). Most importantly, it brought together those directly involved in the resolution of the conflict. A delegation from the Moldovan parliament, headed by Vice-Speaker Vadim Misin, as well as leaders from Transdniestria, headed by Grigory Marakutsa, participated in the discussions, as did the special Government representatives on the Transdniestrian issue from Russia and Ukraine. The OSCE Mission to Moldova was represented by Ambassador William Hill, Head of the Mission.

A meeting of the Standing Committee on Migration, followed by a conference on the same subject, was held in Sintra, Portugal, from 9 to 12 October 2001. The Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations, which met on 9 October, approved a Declaration on Security through Solidarity, concerning the international fight against terrorism. The Foreign Minister of Portugal, Jaime Gama, also addressed the meeting, outlining the main principles of the forthcoming Portuguese Chairmanship of the OSCE. The conference on migration, following the Standing Committee

meeting, consisted of a series of presentations and discussions on various aspects of the topic, including the problems encountered by migrants, migrants' rights and the positive and negative aspects of migration. The conference was attended by more than 100 parliamentarians from over 40 countries, as well as leading experts on the subject.

Other activities

Since 1 December 2000, regular meetings of the leadership of the Parliamentary Assembly have taken place in Vienna (Standing Committee), Copenhagen (Expanded Bureau), Paris (Bureau, Standing Committee, Annual Session) and Sintra (Standing Committee).

The Parliamentary Assembly awarded the Sixth OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy to journalists José Luis López de Lacalle and Georgiy Gongadze. The awards were made posthumously for their furtherance of OSCE values by intervening through their writings in conflicts and secretive political environments.

The Assembly also continued to intensify its International Research Fellowship Programme at the International Secretariat in Copenhagen. Fellowship positions for graduate students are for a six-month period, but may be extended for up to one year. The Fellowship Programme is now in its seventh year. More than 100 Research Fellows from all over the OSCE region have come to Copenhagen to gain practical experience in the field of international politics. The Assembly, in turn, has benefited from an increased capacity to carry out in-depth research and analysis.

OSCE SECRETARIAT

Office of the Secretary General

The Office of the Secretary General supports the Secretary General in his role as the OSCE's chief administrative officer and the representative of the Chairman-in-Office. It carries out a number of activities in support of him, for example, in respect of executive support, diplomatic liaison, press and public information, legal services, internal auditing, contacts with the headquarters of other international organizations and NGOs, contacts with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for

Co-operation, support for seminars, etc. These are further elaborated on in the separate sections below, as are the activities of the Secretary General during the reporting period.

Activities of the Secretary General

During the period under review, the Secretary General actively participated in a number of different external activities, as well as OSCE-centred, activities, the main ones of which are described below. For a description of work aimed at establishing better relations with other international organizations, which constituted a major part of the Secretary General's external activities, refer to the Secretary General's *Annual Report 2001 on Interaction Between Organizations and Institutions in the OSCE Area*.

External activities of the Secretary General

Conferences, seminars and bilateral contacts with OSCE participating States

In the period under review, the Secretary General maintained contacts with OSCE participating States, especially host States of OSCE field activities, and attended a number of international conferences and seminars. The latter in particular were an ideal forum for maintaining existing contacts and establishing new ones.

On 6 November 2000, the Secretary General accompanied the Chairperson-in-Office, Foreign Minister of Austria, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, on a trip to Belgrade. The trip took place after the presidential elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with the aim of establishing contacts with and expressing support for the new democratically elected regime. The Chairperson-in-Office and the Secretary General met with newly elected President Koštunica, as well as with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and other political and religious authorities. The visit concluded a series of contacts through the Chairperson-in-Office's Personal Representative, Ambassador Rohan, designed to finalize the procedure for admission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the OSCE and the establishment of an OSCE Mission in Belgrade. On this occasion, President Koštunica presented a letter in which he expressed his readiness to join the OSCE and

to invite an OSCE Rapporteur Mission to Belgrade.

On 17 and 18 November 2000, the Secretary General attended the Fifth Anniversary Commemoration of the Dayton Peace Accords, in Dayton, Ohio, where he delivered a keynote speech. On 20 November, consultations were held with the United States Department of State in Washington, D.C., and a meeting took place with members of the United States Senate Foreign Affairs Committee.

On 11 January 2001, Ambassador Kubiš held working consultations in Moscow, meeting, *inter alia*, with Foreign Minister Ivanov and the Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration, as well as with representatives from the State Duma. Topics discussed included the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya, ways of improving OSCE work in the economic and environmental areas, the Platform for Co-operative Security and inter-institutional co-operation and development of parallel integration processes in the Euro-Atlantic-Asiatic area. Further discussion included the new threats and challenges of terrorism and extremism.

On 24 January, in Vienna, the Secretary General was received by His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan, who was on an official visit to Austria. Ambassador Kubiš gave a briefing on current OSCE activities, with emphasis on co-operation with the Mediterranean and other Partners for Co-operation.

On 20 and 21 February, the Secretary General spoke at a Conference on the Role of Regional and Multilateral Organizations in the Defense and Promotion of Democracy, organized by the Organization of American States, in Washington, D.C. On the margins of the Conference, issues relating to confidence- and security-building measures and small arms and light weapons were discussed with the Organization's Secretary General and with the Chairman of the Committee on Hemispheric Security. Discussions were also held with Mats Karlsson, the Vice-President of the World Bank for External and United Nations Affairs. While in Washington, D.C., Ambassador Kubiš held working consultations with the United States Department of State and the National Security Council.

On 3 March, while in London for an international workshop on public security and the rule of law, the Secretary General held working meetings at the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

From 14 to 18 March, he was in Japan on a working visit, and met with several Japanese Government and parliamentary representatives. The country's keen interest in increasing its co-operation with the OSCE was clearly expressed at these meetings, building on the success of the OSCE-Japan Conference on Comprehensive Security in Central Asia that had taken place in December 2000 in Tokyo (see below, the section on OSCE-centred activities of the Secretary General).

Between 24 and 27 April, the Secretary General visited Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, where he met with President Akayev, President Rakhmonov and Foreign Minister Kamilov, respectively. The discussion centred on external and internal aspects of security and stability in the region, in the light of the situation in Afghanistan and recurrent military activities in Central Asia.

On 19 June, the Secretary General delivered a statement on the benefits of global co-operation in countering terrorism at a conference on countering terrorism in Central Asia, organized by the Office of Counterterrorism of the United States Department of State, in Istanbul.

On 21 June, he delivered a keynote opening statement at a Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Practical Challenges for the Implementation of Current Undertakings in the OSCE and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, organized in Baku by Azerbaijan and Switzerland.

On 28 and 29 June, Ambassador Kubiš was invited by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to deliver a keynote speech on OSCE conflict-prevention instruments at a conference on conflict prevention and peace building in Africa, in Maputo, Mozambique.

On 5 July, while in Paris for the tenth Annual Session of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Secretary General held working consultations at the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs on European security and other OSCE issues. On the same occasion, he had the opportunity to meet one of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, Philippe de Suremain, with

whom he discussed developments in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The same day, he also attended an informal consultative round table of European institutions co-operating in support of the democratic process in Belarus.

On 24 August, he met with a Japanese parliamentary delegation during their visit to Vienna. The discussion focused on the OSCE's contribution to European security and stability, also through its co-operation with other international organizations. The Secretary General and the Japanese delegates exchanged views on the development of interaction among international organizations as a result of historical developments in Europe, the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and the valuable contribution by Japan to OSCE activities.

On 30 August, the Secretary General met with the Foreign Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, who addressed the PC the same day. The main topic of discussion was the co-operation between the OSCE and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, including the implementation of the Framework Agreement, as well as the request by the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for additional OSCE monitors.

On 12 September, Ambassador Kubiš met in Vienna with the Serbian Deputy Prime Minister, who praised the excellent co-operation with the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Deputy Prime Minister also mentioned the success of the multi-ethnic police training project in Serbia and expressed the wish for further, increased co-operation with the Mission. Considerable progress in the registration of Kosovo Serb voters was also praised.

On 13 and 14 September, the Secretary General travelled to Skopje together with the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, joining Chairman-in-Office Geana. They held meetings and consultations with representatives of the Government and of the international community and with OSCE field staff on the enhancement of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje and future OSCE activities in support of the Framework Agreement, with particular regard to relevant police matters.

On 18 September, the Secretary General met in Vienna with the Secretary of the

Security Council of Kazakhstan, and was briefed on the current situation in the region and on the position of Kazakhstan, with reference to a statement by President Nazarbayev that was distributed to all delegations.

On 19 September, Ambassador Kubiš was received by the President of Kyrgyzstan, H.E. Askar Akaev, who was in Vienna on an official visit.

On 2 October, he met with the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Abkhazia who was in exile, accompanied by the Head of the Georgian Delegation, to discuss the situation in Abkhazia and possible solutions to the conflict.

At the invitation of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav authorities, the Secretary General visited Belgrade on 16 and 17 October in order to represent the OSCE at the first graduation ceremony at the police school in Mitrovo Polje, in southern Serbia. In addition, he had several meetings in Belgrade with, *inter alia*, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia and other representatives from Yugoslav institutions and the media. The main discussion topics were the co-operation between the OSCE and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including issues related to Kosovo, relations between Serbia and Montenegro and regional stability, particularly in southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

On 18 October, the Secretary General met with the Foreign Minister of Tajikistan, Talbak Nazarov, who was on an official visit in Austria. The discussion focused on the implications of the developments in Afghanistan for the Central Asian region and in particular for Tajikistan. The work of the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan, including the opening of a field office in Khorog and a strengthening of the Mission's activity in the economic dimension were also discussed.

Relations with the academic community

In the period under review, the Secretary General devoted a great deal of effort to establishing and maintaining links with the academic community.

On 29 January, he attended the Stockholm International Forum on Combating Intolerance, where he delivered a statement at the Seminar

on Local Communities: Problems, Strategies and Actions.

On 23 February, he participated in the Seminar on OSCE: Lessons Learned During the Austrian Chairmanship – a Look Forward, organized by the Vienna Diplomatic Academy. This event provided a good opportunity for open and interesting exchanges on the work of the OSCE now and in the future.

On 6 March, the Secretary General was invited by the Centre for Defence Studies and the International Institute for Strategic Studies to attend an international workshop on Public Security and the Rule of Law from a European Perspective, which took place in London. The main focus was on the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi, considered from the perspective of European experience. The meeting was attended by the Chairman of the Panel himself and other high-level United Nations and government peace operations experts.

On 3 July, Ambassador Kubiš delivered a statement on the topic “The OSCE, NATO and the European Union – Co-operation or Competition?” at a Conference on Perspectives for Security Policy in the 21st Century: Pillars of European Security, held in Berlin and organized by the German Federal College for Security Policy Studies.

At the invitation of the President of the Austrian College/European Forum Alpbach, on 26 and 27 August, the Secretary General participated in the political symposium, European Forum Alpbach 2001, where he delivered a statement in the panel on Europe, Russia and the United States. On the margins of the meeting, he held a bilateral meeting with the Foreign Minister of Belgium, holder of the European Union Presidency, to discuss the priorities of the European Union Presidency, OSCE and European Union activities and areas of mutual co-operation. He also met with the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

OSCE-centred activities of the Secretary General

The Secretary General participated in the eighth OSCE Ministerial Council, held in Vienna on 27 and 28 November 2000. On the margins of the meeting, he held a number of bilateral meetings, among others with the

Foreign Ministers of the five Central Asian participating States, as well as with the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and a representative of the European Commission.

On 11 and 12 December 2000, the Secretary General participated in the OSCE-Japan Conference on Comprehensive Security in Central Asia - Sharing OSCE and Asian Experiences, organized in Tokyo by the OSCE Secretariat.

Ministerial Troika meetings are recurring OSCE-centred activities. In the reporting period, Ambassador Kubiš attended two such meetings, on 23 January and 20 June, both in Bucharest.

On 22 and 23 January, he participated in the regular meeting of heads of missions in Bucharest. The meeting provided an opportunity to lay out the Secretariat's basic priorities for 2001. The Heads of Mission and the Chairmanship discussed, *inter alia*, the security situation in various mission areas. The Secretary General attended one further meeting of heads of missions in Vienna on 2 and 3 July.

The Secretary General maintained close relations with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. On 22 February, he addressed a session of the Standing Committee of the Assembly in Vienna, together with the heads of other OSCE Institutions. On 6 July, following a statement by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, the Secretary General, together with other heads of OSCE institutions, addressed the tenth Annual Session of the Parliamentary Assembly in Paris.

On 20 and 21 March, the Secretary General addressed the opening session of the OSCE-Korea Conference in Seoul, organized by the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Romanian OSCE Chairmanship and the OSCE Secretariat. The objective of the Conference was to enhance understanding of bilateral, regional and multilateral dialogue and co-operation in the OSCE region and in north-eastern Asia, notably in the fields of confidence-building measures and confidence- and security-building measures.

From 3 to 6 April, at the invitation of the Co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group Process, the Secretary General attended OSCE-sponsored talks in Key West, Florida,

which were seeking a resolution of the dispute in Nagorno-Karabakh.

He delivered an opening statement to the ninth session of the Economic Forum in Prague on 14 and 15 May. This year, the Forum was dedicated to transparency and good governance in economic matters. In his speech, Ambassador Kubiš stressed the need to give greater visibility and responsibility to the next Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

On 1 June, the Secretary General visited Lisbon to discuss the priorities of the incoming Chairperson-in-Office, and to exchange views on OSCE activities and co-operation between the Secretariat and the Chairperson-in-Office. He held meetings with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Closer co-operation and co-ordination with other international organizations, especially the European Union and NATO, was also discussed.

On 8 and 9 October, the Secretary General participated in Kyiv, Ukraine, in the OSCE Seminar on Preventive Functions of the OSCE: Experience, Possibilities, Tasks. On the margins of the Seminar, he was received by President Kuchma of Ukraine and had a working lunch with Foreign Minister Zlenko of Ukraine. Both meetings focused on OSCE matters, on current issues, including developments in Ukraine and the elections scheduled to take place in 2002, and on the role of the OSCE in Ukraine.

External Co-operation Section

As an integral part of the Office of the Secretary General, the External Co-operation Section is chiefly responsible for assisting him in maintaining relations with OSCE's main external partners by serving as the first point of contact for international organizations and institutions and regional and sub-regional organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and the academic community. The Section also serves as the main channel of communication with the OSCE Partners for Co-operation, both Mediterranean and Asian. Through its activities, the Section ensures continuity and coherence of efforts with regard to co-operation with external partners, while at the same time providing for increased visibility of the Organization's work and accurate recognition of it in the declarations and

working documents of partner organizations and institutions.

In the period under review, the Section consolidated the changes introduced by Permanent Council Decision No. 364, adopted on 29 June 2000, which stipulates that the Section, together with other sections in the Secretariat, will be responsible "...for the implementation of the modalities of co-operation in accordance with part II of the Operational Document of the Charter for European Security". Throughout the year, the Section organized both high-level and staff-level meetings in Vienna between OSCE and its external partners, as well as participating in meetings organized by other international organizations.

The Section continued to support the Secretary General by preparing background papers, talking points and speeches, as well as by preparing the two annual reports by the Secretary General, on OSCE activities and on interaction with international organizations and institutions in the OSCE area.

With regard to Partners for Co-operation, the Section continued to assist the Chairman-in-Office and the Chairman of the Contact Group, *inter alia*, by organizing meetings and workshops, such as the Annual OSCE Mediterranean Seminar, which this year took place in Dubrovnik, the OSCE-Japan Conference 2000 and the OSCE-Korea Conference 2001.

The Section was also responsible for the organization of an OSCE Seminar on Preventive Functions of the OSCE: Experience, Possibilities, Tasks, which took place in Kyiv on 8 and 9 October 2001. It also provided logistical support to the Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia in the organization of the Bishkek International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terrorism.

In addition to its traditional tasks, the Section recently expanded its range of activities by initiating new staff-level meetings with partner organizations. Furthermore, the Section was called upon to respond to an increased demand by the Chairmanship and the participating States for the preparation of compilation-type and background papers. At the request of the Chairmanship, the Section

has started preparing talking points for the Chairmanship and the Chairman-in-Office.

Liaison with international organizations and institutions, including sub-regional co-operation frameworks

In the period under review, the External Co-operation Section continued to help strengthen mutually reinforcing relationships and to foster co-ordinated approaches between the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna and the headquarters of other international organizations, including the United Nations and its agencies, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Western European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Organization for Migration. This was achieved by acting as the main channel for communication and maintaining close liaison with representatives of these organizations through formal and informal channels, with a view to making more efficient use of available resources through enhanced co-ordination.

The External Co-operation Section organized the annual Tripartite High-Level Meeting between the OSCE and the Council of Europe, which were represented by the respective Chairmanships and Secretaries General, and the United Nations Office at Geneva, which was represented by the Office's Director General. The Meeting was hosted by the OSCE in Vienna on 16 February 2001, and focussed on progress towards peace and stability in south-eastern Europe, especially the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the Caucasus. Other human dimension issues, such as intolerance, racism and human trafficking, also featured prominently in the discussions, and consensus was reached on the need to pursue enhanced co-operation and exchange of information in areas of common concern. In recent years, participation in the Tripartite Meetings has been extended to the United Nations agencies, as well as the European Commission, the International Organization for Migration and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The Section organized the expert-level target-oriented meeting, also hosted by the OSCE, which took place in Vienna on 15 February 2001. The meeting focused on good governance. Apart from the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the United

Nations organizations led by the United Nations Office at Geneva, participants included the European Commission, the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

The natural corollary to the High-Level Meetings are staff-level and working-level meetings with partner organizations. In addition to meetings which take place with the European Union, the Council of Europe, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Section is preparing new staff-level meetings with United Nations Headquarters (Department of Political Affairs and Department of Peacekeeping Operations) and the United Nations Development Programme. These meetings are scheduled to be held in the latter part of 2001.

The traditional "2+2" high-level meetings with the participation of the respective Chairmanships and Secretaries General, have been convened for the first time to include the Presidents of the respective Parliamentary Assemblies in a "2+2/3+3" format. The Section supported the Chairmanship in organizing the first meeting in Bucharest on 11 April 2001, hosted by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, and co-ordinated OSCE's preparations for a high-level meeting held in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, on 30 October 2001. Further "2+2" meetings at the level of senior officials took place in Strasbourg and Vienna on 20 July and 30 August 2001. The latter was hosted by the OSCE Secretariat and was organized by the External Co-operation Section.

An OSCE Seminar on Preventive Functions of the OSCE: Experience, Possibilities, Tasks was organized by the Section in Kyiv on 8 and 9 October 2001. One of the main themes of the Seminar was co-operation among international, sub-regional and non-governmental organizations, as well as with academic institutions.

The Head of the Section has accompanied the Secretary General to a number of high-level meetings, including the fourth High-Level Meeting between the United Nations and Regional Organizations on Co-operation for Peace-Building, which was hosted by the United Nations in New York on 6 and 7 February 2001. Eighteen delegations from regional and sub-regional organizations

participated in the meeting, discussing mutual interaction and co-operation in the framework of peace-building in all its phases, from conflict prevention to post-conflict rehabilitation. The OSCE has offered to take the lead in holding the first regional follow-up meeting, to take place in Vienna in 2002. The Section will be organizing the meeting for the OSCE and has already started consultations with the United Nations Office at Geneva. Other high-level meetings took place, *inter alia*, with the Secretaries General of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, NATO and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Director General of the International Organization for Migration; and high-level representatives from the European Commission and the Council of the European Union. Furthermore, the Secretary General addressed the NATO Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council for the first time on 17 May 2001⁴.

Throughout the year, the Section has continued to maintain close co-operation with the NATO (SHAPE) School in Oberammergau by contributing to a number of its courses. The Section further participated, upon invitation, in a number of other seminars organized by international organizations and institutions on topics pertaining to the OSCE concept of comprehensive security.

Liaison with non-governmental organizations and academic institutions

In addition to maintaining close links with international organizations, the Section played an important role as the focal point for contacts with NGOs concerned with topics that are not in the human dimension and the academic community. In performing this task the Section participated, upon invitation, in different seminars and workshops throughout the year.

Annual reports

In addition to drafting the Secretary General's *Annual Report on OSCE Activities*, for the second year the Section has produced

⁴ For more details about these meetings, please refer to the Secretary General's 2001 *Annual Report on Interaction Between Organizations and Institutions in the OSCE Area*

the Secretary General's *Annual Report on Interaction between Organizations and Institutions in the OSCE Area*.

Relations with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and the Partners for Co-operation

The Section for External Co-operation kept up relations with both the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia) and the Partners for Co-operation (Japan, Republic of Korea and Thailand). Thailand was welcomed as a new Partner for Co-operation by the Permanent Council on 9 November 2000 (PC.DEC/378).

The Section advised and supported the Chairman of the Contact Group (Romania until the end of 2000, and then Portugal in 2001) on all issues pertaining to the OSCE-Mediterranean dialogue, and the delegation of the Chairman-in-Office (Romania) on relations with the Partners for Co-operation. In the reporting period, the Section was responsible for the organization of the annual Mediterranean Seminar, other related meetings, and two unprecedented conferences in Tokyo and Seoul, respectively.

Dialogue with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

A Workshop for Experts from the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation was organized on 25 and 26 June 2001 at the Hofburg in Vienna, and focused on "Challenges and Opportunities in Economic Development". The Workshop was attended by representatives of all the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. Discussions centred on the importance of good governance and transparency in economic matters, public service reforms and efforts to combat corruption, privatization and a case study of a stabilization and association agreement. A report by the Chairman of the Contact Group was circulated to all the participants (PC.DEL/500/01).

The OSCE and the Republic of Croatia jointly organized the annual Mediterranean Seminar in Dubrovnik, on the topic, "Implementation of OSCE Economic and Environmental Dimension Commitments: The OSCE Experience and its Relevance for the Mediterranean Region", on 30 and 31 October 2001. The Seminar was inaugurated

by H.E. Mr. Roland Žuvanić, Deputy Minister of the Environment, Republic of Croatia. The opening session was also addressed by Mr. Daniel Daianu, Representative of the Chairman-in-Office, Romania; Ms. Hannie Pollmann-Zaal, Head, Office of the OSCE Secretary General; and H.E. Ambassador Ms. Danielle Del Marmol-Guilbert, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the OSCE, as guest speakers. Representatives of all six Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, a number of participating States, international organizations and NGOs participated in the Seminar.

The main focus of the debate was on the economic and environmental dimension and its implications for security, the relevance of the OSCE experience in the economic and environmental dimension in developing regional co-operation and cross-border opportunities for the Mediterranean region and partnership opportunities, including stocktaking and recommendations. As a follow-up to this event, it is expected that recommendations will be taken up during subsequent meetings of the Contact Group.

Meetings of the Mediterranean Contact Group were held throughout the year with the support of the Section, and among the main issues discussed between the Mediterranean Partners and participating states were small arms and light weapons, OSCE training and capacity building and the REACT concept, the Operations Centre and the economic and environmental dimension of security.

Dialogue with the Asian Partners for Co-operation

In accordance with the provisions of the 1992 Helsinki Document, Japan continued to attend the plenary meetings of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation. Japan made contributions to OSCE's endeavours in south-eastern Europe, including by providing election supervisors for the elections in Kosovo.

The Republic of Korea and Thailand also participated in a number of OSCE meetings to which all Partners are invited, such as the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting, the Economic Forum, the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and the Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings and OSCE seminars. All the Partners were

invited to participate in the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Bucharest.

The OSCE-Japan Conference 2000 on Comprehensive Security in Central Asia-Sharing OSCE and Asian Experiences took place on 11 and 12 December 2000 in Tokyo at the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This meeting, which was co-chaired by the representative of the Government of Japan, Dr. Tatsuo Arima, and the Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador Jan Kubiš, marked the first time that such a joint conference took place together with a Partner for Co-operation from Asia. It followed a number of meetings on issues dealing with Central Asia under the 2000 Austrian Chairmanship, organized jointly with the OSCE, or with the Organization's active participation. The Conference was officially opened by the Foreign Minister of Japan, H.E. Mr. Yohei Kono.

Representatives from numerous OSCE participating States, including all five Central Asian countries, took part in the Conference. Eight Partners for Co-operation, both from Asia and from the Mediterranean, also participated in the event, as did the heads of all the OSCE centres present in Central Asia, a representative from the ODIHR, the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and a number of international organizations and research institutions.

The OSCE-Korea Conference 2001 on The Applicability of OSCE Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in Northeast Asia took place from 19 to 21 March 2001 in Seoul, Republic of Korea. This was the first time that a joint conference had taken place in Seoul since the Republic of Korea became an OSCE Partner for Co-operation in 1994.

The Conference, which was organized by the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Romanian OSCE Chairmanship and the OSCE Secretariat, focused on tools successfully brought to bear by the OSCE to reduce armed conflict in Europe and their possible applicability in north-east Asia. While the main theme dealt with the applicability of OSCE experience in confidence- and security-building measures, the discussions also dwelt on lessons learnt.

The opening session was inaugurated by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade

of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Lee Joung-Binn, who stressed the fact that the Conference was a valuable opportunity, at the current time of change in the security environment in north-east Asia, to enhance common awareness of the need to address security challenges through regional security co-operation. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office emphasized that, in a spirit of "cross support between the two regions", the key message of the Conference was to further develop the multifaceted dialogue between the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation by continuing to be creative in searching for appropriate forms of co-operation. The Secretary General of the OSCE stated that "...[the] event is a reflection of the increasing interest in Asia, and in particular in north-eastern Asia, in the work of the CSCE/OSCE and its achievements in the comprehensive and co-operative approach to security".

As guests of the host country, two members of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), namely, China and Vietnam, also participated, as did a number of participating States, the Partners for Co-operation (Japan, Republic of Korea and Thailand), representatives from the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, and the NGO community. The day after the Conference ended, the Republic of Korea organized a study visit to the Joint Security Area, Panmunjom.

Developing recommendations regarding applications for future partnership

Pursuant to Permanent Council Decision No. 379, of 9 November 2000, on developing recommendations regarding applications for future partnership, the External Co-operation Section supported the chairman (France) of the informal working group that was set up to make such recommendations. A draft report was submitted to the chairman of the group, which was endorsed by Permanent Council Decision No. 430, of 19 July 2001.

Among the new aspects of co-operation with the Partners, the report makes reference to setting up an informal contact group with the Asian partners which will enable them to keep abreast of events and activities taking place in the OSCE area. A number of points refer to greater involvement by all the Partners in OSCE activities, including the sending of observers from the Partner States to electoral

missions of the ODIHR; the secondment on a voluntary basis by Partner States of mission members to OSCE field missions, as well as the possibility of inviting Partners to take part in some confidence- and security-building measures, including activities provided for by Vienna Document 1999, organized by the participating States through the Forum for Security Co-operation.

In an effort to provide background material for delegations attending the working group that was mandated to draw up the above-mentioned report, the Secretariat compiled two documents on relations with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (from 1975 to May 2001) and the Partners for Co-operation (from 1992 to May 2001), respectively.

The consolidated summaries of the joint OSCE-Partner seminars and conferences mentioned above are available on the OSCE web site.

Press and Public Information

The Press and Public Information Section is divided into three units: one dealing with the press, which concentrates on relations with the media; one dealing with the public information, which produces publications and ensures public outreach; and one dealing with online services, which supervises and develops the OSCE web site and assists institutions and missions in designing and maintaining their own web presence.

Press

During the period under review, the Organization was regularly mentioned and scrutinized in connection with developments in missions and field activities, in particular in relation to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Chechnya and Kosovo, and trips by the Chairman-in-Office to mission areas. OSCE institutions and other offices were also frequently mentioned in connection with human rights issues, minority rights and freedom of the media.

The spokesperson and press officer worked closely with the Austrian and Romanian Chairmanships to keep the press and the general public aware of the Organization's activities, mandate and goals. This included a steady stream of press releases, frequent press briefings and press conferences, background briefings for selected journalists and organized

trips for media representatives to missions and field activities. Media representatives were invited to accompany the Chairman-in-Office, as well as other senior OSCE officials, on trips to the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia and other mission areas.

The Ministerial Council meeting in November 2000 in Vienna attracted a great deal of media coverage, with the Press Unit organizing press conferences, briefings and side events, and co-ordinating with the Austrian Federal Press Service (*Bundespressdienst*). A number of press releases were drafted for the Chairman-in-Office and distributed to the press. Press kits were distributed to media representatives at the Media Centre.

The Press and Public Information Section organized two public-affairs round-table meetings in Vienna, in May and November 2001, with the participation of press officers and media focal points from missions, field activities and institutions. A programme of training in media relations designed to assist heads of mission in dealing with media representatives was organized in September.

Public information

Public and media interest in the early part of the reporting period focused on the Ministerial Council in Vienna, and the Public Information Unit worked closely with its counterparts in the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the *Bundespressdienst*, in the planning and development of the Media Centre in the Austrian National Library. An exhibition of photographs, illustrating the work of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, provided increased factual information in the Media Centre. During the event, an efficient and effective flow of information was provided in close co-operation with Conference Services Documents Distribution. Documents were made available both in hard copy and via the OSCE web site.

The scope of OSCE publications was broadened early in 2001 with the publication of a Russian language edition of the OSCE Handbook, updated to 31 December 2000, which is also available on the OSCE web site. Demand for the hard copy version exceeded all forecasts and a reprint was ordered. Among other publications, a number of new fact sheets were produced and a large number of existing

fact sheets updated. Besides the original fact sheet, *What is the OSCE?*, the series now extends to the OSCE institutions, the Secretariat and its key divisions (such as the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and the Conflict Prevention Centre), as well as to many field activities. For the first time, the generic fact sheet was translated into the language of the incoming Chairmanship-in-Office and published for distribution to the Romanian press and public at the start of the Chairmanship. Additionally, where feasible, editions of other fact sheets are produced in other OSCE official languages and local languages for distribution by institutions and missions, as well as by the Press and Public Information Section itself. All fact sheets are now routinely published on the web site.

The OSCE video, "For Human Dignity", was released in February and proved an immediate success in terms of both feedback and demand for copies. The 30-minute documentary, which traces the transformation of the CSCE into the OSCE and gives an overview of its current activities, awakened general interest. Scenes were shot in Vienna, Bonn and Warsaw, as well as Kosovo. A Russian language version is being prepared, while the English language version of the video has been made available on line.

The *OSCE Newsletter* continued to appear monthly and covered important issues such as the Ministerial Council, plans of the incoming Chairman-in-Office, the opening of the OSCE Mission in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the visit by the European Union's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the tenth anniversaries of the ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. A reader survey will be conducted in the autumn of 2001, and it is hoped to modify the publication in the light of the views expressed.

The visitor programme continued to attract the interest of young students, young diplomats, military officers and representatives of partner institutions. A total of over 60 groups or 1,000 visitors were welcomed to the Hofburg by the Press and Public Information Section, in co-operation with Conference Services. Most groups wish to observe a meeting of the Permanent Council and hear

presentations on the development and work of the OSCE.

The Public Information Unit co-operated with the Training and Capacity-Building Unit of the Department of Human Resources by providing a Powerpoint overview of the OSCE's structures and activities for the OSCE's fortnightly induction training programme for new mission members and other staff.

Finally, the Public Information Unit continued to answer inquiries about the OSCE from the public and from non-media bodies, a large number of which now come in by e-mail.

Online services

In the past year, the Online Unit has moved the public OSCE web site (www.osce.org) to a database-driven system, using the latest Internet technologies to deliver dynamic and up-to-date content to more than 110,000 visitors each month - double the number of visitors in 2000. Today, the OSCE web site uses the latest, cutting-edge technology, providing visitors easy access to OSCE information, with the option of customizing it to meet their individual needs. The latest news, upcoming events, feature stories, photos and multimedia and background information on OSCE missions and institutions can now be updated daily by OSCE staff throughout the world by using advanced proprietary software tools developed by the Online Unit. In co-operation with the Secretariat's Information Technology (IT) Section, work has begun on the development of an Intranet.

The Online Unit assisted in the development of the REACT programme by developing the software and the public interface offering the latest programme information, vacancy notices and on-line employment application forms.

The Online Unit has also designed a new user-friendly graphical interface for the OSCE web site that will enhance the Organization's corporate image. A new OSCE photo archive containing high quality images has been introduced.

In 2001, the Online Unit focused on developing a system for automating the flow of information to the web site. Eight special software programs were developed, allowing authorized staff in missions and institutions to add or edit information to the site. Information

is entered into a central database to be automatically displayed on the relevant parts of the OSCE web site, saving time and avoiding duplication of information, and doing away with much of the tedious, manual work previously done by the OSCE staff.

Previous unco-ordinated efforts resulted in duplication, delays in the posting of critical information and an overall sub-standard web site that was not a credit to the Organization. Individual sections were managed by various IT departments in the Organization without unified oversight or guidance. With the establishment of the Online Unit in the Press and Public Information Section in 2000, a clear and forward-looking Internet strategy emerged.

Further development of the web site now depends entirely on OSCE's commitment to provide a better hosting solution for its web site and to provide staff with modest infrastructure resources which would enable the Organization to continue to deliver a first-class service to its users. At present, the OSCE web server is sustaining a workload that is far beyond what the current web-hosting service can, or should be providing.

Legal Services

Legal assistance was provided to the Secretariat's departments and to the other institutions and the missions.

As far as constitutional issues are concerned, the Senior Legal Adviser continued to contribute to the debate relating to OSCE's legal personality, legal capacity and privileges and immunities; several documents were drafted, in particular a study on OSCE's liability and the consequences of the lack of legal personality and privileges and immunities. A standard memorandum of understanding, to be concluded with the host country of a mission, was drafted. The Senior Legal Adviser took part in the negotiation of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and gave legal advice on the application and interpretation of memoranda of understanding and on taxation issues. The Senior Legal Adviser also analysed legal matters relating to some OSCE entities and, with a view to reinforcing the legal protection of the Organization, registered the OSCE name and logo with the World Intellectual Property Organization, under the

Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.

Regarding personnel matters, new Staff Regulations were drafted governing all categories of OSCE staff, including mission members, in co-operation with the Department of Human Resources, and several other legal instruments were prepared relating to the working conditions of OSCE staff (e.g., revision of organization directives on the disciplinary procedure, the working professional environment and the Provident Fund Committee). Legal advice was provided on the application and interpretation of the current regulations and rules, and other administrative issuances to the Secretariat, the other institutions and the missions. Legal opinion was also given with regard to a few disciplinary and termination cases. Furthermore, several analyses were made relating to social security issues.

Concerning contractual matters, the Senior Legal Adviser completed the arbitration procedure regarding the pending case with the assistance of the Department of Management and Finance and the legal consultant; the case was won by the OSCE. Legal advice was given on various contractual issues, for example, lease agreements. Several insurance contracts were reviewed, namely, those covering health insurance, the Provident Fund and vehicle insurance. In the latter case, a payment of ATS 4 million was retroactively made by the insurance company under the profit-sharing scheme.

The perspective for the coming years relates mainly to the strengthening of the legal framework of the OSCE (legal capacity, privileges and immunities, clarification of the nature of the different entities operating within the OSCE, strengthening of the legal protection of the missions and their staff, etc.). The implementation of comprehensive conditions for employment applicable to all categories of OSCE staff will require, in addition to the drafting of the Staff Regulations, Staff Rules and other administrative issuances, increased legal advice on their application and interpretation. Various aspects of social security, including the Provident Fund, need further consideration and will entail legal action. Several tenders are to be submitted in the next few months, which will require legal assistance.

Internal Oversight

Permanent Council Decision No. 399, of 14 December 2000, continued the process of strengthening Internal Oversight and established it as an independent appraisal function to examine and evaluate the Organization's activities. The decision incorporated the principles governing Internal Oversight into the Financial Regulations and approved a mandate which sets out the nature, objectives, scope, authority and responsibilities of the function.

The new mandate has substantially broadened the role of Internal Oversight, so that it now incorporates the full range of internal audit, including management audit, evaluation and investigation, quality and value-for-money assurance and management advice. The scope of Internal Oversight encompasses the examination and evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of all the Organization's systems of internal controls and the quality of performance in carrying out assigned tasks. Internal Oversight is also authorized to investigate allegations of breaches of regulations or impropriety such as waste, mismanagement of resources or fraud. An important element of the mandate consists in the fact that the rights of staff and mission members are protected and they may request that their communications with Internal Oversight remain confidential.

This mandate is a powerful tool which will assist the Secretary General, and through him, also other heads of institution and heads of mission, in the effective discharge of their responsibilities.

During the reporting period, Internal Oversight staff made a number of visits to different missions. Systems reviewed included those used in the administration of pay, board-and-lodging allowance and procurement, while topics covered have included the use of Special Service Agreements and extrabudgetary contributions. Audits have also been carried out of the central administration and policy and procedure setting mechanisms in the Secretariat. This work has resulted in a number of recommendations, and Internal Oversight is currently reviewing progress on their implementation. In accordance with its new mandate, Internal Oversight will prepare a separate report including a description of significant problems and deficiencies that were

found in the administration of programmes or operations. The report will be presented to the Permanent Council.

Looking to the future, as the Organization migrates further towards results-based budgeting, Internal Oversight will need to enhance its capability to monitor and evaluate programmes, projects and activities, as required by its mandate. Evaluations are a systematic and objective tool for measuring the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the Organization's activities against their objectives. While evaluation is primarily a management function, the independent assurance provided by Internal Oversight will enable the Organization to engage in systematic reflection with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the main programmes by altering their content and, if necessary, reviewing their objectives.

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA)

Supporting the Chairman-in-Office in accomplishing its objectives in the economic and environmental dimension has been and remains the first priority of the OCEEA. The Office is continuing to pursue its efforts to develop, maintain and cultivate inter-organizational relations with relevant partner organizations. These efforts have included several rounds of formal and informal consultations, both at headquarters and in the field, with, *inter alia*, bodies in the United Nations system, including the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and also the European Commission; the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development; the Council of Europe; the World Bank; various NATO bodies, such as the Economic Committee and the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society; and the Energy Charter Secretariat.

The preparatory process for the Ninth Economic Forum was thus built on the positive experiences from the Eighth Economic Forum; three seminars were organized: one in Almaty

on 2 and 3 November 2000, one in Brussels on 30 and 31 January 2001 and one in Bucharest, on 27 and 28 March 2001. Each of them was aimed at exploring a specific aspect of the Forum's topic, and together they covered the whole OSCE geographical area. There was an increased participation of business representatives and NGOs, as an indispensable link to civil society, were strategic partners in all the activities.

Co-operation with the UN/ECE has further increased. As in previous years, the UN/ECE prepared the general overview of the implementation of OSCE commitments in the economic dimension, which was presented by the Executive Secretary at the Ninth Economic Forum. Regular consultations take place between UN/ECE and OCEEA, and a joint seminar is planned in Switzerland in November 2001.

The second preparatory seminar, held in Brussels and co-sponsored by the European Commission and the OSCE, is a clear sign of the willingness of both institutions to enhance their co-operation. EC officials were very active in all three preparatory seminars, and this helped to deepen the analysis of governance issues. Consultations between the OCEEA and different units from the European Commission took place, during which both policy and operational issues were discussed.

Co-operation with the EBRD has also been enhanced. Representatives of the Bank attended all the preparatory seminars. On 10 May 2001, consultative meetings were held in Vienna with the EBRD Secretary General. Areas of synergy between the OSCE and the EBRD are being explored and the OCEEA is evaluating fields where it could facilitate the EBRD's activities.

The Office had discussions with the UNDP Bratislava Office on a number of issues involving co-operation at the regional and sub-regional levels, in respect of Southeast Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Consultations took place between the OCEEA, the UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention and the International Atomic Energy Agency, to consider possible joint activities and evaluate areas where the OSCE could facilitate the work of the agencies concerned.

Following the first training seminar for OSCE economic and environmental officers, in October 2000 at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna, the Office again brought together environmental officers in an intensive, three-and-a-half-day training seminar in the Romanian mountain resort of Sinaia in September 2001. Topics addressed range from informative sessions on the Aarhus Convention to the role of the OSCE in the development of small and medium enterprises. Through their contributions, the experts on international conventions on water management who participated in the Seminar made a valuable input into the preparation of the Tenth Economic Forum.

In the region of South-Eastern Europe, the Office is cultivating programmatic working relationships with international financial institutions, international organizations and regional initiatives, including the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative and the Stability Pact Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme Task Force. In an example of early warning in Montenegro, the OCEEA, together with the OSCE Podgorica Office, alerted UNEP, and the Belgrade Office of the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe about the threat to public health posed by the cyanide dump in Mojkovac. In March 2001, the OSCE Mission to Croatia organized an Economic Forum, attended by the OCEEA, which focused on the revitalization of Kostajnica, an area straddling Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Office has assisted the OSCE Presence in Albania in its active campaign to raise awareness among government authorities of the implications of degradation in the environment and energy sectors. Its lobbying efforts helped to bring about the establishment of a Ministry of the Environment in September 2001. Also, the Office is helping to identify financing for a pilot environmental education project targeting secondary school children in southern Albania.

From the beginning of OSCE's role in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Office was involved in the planning to ensure that an economic and environmental officer was assigned to address the country's overarching problems in the economic dimension. The Office helped in identifying the financing for the Mission's support programme for environmental legislation and institution

building. In consultations with the incoming Chairmanship, it was decided that the Mission in Belgrade would host the first preparatory seminar for the Tenth Economic Forum, in November 2001.

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Office and the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje work closely to support local government reform and decentralization as well as to raise awareness and promote dialogue among government authorities, civil society and the international community on the linkage between energy production and the environment. The Office facilitated the securing of project financing for a round table intended to develop a national strategy to combat corruption, which was postponed owing to the crisis situation. The Office and the Mission are co-operating on the development of confidence-building measures to support the Framework Agreement, including consultations with the Council of Europe and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative.

The Office facilitated the organization of a tri-mission meeting in Sarajevo, involving the OSCE Missions to Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, to discuss co-operation on cross-border activities. The active participation of the CEEA in the South East Europe Regional Heads of Mission meeting, in September 2001, contributed to a discussion on the further strengthening of field activities in the economic and environmental dimension.

The work plan of the OCEEA in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region during the reporting period took into account the recommendations made at the OSCE Eighth and Ninth Economic Forums in the field of environment and governance.

In the CIS region, increased importance was given to environmental matters in Central Asia, with a special focus on the Aarhus Convention. Seminars were organized by OSCE offices in the region to present the Convention; these events involved NGOs and local officials. More specifically, a web site on the Aarhus Convention is being developed and should be accessible for external users by the end of the year. In Uzbekistan, a working group of experts on the Aarhus Convention has been set up. Seminars on small and medium enterprises have also been organized.

In the Caucasus, most of the activities took place in Armenia, where the OSCE is actively chairing an international group of donors to help the authorities of the country to design and implement a strategy to combat corruption. In the western CIS (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova), there is a strong emphasis on good governance. In this respect, training seminars were organized for judges in Ukraine on the conduct of corruption investigations, corruption prevention strategies, protection of whistle blowers and the role of international organizations and international treaties to counter corruption.

The OCEEA and OSCE missions worked together in the development of project proposals aimed at promoting countries "ownership" of strategies to address a particular economic and/or environmental issue. The OCEEA assists economic and environmental officers with the presentation, formatting and budgeting of proposals before delegations and donors are approached for funding.

OSCE missions continue to prepare spot reports on specific economic and environmental issues with security implications. For example, one was prepared by the OSCE Centre in Tashkent on the drought in Uzbekistan and another by the OSCE Presence in Albania on the energy situation. Depending on the issue of concern, the Office has served as a catalyst for contacting and informing the appropriate organization which has the resources to address the particular problem.

At the Seminar on Strengthening the OSCE's Role in the Realm of the Environment and Security, held in Berlin on 3 and 4 July 2001, as a follow-up to the Seventh and Eighth OSCE Economic Forums, a common understanding was reached among the participants that environmental considerations should continue to be an integral part of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security and of its role as a key instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation.

The 2001 OSCE Mediterranean Seminar, held in Dubrovnik, on 30 and 31 October 2001, focused on the topic: "Implementation of OSCE Economic and Environmental Commitments: the OSCE Experience and its Relevance for the Mediterranean Region".

The addition of two Professional posts in the autumn of 2000, including a senior economic adviser and a senior economic officer, has greatly increased the Office's capacity to interact with and support the work by OSCE field offices in the economic and environmental dimension. However, the resignation of the Co-ordinator on 1 April 2001, and the fact that it has not been possible to appoint a new Co-ordinator promptly, has put the entire staff of the Office under a heavy strain. The ongoing discussions led by the Romanian Chairmanship on the strengthening of the dimension are very encouraging, and concrete results and agreements are to be expected in the near future.

Conflict Prevention Centre

The Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) has continued to support the overall implementation of OSCE tasks in the fields of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. In the reporting period, under the guidance of the Secretary General, the CPC has focused on providing direct support to the Chairman-in-Office and on actively monitoring – and following up on – OSCE mission activities. The CPC has also provided active staff support to OSCE negotiating and decision-making bodies, such as the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation.

The structural reform of the CPC in 2000 has led to an enhancement of the department's work during the past year, *inter alia*, through the very close co-operation between the Mission Programme Section and the Operations Centre. In 2001, the Situation/Communication Room was organizationally placed under the daily direction of the Operations Centre, while maintaining close interaction with the regional teams in the Mission Programme Section.

Mission Programme Section

The Mission Programme Section has worked under its new mandate, as set forth in Permanent Council Decision No. 364 of 29 June 2000, as the primary point of contact on all OSCE mission matters in the OSCE Secretariat. Thus, the Section has tried to maintain an overview of, and ensure focused follow-up to, efforts in respect of all Secretariat

activities in support of the implementation of the mandates of the missions.

The Section has assisted in these tasks, *inter alia*, by taking an active lead participatory role in the work of Secretariat task forces on the Caucasus, Central Asia, south-eastern Europe and, in particular during 2001, in the work of strengthening the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje. The Section has also taken an active part in supporting regional initiatives and co-operation between the missions themselves. Furthermore, the Section has, at the request of the Chairman-in-Office, continued to render technical assistance in support of political consultations and discussions on issues related to mission mandates. This latter task has had to be given additional attention during the past year.

The addition of junior mission programme officers has proven very successful, and they now make a valuable contribution to the Section's work in support of missions and of the Chairman-in-Office.

The Senior Security Co-ordinator has had a very busy year indeed, including repeated duty travel to assist and advise missions with special security concerns. He has again taken a very active part in meetings of heads of mission and has continued to chair the regular meetings of the Secretariat's advisory working group on technical security. His work has further intensified following the tragic events of 11 September 2001.

Operations Centre

Since commencing work in September 2000, the Operations Centre has been involved, not only in its core role, but also in a number of peripheral areas, in support of the Conflict Prevention Centre and the Secretariat itself. An initial task that was completed was the drafting of a generic planning document which laid out the general parameters to be followed in setting up new missions, and the standard procedures and terms to be used.

The Operations Centre has been involved in the planning of a number of mission activities. In the case of the Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, several initial options were explored before it started operating in January 2001. Two members of the Centre were then deployed to Belgrade as short-term assistants to the administrative team.

The Centre has also sent members to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on a number of occasions to assist the Mission there with planning for its first and second enhancements through the adding of extra monitors to cope with the deteriorating situation. Prior to and following the signing on 13 August 2001 of the Framework Agreement, the Operations Centre was further involved with the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, both in planning for a possible enlarged role and in the subsequent enhancements that were required. Members of the Operations Centre were deployed again to southern Serbia to assist in setting up the multi-ethnic police training programme. The Head of the Centre led a team of experts to Georgia to conduct a technical assessment of the feasibility of, and options for, the possible expansion of the border monitoring effort. Operational assessment and support visits have also been made to Moldova and Kosovo.

As regards liaison, the Centre has been active. Of specific note was the participation by the Centre in the NATO Crisis Management Exercise. Throughout the Exercise, which was held at NATO headquarters in February, the OSCE engaged in exercise 'play' in the main events list alongside our NATO partners. In addition and more generally, a number of visits were made to our NATO and European Union partners. Staff-level meetings organized and co-ordinated mainly by the Operation Centre staff, took place in both Vienna and Brussels. These have provided good opportunities to identify points of contact within secretariats, to establish means of exchanging unclassified information, and to start work on procedures for future operational co-operation, particularly as concerns the sharing of specific information in cases of emerging crises. These new structures within the Secretariat have led to significant improvements in operational co-operation and co-ordination with major international partners, and the Centre will continue to build on this initial progress. Similar successful liaisons are taking place in the field of policing following the arrival of the full-time Police Adviser to the Operations Centre.

Finally, the Operations Centre's particular expertise is called on in a number of other areas. The members assist with the drafting of speeches to be delivered by senior members of

the Secretariat where their own particular expertise is needed. They regularly conduct briefings and presentations to delegations, groups and individuals visiting the Secretariat. One member of the Operations Centre represents the OSCE Secretariat at the NATO *Ad Hoc* Committee on Depleted Uranium.

Overall, it can be seen that the Operations Centre is fulfilling its role, as envisioned by the Charter for European Security. It has given both the Secretariat and the Conflict Prevention Centre the additional capacity they need to tackle more efficiently the profusion of tasks they have to deal with together, and it is expected that it will further develop its capacity in the future.

Situation/Communication Room

The Situation/Communication Room has remained staffed around the clock, seven days a week, since January 2001. Since it proved unfeasible to staff the Room fully through secondment alone, continuity was secured by introducing three contracted positions.

The team helps to monitor events by collecting and distributing background information and assisting in the preparation of briefings by the Conflict Prevention Centre. The recent internal reorganization, whereby the Chief of the Situation/Communication Room reports to Head of the Operations Centre rather than to the Deputy Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, allows for a combined effort in early warning assessments and a joint approach to their liaison tasks and networks.

The Situation/Communication Room, through constant monitoring of telephones and electronic mail, ensures a prompt distribution of information and reports outside normal Secretariat working hours. Furthermore, the Room provides invaluable mission support through both medical evacuation co-ordination (nine instances to date in 2001) and, where prudent, daily security checks/reports.

Through its round-the-clock ability to screen incoming information and respond to queries, the Situation/Communication Room plays an essential supporting role for the Organization as a whole.

Forum for Security Co-operation Support Unit

During the reporting period, the Forum for Security Co-operation Support Unit continued

its activities connected with security co-operation, as well as other activities related to security, including the security dialogue, small arms and light weapons, the Seminar on Military Doctrines and communications.

Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting

The eleventh Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM 2001) of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) took place in Vienna from 26 to 28 February 2001. Country experts took advantage of the opportunity to share their experience of the implementation of the Vienna Document 1999 (VD 99), placing the emphasis on fine-tuning, rather than renegotiating the tools the Document embodies. Many delegations underlined the importance of the new OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons and called for its full implementation.

Vienna Document 1999

The first full year of implementation of the Vienna Document 1999 proceeded smoothly without, the need for major changes. Nevertheless, a number of clarifications to the VD99 were discussed by delegations.

Under the Vienna Document 1999, participating States implemented the following confidence- and security-building measures in 2001:

- Six airbase visits;
- 56 evaluation visits (18 of which were in accordance with bilateral agreements);
- 70 inspections (six of which were in accordance with bilateral agreements);
- Five demonstrations of new types of major weapon and equipment systems;
- Five visits to military facilities and military formations;
- Five observations of certain military activities in accordance with bilateral agreements.

Code of Conduct

The information exchange on implementation of the Code of Conduct (FSC.DEC/4/98) took place before 15 April 2001. With the support of the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, a representative of the FSC Support Unit gave a series of presentations on the Code of Conduct at military and academic institutions in Kyiv on 7

and 8 June 2001. Finally, the Government of Switzerland hosted a workshop on the Code of Conduct from 2 to 7 September 2001.

Global and Annual Exchanges of Military Information

A workshop on automating the data exchange for the Global Exchange of Military Information was held from 25 to 27 April 2001, in Vienna. Participating States exchanged the information on paper on 2 May 2001. Similarly, on 15 December 2000, country experts took part in the paper-based Annual Exchange of Military Information (AEMI), after participating in a workshop on automated data exchange in Vienna on 13 and 14 December.

Communications

During this period, agreement was reached on relocating of the central mail server of the OSCE Communications Network to Vienna from The Hague. The FSC expressed its gratitude to the Government of the Netherlands for hosting the server for ten years, and, in decision FSC.DEC/03/01 of 20 June 2001, tasked the technical experts of the project management team with negotiating the relocation details. In accordance with the decision, the Secretariat established a network management team consisting of two Professional staff, and signed a contract with an international firm, TRW, on the migration and operation of the central mail server. The physical relocation of the Central Mail Server was carried out in the first week of September, and the transfer of operations took place by 1 October 2001.

A new network management team was hired to provide remote system administration from the Conflict Prevention Centre.

Network development will continue under phase II, modernization efforts.

Other activities

Small arms and light weapons

Following almost a year of discussions and negotiations, on 24 November 2000, the Forum for Security Co-operation agreed on and adopted the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The Document contains a broad range of norms, principles and measures designed to halt the uncontrolled spread and reduce destabilizing accumulations of such weapons. These include: controls over the

manufacture and marking of weapons; common export controls and criteria; standards for stockpile security, management and destruction; and measures relating to small arms as part of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. At the Vienna Ministerial Council Meeting, foreign ministers welcomed the Document as a landmark achievement for the Organization. Implementation has already begun, and the first set of information exchanges took place successfully on 30 June 2001. The FSC has continued its discussions on how best to make the Document operational, particularly with regard to activities undertaken by OSCE missions and field operations.

Security Dialogue

During 2001, discussion under the Security Dialogue focused primarily on the Seminar on Military Doctrines. Since the successful conclusion of the Seminar, discussion has focused on the Chairman's report on the Seminar and its implications for the future work of the FSC, as well as on the future role of the Forum within the broader context of the Organization.

Round table on confidence- and security-building measures in Belgrade

The FSC Support Unit and the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia organized a round table on implementation of confidence- and security-building measures in Belgrade on 27 and 28 March 2001. The event, which was co-hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, focused on current commitments, including the Code of Conduct, defence planning, the Communications Network and the Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The success of the meeting was due in large part to the willingness of the Yugoslav authorities to fully implement their politico-military commitments.

Department of Human Resources

The establishment of a Department of Human Resources constituted a major step in the development of the OSCE as a modern organization based on sound management principles. The amalgamation of different sections and functions under one unified

Department, which became effective on 22 January 2001, has afforded a significant opportunity to rationalize and focus activities related to the management of the Organization's human resources, both contracted and seconded, including the development of policies and procedures for staff in missions, institutions and the Secretariat.

Given that the various sections amalgamated to form the Department of Human Resources originated in other organizational units, roles and responsibilities were necessarily consolidated, and on 1 October 2001, the Department was restructured into three sections: Recruitment, Personnel and Training and Capacity Building.

In addition, given the important role of the Gender Adviser in substantive matters related to trafficking in human beings and other gender-related activities, it was decided to transfer the post to the Office of the Secretary General.

Mission Staffing

The Mission Staffing Section (MSS) was established to support the mandates of OSCE missions and field activities by delivering the best qualified candidates in a timely transparent, objective and fair manner, and by supporting the OSCE missions and field activities in staffing matters related to internationally seconded mission members.

Staffing

In the past year, MSS has staffed one new mission, the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and six enhancements: three of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; one of the border monitor component of the OSCE Mission to Georgia; one of the police component of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and one of the Department of Election Operations in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. The Section also started preparations to recruit and deploy 1,850 short-term election supervisors for the OSCE Mission in Kosovo required in November 2001.

Overall, 2001 started out with 1,100 posts in the missions, filled with 1,075 mission members, whereas at the time of writing there are around 1,651 posts filled with 1,200 mission members. It should be noted that, on

occasion, especially for the Department of Election Operations in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, it was necessary to issue short-term contracts to fill open positions, as there are sometimes insufficient secondment offers to fill these posts.

Timely recruitment of qualified staff for OSCE missions and field activities has become ever more difficult owing to such factors as budgetary constraints and the difficulty of identifying qualified candidates for secondment to non-family duty stations. In addition, some participating States have policies that limit secondment of candidates to staff of their ministries of defence and foreign affairs.

The Mission Staffing Section also made contributions to other human resources issues, including staff regulations, integrated human resources management system software and REACT/MSIS implementation.

Implementation of the Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Team/Mission Staffing Information System (REACT/MSIS)

The core objective of the REACT initiative adopted by the OSCE Heads of State and Government at the November 1999 Istanbul Summit was set out succinctly in the Charter for European Security. Above all, the Charter states, the initiative should result in:

“A capability within the participating States and the OSCE to set up Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams” that will give the States and the Organization “the ability to address problems before they become crises and to deploy quickly the civilian component of a peacekeeping operation when needed”.

In January 2000, a task force was established in the Secretariat to develop a programme for making the REACT initiative fully operational. It immediately undertook consultations with the participating States, field missions and OSCE institutions, as well as in the Secretariat. Major international partners, including the United Nations Secretariat and UNHCR, the European Union and the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the International Committee of the Red Cross, were also brought into the dialogue. The aim was to develop the parameters of the REACT programme.

Based on the consultation process, and drawing on the experience of, and lessons learned by, the OSCE and its partner organizations, the REACT task force concluded that three factors could be brought to bear in realizing the objectives articulated in the Charter for European Security:

1. Standards based on precisely defined qualifications for the work carried out in OSCE field activities that could be applied to improve the focus of the recruitment and selection process;
2. Efficient management of the documentation used in the recruitment and selection process that could help overcome impediments to rapid selection of personnel for field assignments; and
3. Pre-selection/pre-deployment training that could ensure that those selected would be operationally prepared to carry out their duties upon arrival in the field.

The concept for making REACT operational has been based on these three pillars. Documents were developed to assist participating States and the Organization in the process of recruitment and selection of internationally seconded staff for OSCE field activities. These include a staffing matrix, which is based on an analysis of work done in existing OSCE field activities. The matrix, and accompanying job descriptions and minimum prescribed qualifications, codify the standards against which recruitment and selection of candidates for OSCE field assignments are to be conducted. The matrix and its associated materials are also the basis for a standardized combined application/*curriculum vitae* form. This document captures candidate information in a format that can easily be moved into an electronic environment, thereby providing the means for overcoming a major impediment to rapid identification, selection and deployment of qualified candidates. That impediment is the time-consuming, labour-intensive manual processes used in the Secretariat for handling candidate documentation.

In addition, a set of generic training standards was developed that can be used by participating States for pre-selection/pre-deployment training. These standards cover the skills and knowledge that those assigned to OSCE field activities will

need in order to be operationally prepared and effective.

The matrix and associated documents, together with the training standards, were distributed to delegations in November 2000.

Another aspect of the REACT concept that is designed to support efficient management of documentation is the web-based Extranet which links geographically dispersed elements involved in the recruitment and selection process. These include participating States, the Secretariat and field missions. In addition, because of the system's web-based features, vacancy notices and application forms (i.e., the formatted application/*curriculum vitae* form) are now posted on the OSCE web site and candidates are able to complete the form online and submit it directly, via the Internet, to their national authorities responsible for recruitment.

Participating States not wishing to receive applications via the Internet can, if they so wish, provide contact details on the web site, indicating their preferred method of communication with candidates. Those not wishing to use the OSCE web site at this stage, or to display contact details, can use the new application/*curriculum vitae* form and continue with their current practices by forwarding their nominations to the Secretariat by e-mail, by fax or by post.

Training for representatives from participating States, missions and the Mission Staffing Section took place between 19 and 31 March 2001. The training sessions were designed to introduce the processes and procedures developed in the framework of the REACT/MSIS project and to familiarize participants with the tools that accompany the new system (the standardized forms, the human resources Extranet and the Mission Staffing Information System).

Implementation of the REACT/MSIS programme commenced on 2 April 2001 with the posting of new vacancy notices for secondment positions on the OSCE web site, and participating States were requested to use the new documentation and processes. Vacancies for secondment positions for OSCE field activities are now advertised in the new structured format in accordance with the requirements of the staffing matrix. Since the implementation of the REACT/MSIS programme, traffic on the OSCE web site has

increased steadily. In August 2001, there were 3.8 million hits, generated by over 117,000 individual visitors, and during the period from 1 June 2001 to 31 August 2001, over 3,400 visitors viewed the application/*curriculum vitae* form for secondment positions and 950 applications were received by participating States that accept applications via the OSCE web site. This figure does not include applicants redirected to national recruitment web sites. Currently, 60 per cent of participating States are processing the new application/*curriculum vitae* form in the electronic environment.

To ensure an effective and efficient transition period during the roll-out phase, the REACT implementation team provides ongoing support in the form of a help-desk.

In addition, with a view to developing the programme further, on 29 October 2001, an informal meeting was held at the Hofburg for representatives of delegations to identify and discuss, at a strategic level, good practice and lessons learned during the implementation of the REACT concept. Representatives from participating States and partner organizations attended the meeting. Presentations were given on various aspects of REACT, from its concept to its implementation, the experience of participating States, the mission perspective and training within the REACT concept.

Realizing the objectives enunciated in Istanbul poses a formidable, complex challenge, not only to the Secretariat, but to the Organization as a whole. Implementing the REACT/MSIS programme will take time and effort, and the system will only be as good as the support and participation by all the parties involved. Much additional work will need to be done, but with the system's full functionality available to all the participating States, field missions and Secretariat staff, the Organization has at its disposal a powerful tool for realizing the objectives set out in the Charter for European Security. It is a tool that takes full advantage of sound business practices and modern information technology alike.

Personnel

Policies and procedures

At the request of the Permanent Council, the Secretariat prepared draft Staff Regulations for mission members. In the course of the discussions on the document, the Secretariat

was requested to combine the Staff Regulations for fixed-term staff in institutions and those for mission members into one set of Staff Regulations that would encompass all categories of staff working for the OSCE. The document is currently under discussion in the Informal Financial Committee.

In the context of harmonization and decentralization of human resources management, the Secretariat is trying to take the leading role in establishing harmonized OSCE-wide policies and procedures, while delegating more authority in policy implementation to the institutions and missions. A number of Organization Directives have been drafted and are due to be issued soon, for example, the Organization Directive on the Internship Programme, which will provide a framework for interns working not only in the institutions but also in the missions. The Organization Directive on Use of Special Service Agreements was issued in May 2001.

Unfortunately, last year's plan to obtain an integrated human resources management system (HRMS) was postponed pending a management of the information technology function review in which by outside consultants. The initial review was finalized and the second phase, in which specific requirements related to an HRMS will be discussed, is now under way. An HRMS would give a stronger monitoring role to the Secretariat and, at the same time, would allow for further decentralization of personnel management processes.

Social security

The Personnel Unit renegotiated conditions of health coverage with J. Van Breda International to include additional benefits for all categories of staff at no additional cost, and introduced comprehensive health coverage for short-term staff in institutions and missions at greatly reduced cost.

In view of the need to streamline social security arrangements in the OSCE, a consultant has been hired to review the current schemes offered by the OSCE for life and accident and disability insurance and to make recommendations for a better and less costly coverage. The findings of the consultant are now being discussed by senior management.

Recruitment

Recruitment activities continued to be quite intensive. With the 2001 budget, 32 new posts were approved for the Secretariat. From 1 November 2000 to September 2001, 86 vacancy notices were issued by the Secretariat, including also vacancy notices for institutions as well as for contracted international posts in missions.

The Personnel Unit interviewed 200 candidates during this period and recruited 92 fixed-term staff members and 49 temporary assistants. During the above period Personnel processed about 4,000 applications.

During the same period, 57 fixed-term staff members separated from the OSCE, including 26 contracted international mission members.

Internship programme

The internship programme continued, and during the reporting period, 40 interns were assigned to the OSCE institutions.

Post classification

The initial job classification for fixed-term posts in institutions has been completed, with the exception of eight posts. In addition, 41 jobs have been reclassified in order to reflect changes in duties, structures or responsibilities. During the approval of the 2001 budget, not all classification results were accepted by the Permanent Council. The discussion on classification is continuing in the Informal Financial Committee.

The classification exercise has been extended to OSCE missions. As a priority, all contracted international posts are being classified, after which local posts will be classified.

Training and capacity-building

Implementation of the strategy on capacity building through training continued during the reporting period. As the strategy runs only until the end of 2001, its extension and possible revision is currently under discussion. On 9 and 10 May 2001, the second meeting of focal points for training took place in Vienna. Representatives from OSCE field activities and one OSCE institution agreed to enhance and strengthen the co-ordination of all training-related issues in the OSCE, in particular in respect of interregional co-operation. It was confirmed that the three larger missions, the medium-sized missions and small OSCE field activities have different

training needs and resources, calling for a differentiated approach. The role of the Training Section and the Secretariat as service provider for field operations and institutions in this field was once again highlighted at the meeting. At the suggestion of the Director for Human Resources, it was agreed that field activities, institutions and the Secretariat should foresee approximately 3 per cent of their staff costs for training activities in the 2002 budget.

The training standards for preparation of OSCE mission staff developed in the framework of the REACT initiative are being taken into account by an increasing number of OSCE participating States in their pre-mission training programmes. The Austrian Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution, in close co-operation with the Training Section, organized a two-week pilot mission-preparation training course for the OSCE in October/November 2000, in which 11 local staff members from OSCE missions took part. Two further courses with more than 20 local staff members as participants have taken place since. The experience gained from these courses will be of assistance in preparing the next, updated edition of the training standards, which should be published by the end of 2001. The OSCE continues to support pre-mission training by OSCE participating States, *inter alia* by providing trainers and training material.

In late November 2000, Organization Directive OD16/2000, on the co-ordination of training activities in OSCE missions and field activities, was released. In particular, it was successfully implemented in the two largest OSCE missions, in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, by increasingly co-ordinating all staff-training activities. This will contribute to a full picture of staff training expenditure throughout the missions.

In 2001, the induction course for new mission members and new staff in the Secretariat continued. From September 2000 through September 2001, a total of 400 new mission members attended the induction course. Besides initial processing, the main purpose of the Induction Programme is to convey corporate identity as well as basic knowledge of the OSCE, its institutions and field activities. To this end, the existing OSCE

overview and mission overview modules were improved and other modules developed.

In the spring of 2001, eight training seminars were organized for Secretariat staff, many of them also open to participants from smaller OSCE missions, on topics such as interviewing skills, management, office management and conflict management. Altogether, 81 staff and mission members took part in these seminars. The Training Section will continue to offer these training seminars in the autumn of 2001. Under the training strategy, certain training events will now be open to OSCE delegations.

The Section has trained personnel from the Secretariat, missions and field activities and participating States to use the newly introduced REACT/MSIS tools such as the staffing matrix, new recruitment procedures and communication systems such as the REACT Extranet.

The OSCE training web site went on line in January 2001. The web site helps to ensure a steady flow of information between OSCE field activities, the Secretariat and institutions, participating States, international organizations and relevant NGOs. In July 2001, the third bi-annual training newsletter on staff training in the OSCE was released.

In the spring of 2001, another series of training seminars for personal computer applications open to all OSCE staff in Vienna was provided by the local information technology trainer from the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. Staff members were very satisfied with the content and quality of the seminars, and a further series is planned for December 2001. IT training was also extended to the Mission to Georgia in October 2001, and other smaller missions are being considered.

Training in the missions

The resources allocated to training in 2001 are concentrated on field missions reflecting the principle laid down in the strategy that training should be carried out as close as possible to the actual activities. The central training funds are limited to activities that for obvious reasons of cost effectiveness and consistency should be carried out centrally. In 2001, smaller field activities have for the first time had separate training budgets. More and more Missions and field activities are offering training opportunities to their staff, especially

qualified local staff, for example, by sending them to the training seminars offered in the Secretariat, as well as to training courses outside the OSCE, as recommended by the Training Section. For example, the German Government is offering places for qualified OSCE local staff in its pre-mission training courses. The United Kingdom announced its intention to do the same for its newly established pre-mission training courses.

Since a large part of OSCE training funds is used by the large missions, their training activities deserve special mention. The co-ordination of staff training activities between the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and the Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina has proceeded apace. From 2002, the Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina will have a unified training budget. A comprehensive overview of planned training activities in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo will be made available to the Secretariat and the delegations.

Efforts by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo's Training Section include needs assessments, training delivery and evaluation. Since the number of new international and national staff is decreasing, the focus of the overall training activities has shifted from Mission-specific induction courses to training seminars on conflict mapping (basic negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills). In order to respond to assessed training needs, training for national and international staff was offered on management, communication skills, effective meetings, working with/as an interpreter and computer skills (in English, Albanian and Serbian). Language training was also offered in English, Albanian and Serbian. To ensure continuity and to build on local capacity, key potential trainers were identified among local staff and specialized training-of-the-trainers programmes introduced.

The implementation of the training strategy in the Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina continued in 2001. It was designed around the target areas identified in the OSCE strategy for capacity-building through training and tailored to the Mission's needs. The activities organized by the Training Section in Sarajevo concentrated on improving the skills of national and international Mission staff in areas such as Microsoft Office software, office skills, management skills and report writing. The welcome programme for new Mission

members is an ongoing activity. Each department organized numerous internal training activities.

The OSCE Mission to Croatia has a well-developed training programme that comprises induction training and specific training for all Mission staff. The main focus is on skills, with particular emphasis on management, project management, negotiation/mediation/facilitation, as well as human rights and support to civil society.

Gender issues

In 2001, the Gender Adviser continued to assist field activities in implementing the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues, which was approved by the Permanent Council on 1 June 2000. As stipulated by the Plan, every mission or OSCE field presence appointed a focal point for gender issues. A first meeting of focal points was held in Vienna in June, and experiences were exchanged regarding gender mainstreaming and best practices. It was decided that the group would meet regularly to discuss implementation strategies for the Action Plan and other issues.

In compliance with the Action Plan, the Secretary General delivered a comprehensive report on its implementation to the Permanent Council in September. The report, edited by the Gender Adviser, is a compilation of contributions from OSCE field operations and institutions. It was highlighted that an increasing level of awareness regarding gender issues is being demonstrated and that most missions have developed extensive programmes related to women's human rights.

The section on gender issues in the bi-weekly induction course for new Mission members was further enlarged to cover, in particular, trafficking in human beings. The section outlines the response from international organizations, as well as the obligations placed on international staff members in combating these criminal activities. Staff members are made aware of the new Code of Conduct, which calls for exemplary behaviour and prohibits dealing with persons suspected of being involved in trafficking in human beings.

The induction module also gives insight into the rights of the child and the impact of armed conflict, including the impact of proliferation of small arms on children. The module further stresses the importance of a

professional working environment, where all staff members are treated with fairness and respect. Staff members learn about the relevant Organization Directive and procedure applicable in cases of harassment or discrimination. This Directive was revised in March to include provisions that seemed necessary in the light of experience gained in the past year. It also was in need of some modifications and adaptation relating to more recent directives such as the one setting for disciplinary procedure.

The Gender Adviser has developed a wide range of training materials on gender issues and has held several workshops on gender awareness and its implications in post-conflict situations. The guidelines on gender-related factors in post-conflict situations, developed with a voluntary contribution from the Canadian International Development Agency, were used in two workshops conducted in November 2000 for international and national staff members from Balkan missions. The guidelines were then revised and printed for distribution to all OSCE mission members and their NGO partners working on gender issues. The Gender Adviser also taught on the subject in the pre-deployment training courses for mission members of the Austrian and Swiss Governments.

The Gender Adviser attended a number of international conferences and meetings on gender mainstreaming and trafficking in human beings. Such conferences provide opportunities to develop valuable contacts with other international organizations, NGOs and other gender specialists, and are essential for the co-ordination of efforts on the subject. In this respect, the Gender Adviser worked closely with the Co-ordinator of the Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings of the Stability Pact to strengthen relations with the organizations that are members of the co-ordination group.

Also, within the framework of Permanent Council Decision No. 426 on Trafficking in Human Beings, the Secretary General sent the OSCE Code of Conduct, the anti-trafficking guidelines and other relevant materials to a number of international organizations, calling for a joint response to the problem of trafficking, in particular with regard to staff behaviour and the apparent involvement of international staff members in these criminal

activities. This initiative was followed by an exchange of regulations among international organizations and efforts to streamline the responses of all international actors.

In June 2001, the Gender Adviser for the first time attended the annual meeting of the Organizational and Institutional Gender Information Network, a network of gender advisers from the UN System and other large organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund, the African Development Bank, and the Asian Development Bank. In the meeting, organizations presented their approach and methods for the promotion of a diverse and gender-balanced work force. Members also regularly exchange information on staff regulations and matters relating to equal opportunities and equal sharing of family responsibilities. Close contacts with members of the Network proved particularly valuable in the light of the development of the new Staff Rules and Regulations of the OSCE, in which the Gender Adviser participated.

The increasing awareness of and work on gender issues in the Organization was also highlighted by the Gender Adviser in various meetings, such as the annual meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly and meetings of UN organizations. United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 calls for an increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peacekeeping. As an organization working in the area of post-conflict reconstruction, the OSCE is in a privileged position not only to promote the advancement of women within its own structure, but also to increase their representation in conflict resolution and peacekeeping, as called for by the resolution. The OSCE will therefore continue to strengthen its efforts in both those directions.

Department of Management and Finance

The reorganization of the Secretariat into three departments has created a new structure, which in turn has generated a momentum for change and a streamlining of approaches. The continuing evolution of the Secretariat has had a significant impact on all parts of it, and not only on the Department of Management and Finance. The primary concern of the Department during the reporting period has been to reflect upon the impact on the

Department of this progress in the internal management of the Organization and to determine how processes can be reviewed to render the OSCE more efficient, effective and transparent. Notably, several discussion papers have been prepared on issues such as extrabudgetary income, budget processes and window contracts. These papers propose the way forward for some of the key processes which fall under the responsibility of the Department.

The overall challenges for the future management of the OSCE were summarized in the Secretary General's paper, "The OSCE Management Agenda: Streamlining Management Responsibilities and Improving Business Processes and Tools" (SEC.GAL/152/01), which he addressed to the Permanent Council on 7 September 2001, and a significant portion of which was prepared by the Department. The basic premise of the paper is the need to create an organization able to respond quickly, effectively, efficiently and in a transparent manner to any task entrusted to it by the Permanent Council. In order to achieve this, two ground rules are to be established: firstly, a fully decentralized management system and, secondly, a refocused management role for the Secretariat. The latter will particularly influence the Secretariat's relationship with Missions and field operations.

The processes and tools to be considered within this management agenda which fall under the responsibility of the Department of Management and Finance cover six areas:

- Budgets have to become a key operational management tool for an organization with a highly decentralized management system, as is the case with the OSCE;
- For decentralizing budget implementation, a clear distinction should be introduced for all OSCE operations between the budget manager and the administration. The budget manager is ideally the head of a mission or department and he or she will have full authority over the relevant budget;
- All major work processes will need to be reviewed to bring them into line with the new business architecture and the distribution of responsibilities between Missions and the Secretariat as well as within the Missions and the Secretariat;

- A new integrated resource management system has to be developed and implemented;
- It is paramount for an organization such as the OSCE to manage its knowledge documents in a coherent and transparent manner. Although knowledge documents are among the main outputs and working tools for the Organization, at present there is no system for managing them properly;
- Possibilities will be explored for outsourcing computer equipment operations and maintenance, the communication network and ultimately the housing of software applications, whereby users would run software stored on the service provider's remote server.

All of the above-mentioned developments imply an ongoing review of the Department's approach to its work processes as well as its role *vis-à-vis* Missions and field operations and other departments within the Secretariat.

An important project for the Department in this context was the implementation of a management review of the information technology function. An independent consultant was asked to formulate a comprehensive, cost-efficient strategy and to prepare detailed implementation and cost plans for improving the management of OSCE's financial, human, intellectual and material resources through modern information technologies. The first phase of the review was completed in July 2001 and the second phase, which will provide detailed strategies, started in September 2001.

The Department has also been extremely occupied with the submission of 12 supplementary budgets for activities in the field amounting to EUR 36,718,400. (A summary table listing the budgets and the purposes for which they are intended is given in Annex III). This task has been very time-consuming for numerous sections in the Department and has required a great deal of co-ordination work.

Conference Services

Conference Services provides regular services to the OSCE, the Joint Consultative Group of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, and the Open Skies Consultative Commission. In addition, Conference Services provides support and service for OSCE-related meetings, seminars and workshops held in

co-operation with other international organizations and bodies, both at the headquarters in Vienna and abroad. The reporting period was again characterized by an increasing number of meetings to be serviced.

Meetings

During the reporting period, from 1 December 2000 to October 2001, Conference Services serviced close to 1,900 meetings.

- The total number of Permanent Council meetings and related PC consultations will have amounted to approximately 680.
- The number of Forum for Security Co-operation meetings and FSC-related meetings: approximately 370.
- Over 180 formal and informal meetings of the Joint Consultative Group and the Open Skies Consultative Commission.
- Meetings with regard to specific topics (including meetings on Article II, IV and V of the Dayton Peace Agreement) held by regional groups/groups of OSCE participating States: approximately 570.
- Briefings for other organizations, students groups, academics and research institutions have increased to around 180.

A number of major conferences and seminars were serviced, in addition to the annual Ministerial Council, including the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting, the Seminar on Military Doctrines, the Second Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Review Conference, meetings related to the economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE's activities in Brussels and Bucharest, the Ninth Economic Forum in Prague (in close co-operation with the Prague Office), meetings for ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Furthermore, the number of Open Skies meetings has also increasing since the entry into force of the Treaty in 2001.

Meetings Assistance

The Meetings Assistance Unit provides support to the Chairpersons of the various OSCE and related bodies in the form of advice on procedures, drafts reports and summaries of meetings for internal and external distribution, and prepares draft decisions and official journals.

The number of special meetings of the Permanent Council and of special visits from

other organizations or institutions has dramatically increased. From January to June 2001, there were eight special meetings of the Permanent Council, as compared to six throughout the year in 2000.

In addition to the regular informal meetings of the Permanent Council (preparatory committee and head of mission meetings), there is a growing number of informal open-ended working groups, reflecting the steady growth of OSCE activities relating to a broad range of different subjects. Some of these are:

- Informal open-ended working group on police-related activities;
- Informal open-ended working group on equal opportunities for women and men;
- Informal open-ended working group on the legal capacity, privileges and immunities;
- Informal open-ended working group on developing recommendations regarding future applications for partnership;
- Informal open-ended working group on the revision of the Helsinki scale;
- Informal open-ended working group on the OSCE Financial Regulations;
- Informal open-ended working group on the OSCE Staff Rules and Regulations.

These meetings are all serviced (including written reports in five cases out of the seven mentioned above) by the Meetings Assistance Unit.

Documentation

The number of documents distributed during the period from January to July 2001 was approximately 20 per cent larger than the number distributed in the same period in 2000. In 2000, 8,450 documents were distributed, so an extrapolation for the whole of 2001 would suggest a total of approximately 10,140 documents for the year 2001. The transmission of documents by means of e-mail increased by approximately 60 per cent compared to 2000. Thus the requests for retrieval of digital files increased accordingly.

In 2000, a pilot project for a secure web site (implemented by the OSCE Documents Centre in co-operation with Information Technology, Press and Public Information and the Prague Office) designed to provide delegations with conference-related materials was established. Conference Services has taken

the responsibility for maintaining the web site section which contains conference documents and for keeping the database up to date. Thus, this site has been restructured and prepared for the use of delegations in order to guarantee easy access to and retrieval of documents in keeping with the needs and demands of delegates.

Interpretation

Interpretation was provided for the regular meetings of the OSCE fora, the Joint Consultative Group and the Open Skies Consultative Commission, the Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting, the Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings, as well as the Second Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Review Conference, the Seminar on Military Doctrines, the Minsk Group, the Public Workshop on Freedom of the Media with Belarus journalists, as well as meetings on Articles II, IV, and V of the Dayton Agreement held in Vienna under OSCE auspices. Other major meetings where interpretation services outside of Vienna were provided included the Ninth Economic Forum in Prague, and the Human Dimension Seminar on Election Processes and the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, both in Warsaw.

Interpretation was also provided to numerous informal meetings in the framework of the Permanent Council in Vienna, within the overall limits of available resources.

Documents Control, Translation and Editing

During the reporting period, over 13,000 pages, or 37 per cent more than in the past, were translated and edited by the Translation and Editing Unit, and over 15,000 pages of documents were processed in one or more of the six official OSCE languages. Among the major documents translated were the Vienna Ministerial Council Document, the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Formal Conclusions of the Second Conference to Review the Operation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Concluding Act of the Negotiation on Personnel Strength, the Document relating to Notifications, the Concluding Document of the Negotiations under Article V of Annex 1-B of the General

Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Annual Report 2000 on OSCE Activities and the Annual Report 2000 on Interaction between Organizations and Institutions in the OSCE Area. In addition to OSCE conference documents, the OSCE Newsletter, the draft reports and draft resolutions of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, ODIHR documents were translated and the OSCE decisions manual 2000 was compiled.

Finance Services

Finance

In 2001, there were improvements in several areas. The financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2000 were presented in a new format and for the first time were produced directly from the Oracle Financial Management System. The external auditors issued an unqualified audit report for the financial year 2000.

The external auditors commented in their report on the overspending for several funds or main programmes. This was the most significant area that needs to be addressed by introducing enhanced budgetary control measures and applying more flexible budget execution mechanisms.

Budget

The OSCE Unified Budget for the year 2001, amounting to EUR 167.2 million, was approved by the Permanent Council on 14 December 2000 (PC.DEC/399/Corr.). The Budget was further increased through various decisions of the Permanent Council in the course of the year. A summary list of Budget increases approved by the Permanent Council is included in Annex III.

To date, the OSCE budget for 2001, including all the above decisions, amounted to a total of EUR 208.8 million.

This compares to an OSCE budget for 2000 that amounted to a total of EUR 204.6 million (before miscellaneous income) as at 31 December 2000. Total expenditure by the OSCE in 2000 amounted to EUR 202.7 million, which represented an implementation rate of 99 per cent.

Accounting

Financial Instructions. During 2001, a number of Financial Instructions were issued and implemented. Financial Instructions are

issued by the Secretary General with the aim of implementing the Financial Regulations. A summary list of Financial Instructions issued is included in Annex IV.

Draft Financial Instructions on insurance claims, delegation of authority and cash funds have been released for comments by Institutions, Missions and field operations and will be issued by the end of 2001.

Financial statements. The financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2000 and the report of the external auditors (PC.IFC/58/01), of 15 June 2001, were accepted by the Permanent Council on 19 July 2001 (PC.DEC/432). The Permanent Council requested the Secretary General to establish a work plan for implementation of the recommendations of the external auditors as reflected in their report for 2000 and to inform the Permanent Council about this plan. The Permanent Council accepted the unqualified audited financial statements for 2000.

Cash management

To date, bills of assessment in respect of the 2001 Unified Budget, amounting to EUR 196,004,500, have been issued to participating States and the sum of EUR 10,270,300 remains to be billed. In order to prevent over-billing of participating States, a review of the Unified Budget will be performed early in December, when actual levels of expenditure can be better assessed.

Cash continues to be managed centrally and in order to maximize investment income, excess funds are placed as short-term time deposits.

Mission Support Service

Mission Support Service has been further developing the policy of providing more cost-effective and rapid support to Missions. Standard catalogues on vehicles and generators have been produced to keep the size of the fleet to a minimum. The transfer of equipment between Missions has been further facilitated and supported, resulting in a more economical use of resources achieved by employing equipment made surplus by downsizing of Missions. Mission Support has developed a number of logistics concepts, feasibility studies and evaluation and has thus provided logistics backstopping of Missions and special operations.

Procurement

As recommended in the Report by the External Audit for 2000, all purchasing at the Secretariat was consolidated within the Procurement Unit. Mission requests have remained stable, with slight peaks for the Kosovo election preparations, establishment of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and expansion of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje. From 1 January to 30 June 2001, a total of 2,275 procurement requests were processed with an aggregate value of around EUR 12,000,000. During this period, a total of 54 contracts were administered with a yearly value of approximately EUR 10,000,000.

Communications

The project to establish microwave links to the regional centres of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo was successfully completed. A project to improve the data connectivity over landlines via Albania is in an advanced stage.

A major operation has been the establishment of the communications system of the OSCE office in Belgrade. The project has been successfully completed, and the office now has all the voice and data connectivity it needs.

A large share of the resources available are devoted to supporting and upgrading of the communications systems in the other already established Missions. Efforts were made to implement the decisions regarding the start-up package for new Missions.

Asset management – supply

The Supply Unit continued to receive and transfer large amounts of equipment purchased on behalf of OSCE Missions and field activities. The average monthly turnover of goods at the Supply Unit warehouse was EUR 425,000.

The main effort was to reconcile physical inventory reports sent by the majority of Missions at the end of the year 2000 with the Oracle Material Management System (MMS) records. The reconciliation was in most cases successful, although there are numerous open questions regarding the inventories of the Mission in Kosovo and the Secretariat.

Records of all the OSCE fixed assets were finally uploaded into the new Oracle fixed assets database managed by the Supply Unit.

The inventory value amounted to EUR 51 million at the end of 2000.

Shortcomings in the management of fixed assets had been the reason for a qualified audit report for the financial year 1999. Significant improvements in this area, such as the uploading of asset records into the Oracle database, and a thorough physical inventory in all Missions, allowed the external auditor to issue an unqualified report on 14 June 2001.

In compliance with the external auditor's recommendation, the OSCE started to mark all its property with tags comprising owner identification (the OSCE logo) and bar codes. In the future, proper identification tags will greatly enhance the physical reconciliation of assets.

Transportation

The Transport Unit has constantly ensured the forwarding and transport of equipment and consumables from Vienna to all Mission areas by commercial air transport, using commercial trucks and/or the Organization's own resources. This support was designed to take advantage of the most economical and operation-efficient means of transport to and from Missions for both passengers and cargo. After commercial airlines resumed connections between Vienna and Priština and Skopje, the cost-intensive air shuttle was discontinued in January 2001. Passengers and cargo were routed through the Skopje hub using commercial carriers, and transported onward by road to and from Priština. Import and export of equipment intended for delivery through Vienna and to the Secretariat has facilitated and enhanced the turnover of equipment, allowing a quick response to Missions' requirements or to the initiation of new Missions, in that equipment and assets from the start-up kit can be put to use on a transfer basis.

Vehicle Management

In conjunction with the expansion of field activities, vehicle fleets were significantly increased. Fleets are deployed in more than 20 countries. Increased demands from Missions and field activities are reflected in the requirement for more technical expertise in the Vehicle Management and Transport Unit so that it can maintain and repair the OSCE's vehicles, and ensure their efficient and safe operation and use.

In order to better achieve these objectives, a functional restructuring of the unit was undertaken in October 2000. Consequently, a functional system approach has been adopted within the Unit, as opposed to a geographically based assignment of responsibilities. The former Transport Unit and the Vehicle Management Unit were merged in June 2001 to streamline work processes. Under the supervision of a Chief, the new joint unit is ensuring operational support for Missions within the Logistics Section.

In order to perform technical and economic monitoring of the fleet, electronic fleet-management information systems need to be planned, developed and implemented making it possible to control and reduce operational costs and to maintain the technical standard of the fleet better.

Given the complexity of the technical systems required by the Missions there is an increasing need to expand the range of technical capabilities in the Secretariat to go beyond expertise regarding vehicles and generators and to extend to general technical expertise comprising electrical engineering, building installation and civil engineering. The cost-efficiency of mission operations can be improved if the maintenance of systems in the Missions is monitored; expertise on the procurement of appropriate and feasible technical equipment, systems and services can be obtained from the Secretariat as well as from Missions; and a greater standardization of technical equipment is achieved. This, however, will require additional staff.

Rapid Operational Support

Within Rapid Operational Support, a basic start-up kit of equipment has been identified, partially purchased or transferred from other Missions and stored in Vienna for immediate dispatch to a new mission. The start-up kit has been designed for the kick-start of a mission of up to 50 international staff members at any given location. Items requiring international procurement with a lead time of more than two weeks have been prepared for instant dispatch. The equipment in the start-up kit includes many surplus items from the downsizing of Missions, which have been transferred to Vienna at zero value. The Logistics Section has also provided temporary staffing support, expertise and assistance when new Missions are being started up, e.g., in the Federal

Republic of Yugoslavia, where more than 200 man-days of Logistics Section staff were provided to support the initial start-up of the Mission.

General Services

Administrative services

The demand for services to be provided by Administrative Services has been increasing in proportional to the steadily increasing numbers of staff. The same is true of the Travel Section of Administrative Services, which received more requests for travel planning (ticket and hotel bookings) as a result of the increase in activities and staff numbers (especially in respect of Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Chechnya and Central Asia). An increase in interview travel resulting from the efforts of the Department of Human Resources to fill all the newly created positions also increased demand. Overall, the Travel Section made approximately 1,800 flight reservations in the reporting period. Finally, essential support was provided for the procurement of Secretariat supplies and the equipment, acquisition and preparation of additional office accommodation.

Records management

The last 12 months have seen a significant increase in the workload of the Records Management Unit. The main contributing factors have been activities related to the Missions in Kosovo and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The Mail Room located in the Unit has continued to provide the OSCE Missions and Institutions with a diplomatic mail service. The quantity of mail has drastically increased since last year as a result of the expansion of the OSCE and its Missions. The Mail Room registered and processed over 9,290 kilograms of outgoing mission mail through the Secretariat in 2001.

Information Technology Services

The updated Information Systems Strategic Plan was released for discussion in October 2000. Information Technology experts from participating States discussed the new Information Systems Strategic Plan and expressed concerns about its budget implications. The Informal Financial Committee then requested a review by an independent consultant of current and future

use of information technology in OSCE. The review is under way, and the results of the first phase were published in July 2001.

The following events received extra information technology support:

- Ministerial Council, Vienna/Hofburg, November 2000;
- Economic Forum, in Prague, May 2001.

Management Information Systems Section (MISS)

The need for an integrated Human Resources Management System has been reiterated by several user groups. This resulted in the formulation and publication of a tender document. Three offers were received (IBM, PeopleSoft and Oracle), which were presented and analysed in detail. The evaluation process has not been completed, because it was suspended by the Informal Financial Committee.

The integrated Financial Management and Material Management System (Oracle applications) was utilized again this year for processing all business finance and material management transactions. Most of the activities related to the application were focused on stabilizing its operations and imparting a greater depth of knowledge through advanced training classes. The system currently has approximately 325 users in 13 processing locations.

The REACT Missions Staffing Information System was implemented in April 2001. It is a recruitment system for OSCE secondment positions which is accessible to individuals, participating States, Missions and the Secretariat. It serves the requirements for filling specific positions through secondment from participating States, including forwarding applications to the participating States, receiving nominated applications from them and submitting recommendations through a secure Extranet that can be used by participating States. In addition, the system provides the tools necessary for tracking the selection, screening and placement of candidates to secondment positions.

The Electronic Document Management System (DMS) initiative, which was started in 1999, was tendered, and LiveLink software from OpenText was selected. A pilot implementation was introduced at the Eighth Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the OSCE in

November 2000. It remains active in the form of a secure delegates' web site, which has proved popular. The system is also a key component of the REACT system. Except for these two applications, the project is currently on hold pending further evaluation of business needs.

Technical and Networking Unit (TNU)

The Technical and Networking Unit has improved the Secretariat's infrastructure by installing a network core switch upgrade to the Cisco Catalyst series, wiring the server rooms, replacing old servers and PCs, upgrading the Oracle servers to storage area networks and cluster configuration and by extending the network to Article II and IV and to the new area for Internal Oversight in the Palais Corso.

The servers and software for the REACT project were installed in the first quarter of 2001. A new e-mail system for the OSCE (GroupWise) was selected and implemented in Vienna and Prague. The software also supports secure access to the GroupWare System over the Internet. The Unit assisted in the planning and tender process for the confidence- and security-building measures network project.

Information Technology Mission Support Unit (IT-MSU)

The Information Technology Mission Support Unit has supported the firewall installations and the integration into the OSCE-wide firewall security concept of the Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Mission to Croatia and the Mission in Kosovo. For on-site assistance, planning, design, IT personnel evaluation and selection and other issues, ten trips were made (a total of 46 man-days). Assistance in infrastructure, technology and budgeting was provided to the Missions in Belgrade, Skopje and Kosovo. Seminars were organized for the OSCE Missions in Kosovo and Croatia. The Unit is a focal point for general advice to all OSCE field entities during the budgeting process and assists in budget execution by providing technical approval of all IT-related procurement requests by Missions. Work on the OSCE-wide soft- and hardware standardization, software licensing, service, maintenance and warranty handling is a permanent feature.

Prague Office

The oldest institutional roots of the OSCE are located in the documentation repository in Prague. The Prague Office has been an extension of the Vienna-based Secretariat since 1994, and has been the keeper of OSCE institutional memory since 1991. Since the beginning of the Secretariat, the Office has been responsible for tasks specified in a supplementary document to give effect to certain provisions contained in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe – 1990. At that time, the Secretariat was located in Prague and was mandated to maintain an archive of CSCE/OSCE conference documentation and to provide information to the public. Along with a number of divisions and services in Vienna, the Office conducts sustained efforts in knowledge management and public information.

During the reporting period, the Prague Office continued to support all forms of dissemination of public information, in close co-operation with the Secretariat's Press and Public Information Section (especially its online team) and Conference Services. Monthly mailings of the latest issue of the *Newsletter* and listings of new releases available on request now reach more than 3,000 subscribers. Upon request, the Prague Office additionally circulates selected OSCE publications such as the *Handbook* and the reference manual of OSCE decisions. This year, readers may file their orders by filling out electronic forms for various types of publication available in printed and bound form (see for example the *Handbook* order form at <http://www.osce.org/publications/handbook/request.php3>). More than a thousand publications were mailed out worldwide using this procedure.

Besides circulating printed matter containing public information, the Office assures the weekly posting to the web of journals and decisions adopted by negotiating bodies that regularly meet in Vienna. The so-called online document library of the OSCE web site (www.osce.org/docs/) is a reflection of the type of work in which the Office specializes. The re-issue of an updated version of the CSCE/OSCE documentation CD-ROM (1973-2001) is one of the major projects that the Prague Office intends to complete this year. The electronic and mechanical processing of documents prior to dispatching them by mail or

displaying them on the web requires constant communication between Prague and Vienna. Only a high degree of streamlining of the OSCE documentation flow offers a timely and comprehensive public information service. Thus, the *Newsletter* and journals may be produced in Vienna and further mailed and displayed on the web in the Czech Republic, while other information is either available immediately via Internet, or with a week's delay for mailing overseas.

The general public may also visit any of the 66 official OSCE depository libraries which the Office has been supplying with printed documents for the past five years. Each month, these depository libraries receive an average of 40 newly released documents as well as monthly issues of the *Newsletter*, Permanent Council and Forum for Security Co-operation journals and decisions and other public materials released by the Secretariat and OSCE Institutions. In view of the increasing public awareness of OSCE activities, the Prague Office has intensified its exchanges with leading research institutions in the field of international politics located in Germany and Switzerland, with a view to multiplying and enhancing its analytic and assessment resources.

The intellectual capital contained in the collections stored in Prague make the Office particularly well equipped to answer queries on topical issues or on the Organization's historical evolution. In the past, the staff of the Office have compiled several collections such as the background documents to the economic dimension (1995) and decision manuals, and have created a number of retrieval tools such as indices and descriptive listings and summaries of CSCE/OSCE events and documents covering the past 26 years of meetings and conferences. In 2001, the Office assisted the External Co-operation Section in putting together a compilation reflecting the participation of and contributions made by the official OSCE Partners for Co-operation in the Mediterranean and in Asia (SEC.INF/127/01 and SEC.INF/128/01/Rev1). The staff of the Office build on the experience from each such compilation, increasing their ability to respond to queries from within the Organization and from the public and academic institutions.

Not only do the Prague collections serve as a back-up archive for OSCE staff and

delegations, but they also provide the foundations for the OSCE Researcher-in-Residence Programme. According to most of the researchers who came to Prague to carry out research on the OSCE legacy, they found reliable support in the Office's small team and an environment conducive to drafting and in-depth scrutiny of a large array of conference documents. Thus, graduate and post-graduate students writing papers and theses, scholars, academic workers, historians researching current or past events involving the OSCE and its policies or experts in political sciences and related fields come to Prague for periods from a few weeks to three months at a time to conduct their research.⁵

In 2001, the Office welcomed a total of 12 researchers from 10 countries (Australia, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America).

The Office also has two internships of three to four months through which 17 interns took turns to help permanent staff and researchers. This programme is already fully subscribed for the first half of 2002.⁶

Approximately 250 visitors came to the Office this year to inquire about the OSCE not counting scheduled groups of students who come mostly from Germany and the United Kingdom for a short presentation on the OSCE during their study tours to Prague. The lecture and the discussion on past and present activities of the OSCE was delivered at the Law Faculty of the Charles University in Prague by the Head of the Office.

Shortly after the Eighth Meeting of the Ministerial Council (which staff of the Office also supported by building a closed user group web site for the occasion), the Prague Office assisted with a Seminar on Roma Political Involvement prepared by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

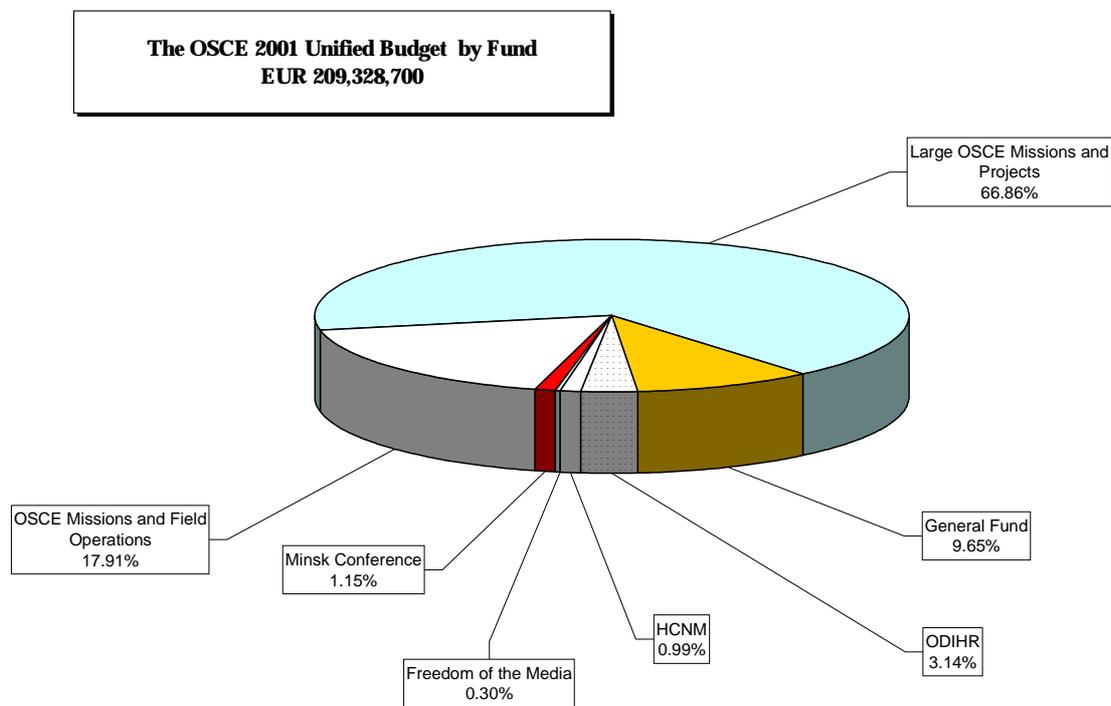
This year, the Ninth Meeting of the Economic Forum met once again in Prague from 15 to 18 May 2001. As for all preceding

Forums, the Office provided the support for this event in co-ordination with the Czech Foreign Ministry, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and Conference Services. This year, the Forum had a much larger coverage in the local press and media than in the past, including television broadcasts of the proceedings and interviews with the Chairman of the Forum. In relation to the Economic Forum, the Prague Office works in close contact with the local embassy of the Chairmanship and with many other embassies in Prague, including countries of OSCE Partners for Co-operation.

⁵ More details of this Programme can be found at http://www.osce.org/employment/research_n.htm

⁶ Conditions and applications can be found at: http://www.osce.org/employment/internships_n.htm

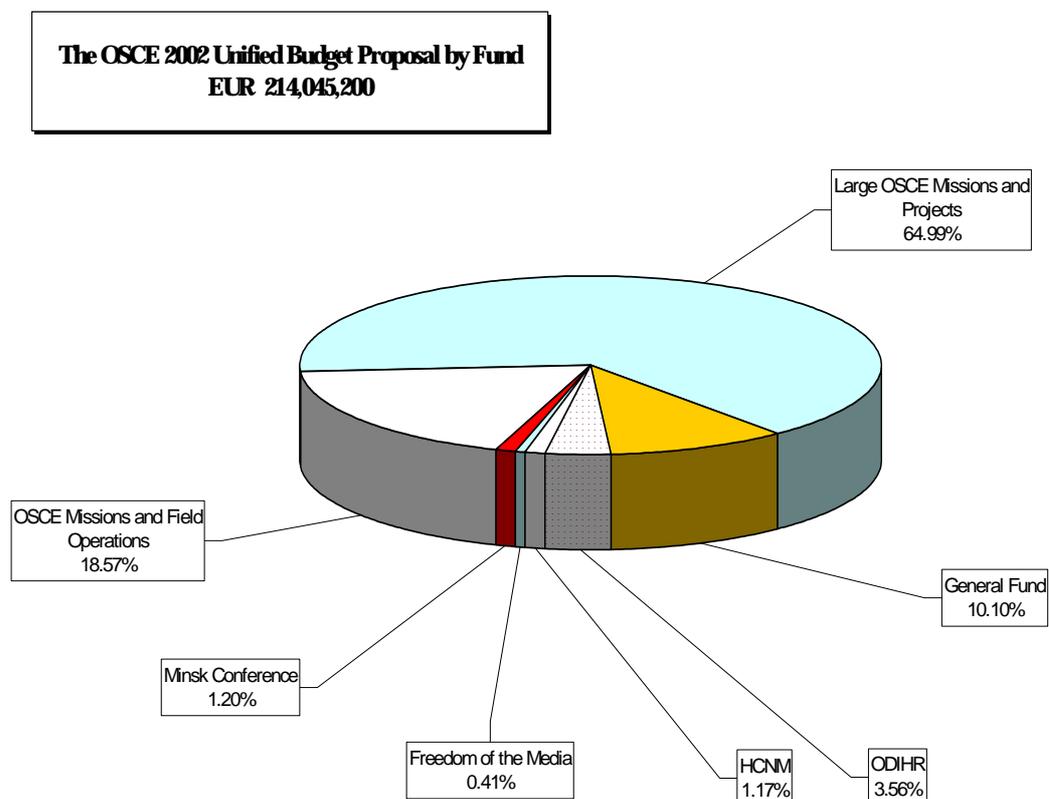
THE OSCE 2001 UNIFIED BUDGET



2001 UNIFIED BUDGET	EUR	%
General Fund	20,212,200	9.65%
ODIHR	6,566,400	3.14%
HCNM	2,069,800	0.99%
Freedom of the Media	636,500	0.30%
Minsk Conference	2,407,700	1.15%
OSCE Missions and Field Operations	37,488,100	17.91%
Large OSCE Missions and Projects	139,948,000	66.86%
TOTAL	209,328,700	100.00%

THE OSCE 2002 UNIFIED BUDGET PROPOSAL

(AS PER THE 2002 UNIFIED BUDGET PROPOSAL – PC.IFC/106/01)



2002 UNIFIED BUDGET PROPOSAL	EUR	%
General Fund	21,628,400	10.10%
ODIHR	7,615,300	3.56%
HCNM	2,511,200	1.17%
Freedom of the Media	876,800	0.41%
Minsk Conference	2,561,200	1.20%
OSCE Missions and Field Operations	39,750,500	18.57%
Large OSCE Missions and Projects	139,101,800	64.99%
TOTAL	214,045,200	100.00%

BUDGET INCREASES APPROVED BY THE PERMANENT COUNCIL

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT (EUR)	PC DECISION NO.
Budget for the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	3,174,900	PC.DEC/402
Extension of the mandate of the border monitoring operation of the OSCE Mission to Georgia from 16 April to 15 November 2001	3,972,600	PC.DEC/406
Temporary strengthening of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje	628,600	PC.DEC/405
Supplementary budget for the OSCE Mission in Kosovo for Kosovo-wide elections	21,650,000	PC.DEC/412
Further enhancement of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje	886,300	PC.DEC/414
Development of a multi-ethnic police element in Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedia (Phases I and II)	189,300	PC.DEC/415
Mid-year review of the 2001 OSCE Unified Budget	0	PC.DEC/431
Supplementary budget for the OSCE Mission in Kosovo	2,901,900	PC.DEC/433
Supplementary budget for the OSCE Communications Network	350,000	PC.DEC/434
Supplementary budget for the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights *	64,000	PC.DEC/435
Supplementary budget for the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	1,800,800	PC.DEC/436
Supplementary budget for the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje	1,100,000	PC.DEC/437
Further enhancement of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje and the development of police advisers and police trainers	4,053,600	PC.DEC/439
Extension of the mandate of the border monitoring operation of the OSCE Mission to Georgia from 16 November to 31 December 2001	892,000	PC.DEC/442/Corr.1
Budget for the 2001 Ministerial Council meeting in Bucharest	490,200	PC.DEC/443
Total	42,154,200	

* Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

FINANCIAL INSTRUCTIONS

REFERENCE	FINANCIAL REGULATION	SUBJECT	PURPOSE
1/2000	6.02	Representation Funds	Ensures that funds budgeted for representation are used with maximum economy.
2/2000	1.02, 3.01, 3.03	Unliquidated Obligations	The External Auditors were satisfied that the unliquidated obligations for 2000 were correctly stated, as a result of clarifying the accounting policy on unliquidated obligations and implementing standard procedures.
3/2000	6.01	Financial Controller Function	Clarifies the functions of the Financial Controller, distinct from Internal Oversight.
4/2000	7.01	Monthly Accounts	Ensures that programme managers have timely information on the implementation of their budgets and accurate reports are provided to delegations, by establishing the procedures, responsibilities and deadlines for the monthly closure of accounts.
5/2000	Article VII	Annual Accounts	Ensures that audited financial statements are produced in accordance with Article VIII of the Financial Regulations, through the establishment of a clear schedule of activities to be followed by institutions, Missions and field operations for the annual closure of the accounts.
6/2001	2.01	Foreign Exchange Rates	Stipulates the foreign exchange rate(s) to be used for the formulation of budgets, to ensure that they are correctly costed, using realistic rates in a consistent manner.
7/2001	5.01, 5.02, 6.02 (viii)	Bank Accounts	Ensures that bank accounts are opened and operated under appropriate authority, ensuring efficient control of the financial assets and monthly reconciliation against the accounting records.