



**Annual Report on
OSCE Activities 2003**

SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION FOR EUROPE



The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is a pan-European security body whose 55 participating States span the geographical area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Recognised as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE is a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation in its area. Its approach to security is unique in being both comprehensive and co-operative: comprehensive in that it deals with three dimensions of security — the human, the politico-military and the economic/environmental.

It therefore addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including human rights, arms control, confidence- and security-building measures, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counter-terrorism and economic and environmental activities. It is co-operative in that all the States participating in OSCE bodies and activities are equal in status. Decisions are taken by consensus on a politically, but not legally binding basis.

OSCE PARTICIPATING STATES

Albania | Andorra | Armenia | Austria | Azerbaijan | Belarus | Belgium
Bosnia and Herzegovina | Bulgaria | Canada | Croatia | Cyprus | Czech Republic
Denmark | Estonia | Finland | France | Georgia | Germany | Greece | Holy See | Hungary
Iceland | Ireland | Italy | Kazakhstan | Kyrgyzstan | Latvia | Liechtenstein | Lithuania
Luxembourg | the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | Malta | Moldova | Monaco
Netherlands | Norway | Poland | Portugal | Romania | Russian Federation | San Marino
Serbia and Montenegro | Slovakia | Slovenia | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | Tajikistan
Turkey | Turkmenistan | Ukraine | United Kingdom | United States of America | Uzbekistan

PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION

Afghanistan | Japan | Republic of Korea | Thailand

MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION

Algeria | Egypt | Israel | Jordan | Morocco | Tunisia

early warning
conflict prevention
crisis management
human rights
democratization
confidence-building measures
arms control
preventive diplomacy
security-building measures
election monitoring
police training
freedom of the media
anti-trafficking
protecting national minorities
economic and environmental security
post-conflict rehabilitation
action against terrorism
institution building
border monitoring
building civil society

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*While we should be resolute in our response
to threats and challenges, old and new,
we must never forget that the over-arching objective
of our struggle is to defend our common values
of human security and dignity.*

OSCE 2003 Chairman-in-Office,
Jaap de Hoop Scheffer

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MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL, Ján Kubiš

In 2003, the OSCE once again demonstrated its ability to respond to contemporary challenges to European security. Much of this work is referred to as quiet diplomacy or soft security. It is also often of a long-term or low-key nature that seldom gains public attention. The Annual Report on OSCE Activities is therefore a rare opportunity to showcase our work. It gives me great pleasure to present to you this year's edition.

The participating States and the Netherlands Chairmanship had an ambitious agenda, and set in motion a number of processes that will give the OSCE a clear strategic framework for years to come. Follow-up to decisions taken at the Maastricht Ministerial Council concerning threats to security in the 21st century, the economic and environmental dimension strategy document, anti-trafficking, tolerance and non-discrimination, Roma and Sinti, as well as anti-terrorism and politico-military affairs give us clear sign posts on where to orient our activities for the future. These decisions, which crowned a busy year, build on existing OSCE institutions, field activities and commitments.

The OSCE's comprehensive approach to security is becoming increasingly evident. In 2003, stronger emphasis was placed on the economic and environmental dimension, culminating in the agreement on an *OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension*. The challenge is to implement the strategy. This should bring security-related economic and environmental issues more into the mainstream of the OSCE's activities, for example, in relation to the implementation by the participating States of their commitments in this area or to early warning.

As is evident from the report of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), the OSCE's work in the politico-military dimension is experiencing a renaissance. For the first time the OSCE conducted a comprehensive discussion and assessment of its activities in addressing contemporary threats to stability and security, in the form of the *Annual Security Review Conference*. A highlight in 2003 was also the work on small arms and light weapons (SALW), including the preparation of the handbook of best practices on SALW, compiled by the FSC Support Unit of the Secretariat. Another success was the introduction of Man Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS) and conventional ammunition stockpiles to the OSCE agenda.

Of course, the OSCE continues its core activities of conflict prevention, strengthening democratization and the rule of law, ensuring freedom of the media, election monitoring, and post-conflict rehabilitation. This is reflected, in particular, in the reports of OSCE Institutions. It is also evident in the work of OSCE field operations whose activities make up the bulk of the Annual Report.

Georgia and Moldova have grabbed the headlines in 2003, and in this report, we feature the important role that the OSCE played at short notice in assisting Georgia in the elections. But one should not overlook the equally important work of dedicated staff who promote co-operative security by carrying out their mandates in field activities in other parts of the OSCE area.



The Secretariat is home to two of the OSCE's relatively new, but most dynamic units: the Strategic Police Matters and the Action against Terrorism units. The OSCE is fast developing internationally recognised expertise in policing and counter-terrorism thanks to the innovative project-oriented activities of these units. They should soon be joined by an anti-trafficking unit and a stronger capability for dealing with border management issues.

Addressing contemporary Europe's multi-faceted security challenges require a pluri-institutional approach. This is why we are putting increased emphasis on further improving contacts and co-operation with a range of international, regional, sub-regional and non-governmental organisations in the field, at the institutional level, and in the seminar room.

The OSCE is also broadening its network of contacts outside its region. In 2003, Afghanistan became the latest Partner for Co-operation. States and organisations are increasingly interested in the OSCE's experience and approach, and we are open to dialogue and co-operation with them. In 2004, we will explore the scope for wider sharing of OSCE norms, principles and commitments with others.

In 2003 the management agenda gained momentum. A new budget process was initiated, the Integrated Resource Management System (also known as IRMA) was prepared for its roll-out at the beginning of 2004, the first comprehensive OSCE staff regulations were adopted, new financial regulations were drafted, and a concept for document

management has been prepared for implementation this year. This process of management reform should provide a solid platform for assisting participating States and the Chairmanship to implement OSCE decisions and to support OSCE operations. It is not the kind of thing that gains broad attention, but if we do it right, it should enable the OSCE to maintain its reputation of being lean, efficient and cost effective. That is a goal that I am pursuing as Chief Administrative Officer of the OSCE.

I take seriously the security of OSCE staff and have therefore taken steps to improve security management. It is also vital that our staff, particularly the more than 3,000 staff in the field, are well trained and highly motivated. In 2004, we will continue to improve training and review the effectiveness of field operations.

The OSCE has much to be proud of. I believe that this report, both in its style and substance, brings to life the diverse range of activities that the OSCE carries out in its important work to build security and co-operation from Vancouver to Vladivostock.

We look forward to 2004 and working with the Bulgarian Chairmanship which has stressed implementation and continuity as its main priorities.

Ján Kubis



THE CHAIRMANSHIP

Chairman-in-Office | Permanent Council | Budget cycle | CiO's Personal Representatives |
Chairpersons of the Contact Group with Asian & Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE

The OSCE in 2003 adapted itself to new security risks and challenges and refined its instruments to meet new challenges ahead. During the year the OSCE had to demonstrate its ability to respond effectively to the demands of an ever-changing security environment. The Institutions and Missions of the OSCE demonstrated their ability to make a difference on the ground through the numerous activities they developed. In many cases the OSCE co-operated in 2003 with other international organisations that deal with European security, human rights and economic issues. In view of the broad spectrum and complex nature of security and other issues, and in line with its *Platform for Co-operative Security*, co-operation with other organisations and institutions was promoted, as it makes the performance of the OSCE more effective and more efficient.

The Netherlands Chairmanship of the OSCE worked in 2003 on the basis of the outcome of the Porto Ministerial and other achievements of the Portuguese and previous Chairs. Building upon the commitments of OSCE participating States the Netherlands Chairmanship formulated its objectives and priorities for the year 2003. The CiO presented the following priorities and objectives to the Permanent Council on 13 January 2003:

- A re-balancing of the dimensions of the OSCE
- A geographical re-balancing
- Combating trafficking
- Propagation of OSCE activities and standards in Central Asia and other regions
- An intensive diplomatic and political endeavour to bring frozen conflicts closer to solution
- Consultations to bring the discussion on new threats and challenges to a satisfactory conclusion
- Reinforced co-operation with other international organisations, as well as a strong effort to improve co-ordination within the Organization, were among the priorities of the Netherlands Chairmanship of the OSCE for 2003.

An interim report on the activities of the Netherlands chair was presented to the PC in June. Guided by the various Porto tasks, the Netherlands Chairmanship instituted groups of friends in Vienna to work on issues that at the time were to be decided upon at the *Maastricht Ministerial Council Meeting* on 1 and 2 December 2003.

From a Discussion on Threats to a New Strategy

An important endeavour of the OSCE community this year was the development of a comprehensive strategy to address threats to security and stability in the 21st century. Consultations on the new strategy were based on a Russian-American non-paper of the autumn of 2002, which identified the main threats and challenges for the OSCE. A group of friends, chaired by the Danish delegation, held intense consultations on a wide range of subjects, with the result that the Maastricht Ministerial Council could agree on an *OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Stability and Security in the Twenty-First Century*. This strategy recognises that the evolving security environment creates new challenges for all, including for the OSCE.

The strengths of the OSCE — its broad membership, its multidimensional concept of comprehensive security, its co-operative stance and tradition — will help the Organization to meet these challenges. The new OSCE strategy contains the OSCE's response to inter-State and intra-State conflicts, terrorism, cross-national criminal activities, discrimination and intolerance, to threats arising from the economy and the environment and to specific threats of a politico-military nature. It aims to contribute to a more cohesive and effective international system for responding to global threats and challenges.



We are faced with a complex international agenda: an agenda that combines emerging threats — such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts and trafficking in human beings — with traditional challenges such as poverty, discrimination and environmental degradation.

While we should be resolute in our response to threats and challenges, old and new, we must never forget that the over-arching objective of our struggle is to defend our common values of human security and dignity.

**OSCE 2003 Chairman-in-Office,
Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.**

Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

The Netherlands Chairmanship suggested to the participating States that the fight against trafficking in human beings should be made one of the OSCE's priorities in 2003. Trafficking in human beings is a scourge of our times, a threat to security and stability and a violation of human dignity. The OSCE encompasses a wide range of countries of either origin, or transit, or destination of victims of trafficking. The Organization, with its three-dimensional structure, is in a good position to tackle issues related to prevention, protection of victims and prosecution of perpetrators.

The efforts of this Chairmanship focused on supporting the work already done in the OSCE through institutions like the *Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)* and the field operations. It also harnessed the expertise of other parts of the Organization, such as the office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE *Economic and Environmental Activities* and the *Strategic Police Matters Unit*. Their specific input ensured a comprehensive approach in tackling the problem.

The *Eleventh Meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum* was devoted to *Trafficking in Human Beings, Drugs, Small Arms and Light Weapons: National and International Economic Impact*. The Second Preparatory Seminar to the Economic Forum was exclusively devoted to the theme of *Trafficking in Human Beings*, particularly the economic aspects.

The theme of trafficking in human beings was further elaborated in many events and projects through ODIHR and OSCE field operations. The protection of victims, the prosecution of criminals and the need for further police co-operation, particularly at a regional level, in combating trafficking were top of the agenda at the *First OSCE Police Experts Meeting in Vienna* on 18 and 19 September organised by the SPMU. The OSCE further intensified its co-operation with other relevant international organisations (the United Nations (UN), the Council of Europe (CoE), the European Union and the International Labour Organization (ILO)).

The OSCE Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

Pursuant to the Bucharest Ministerial Decision No. 6 of 2001 and the Porto Ministerial Declaration of 2002, the participating States, through the Informal Working Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking under Belgian and Russian co-chairmanship, adopted the *OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings* (PC/DEC No. 557) on 24 July 2003. The result was a comprehensive document encompassing commitments of participating States in:

- investigation, law enforcement and prosecution
- prevention of trafficking in human beings
- protection and assistance.

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MAASTRICHT MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

Foreign ministers from OSCE participating States met in Maastricht on 1 and 2 December for the *11th Ministerial Council of the OSCE*. Decisions were taken that will help set the course of the Organization for years to come:

- OSCE Strategy to address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century
- OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension
- Decision No. 1: The Annual Report
- Decision No. 2: Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
- Decision No. 3: Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area
- Decision No. 4: Tolerance and Non-discrimination
- Decision No. 5: Elections
- Decision No. 6: Terms of reference for the OSCE Counter-Terrorism Network
- Decision No. 7: Travel Document Security
- Decision No. 8: Man Portable Air Defence Systems
- Decision No. 9: OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition
- Decision No.10: OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2006
- Decision No.11: Time and place of the next meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council
- Permanent Council Decision No. 570: Forwarding of draft documents to the Ministerial Council
- Permanent Council Decision No. 571: Broadening dialogue with Asian and Mediterranean Partners



This year, the OSCE has taken an important step with the formulation of the Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century. This is, undoubtedly, the key document of our meeting. Its purpose is to become a kind of 'road map' setting out the OSCE's agenda for the coming years.

We consider the work undertaken to combat trafficking in human beings in the period following the Ministerial Council meeting in Porto to be a genuine success on the part of the OSCE. The relevant OSCE Action Plan adopted in July of this year deserves high praise.



The Organization undoubtedly has considerable potential in the politico-military sphere. The adoption of the decisions on Man Portable Air Defence Systems and the elimination of stockpiles of surplus ammunition may serve as evidence of this. We welcome these measures as a tangible contribution to the strengthening of the regulatory framework of the OSCE.

Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Igor Ivanov, at the 11th Ministerial Council Meeting in Maastricht.

Lack of consensus entailed that ministers did not agree on a Ministerial Declaration or on texts on the situations in Moldova and Georgia, the two regional issues that dominated the Ministerial Council in Maastricht. No consensus was reached on regional statements on Nagorno-Karabakh and on Central Asia. Due to the constructive co-operation of partners involved, a regional statement for South-eastern

Europe was agreed upon. As a special guest the meeting in Maastricht was attended by the acting Georgian President, former Parliamentary Speaker, Nino Burjanadze.

It was the first international appearance of the interim President, who took office just seven days earlier when weeks of political turmoil culminated in a peaceful change of Government in Tbilisi.

The Chairmanship of the OSCE decided to capitalise on the presence of dozens of foreign ministers in Maastricht, to convene an impromptu donors' meeting to help Tbilisi's interim authorities to organise presidential and parliamentary elections. Acting President Burjanadze left Maastricht with pledges worth some € 6 million to help Georgia organise fresh presidential and parliamentary elections in 2004.

The document furthermore gives guidance, offering a perspective on the ways in which various parts of the organization, its institutions, and the field offices can better contribute to the combat against trafficking. The Maastricht Ministerial Council endorsed the OSCE *Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings*.

The Mechanism for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

The Ministerial Council in Maastricht established an OSCE mechanism to implement the Action Plan, consisting of a Special Representative and a dedicated unit. The CiO presented the proposal to establish a mechanism for combating trafficking in human beings at the opening session of the *11th OSCE Economic Forum in Prague* in May. The objectives of this mechanism are:

- to assist participating States in the implementation of commitments and full usage of recommendations proposed by the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings
- to ensure co-ordination of OSCE efforts in combating trafficking in human beings across all three dimensions of the OSCE
- to strengthen co-ordination among the relevant authorities of the participating States and between the OSCE and other relevant organisations
- to raise the public and political profile of the fight against trafficking in human beings.

The Fight Against Terrorism

Another important task of the Netherlands Chairmanship was to ensure that the OSCE continues to reinforce the fight against terrorism in 2003. This was why a Group of Friends was established, under the chairmanship of Iceland, to deal with implementation issues. The Chairmanship notes with satisfaction that the Maastricht Ministerial Council Meeting took important decisions in this field, among others on Travel Document Security, on the establishment of an Anti-Terrorism Network and the decision which endorsed and underlined the importance of the FSC Decision on MANPADS. To reinforce the OSCE's stance in the combat against terrorism, the OSCE convened a number of seminars on terrorism in the OSCE area. This was done with the support of the anti-terrorism unit in the OSCE Secretariat. The CiO attended a major anti-terrorism meeting organised by the UN on 7 March 2003, the aim being to improve co-ordination between regional organisations. Portugal, as a member of the OSCE Troika, in consultation with the Netherlands as Chair of the OSCE, organised a follow-up conference to the *First Lisbon Anti-Terrorism Conference* in September of 2003. The aim was to take stock of the implementation of anti-terrorism measures of the OSCE.

In its fight against terrorism, the OSCE should remain on guard for the risk of any concomitant erosion of human rights. The Netherlands Helsinki Committee (NHC) organised a conference, with support of the Dutch Chairmanship, on *Human Rights and Combating Terrorism*, on 18 September 2003 in The Hague. The seminar's speeches and a concise summary of its debates have been collected in a booklet that has been made available to OSCE capitals and to delegations in Vienna.

The Chairmanship also noted with satisfaction the work of the *Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU)* of the Secretariat. Now fully staffed, it turns out to be an essential focal point for anti-terrorism activities and new initiatives, notably the proposal for an anti-terrorism network of the OSCE.

OSCE peacekeeping operations

The Ministerial Council in Porto tasked the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation with reviewing the OSCE's role in peacekeeping operations. In addition, possible options for deployment should be considered, based on the decisions of the OSCE Helsinki Summit in 1992. It was decided then that the OSCE must be able to conduct peacekeeping operations, possibly with the support of organisations such as NATO, the EU, and the CIS. This decision is generally thought to have paved the way for the OSCE to conduct small-scale peacekeeping operations. Discussions held in the Group of Friends that the Netherlands set up to review this matter at the beginning of this year, chaired by Finland, confirmed that most participating States do not favour large-scale military peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the OSCE. A workshop on this subject that the Netherlands Chairmanship and Finland organised in Vienna reaffirmed that a majority of participating States do see merit in small-scale OSCE peacekeeping operations. The overall conclusion was that Helsinki '92 still proves a sufficient base for OSCE activities in this field. The letter from the Chairperson of the Permanent Council to the Chairman-in-Office, Appendix 13 of the journal of the Eleventh MC in Maastricht, reports on peacekeeping.

The Annual Security Review Conference

The Netherlands Chairmanship has built on the work of previous chairmanships in its efforts to enhance interaction and co-ordination between the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation. In this regard, the Chairmanship welcomes the results of the first *Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC)*. The purpose of the ASRC is to review and discuss, on an annual basis, the fulfilment of OSCE commitments in security policy and arms control. The first ASRC took place in Vienna on 25 and 26 June. The conference consisted of a general plenary session, followed by parallel working groups on combating terrorism, comprehensive security, potential security risks, and conflict prevention, all of which opened with keynote speeches. This structure was adopted to encourage debate between representatives of participating States, the staff of delegations in Vienna, and outside experts. The ASRC can make an important contribution to review and update the newly adopted OSCE strategy.

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Ammunition and explosives stockpiles

The Chairmanship welcomes the OSCE document regarding the security risks arising from stockpiles of ammunition and explosives for use in conventional armaments in surplus or awaiting destruction in the OSCE area. In 2002, the FSC agreed to include dangers arising from surplus stockpiles of ammunition on its agenda for 2003. After the successful conclusion of a workshop on this issue in Vienna on 27 and 28 May 2003, a draft document was introduced into the FSC by France and the Netherlands. Consultations and negotiations led to the successful adoption of the current document in the FSC. The Chairmanship believes that an OSCE mechanism dealing with surplus stockpiles of ammunition will enhance security in the OSCE area. The Ministerial Council in Maastricht endorsed the *OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition*.

The Economic and Environmental Dimension

The Netherlands Chairmanship, in its efforts to re-balance the three OSCE dimensions, focused on strengthening the economic and environmental dimension and on linking its work to other dimensions. The Chairmanship put subjects and themes on the OSCE agenda which are equally important to all OSCE participating States

The 11th OSCE Economic Forum

Pursuant to PC Decision No. 490, dated 25 July 2002, the theme for the *Eleventh OSCE Economic Forum* was *Trafficking in Human Beings, Drugs, Small Arms and Light Weapons: National and International Economic Impact*. This theme provided an opportunity to expand the area of attention of the Economic Forum to other dimensions, in particular with regard to trafficking in general and to the economic aspects of trafficking. Furthermore, discussions in the preparatory seminars and the Economic Forum consistently underlined that trafficking was a matter of concern to all participating States. It was generally accepted that reinforced co-operation — both within the OSCE and between the OSCE and other organisations and institutions — would be necessary in order to make the combat against trafficking more effective.

The *First Preparatory Seminar on Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons: National and International Economic Impact* took place in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 11 and 12 November 2002. The content of the seminar was complementary to the work of the FSC. During the seminar the need to implement and enforce existing agreements was emphasised. Furthermore, information-sharing took place on issues such as brokering, production and destruction of surpluses of small arms and light weapons (SALW). Follow-up of the conclusions of the seminar took place in the Economic Forum, the FSC

and in a follow-up seminar reviewing the role of brokers in the illegal arms trade, organised jointly by Norway and the Netherlands in Oslo (22 to 24 April 2003). These two countries launched an initiative on the development of regional instruments to improve the control of brokering in SALW, which was one of the recommendations of the seminar. At a side meeting of the *Maastricht Ministerial Council Meeting the Best Practices Handbook on SALW* was presented to delegations and NGOs.

Trafficking in Human Beings: National and International Economic Impact was the theme of the Second Preparatory Seminar, which took place in Ioannina, Greece, on 17 and 18 February 2003. This seminar concentrated on the economic aspects and impact of trafficking in women and minors for sexual exploitation, and on trafficking in human beings for exploitation in industry. The focus on economic aspects, the push and pull factors behind the trade, the financial aspects (such as the money trail and the value-added chain of trafficking profits), as well as the discussion on the root causes of trafficking were useful additional elements in a discussion which is, internationally in particular, dominated by rightful attention to the protection of victims and the prosecution of perpetrators. The conclusions of the seminar provided valuable input for the Economic Forum and for the work of the *Informal Working Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking* in establishing the *OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings*. This Action Plan was endorsed by the Maastricht Ministerial Council Meeting.

The *Third Preparatory Seminar Trafficking in Drugs: National and International Economic Impact* took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on 17 and 18 March 2003. It focused on issues such as the effect of trade in heroin, synthetic drugs and precursors. It was established that the more vulnerable OSCE economies tend to be hardest hit by the disruptive effects of the financial and economic consequences for their economies. Weak institutional structures facilitate drug-trafficking. Following this third seminar, the OSCE strengthened its relations with the UNODC in an effort to establish its role in their joint fight against trafficking in drugs.

Conclusions and suggestions from the three seminars indicating the possibilities for synergies in the fight against the various types of trafficking provided the input for the *Eleventh OSCE Economic Forum*, which took place in Prague, from 20 to 23 May 2003. The Economic Forum focused on anti-trafficking in relation to the role of the business community, to the role of Governments and finally to the role of the OSCE in combating the various forms of trafficking from the perspective of the economic aspects and impact. The Economic Forum provided useful input for OSCE participating States to establish public-private partnerships in combating trafficking and to continue work on the economic aspects of trafficking. Furthermore, the proposal to establish a special mechanism for combating trafficking in human beings was officially put forward by the CiO in Prague.

Apart from the main theme, the Eleventh Meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum also provided an opportunity for the review of the implementation of commitments made by the OSCE participating States in the economic and environmental dimension. For this, UNECE provided an outstanding background document and shared ideas on further development of indicators for the future review of commitments. A side event was organised on the co-operation between the OSCE with UNEP and UNDP in the framework of *The Initiative on Environment and Security in Southeast Europe and Central Asia*, when a link was established with the Ministerial Conference on *Environment for Europe*, which took place in Kiev simultaneously with the Eleventh Economic Forum. During this side event the results of environmental security assessments were presented and ideas on follow-up co-operation were shared.

Pursuant to PC/DEC 539 of 10 April 2003, the *OSCE Conference on Globalisation* took place in Vienna on 3 and 4 July 2003. The main purpose of the conference was to discuss the role of the OSCE in maximising the benefits and addressing the risks and challenges of Globalisation. Furthermore, on 26 September, the Chairmanship organised a *Special Meeting of the Permanent Council on the Integration Processes* in the OSCE region.

The Economic and Environmental Sub-Committee of the Permanent Council

The Netherlands Chairmanship further increased the number of meetings of the Economic and Environmental Sub-Committee, which proved to be an important tool for information-sharing and preparing PC decisions.

The OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension

Following the *Porto Decision No. 5* calling for the development of a new OSCE strategy document in the economic and environmental dimension, two informal groups of friends were established. The first group, chaired by Belarus, focused on the substance of the new document, while the second group, chaired by the Netherlands, discussed procedures. Furthermore, input was provided to the elaboration of the strategy document at a conference, organised by the UNECE in Villars, Switzerland, 7 and 8 July 2003. The Strategy Document identifies the challenges and threats in the economic and environmental dimension as well as responses and actions to address them (including further developing co-operation, strengthening good governance, and ensuring sustainable development and the protection of the environment). The document was adopted by Ministers at the Eleventh Meeting of the Ministerial Council in Maastricht.

The Human Dimension

The activities of the CiO in the human dimension are manifold. A number of activities follow the regular pattern of the events organised according to the regular schedule of the OSCE activities in the human dimension: the *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM)*, the yearly ODIHR *seminar* and the three *Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings (SHDM)*. Other activities are the result of decisions taken at Ministerial Council meetings, such as the organisation of the conferences on *Anti-Semitism* and on *Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination*, as well as the work on the *Roma and Sinti Action Plan*. Furthermore, the human dimension plays an important role in the activities of the CiO in regional issues. While these are to be found in the respective regional parts of this report, special mention should be made here of the invocation of the Moscow Mechanism by ten participating States in the case of Turkmenistan, including the trip of the CiO to that country in this regard.

In the context of the regular OSCE activities, three SHDMs were organised, in co-operation with the ODIHR, devoted respectively to *Roma and Sinti*, to *Freedom of Religion or Belief* and to *Prevention of Torture*.

The first of these meetings was organised in Vienna on 10 and 11 April. The theme 'Roma and Sinti' was chosen to give the opportunity to all interested parties, including international organisations and NGOs, to give input for the work on the *Roma and Sinti Action Plan*, the elaboration of which had been entrusted to the ODIHR by the *2001 Ministerial Council Meeting in Bucharest* (Decision No. 7). The discussions at the SHDM proved to be a useful input for the further work on the Action Plan. A working group was subsequently set up to continue the work in drawing up the required Action Plan, with the result that this plan was endorsed by the Maastricht Ministerial Council Meeting.

The second SHDM took place in Vienna on 17 and 18 July and was devoted to *Freedom of Religion or Belief*. It showed that, although progress has been made in this field, there are still areas and situations where freedom of religion or belief is not taken for granted. Problems that were stressed included registration, and the role of the media in promoting tolerance.

The third SHDM was devoted to the *Prevention of Torture* and took place in Vienna on 6 and 7 November. Though all States condemn torture, it still occurs in many places and it remains necessary to be pro-active and to stay vigilant in the fight to prevent this.

The annual Human Dimension Seminar in 2003 was devoted to *Women's Participation in Public and Economic Life* and took place in Warsaw from 13 to 16 May. The meeting offered a good opportunity to highlight the work done in the field of gender issues by the OSCE and the ODIHR. It also was used to review the *OSCE Gender Action Plan*.

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As urged by the *Ministerial Council in Porto*, the Chairmanship organised two special Conferences on issues addressed in its *Decision on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination* (Decision No. 6). The first of these two conferences was on *Anti-Semitism* and took place on 19 and 20 June in Vienna. This conference underlined the importance of the continuing struggle against this phenomenon, which unfortunately is recurring in the OSCE area in present times on a larger scale than before.

The *Conference on Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination*, which took place on 4 and 5 September, likewise in Vienna, drew attention to the various aspects of this issue, which, in particular in recent years, has unfortunately become more topical.

Both conferences stressed the need for continuous attention on the part of the OSCE and the participating States and the need for the collection of data on occurrences, bearing in mind both the specific background of these phenomena as well as their similarities.

The *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM)*, which took place from 6 to 17 October in Warsaw, was the second one organised according to the new modalities. After a first week in which a comprehensive review of all OSCE commitments in the field of the Human Dimension took place, the second week was devoted to three specially selected subject areas — racism, xenophobia, discrimination; and anti-semitism; and national minorities and migrant workers. Another day was devoted to the project work of the ODIHR. At the HDIM broad support was noted for, *inter alia*, the *Roma and Sinti Action Plan*, the idea of a special mechanism in the field of trafficking in human beings, as well as for the *Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings*.

Following interest expressed by some participating States, the Chairmanship and UNHCR organised a one-day informal briefing for Delegations on 21 October on *Internally Displaced Persons*. The briefing discussed existing protection arrangements and the role of the UN and OSCE in this field.

At the request of ten participating States, the Human Dimension Mechanism was invoked according to § 12 of the Moscow Document of 1991 and the rapporteur, Professor Decaux, submitted his report on 25 February 2003. On 3 March the CiO visited Turkmenistan and urged President Niyazov and the Turkmen authorities to engage fully in this Mechanism. The report was discussed in the Permanent Council of 13 March.

Internal Co-ordination and Operational Capacity of the OSCE

The OSCE Troika

The *OSCE Troika* format is an important tool for co-ordinated action and mid-term planning. In 2003 the OSCE Troika met at foreign minister level twice (January and July). OSCE Ministerial Troika meetings involve, in addition to the three Troika Ministers, the heads of institutions, the Secretary General and the President of the Parliamentary Assembly. The latter presented, at both occasions, a brief outline of their respective work programmes, together with an indication of their planned events and travels for the following six months. The Troika meetings were also used for an evaluation of information-sharing, co-ordination and co-operation between the CiO, Secretariat, institutions, PA and field missions. Finally, the Chairmanship initiated discussions on specific situations (country or regional) and thematic priorities.

Co-ordinating with the Institutions

The Netherlands Chairmanship has been working in close collaboration with the ODIHR (*Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights*), the HCNM (*High Commissioner on National Minorities*), and the RFoM (*Representative on Freedom of the Media*). In the course of 2003 there were numerous contacts, on working level and on the level of high officials. When appropriate the CiO met with or contacted the heads of institutions. The heads of institution participated in the Ministerial Troika meetings.

In addition, in May 2003 the Netherlands Chairmanship organised a co-ordination meeting in The Hague to which the OSCE heads of institutions, the Secretary General and the President of the Parliamentary Assembly were invited. The aim of the meeting was to further improve co-ordination and co-operation between CiO, Secretariat and institutions.

Co-operation with the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE

The Netherlands Chairmanship has continued the development of a closer and more intense relationship with the *OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE/PA)*. The CiO regarded a closer relationship with the OSCE PA a priority.

The CiO had several meetings with the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Bruce George. Apart from the Ministerial Troika meetings with the heads of institutions, and during two appearances of the CiO at the PA's winter and summer assemblies, the CiO and Mr. George met in one-to-one meetings to discuss ways to improve the co-operation between the OSCE and the OSCE PA. Discussions focused on the common objective of enhancing co-operation between the Parliamentary Assembly and the other OSCE institutions and organs.

The CiO welcomed, in this context, the decision of the PA to open a liaison office in Vienna. The PA's liaison office and its representative, Ambassador Nothelle, has proven to be an excellent means of bringing about more effective co-operation and exchanges of information.

The CiO addressed the first winter session of the PA which was held in Vienna on 20 February 2003. The CiO also addressed the *Twelfth Annual Session of the PA*, which took place in Rotterdam on 5 July on the theme *The Role of the OSCE in the New Architecture of Europe*. The CiO commended the PA for choosing such a timely topic, both in view of an enlarging EU and NATO, and because of the new emerging threats confronting Europe.

Contacts with non-governmental organisations

In the view of the Netherlands Chairmanship of the OSCE vibrant civil societies — societies that provide opportunities for people to make their views and concerns heard — are crucial for the development of democracies throughout the OSCE region. Civil society and political participation are conducive to democratic development. Non-governmental organisations, both at the national and the international level, play an important role here.

During 2003 the Netherlands Chairmanship held regular consultations with the International Helsinki Federation (IHF) and its Dutch affiliate the Netherlands Helsinki Committee. At the joint initiative of the IHF and the Chairmanship a meeting with international NGOs was held in Vienna on 12 May. It was strongly recommended that future Chairs should hold similar meetings in their tenure. Parallel to the Ministerial Council Meeting in Maastricht, a NGO meeting was organised under the title *OSCE Priorities and Perspectives from Civil Society*. More than 100 representatives from NGOs from all over the OSCE region participated in the NGO meeting.

Border management: The Ohrid Conference

In accord with the Porto Declaration, the Chairmanship put the improvement of border management high on the agenda in 2003. Particularly, the Chairmanship focused on the *Ohrid Conference on Border Security and Management* (22 and 23 May 2003) and its follow-up. At this conference, initiated by NATO, the EU, the OSCE and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the countries of South-Eastern Europe agreed upon the Common Platform on Border Security and Management proposed by the four partner organisations and on the 'Way Forward Document'. Subsequently, an OSCE expert team conducted an in-depth needs assessment in the region. The expert team also consulted the EU Commission and NATO. The Assessment Team's report proposes to focus the OSCE's contribution to the implementation of the Way Forward Document on a number of cross-boundary issues, including harmonisation of legislation, effectiveness of cross-border agreements and standardisation of equipment.

OSCE police-related activities

The Netherlands Chairmanship supported the efforts of the *Senior Police Adviser* and the *Strategic Police Matters Unit* to enhance the Organization's police-related activities. The OSCE was involved in police training and reform, most notably throughout Serbia and Montenegro, including in Kosovo, and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In addition, a large-scale police reform programme was launched in Kyrgyzstan. This programme, for which a donors' conference was initiated at the end of May, may be seen as a precursor to police capacity- and institution-building initiatives, begun in Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Armenia. It may be of interest to other countries. Together with the UN Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), a joint training programme for 10 Georgian and 10 Abkhaz police officers started in 2003. These 20 police officers are being trained at the OSCE Kosovo Police Service School.

The Chairman of the Permanent Council addressed the annual meeting of the OSCE Police and Law Enforcement Experts, held in Vienna on 18 and 19 September, which focused on the theme, 'How may co-operation between national law enforcement, non-governmental and international institutions be made more effective in preventing and combating trafficking in persons, especially women and children?'

Regional Issues

Southern Caucasus

2003 was a year of important developments for the Southern Caucasus region. Elections were held throughout the region. Presidential elections were held in Armenia on 19 February and 5 March, parliamentary elections were held in Armenia on 25 May, presidential elections in Azerbaijan were held on 15 October, and on 2 November parliamentary elections took place in Georgia. The OSCE, through the ODIHR and through the activities of the field missions, played a prominent role in monitoring these elections. The ODIHR and the Missions also played an important role in assisting the authorities in ensuring that their election legislation was reformed. Regrettably, the elections held in 2003 in Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan fell short of international standards. In this region, improvements will be needed to ensure consolidation of democratic institutions and progress in election practices. The CiO visited Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan on 21 and 22 October.

In January 2003 the CiO re-appointed his Personal Representative for the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference and appointed Ambassador Roy Reeve as Head of Mission of the OSCE Mission in Georgia, and, later in the year, appointed Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin as Head of Mission of the OSCE Office in Yerevan.

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The OSCE's activities in Georgia were particularly challenging. The Chairmanship's OSCE Task Force visited Georgia in September and prepared for the visit of the CiO on 21 and 22 October.

In regard to the South Ossetian negotiating process, the Chairmanship hosted the *Tenth Meeting of the Experts Group on Political Issues* in Kijkduin, The Hague in the week of 13 to 17 October. For the first time the EU Special Representative for the Caucasus Heikki Talvitie participated in the meeting as an observer. At this meeting there were still strong differences between the sides on the key issues of the political settlement, and prospects for resumption of discussions on the status of South Ossetia seem bleak in the short and medium term. It is, however, positive that, although unable to agree upon the text of a protocol of the meeting in The Hague (for the first time), the sides reiterated their commitment to continue the political dialogue, despite profoundly divergent views on the key issues. In addition, the sides repeated their firm intention to continue to seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict. More positive have been the discussions on the implementation of projects under the € 2.5 million European Commission (EC) grant, earmarked for the implementation of projects in the areas of rehabilitation and refugee/IDP resettlement. Following the signature of an agreement between the Mission and the EC on 26 August, the OSCE Mission has entered into detailed discussions with UNDP and UNHCR as to who will be responsible for the design and implementation of the actual projects. A list of projects for € 1.3 million has already been agreed with the parties and work is now in hand to identify the projects for the remaining € 1.2 million and to develop a mechanism for monitoring progress involving all parties.

The OSCE Mission has also tried to enhance the work of the *Special Co-ordination Centre (SCC)* by presenting proposals to the Georgian and South Ossetian sides regarding the establishment of joint police patrols. Both sides responded positively to the idea, which was also strongly supported by the *Joint Peacekeeping Force*. Two visits were made by a member of the *Senior Police Matters Unit* to the region in the latter part of 2003.

As regards elections in Georgia, the OSCE Mission chaired a Technical Working Group tasked with assisting the Georgian authorities in the elaboration of the election code. Many of the measures identified by the international community as important for the success of the elections were included in the Election Code, which was adopted by the Georgian Parliament between 5 and 14 August. Major involvement of the OSCE Mission and the OSCE Chairmanship in 2003 was the assistance in the selection process of the Chairman of the CEC. This led to the creation of an *Ad Hoc Advisory Commission* from the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The Mission provided logistical and secretarial support to the Commission throughout most of the month of August. On 31 August, President Shevardnadze appointed one of the three potential candidates identified by the Commission.

On the conflict in Abkhazia, the Chairmanship followed with the closest attention the development of events and supported the efforts of the United Nations in the peace process, namely in terms of conflict resolution and human rights. Progress has been made on the proposals by *UNOMIG* to enhance the law enforcement bodies of the Abkhaz and Georgian sides in the Gali and Zugdidi districts respectively. Twelve UN civil policemen have been deployed in the conflict zone, and some 20 Georgian and Abkhaz police officers underwent training at the *OSCE Kosovo Police Service School*.

The work of the Border Monitoring Operation of the OSCE Mission to Georgia (BMO) continued to make a significant contribution to stability and confidence in the region. This year saw the enhancement and enlargement of the BMO to the Dagestan segment of the border with the Russian Federation. Throughout 2003 the BMO has proved to be a very useful and necessary tool for building confidence and security between Georgia and the Russian Federation.

With regard to the resignation of Georgian president Shevardnadze, on 23 November, the CiO praised the people of Georgia for ensuring that the change in their country's leadership was accomplished without violence. The CiO noted that both demonstrators and security forces acted with admirable restraint. He voiced his respect for President Shevardnadze's brave decision to step down in order to avoid a further escalation of tension. The CiO also offered assistance to the new leadership in the preparation of new elections in Georgia.

At the *OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting* in Maastricht on 1 and 2 December 2003 pledges of financial support were made by the participating States to support Georgia in conducting democratic presidential and parliamentary elections in the year 2004. In response to these pledges, a mechanism for the immediate provision of funds needed for the implementation of the programme was set up by the OSCE Secretariat. International technical and financial support to the country's electoral process was to be channelled through this fund: *Georgia Election Assistance Programme*. The international assistance to the election programme consists of various projects, first of all for the presidential elections scheduled for 4 January 2004, addressing, among other things, administrative, as well as professional needs of election administrative bodies. The principal aim was to contribute to the promotion of much-needed confidence in the electoral process between voters and the political elite in Georgia.

In Armenia the OSCE's activities in 2003 were influenced and affected by two major factors. The first has been the expansion and reorientation of the OSCE Office to make effective use of the additional core funding from the 2003 Budget Decision. The second factor has been the succession of elections — local, presidential and parliamentary — which took place in Armenia. The first round of presidential elections on 19 February as reported by the *OSCE/ODIHR EOM* and the *CoE* observation mission was marked by a number of irregularities, both during the

pre-electoral campaign and on the voting day, but especially during the vote counting process. The second round of elections on 5 March was also marked by violations. The general assessment of the presidential elections by the *ODIHR election observation mission* and by the CoE observers was that 'Presidential elections in Armenia fell short of meeting international standards'.

The quality of the voter lists has been widely recognised as one of the shortcomings in electoral matters in the country. The OSCE facilitated and supported the project on improvement of voter lists in Armenia, which took as its means standardisation and systematisation of the population registers in local communities. The Office also assisted the Central Electoral Commission by arranging procurement and delivery of transparent ballot boxes, which were used in all polling stations of Armenia for the first time. The use of these ballot boxes contributed to the general transparency of the electoral process and was assessed by the OSCE and CoE observation missions as a progressive step. The parliamentary elections held on 25 May again 'fell short of meeting international standards'. Much needs to be done for the next electoral cycle.

In the field of Media Affairs the OSCE continued to follow the case of the broadcasting agencies A1+ and Noyan Tapan, which were closed down by the authorities. The CiO was among those who appealed to the authorities to review this decision.

During the visit of the OSCE CiO on 21 October the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was raised, as were the previous elections and the media situation.

In Azerbaijan the OSCE continued to promote the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments in all OSCE dimensions with an important focus, in practice, on the promotion of the rule of law and good governance. The OSCE closely followed developments related to compliance with OSCE principles and commitments, commenting on them and maintaining dialogue with relevant authorities. The OSCE also continued to develop and carry out projects with the aim of supporting the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments.

The presidential elections on 15 October as reported upon by the *OSCE/ODIHR EOM* and the *CoE* observation mission were marked with a number of significant irregularities, both during the pre-electoral campaign and on the voting day, but especially during the vote-counting process. The general assessment of the presidential elections of the ODIHR EOM and the CoE observers was that 'Presidential elections in Azerbaijan fell short of meeting international standards in several respects'.

During the visit of the OSCE CiO on 22 October the *Nagorno-Karabakh* conflict was raised as well as the aftermath of the presidential elections.

The lack of significant progress in process of the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict 2003 is a matter for concern. The elections in Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2003 prevented any progress being made. During his visit to Armenia and Azerbaijan the CiO emphasised to both Presidents the utmost importance of renewing talks on this issue. The Presidential elections held in Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2003 now offer a window of opportunity for a renewal of the talks between both countries. The CiO also had meetings with the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Conference and gave full support to their efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The activities of the Personal Representative of the CiO on the Conflict Dealt with by the Minsk Conference are instrumental in coming closer to the conclusion of a political agreement on the cessation of the armed conflict, the implementation of which will eliminate major consequences of the conflict for all parties and permit the convening of the Minsk Conference.

Northern Caucasus

With regard to Chechnya, the Chairmanship oversaw an orderly closure of the Assistance Group. The Chairmanship has been engaged in a dialogue with the Russian Federation aimed at agreement on a long-term OSCE programme of technical co-operation in Chechnya. This co-operation would, on the one hand, be based on real needs in the Chechen Republic and, on the other hand, on OSCE expertise and experience, reflecting all three dimensions of the OSCE. It would make optimal use of the OSCE institutions and take into account activities by domestic and international organisations. A number of meetings have taken place, some of which were on a technical level, with participation from the OSCE Secretariat and institutions. Nonetheless, it had to be concluded (taking into account, *inter alia*, the situation on the ground) that an agreement along the lines that had been agreed upon, was no longer feasible before the end of 2003.

South-eastern Europe

South-eastern Europe continued to represent a priority for the Chairmanship. The OSCE, in particular through its field missions and the ODIHR, continued its efforts to ensure compliance of elections with the highest international standards. In 2003, ODIHR observed elections in Montenegro (presidential elections on 9 February and on 11 May), Albania (local elections on 12 October), Serbia (presidential elections on 16 November) and Croatia (parliamentary elections on 23 November). In general, these elections were a step forward towards the consolidation of democratic institutions and practices in South-eastern Europe.

In January 2003, the CiO re-appointed the Personal Representative for Articles II and IV of the Dayton Agreement, as well as the Personal Representative of the CiO for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The CiO also appointed a new Head of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje.

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The CiO visited Serbia and Montenegro on 22 April, the day on which the State of Emergency was lifted in that country. On 23 April the CiO visited Kosovo/Serbia and Montenegro.

In Serbia and Montenegro, the OSCE Mission continued to provide assistance to the ongoing reform and democratization process, developing programmes and activities in a variety of areas: judicial and penal reform, human rights, return and re-integration of displaced persons and refugees, institution-building and media development. The OSCE Mission played a much-valued role in assisting the authorities in the reform and restructuring of the internal security forces, both through the Mission's police-training programme and through the support given in defining priorities and co-ordinating international aid. The fight against corruption was a key priority in 2003 with reform of legislation being a central element in this area. In this regard, the OSCE provided practical assistance towards full implementation of applicable laws.

In 2003, the OSCE Head of Office in Podgorica was upgraded to the level of Deputy HoM giving the Office a higher status in Montenegro in line with its increasing role.

In Kosovo/Serbia and Montenegro, the Chairmanship further supported the activities of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and its assistance to *UNMIK* with regard to the policy of promoting standards and their implementation in Kosovo society, in the context of greater acceptance of responsibilities by the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government.

The OSCE CiO participated as international 'guarantor' in the official opening of dialogue, between delegations from Belgrade and Pristina. This inaugural meeting took place in Vienna on 14 October.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the OSCE Mission continued its key role in the field of human rights and rule of law, most notably with regard to property law implementation. Substantial completion of the property law implementation process is expected by the end of the year, and will represent a milestone in the post-conflict history of the country. Major results were achieved in promoting a thorough reform of the education system of the country. The Mission also played a leading role in the field of security co-operation and defence reform. Its contribution to the proposed reform of the armed forces, which is currently under parliamentary discussion, to their peaceful reduction, and to increasing transparency in military budgets, is essential to the creation of effective democratic control over affordable armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In Croatia, the OSCE continued to implement its key mandate in the fields of return of displaced persons and refugees, human rights and rights of national minorities, judicial reform, media development and police-related reforms. In July the Mission presented a Status Report to the Permanent Council, assessing progress in mandate-

related issues. This report emphasised that the *Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA)* with the EU and the Government's EU membership application, presented in February 2003, had contributed to reinforcing co-operation between the Mission and the Government. Three key issues in the Mission's mandate — refugee return, human and minority rights and the application of the rule of law — are part of the political criteria for accession to the EU. The Chairmanship followed developments regarding the co-operation with the ICTY, which is a key condition for Croatia's integration into Euro-Atlantic structures.

Although some localised incidents continued to occur in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the overall trend of gradual improvement in the situation was further consolidated. The OSCE Mission continued, in close co-operation with the Government and international partners, to play an active and valuable role in the efforts to preserve peace and stability and to support the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

2003 saw the successful completion of a number of mission activities, including the training of 1,000 non-majority police cadets. The *Field Training Programme* was handed over to the Ministry of the Interior (MoI). The Mission continued its assistance to the MoI through specialised courses related to the Framework Agreement and the implementation of community-policing activities, in particular through *Citizens Advisory Groups (CAGs)*. Other main activities of the Mission include support to the Ombudsman Institution, reform of Macedonian Radio and Television and the creation of a domestic trial observation network. General confidence-building initiatives retained their great importance. In 2004, the Mission will continue to support the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement. With active involvement of the Chairmanship and the Secretariat, the Mission has fully supported the planning for the EU Police Mission 'Proxima' in a spirit of joint purpose and excellent co-operation between the EU and OSCE.

In 2003, the OSCE Presence in Albania continued its activities in the fields of democratization, human rights and rule of law and security co-operation. In particular, the Presence played a major role in 2003 in assisting the work of the Bi-Partisan Committee on Electoral Reform as well as assisting Albanian authorities on the issue of property restitution. On both sides, the Presence played the role of a facilitator, while contributing legal and other expertise. The Presence delivered the draft on property restitution to the Speaker of the Albanian Assembly on 27 October prepared by a technical experts group working under the Presence's guidance. During 2003, the Presence also prepared its long-term project analysing the functioning of the judicial system in Albania. This will soon be completed and will serve as the basis for further work in this area. The Presence has continued to support the implementation of the Albanian Government's *National Strategy on Trafficking in Human Beings*.

Dr. Erhard Busek, the Special Co-ordinator of *the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe*, visited Ambassador Everts, Personal Representative of the CiO, to exchange views on issues of mutual interest and concern and on modalities for practical co-operation. The Chairmanship welcomed the priorities and the clear working agenda set out by the Special Co-ordinator, as well as the specific activities carried out in 2003. The OSCE continued to co-operate closely with the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe on a wide range of issues, including the follow-up to the *Ohrid Regional Conference on Border Security and Management* and the *Stability Pact's Migration Asylum Return Refugee Initiative (MARRI)*.

Ukraine

In March the Chairmanship appointed Ambassador David Nicholas as OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. The Project Co-ordinator has taken up several project activities. For this purpose the Project Co-ordinator reorganised the office and created a project database. The Project Co-ordinator has presented an ambitious plan to assist and co-operate with Ukraine in a number of areas including rule of law, media freedom, combating trafficking, development of SMEs, and electoral reform. The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine enjoys a good relationship with the authorities in Ukraine and receives support at all levels. The Chairmanship considers it important that the office of the Project Co-ordinator will be able to continue this co-operation and expand its work.

Belarus

Following the Permanent Council decision of 30 December 2002 the OSCE Office in Minsk opened on 1 January 2003. The Chairmanship appointed Ambassador Eberhard Heyken as Head of the OSCE Office. Ambassador Heyken took up his duties in Minsk on 10 February. Subsequently, four international staff members were deployed. At the request of the Chairmanship Ambassador Heyken reported in March on the developments related to the functioning of the Office and addressed the PC on 2 April and 13 November. In consultation with the Belarus authorities the Office has identified and implemented project activities in the field of the economy and environment, institution-building, and the rule of law and civil society. At the same time the Office has actively monitored the commitment of the Belarusian authorities to their obligations in the framework of the OSCE. Reports on restrictive measures against civil society, NGOs and independent media are of deep concern to the Chairmanship. Civil society, NGOs and media should be allowed to be part of and make their contribution to Belarusian society. In this regard Belarus should be encouraged to bring its legislation as well as its application into conformity with OSCE commitments and standards. The OSCE Office in Minsk stands ready to assist the Belarusian authorities in this field. The Chairmanship attaches great importance to the continued OSCE Presence in Belarus.

Moldova

The Chairmanship has intensified the efforts to bring the Moldovan/Transdnestrian conflict closer to a solution. In January 2003 the CiO strengthened OSCE involvement by appointing Ambassador Adriaan Jacobovits de Szeged as Personal Representative for Moldova. The Personal Representative attended the monthly rounds of the political negotiation process in Moldova. Furthermore, Ambassador Jacobovits de Szeged, together with OSCE Head of Mission to Moldova Ambassador William Hill, conducted consultations in several OSCE participating States and participated in a variety of seminars on federalism.

The first half of the year showed promising progress, both in the negotiating process and in the field of ammunition withdrawal as a part of the Istanbul Commitments 1999. President Voronin's initiative in establishing the Joint Constitutional Commission to draft a new constitution for a reunified Moldova on a federal model was broadly welcomed and supported. In the March to June period a considerable amount of ammunition was withdrawn from Transdnestria. The CiO visited Moldova on 2 April and, in addition, had other meetings with President Vladimir Voronin on three separate occasions to discuss the prospects for a settlement. In the autumn the mediators finalised a document with recommendations on State structure, division of competencies and guarantees to serve as a basis for the further work of the Joint Constitutional Commission. Furthermore, an extra Russian effort to come to an agreement on the Transdnestrian problem was noted. The CiO consulted with several participating States on the Memorandum on the Basic Principles of the State Structure of a United State proposed by the Russian Federation. The consultations showed that there was no consensus on supporting the document and that the OSCE were to take a neutral stance if the parties would come to an agreement. Moldova considered it premature to sign the memorandum. In the event of a settlement it should be consolidated by an international presence under OSCE supervision. The Chairmanship has explored possible options, all focused around a broadly based multinational operation under the aegis of the OSCE to support peace and stability.

Furthermore, the Chairmanship has committed itself to making a significant contribution to the fight against trafficking in human beings. The OSCE Mission to Moldova launched a two-year project in Moldova to help with victim assistance and reintegration. Although this year has shown much progress in negotiations towards an agreement, a lot of work remains to be done.

Central Asia

During its chairmanship, the Netherlands has emphatically drawn attention to the participating States of Central Asia, and to the challenging process of political and economic transition that they are undergoing. Although Central Asia is not a conflict region as such, the region needs attention from the OSCE because of the necessity, as expressed by the Central Asian participating States, of pursuing a path of political and economic reform. In addition, stability and security in the Central Asian region is directly influenced by developments in Afghanistan.

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During its Chairmanship, the Netherlands has aimed to strengthen the relationship between the OSCE and Central Asia at the political level by keeping in regular contact, both in the participating States and with delegations in Vienna, and by discussing all issues of concern in an open and transparent manner. While recognising the different characteristics of each of the five Central Asian States, an overall important aim of the Netherlands Chairmanship was to involve the Central Asian countries with the OSCE and to create awareness of what the OSCE can offer them. The Chairmanship aimed at improving the balance between the three dimensions of the OSCE with regard to activities in the countries of Central Asia, with the understanding that this should not mean less attention to the human dimension, but more inter-linking between the three dimensions.

The Netherlands Chairmanship has also pleaded for a strengthening of the activities of the various OSCE institutions and structures in the OSCE Secretariat through such means as increased co-ordination and coherence, with a view to strengthening governmental and non-governmental institutions in the participating States of Central Asia. A shift of resources in the OSCE budget 2003 was carried out in order to strengthen efforts of the OSCE in Central Asia and got the underpinning of OSCE activities in the region off to a good start.

The Netherlands Chairmanship has worked towards increasing co-operation between the OSCE and the EU, and international organisations such as the UN and the EBRD amongst others.

The CiO visited Central Asia twice: Turkmenistan at the beginning of March 2003 and Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in July 2003. The CiO was received by the five Heads of States. In all these countries the priorities of the participating States and the OSCE Chairmanship were discussed, such as the fight against terrorism and various forms of trafficking (including on small arms and light weapons, drugs, and human beings), strengthening the rule of law, democratization, respect for human rights, and economic transition.

The CiO's appointment of Mr. Martti Ahtisaari, the former President of Finland, as Personal Envoy for Central Asia reflects the importance given by the Netherlands Chairmanship to continuing engagement with the participating States in Central Asia. Mr. Ahtisaari maintained contacts at the highest political levels in all five countries.

In Turkmenistan the purpose of the CiO's visit and of the subsequent follow-up visit of President Ahtisaari was to strengthen the dialogue between the OSCE participating States and the Turkmen authorities. This was particularly timely during the visit of the CiO as the implementation of the Moscow Mechanism, invoked by ten participating States, required the collaboration of the Turkmen authorities. The report and the reply of Turkmenistan were discussed in the Permanent Council. The CiO and his Personal Envoy furthermore discussed the need to strengthen civil society, access to

detention centres for family members or independent international organisations, as well as political reform and the importance of education.

In Kazakhstan the CiO and the Personal Envoy in his subsequent visit discussed several legislative amendments, including that to the law on elections, which is still being reformed. The laws on the media and NGOs were the subject of discussion as well. At the invitation of President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan and its Foreign Minister Kassymzhomart Tokayev, who had made an official visit to the Netherlands in November 2002, the Chairmanship sent two experts to their country in March 2003 to report to the Permanent Council on the legal proceedings against the well-known journalist Sergei Duvanov. The report and the reply of Kazakhstan were discussed in the Permanent Council. In June, the CiO was represented at the OSCE *PA Trans-Asia Parliamentary Forum* which took place in Almaty.

In Kyrgyzstan the CiO and the Personal Envoy made a plea for the further strengthening of conditions for democracy, rule of law, free media and participation of national minorities in public life. The Personal Envoy stressed the importance of the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections and the need for ongoing democratic reforms and the strengthening of the rule of law. In this context, the Chairmanship supported the development of the *OSCE Police Assistance Programme*. The Chairmanship pointed out that inclusion of representatives of civil society in police reform would facilitate the acceptance of the programme by the Kyrgyz population. On 19 May, a pledging conference was organised in Vienna to raise funds for a substantial police assistance programme (€ 3.8 million). In August an MoU between the OSCE Head of Centre and the Kyrgyz authorities on the implementation of the programme was signed in Bishkek.

In Tajikistan the CiO and the Personal Envoy pleaded for a moratorium on the death penalty with the ultimate goal of full abolishment. Among the issues discussed were de-mining, both inside the countries as well as in border areas, the fight against drug trafficking, the need for political reform, particularly the need to strengthen dialogue and co-operation between political parties, and the preparations of the next parliamentary elections in 2005. The importance of regional co-operation was discussed as well.

In Uzbekistan the CiO and the Personal Envoy discussed, among other things, regional co-operation, registration of parties ahead of next year's election, and dialogue between the Government and the opposition. On the issue of trafficking, the *Third Preparatory Seminar for the Eleventh Meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum – Trafficking in drugs: national and international impact* was successfully organised and held in March in Tashkent.

In line with the extra attention that the Dutch Chairmanship has decided to devote to Central Asia, a Dutch diplomat was posted to the Italian embassy in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, at the end of 2002. One of his tasks was to identify areas for OSCE-related projects. Various projects are currently being implemented.

Co-operation with other International Organisations

The Dutch Chairmanship attaches great importance to improving co-operation and co-ordination between the OSCE and other international organisations. New plans have been developed at the political and official level, for instance to improve co-ordination with the EU. Both the Greek and Italian Presidencies agreed to hold meetings between the OSCE Troika and the EU Troika, primarily to discuss topical issues. These meetings took place at the margins of the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) in February and September of 2003. At the GAERC the Netherlands provided information on and drew attention to OSCE matters relevant to the EU. At the policy level, the Chairmanship of the OSCE maintained close ties with the EU Presidency, the Council secretariat and the European Commission. The other EU member States were kept informed about relevant developments within the OSCE and the Organization's policy plans. The aim was to encourage the forming of EU positions that support the OSCE's policy. In Vienna too, a great effort has been made to achieve co-ordination with the EU. EU High Representative Javier Solana addressed the Permanent Council in Vienna in July, at the invitation of the Dutch Chairmanship.

The Dutch representatives at NATO regularly drew attention to events within the OSCE. In June a co-ordination meeting of the CiO with Secretary-General Robertson was arranged on the fringe of the NATO ministerial. Operational level consultations are held regularly to co-ordinate policy and are attended by representatives of the entire OSCE Troika. In Vienna, the weekly NATO Caucus meetings were held. NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson addressed the Permanent Council in October.

Harmonisation with the Council of Europe takes place on a daily basis. Certain dossiers, particularly those in the Human Dimension and the work of the ODIHR, overlap with the Council of Europe's concerns and make close co-ordination essential. Ministerial-level meetings between the OSCE and the Council of Europe take place twice a year. They are attended not just by the chairmanship of the OSCE and that of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, but also by the Secretaries-General and the presidents of the parliamentary assemblies of the two bodies. The first meeting, convened by the Netherlands as CiO of the OSCE, took place in February 2003. The second meeting, convened by Moldova as Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, took place in November 2003.

A further event in February was the tripartite meeting, in Geneva, between representatives of the OSCE (including the Chairmanship), the Council of Europe and the UN. It was also attended by representatives of the European Commission, the EU Council secretariat, the ICRC, and the IOM. In 2003 consultations with the UN centred on ways to combat terrorism and the various forms of trafficking.

Besides maintaining existing ties within the OSCE area, the Organization also needs to conduct a dialogue with other organisations. The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) is willing to engage in a political dialogue with the OSCE. Following tentative preliminary contacts, the OSCE (including the Chairmanship) was represented at the Islamic Conference Summit in Teheran at the end of May. The purpose of this dialogue is not just to propagate the OSCE's ideas, but also to learn about the views and attitudes expressed within the OIC, thus encouraging dialogue with the Islamic world. The countries of Central Asia, in particular, firmly supported these initiatives on the part of the Chairmanship.

Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation

In 2003 Mediterranean and Asian Partners (MPCs, APCs) were invited to OSCE meetings in which the States concerned had special interests. In addition, the Partners for Co-operation were invited to a number of OSCE events (*Annual Security Review Conference*, ODIHR seminars, workshops, the *Economic Forum*) and were given briefings on OSCE activities by heads of institutions or Missions. Parliamentarians from Partner States were invited to attend the Parliamentary Assembly's annual and winter sessions. Partners were also involved in operational activities, such as short-term visits to OSCE Missions, election observation and secondment to Missions. A meeting between the OSCE Troika and Foreign Ministers or their representatives from Partner States was held on 30 November, on the eve of the Ministerial Council.

Representatives of the Chair took part in two separate informal, open-ended contact groups (one on Mediterranean-related issues, the other on Asia) at the level of experts that have been established in the framework of the Permanent Council and met periodically to conduct a dialogue with the States concerned in order to facilitate the exchange of information on subjects of mutual interest. The Mediterranean Contact Group was chaired by Bulgaria. The Contact Group for the Asian Partners was chaired by Portugal.

Meetings were held to focus on the regional considerations of the respective partners. Korea held a workshop on the applicability of OSCE-instruments (CSBMs) in East Asia in September and Jordan hosted the annual Mediterranean Seminar in October. Representatives of the Chair took part on both occasions.

In the course of 2003, the Bulgarian Chairmanship of the Contact Group with Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, in close consultation with the Netherlands Chairmanship and with the support of the External Co-operation Section of the OSCE Secretariat, concentrated its activities on the following issues:

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Contact Group meetings with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

The regular meetings of the Mediterranean Contact Group provided the opportunity for participating States and the six MPCs both to advance the dialogue and to discuss and exchange ideas on a number of issues pertinent to both sides of the Mediterranean. A total of six meetings of the Contact Group were held in 2003. They were preceded by meetings of the Contact Points that discussed the agenda of the Contact group meetings and explored other forms of co-operation.

The Contact Group meetings continued to serve for ongoing dialogue and the development of joint activities between participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, as well as among the MPCs themselves. An exchange of views on the current activities of the OSCE figured prominently on the agenda, as well as other issues such as: the work of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE (presented to the MPCs by the President of the Assembly, the Rt. Hon. Bruce George, M.P.), the first ever *Annual Security Review Conference*, the *Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century*, the tasks undertaken in the Economic and Environmental Dimension, the field activities of the Organization and the role of the Conflict Prevention Centre.

Attendance of meetings of the Permanent Council, other OSCE institutions and different events

The Mediterranean Partners were regularly invited to the meetings of the Permanent Council, especially when special guests addressed the plenary, or when there were particular topics of interest. Particularly noteworthy was the address by H.E. Mr. Habib Ben Yahia, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tunisia in March, in which he stressed the necessity to further strengthen and develop co-operation in the wake of the new threats and challenges to security and stability. A useful exchange of ideas took place at the meeting of the Ambassadors of the OSCE Troika and the Secretary General with H.E. Mr. Bouteflika, President of Algeria, during his visit to Vienna, as well as during the discussions with the Algerian Minister for Maghreb and African Affairs, Mr. Abdelkader Messahel, who was interested in exchanging information and possible co-operation with the OSCE on the *African Centre on the Research and Study of Terrorism* to be based in Algiers.

The Mediterranean Partners were given the opportunity to provide input into the work of the Organization. Their representatives participated in topical conferences on anti-Semitism, as well as on racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Partners for Co-operation took part in the first *OSCE Annual Security Review Conference* and in the conference on globalisation. In addition, Partners were invited to contribute to the elaboration of the *OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century*. The strategy, while addressing the cross-dimensional nature of new threats and challenges, also reflects close ties between participating States and Partners for Co-operation.

The *Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean*, established by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, convened for the first time in Rome in October 2003 and brought together parliamentarians from the participating States and the MPCs. As usual, representatives of the MPCs were invited to attend the *Economic Forum* in Prague, the *HDIM* in Warsaw, the *Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings* and the *Human Dimension Seminar*. Representatives of MPCs were also invited to participate in election observation, to visit Missions and to submit candidates for mission members in OSCE field activities.

Ministers of the MPCs were invited to attend the *Ministerial Council Meeting* in December 2003 in Maastricht, with a meeting of the OSCE Troika ministers with their colleagues from the MPCs being held on the eve of the Council.

The Annual OSCE Mediterranean Seminar

The 2003 *Mediterranean Seminar* on the topic *The comprehensive approach to security: The OSCE experience and its relevance for the Mediterranean region* was held in Aqaba, Jordan on 20 and 21 October. The Seminar was inaugurated by Mr. Shaher Bak, Jordan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and Dr. Solomon Passy, Bulgaria's Foreign Minister. Around 120 participants from participating States and MPCs, academic institutions, international organisations and NGOs attended the seminar. The Seminar provided the opportunity to exchange views on confidence-building, poverty reduction, as well as on democratic institution-building and civil society development as important prerequisites for prevention of conflicts. The fact that this seminar took place in Jordan, one of the MPCs, conveyed a strong and positive political message, especially in view of the current situation in the Middle East.

The Consolidated Summary of the proceedings of the seminar reflected many interesting proposals that deserve further study and consultation, including: outreach activities to the capitals of the Partner States, the establishment of a Conflict Prevention Centre in the Mediterranean, access of the MPCs to the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation, and the development of co-operation between the Council of Europe's Venice Commission and interested MPCs. It was emphasised that the OSCE's common values could serve as basis for further dialogue between the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners.

The Contact Group with the Partners for Co-operation in Asia

OSCE activities with the Partners for Co-operation in Asia were enhanced during 2003. The Contact Group meetings with the Partners for Co-operation in Asia were launched bringing together the Asian Partners and OSCE participating States to discuss issues of common concern. The agendas of these meetings covered all the major issues related to security in the OSCE area, opening the door for a two-way approach in discussions and future exchanges of information and practices, in particular in areas where OSCE experience might become more relevant to the regions of the Partner States. The Partners' own experience and concerns in different areas were carefully studied during the meetings.

The Asian Partners actively participated in Contact Group meetings and other joint activities by, *inter alia*, submitting proposals for discussion and follow-up. The presence of experts from the Asian Partners, from the capitals and external Permanent Missions, contributed to deepening the debates and focusing in more detail on issues related to their main interests.

During the Contact Group meetings, Partners were regularly informed by a representative of the OSCE Chairmanship, on the progress of discussions leading up to the Ministerial Council meeting. They were also provided with reports of the working group meetings, and were invited to attend and contribute in writing to discussions on the *OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century*.

Afghanistan, which became a Partner for Co-operation in April 2003, was welcomed to a meeting of the Asian Contact Group on 5 May 2003. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Mr. Abdullah Abdullah, addressed the OSCE Permanent Council on 5 December 2003.

Four meetings of the Asian Contact Group took place in 2003. Topics for discussion included: trafficking in human beings, drugs and small arms and light weapons; follow-up to the 2001 *OSCE-Korea Conference on Applicability of OSCE Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs)*; the *OSCE Asia Academic Network*; the *OSCE-Japan Conference on Conflict Prevention*; an overview of CSBMs, including a briefing by the Chairman of the Forum for Security Co-operation (at that time, Germany); and the *Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA)*. Furthermore, discussions focused on gender equality, OSCE field activities in Central Asia, preventing and combating terrorism and the work of the OSCE Secretariat's *Anti-Terrorism Unit*, as well as Korea's *Policy for Peace and Prosperity and a Multilateral Security Mechanism in North-East Asia*.

The Partners were regularly invited to meetings of the OSCE Permanent Council. The Republic of Korea was also invited to address the PC and FSC on the outcome of the Workshop on CSBMs held in Seoul. Thailand was invited to address a joint PC/FSC meeting on anti-personnel landmines.

The Republic of Korea and the OSCE organised a workshop entitled *Applicability of OSCE CSBMs in North-East Asia Revisited* on 22-23 September 2003 in Seoul. More than 30 OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation participated in the event, including the five parties involved in the dialogue process with North Korea, whose diplomatic representative in Vienna was later informed about the outcome of the meeting.

On the eve of the Ministerial Council meeting in Maastricht, a meeting of the OSCE *Ministerial Troika* with counterparts from the Asian Partners for Co-operation took place during which discussions focused on new threats to security and stability in the

21st century, and on relations between Partners for Co-operation and the OSCE, including OSCE-Partner State activities in 2004. The OSCE Ministerial Troika and Partner States welcomed:

- the launching of the meetings of the Asian Contact Group in 2003, which provided a platform for dialogue and co-operation, and also expressed interest in the Group's further development into a forum for follow-up of recommendations made at the Contact Group and for other joint activities of the OSCE and Partner States
- the envisaged adoption of the *OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century*, and the Permanent Council decision on expanding further areas of co-operation
- the more frequent participation of Partner States in the meetings of the PC and FSC
- the forthcoming 2004 *OSCE-Japan Conference on Conflict Prevention* and the back-to-back ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Workshop on Preventive Diplomacy
- the deepening of relations between the OSCE and the ARF
- the enhancement of the *OSCE Asia Academic Network*
- further co-operation on subjects of common concern, including new threats and challenges to security.

The Outreach Programme

The Bulgarian Chairmanship is looking forward to working together with MPCs on this new evolving mechanism of co-operation, which brings OSCE expertise to the Partner countries, to their officials, experts, the public and to academia. The outreach programme is one way of disseminating and exchanging information, with the largest possible number of participants in the Partner Countries on the OSCE *acquis*. It is envisaged that the first activity of this kind will take place in the coming months in Algeria for the Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) on the topic of Freedom and Responsibility: the Media. Similar activities covering other topics and other groups of countries will follow.

Despite all positive and encouraging developments, there is a need to continue to consider ways of enhancing the OSCE Mediterranean dialogue. The potential for increasing dialogue and co-operation was discussed at the Aqaba Seminar. Subsequent discussions in the Preparatory Committee, both in Vienna and in Maastricht, on the basis of a draft decision tabled by the delegation of Turkey, have ultimately resulted in the adoption of *Permanent Council Decision No. 571 on Furthering Dialogue and Co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and Exploring the Scope for Wider Sharing of OSCE Norms, Principles and Commitments with Others*. This decision foresees work in 2004 on, among others, the identification of additional fields of co-operation and interaction with Partners, the sharing of OSCE norms, principles and commitments with others, including adjacent areas, and procedures for future application for partnership.

THE WORK OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL

Throughout the year the Permanent Council (PC) met 60 times. Main agenda items were briefings by Heads of Mission, decisions concerning extension of Missions, activity reports by the Secretary General and the Chairman-in-Office, and current issues. In addition an exceptional total of 17 special guests addressed the PC. The 10th Ministerial Council of 2002 in Porto gave the PC a number of tasks. The Netherlands Chair installed seven Informal Groups of Friends to carry out a substantial part of these tasks. Most groups started to meet in January and continued their work throughout the year, resulting in documents that were forwarded to the Preparatory Committee and the PC, and that were subsequently adopted by the 11th Ministerial Council in Maastricht. This approach created an intensive meeting schedule for the Vienna delegations throughout the year.



*Mission members briefing the Preparatory Committee
on their activities in the field.*



Special Guests who addressed the OSCE Permanent Council in 2003

	Special Guest	Topic of Address
16 January	Mrs. Benita Ferrero-Waldner , Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria	The Human Security Network
06 March	Mr. Jean Lemiere , President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	OSCE Support for small businesses
27 March	Mr. Habib Ben Yahia , Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tunisia	New synergy to bolster OSCE's Mediterranean partnership
08 April	Mr. Ruud Lubbers , United Nations Commissioner for Refugees	Human trafficking and human smuggling
10 April	Mr. George Soros , Soros Foundations Network	Democratic growth in the OSCE area and challenges ahead
08 May	Mr. Michael Steiner , Special Representative for Kosovo of the UN Secretary-General	UN Mission in Kosovo at a critical phase
04 June	Lord Paddy Ashdown , High Representative and EU Special Representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina	Concern about the risk of economic crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina
16 June	Mr. Dragan Djurovic , Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro	Legislative reform in Montenegro
17 June	Mr. Malkhaz Kakabadze , Minister for Special Affairs of Georgia	Developments in Georgia
10 July	Roberto Antonione , Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy	EU enlargement and the OSCE
24 July	Mr. Walter Schwimmer , Secretary General of the Council of Europe	Consolidating democracy and the rule of law
05 September	Mr. Martti Ahtisaari , Personal Envoy of the CiO to Central Asia	Central Asia
04 November	Ms. Carla Del Ponte , Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)	Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in South-eastern Europe
06 November	Lord Robertson , NATO Secretary General	OSCE has critical role to play in new security environment
18 November	Mr. Inocencio Arias , Chairman of the UN CTC	The report on the activities of the Counter Terrorism Committee of the United Nations
04 December	Dr. Abdullah Abdullah , Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan	Seeking OSCE support to build security and stability in Afghanistan
11 December	Mr. Harri Holkeri , Head of UNMIK and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General	Standards for Kosovo

THE UNIFIED BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT REFORM

Preparations for the OSCE's 2003 Unified Budget commenced in May 2002 with a series of programmatic discussions among participating States. The introduction of this programme outline was generally welcomed as an improvement to both the consultation process and the preparation of the next year's Unified Budget. The Permanent Council approved the 2003 Unified Budget on 30 December 2002 upon the consensus recommendation of the informal Financial Committee. Its level was set at € 185.7 million, which was maintained throughout the year. It achieved a significant strengthening of several units in the Secretariat and almost doubled the budgets for the OSCE's activities in the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia.

In the first half of 2003, the efforts of the Chairmanship concentrated on concluding the negotiations on a set of management reform decisions. On 27 June, the reinforced Permanent Council approved the first comprehensive Staff Regulations for all categories of OSCE staff, the codification of the *OSCE's Unified Budget Process* and the terms of reference for the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance, which thereby replaced the informal Financial Committee. These decisions serve, on the one hand, to strengthen the budgetary prerogative of the Permanent Council and to streamline the programming and budgeting of the

Organization's diverse activities in a manner which is consistent with the consultative nature of the OSCE's decision-making processes. On the other hand, they strengthen the Organization's regulatory framework, thus implementing one of the most important recommendations of the OSCE's external auditors.

Furthermore, throughout 2003, work has been ongoing on updating the OSCE's Financial Regulations, which has resulted in a comprehensive proposal drafted by the Secretariat. It is expected that the review of this proposal will be concluded early in 2004.

On the whole, 2003 has seen significant progress in strengthening the management and budget process of the OSCE, which allows the Organization to take on an increasing number of tasks by using the finite resources more efficiently and more effectively. In this respect, the management reform agenda has proven to be an enabling tool for the political decision-making processes.

ACTIVITIES OF THE CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES

The Agreement on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Article II, Annex 1B), and the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control (Article IV, Annex 1B, Dayton Peace Accords)

The Netherlands Chairmanship closely followed the activities of the Personal Representative for the Article II/Annex 1B, Dayton Peace Accords on confidence- and security-building measures in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Article IV/Annex 1B, Dayton Peace Accords on sub-regional arms control. The Chairmanship supported and recognised the work of the States Parties for the full implementation of these agreements.

This year has seen substantive and positive changes, in South-eastern Europe. The defence reform initiatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina are an important contribution with regard to that country's efforts towards European integration and the *Partnership for Peace programme*. The Parties to the Article IV Agreement successfully concluded negotiations on modalities for inspections by the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These inspections, the first of their kind by Bosnia and Herzegovina, occurred in October of this year. In short, both agreements were implemented fully this year in an environment of trust, openness and transparency.

For the implementation of Article II, the regular activities were executed; in addition a *seminar on the Code of Conduct* was organised, as well as, *inter alia*, a seminar on *Economic Aspects of Security* and the first *Command Post exercise on Disaster Relief*. All these activities will be maintained in 2004.

All Parties to Article IV of this agreement are undergoing a process of restructuring of the armed forces, as well as demobilisation of personnel. The end result is excess equipment. Agreement was reached that for any further reduction of equipment, the Party conducting the reduction will notify the other Parties, who may send observers to verify the process. This is a purely voluntary notification but it is a sign of the goodwill and transparency existing among the Article IV Parties.

The Parties agreed to update the *Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control* by incorporating, as footnotes, those decisions taken by the Commission; and those decisions made at the three review conferences which have substantially affected the inspection process or the overall implementation of the agreement. In 2004, the Parties will look for ways for improvements.

The Personal Envoy to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Max van der Stoel, Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office, continued to visit the country on a regular basis in support of the general policy objectives of the OSCE Chairmanship. During his visits, he particularly focused on the South Eastern Europe University in Tetovo. In 2003, the priorities of the OSCE were centred around the implementation of the *Ohrid Framework Agreement*, in order to further strengthen peace and stability in the country. Although some localised incidents continued to occur, the overall trend of gradual improvement of the situation was further consolidated.

Personal Representative for Moldova

The Chairman-in-Office appointed Ambassador Adriaan Jacobovits de Szegeged as Personal Representative for Moldova in January 2003 to strengthen its involvement and intensify the efforts to bring the Moldovan/Transnistrian conflict closer to a solution. The main task of Ambassador Jacobovits was to support the efforts undertaken by the OSCE and its Mission to Moldova to contribute to resolving issues that impact on Moldova's progress towards greater peace, stability and democracy. The Personal Representative attended the monthly five-sided (Moldova, Transnistria, OSCE, Russia and Ukraine) rounds of the political negotiation process in Moldova. Within this framework agreement was reached to seek a settlement of the Transnistrian problem through the establishment of a Joint Constitutional Commission to jointly draft and adopt a constitution of a federal state through a preliminary nation-wide discussion, followed by a referendum and national elections. Furthermore, Ambassador Jacobovits de Szegeged conducted consultations in several OSCE participating States and participated in several seminars on federalism.

Office of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference

In view of the slowdown of the negotiations on the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict the role of the Personal Representative, Ambassador Kasprzyk, in keeping the Chairmanship and the Minsk Group, including its Co-chairs, fully informed of developments on the ground increased. The Personal Representative and his Office also continued their task of monitoring the front line to assess the military situation and to assist in reducing tension. This was particularly important during the period from May to August when the situation threatened to deteriorate and reports from the Personal Representative gave early warning of this. Towards the end of the reporting period the front line appeared to have stabilised.

The Personal Representative assisted the High Level Planning Group. Contact was maintained with organisations such as the EU, CoE, UNHCR, ICRC and various international NGOs, with relation to the major problems of IDPs/refugees, POWs, missing persons/detainees and mine clearance.

Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) promoted by the Office between the sides were largely confined to what was needed to carry out monitorings and assist in the return of POWs and other persons detained by the sides on the front line. Efforts were made to encourage contact between the sides at local level. There was little progress in this, but the Personal Representative was successful in arranging the return of livestock from the Armenian to the Azerbaijani side and this involved a face-to-face meeting between military and civilian officials of the sides. Work continued on planning for future CBMs to be implemented when the climate is right.

The High-Level Planning Group

The *High-Level Planning Group (HLPG)* was established in 1994 at the Budapest Summit of Heads of State or Government of the participating States of the OSCE (then the CSCE), to make recommendations for planning options of a multinational OSCE peace-keeping force to the Chairman-in-Office for the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, based on directives given. It liaises with the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group, as well as the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference and contributing States.

In July 2003 the Chairman-in-Office issued Directives 7 and 7a, which state inter alia that, after a period of six years, a low-profile reconnaissance mission in the region should be conducted in order to obtain information and knowledge pertaining to the operational, logistic and financial aspects of the existing contingency-planning.

Furthermore, the Directive 7a states that in order to broaden the scope of the HLPG, the Group is tasked, after consultations with

the Chair, to make available its expertise and experience to the OSCE as a whole.

The HLPG continues to refine the operational plans based on its mandate, in accordance with ongoing developments.

The CiO's Personal Representative, Personal Envoy of the CiO for participating States in Central Asia, President Martti Ahtisaari



The Chairman-in-Office appointed President Ahtisaari in early 2003 as his Personal Envoy for participating States in Central Asia. The main task of President Ahtisaari has been to maintain contacts at the highest political levels with the participating States in Central Asia.

During his visits, the following issues were discussed: the co-operation with the OSCE in different spheres, the role of non-governmental organisations; pluralism in political life; human rights concerns; legislative reform; and regional co-operation. More specific matters included the situation of detained or imprisoned persons, whose fate has been of special concern to the international community.

While recognising the particularities and differences between the five Central Asian participating States, the Personal Envoy highlighted three main areas of vital importance for the future of the countries involved: the importance of establishing a good education system; the importance of good neighbourly relations; and the need to support civil society through the creation of non-governmental organisations.

All of these issues are highlighted in the situation of the young generation of citizens, which needs to be encouraged to remain actively involved in the processes of economic and legal change.

Through his discussions, the Personal Envoy underlined the importance of dialogue and co-operation through mutual understanding, and the need for visible steps towards the fulfilling of OSCE commitments.

THE REPORTS OF THE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE RESPECTIVE CONTACT GROUPS WITH THE MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION AND PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION IN ASIA

Mediterranean Partners currently include: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia

Partners for Co-operation currently include: Afghanistan, Japan, Korea and Thailand

Augmenting and Transforming Relations with Partner States

The 11th Ministerial Council

In 2003, heightened attention to the enhancement of relations with the OSCE Partners for Co-operation culminated in the adoption of relevant decisions by the 11th Ministerial Council meeting. In the *OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century*, the Foreign Ministers decided to intensify co-operation with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation, by early identification of areas of common interest and concern and possibilities for further co-ordinated action.

In addition, participating States decided that the Organization should look for ways 'in which OSCE norms, principles, commitments and values could be shared with other regions, in particular neighbouring areas'.

They expressed interest in interacting with Partners to enhance mutual security through such arrangements as including them in information exchanges that form part of the OSCE confidence- and security-building measures regime. It was also decided that the Partners for Co-operation would participate on a more frequent basis as observers in Permanent Council and Forum for Security Co-operation meetings.

The Ministerial Troika

Among the highlights in 2003 was the OSCE Ministerial Troika that met with counterparts respectively from the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and the Partners for Co-operation in Asia, on the eve of the 11th Ministerial Council. They agreed on the importance of forging closer relations by furthering dialogue and joint activities, including in the Partner States themselves.

The Permanent Council Meetings

Throughout the year, with a view to closer interaction, the Chairmanship regularly invited representatives of the Partner States to Permanent Council meetings, particularly when special guests were invited, such as the Secretaries General of the Council of Europe and NATO. The Chairmanship invited the Foreign Minister of Tunisia, H.E. Mr. Habib Ben Yahia, and the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, the OSCE's newest Partner for Co-operation, to address the Permanent Council in March and December respectively.

At the level of the OSCE Troika Ambassadors and the Secretary General, a useful exchange of views took place at a meeting with H.E. President Bouteflika of Algeria during his visit to Vienna.

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OSCE Mediterranean Seminar

In November, Jordan was invited to report to the Permanent Council on the outcome of the *OSCE Mediterranean Seminar* held in October in Aqaba, on the comprehensive approach to security: the OSCE experience and its relevance for the Mediterranean region. The fact that the Seminar took place in Jordan conveyed a strong and positive political message, especially taking into account the prevailing situation in the Middle East.

The Seminar was inaugurated by Mr. Shaher Bak, Jordan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and Dr. Solomon Passy, Bulgaria's Foreign Minister. It brought some 120 participants from participating States and MPCs, academic institutions, international organisations and NGOs. The Seminar provided the opportunity to exchange views on important prerequisites for the prevention of conflicts: confidence-building, capacity-building and poverty reduction, as well as democratic institution-building and civil society development. It reiterated that the OSCE's common values could serve as a basis for further dialogue between the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners.

Proposals made at the Seminar included outreach activities to the capitals of the Partner States, the establishment of a Conflict Prevention Centre in the Mediterranean, regular access of Partner States to the meetings of the Permanent Council and Forum for Security Co-operation, and the development of co-operation between the Council of Europe's Venice Commission and interested Mediterranean Partners.

New forms of co-operation

The Bulgarian Chairmanship in 2004 is looking forward to working together with the Mediterranean Partners on a new evolving mechanism of co-operation, bringing OSCE expertise to the Partner States, to their officials, experts, the public, academics, the media, civil society and NGOs. This would be one way of disseminating and exchanging information, with the largest possible number of participants in the Partner States on the OSCE's *acquis*. It is envisaged that the first activity of this kind will take place in Algeria for the Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) on the topic of Freedom and Responsibility: the Media. It is hoped that similar activities covering other topics and other groups of countries will follow.

The potential for increasing dialogue and co-operation was discussed at the Aqaba Seminar. Subsequent discussions in the Preparatory Committee, both in Vienna and in Maastricht, on the basis of a draft decision tabled by the delegation of Turkey, ultimately resulted in the adoption of *Permanent Council Decision No. 571 on Furthering Dialogue and Co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and Exploring the Scope for Wider Sharing of OSCE Norms, Principles and Commitments with Others*. This decision foresees work in 2004, among others, on the identification of additional fields of co-operation and interaction with Partners, the sharing of OSCE norms, principles and commitments with others, including adjacent areas, and procedures for future application for partnership.

The Seoul Workshop

Similarly, the Republic of Korea was invited to brief the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation on the results of the joint workshop (organised by the OSCE and the *Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, IFANS*) held in September in Seoul, on the Applicability of OSCE CSBMs in Northeast Asia Revisited. More than thirty OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation took part in the event, including the five parties involved in the dialogue process with North Korea, whose diplomatic representative in Vienna was informed about the outcome of the meeting. The event provided the opportunity to discuss possibilities on how to initiate a multilateral dialogue on security and confidence- and trust-building issues in Northeast Asia. Another Partner for Co-operation, Thailand, was invited to address a joint PC/FSC meeting on anti-personnel landmines. All partners attended an FSC meeting on Civil Emergency Planning in December.

Contact Group Meetings

The respective Contact Group meetings with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation continued to strengthen ongoing dialogue and co-operation between participating States and the Partners for Co-operation, as well as among the Partners themselves. An exchange of views on the OSCE activities figured prominently in these meetings, which took place in close consultation with the Netherlands Chairmanship and with the advice and support of the *OSCE Secretariat's External Co-operation Section*.

The security of the Mediterranean depends above all on a close, solid and equal relationship between the countries on both shores.
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, Habib Ben Yahia, at the
OSCE Permanent Council Meeting, 27 March.

The Contact Group with Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

The Contact Group with Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation convened six times, bringing together participating States and Mediterranean Partners. It continued to facilitate the interchange of information of mutual interest and the generation of ideas. Chaired by Bulgaria, the incoming OSCE Chairmanship, topics for discussion included: the work of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, which was presented by the President of the Assembly, the Rt. Hon. Bruce George, M.P.; tasks undertaken in the Economic and Environmental Dimension; the field activities of the Organization; and the role of the Conflict Prevention Centre. The Mediterranean Contact Group meetings were preceded by meetings at the level of the Contact Points to prepare the agenda and explore other forms of co-operation in the OSCE Mediterranean dimension.

The Contact Group with the Partners for Co-operation in Asia

Similarly, the Contact Group with the Partners for Co-operation in Asia, which was launched for the first time in 2003, convened four times under the Chairmanship of Portugal, the outgoing OSCE Troika member. Themes for discussion during the meetings that brought together participating States and the Asian Partners included: trafficking in human beings, drugs and small arms and light weapons; the OSCE *Asia Academic Network*; the OSCE *Japan Conference on Conflict Prevention*; an overview of CSBMs and the *Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA)*. Further, discussions focused on gender equality; OSCE field activities in Central Asia; preventing and combating terrorism; Korea's Policy for Peace and Prosperity; and a Multilateral Security Mechanism in Northeast Asia.

Afghanistan: a new Partner for Co-operation

Afghanistan became a Partner for Co-operation in April, and was welcomed to a meeting of the Asian Contact Group a month later. Afghanistan shares common borders and security interests with three OSCE participating States in Central Asia – Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Afghanistan participated in OSCE events in Kyrgyzstan on the security of travel documents, and in Uzbekistan on the training for border and customs guard officials.

Jordan hosted the Annual Meeting of the OSCE with its Mediterranean partners, to examine how Europe's experiences from the OSCE could be relevant to the Middle East. It could prove to be an important step in discussions aimed at finding the appropriate model for regional dialogue.

From an article in the *Financial Times*, 16 November, by Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller and Jordanian Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher.

The forthcoming OSCE-Japan Conference

Japan has offered to host an *OSCE-Japan Conference on the Search for Conflict Prevention in the New Security Circumstances – European Security Mechanisms and Security in Asia*, to be held in Tokyo, in March 2004. Members of the ASEAN Regional Forum will be invited to participate.

Other activities

During the course of the year, all Partners for Co-operation were invited to attend the Working Group on the OSCE *Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century* and to make written proposals. Partner States were invited to join in other OSCE activities, such as the first-ever *Annual Security Review Conference*, as well as the *Conference on Anti-Semitism*, the *Conference on Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination*, and, the *one on Globalisation*.

In 2003, relations with Partner States were augmented and transformed. There is need to continue considering possibilities of enhancing the OSCE's Mediterranean dimension as well as relations with the Partners for Co-operation in Asia, by seeking ways to take advantage of the new momentum generated. The Partners are also encouraged to take part in various OSCE activities which are open to their participation. The further strengthening of the fruitful co-operation depends on Partner and participating States alike.

More information on the Chairpersons' activities can be found in this report's section on External Co-operation.



THE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION

THE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION

The FSC dedicated a significant amount of attention to identifying and addressing the threats to security and stability in the 21st century and other tasks from the 10th Ministerial Council, while continuing to productively engage with issues from its traditional portfolio. In accordance with its mandate, an underlying motif to the FSC's work has been a focus on enhancing security through development of concrete measures, programmes and projects, such as the *OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition*.

A key effort by the FSC Chairmanship during 2003 has been to increase the visibility of the FSC within the Organization and beyond, and to strengthen its effectiveness, whether in its own work or as an integral body of the OSCE.

A noteworthy aspect of its work has been enhanced co-operation with the Permanent Council (PC) on politico-military matters on multiple levels. This was particularly useful in fulfilling the tasks from the 10th Ministerial Council. In one case, in addition to contributions during the preparation of the first *Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC)*, the FSC played an active role during the ASRC itself. Most of the FSC work on peacekeeping was conducted in an informal working group. This work, complementary to the more general review being conducted by the PC, considerably raised the FSC's level of awareness of the complexity of peacekeeping operations, as well as highlighting the requirements, including resources, that might be needed by them.



The FSC continues to facilitate implementation of the *Small Arms and Light Weapons Document*. In July, Belarus was the first participating State to request OSCE assistance in destroying and controlling excess SALW. Following the steps outlined in the Expert Advice on providing assistance under the SALW Document, consultations by the FSC Chairperson in co-ordination with the representative of the CiO are currently underway. A complementary document, the *OSCE Handbook of Best Practice Guides on SALW* has now been completed. It has been made available to all OSCE participating States, as well as the global community, in all six languages.



The Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition: part of wider OSCE efforts in the politico-military field in response to threats in the OSCE region. This document provides a mechanism for participating States to request international assistance to destroy or better manage stockpiles of conventional ammunition, explosive material and detonating devices.

The *Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition*, agreed in November, establishes a mechanism that will allow participating States to request international assistance to either destroy or better manage stockpiles of conventional ammunition, explosive material and detonating devices. This Document is an important contribution to wider OSCE efforts in the politico-military field, demonstrating the will of participating States to promote co-operative responses to threats in the OSCE region.

The FSC has kept the issue of combating terrorism on its agenda. An example is the effort by the FSC to respond to the threat posed by the potential access of terrorist groups to *Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS)* by encouraging effective and comprehensive export controls.

A key element of the FSC's traditional portfolio, the *Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security* has proven to be one of the OSCE's main tools in the fight against terrorism. The FSC completed a technical update of the questionnaire on implementation of the Code of Conduct early in 2003, seeking to make it a more useful tool for participating States.

The FSC continues to devote significant attention to its traditional activities. While no new traditional arms control or CSBMs have been established during 2003, the participating States retained their interest in improving implementation of existing agreements. When considering current security issues in the politico-military dimension, the FSC has most often used its regular security dialogue function. The security dialogue acts as a transparent confidence-building tool for the FSC, allowing the participating States to strengthen security and stability.

The FSC's focus on practical programmes, demonstrates the significant contribution it has made, and can continue to make, to enhance security across the OSCE region.



THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

The great thing about the OSCE is its diversity, flexibility and adaptability. It is unique in its interrelationships between so many seemingly disparate issues, and in addressing security and human rights within the same organisation.

President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly,
Bruce George.

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Context

The Parliamentary Assembly (PA) of the OSCE is the parliamentary dimension of the 55-nation *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe*.

The primary task of the 317 member Assembly is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue an important aspect of the overall effort to meet the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE area.

Originally established by the 1990 Paris Summit to promote greater involvement in the OSCE by national Parliaments, the Parliamentary Assembly has grown into a very active member of the OSCE family.

A dialogue aimed at further strengthening ties and co-operation between the inter-governmental and parliamentary OSCE branches has been positive and productive. The President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has continued to participate regularly at the political level in the OSCE, including Ministerial Troika meetings and the Ministerial Council. The Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the staff of the Assembly's International Secretariat, located in Copenhagen, work closely with the OSCE Secretariat and with the other OSCE Institutions.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has a unique structure.

The President of the Assembly is elected each year by majority vote of the Assembly, presides over Assembly meetings and acts as the High Representative of the Assembly. The Secretary General is elected every five years by approximate consensus or majority vote of the *Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations* from all OSCE member parliaments. The President is assisted by nine elected Vice-Presidents and an elected Treasurer. The Secretary General manages the day-to-day affairs of the Assembly and is responsible for the International Secretariat and, with the Treasurer, oversees financial management.

Ministerial Council Meeting, Maastricht, December 2003

Calls for flexibility in consensus rule

In their respective addresses to the 11th Ministerial Council in Maastricht, both the Chairman-in-Office and the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly raised questions about the current OSCE consensus rule, advocating recommendations for flexibility.

In his address to the Ministerial Council, PA President Bruce George pointed out that although NATO has a consensus rule like the OSCE, it has evolved different ways of being flexible so as not to allow a paralysis of non-decision making. 'Consensus has its price. If that price is the absence of taking the right and necessary decision or to postpone the right decision, or to dilute the decisions, one may wonder if the price to be paid is too high. Perhaps you may look again at the Assembly's principle of occasionally using approximate consensus.'

The Assembly has been recommending a change in the consensus rule for more than ten years.

Annual Session, Rotterdam, July 2003

Role of OSCE in New Architecture of Europe

At its 12th Annual Session in Rotterdam, the Assembly focused on *The Role of the OSCE in the New Architecture of Europe*. Nearly 300 parliamentarians adopted the *Rotterdam Declaration*, covering a wide range of political, economic and human rights aspects of the main theme.

Several additional documents were also adopted, including those on:

- *resolutions on welcoming Afghanistan as a new partner for co-operation*
- *renewing the OSCE partnership*
- *parliamentary follow-up of OSCE activities at the national level*
- *OSCE peacekeeping operations*
- *the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension*
- *combating trafficking and exploitation of children*
- *the role of the OSCE towards the greater Europe*
- *combating anti-Semitism in the 21st century*
- *the International Criminal Court and on the prisoners detained by the United States at the Guantanamo Base*
- *Moldova*
- *Belarus*.

In keeping with established practice, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, along with the OSCE Secretary General and the Heads of Institutions, addressed the Annual Session in Rotterdam and answered questions from the floor.

A special meeting of woman parliamentarians was dedicated to the 2003 OSCE PA Gender Report. On the final day of the Annual Session, the Assembly unanimously re-elected Bruce George, the *Chair of the Defence Committee* of the British House of Commons, as its President for a second one-year term and Treasurer Jerry Grafstein (Canada) for a second two-year term.

The Assembly elected four new Vice Presidents: Nino Burjanadze (Georgia), Giovanni Kessler (Italy), Tone Tingsgaard (Sweden), and Nevzat Yalcintas (Turkey). Vice President Tone Tingsgaard was appointed by President Bruce George as the new *OSCE PA Special Representative on the Gender Issue*.

Winter Meeting, Vienna, February 2003

The Iraq Crisis Debate

One of the main highlights of the Second Winter Meeting in Vienna was a special debate on the situation in Iraq. It was the first of its kind on any specific subject related to a current international crisis.

The Winter Meeting also followed up on the previous year's Declaration, prepared for the forthcoming Annual Session, and heard reports from leading OSCE Officials, including Chairman-in-Office, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, who urged OSCE parliamentarians to use their influence to help reinforce democratic structures and institutions throughout the OSCE region.

Election Monitoring Leadership

Throughout 2003, the Parliamentary Assembly has continued to play a key part in the monitoring of elections, particularly parliamentary elections, in the OSCE area.

Whenever the OSCE PA plays a leading role in monitoring elections, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office appoints a senior member of the Assembly to act as his Special Co-ordinator – to lead the OSCE observers and present the conclusions of the observation mission, in conjunction with other official observers. In 2003, Special Co-ordinators were appointed for the elections in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Russian Federation, and Serbia & Montenegro.

Monitoring activities

In 2003 the Chairman-in-Office appointed:

- *OSCE PA President Bruce George as his Special Co-ordinator for the elections in Georgia (November) and the Russian Federation (December)*
- *Vice President Giovanni Kessler as Special Co-ordinator for the elections in Armenia (May) and Azerbaijan (October)*
- *Vice President Ihor Ostash as Special Co-ordinator for the elections in Serbia & Montenegro (December).*

These Election Monitoring Missions were conducted in close co-operation with the OSCE's *Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights* (ODIHR), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and the European Parliament. They involved several hundreds parliamentarians from throughout the OSCE area.

Parliamentary Field Visits

The OSCE PA has organised regular parliamentary visits to OSCE Field Offices and Missions to enable parliamentarians to observe the activities of the OSCE in the field and to support the important work of the missions.

In 2003, visits have been organised to the OSCE field presences in Croatia, Albania and the FYR of Macedonia.

Ad Hoc Committees

The OSCE PA *Ad Hoc Committees* – which have been established to address specific issues or areas that may benefit from parliamentary attention – continued to make a positive contribution to the work of the OSCE.

Further initiatives for transparency and accountability

As a direct result of the *Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability's* initiative, the OSCE Secretary General briefed parliamentarians, for the second time, on the proposed OSCE budget for the following year. At their October Meeting in Rome, members of the Standing Committee discussed the proposed 2004 OSCE Budget and put questions to the Secretary General.

After the debate it was agreed that the OSCE PA would forward the Assembly's comments and recommendations to the Chairmanship and Secretary General in November. The presidential letter to that effect emphasises that adequate resources are needed to match the OSCE's increased attention to combat trafficking in human beings; specifically to develop police capabilities and effective border controls; to strengthen the economic dimension of the OSCE; and to enhance efforts to improve gender balance; particularly in high level OSCE positions.

Facilitating dialogue in Belarus

During three visits to Minsk, the *Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus* continued to pursue its aim of facilitating dialogue between political forces in the country, in particular regard to the forthcoming parliamentary elections tentatively scheduled for October 2004.

The Working Group also organised a round table on the Belarusian electoral code on the sidelines of the *Rotterdam Annual Session* and the Working Group Chair initiated a resolution on Belarus which was passed by the Assembly in Rotterdam.

Resolving the status of Transnistria

In pursuit of its particular priority, the *Parliamentary Team on Moldova* organised, in close co-operation with the OSCE Mission, two Parliamentary Seminars on Federalism in May and September in Moldova. The purpose of the Seminars was to further promote the ongoing negotiations, between Moldova and the Transnistrian region, on a new constitution for Moldova.

The PA and ODIHR: 'working practices more streamlined'
President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Bruce George (right) meeting with ODIHR Director Christian Strohal during a working visit to Warsaw on 8 September.



Meetings, Conferences & Seminars

Sharpened focus on Central Asia

The Trans-Asian Dimension of the OSCE: a Vital Security Link was the main theme of the *Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum*, organised by the OSCE PA in Almaty, Kazakhstan in June.

The Forum gathered more than 90 parliamentarians from 30 OSCE participating States and its main goal was to raise awareness and increase parliamentary dialogue on issues of security in the Trans-Asian dimension of the OSCE.

Promoting SMEs in the OSCE area

In May, in Bern, parliamentarians from more than 30 OSCE participating States agreed on the *Bern Declaration on Promoting Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)* in the OSCE area. The Declaration calls upon participating States to create legal and regulatory environments favourable to the development of SMEs, along with attractive taxation systems and guaranteed access to various infrastructures.

The Conference in Bern was the third conference organised by the OSCE PA in the field of sub-regional economic co-operation, and followed those held in Monaco (1997) and Nantes (1999). The next conference will be held in Norway in 2005.

Oversight of Armed Forces.

The OSCE *Conflict Prevention Centre* and the OSCE PA held a second joint seminar in June, in Kiev. It promoted awareness of the parliamentary responsibilities outlined in the *Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security* and fostered dialogue between senior military personnel and parliamentarians involved in oversight of the armed forces.

Fall Meetings: Religious Freedom and the Mediterranean Forum

More than 160 parliamentarians from 49 participating States and partners took part in the 2003 OSCE PA *Fall Meetings*, which were held in October in Rome.

The Conference focussed on the law and politics of religious freedom; religious tolerance in pluralistic societies, and religious freedom and democracy; and was followed by a Papal audience. The subsequent *Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean* focused on strengthening security in that area and developing the OSCE Mediterranean dimension.

Other Activities

PA Leadership Meetings

Regular meetings of the leadership of the Parliamentary Assembly have taken place in Vienna (Standing Committee), Copenhagen (Expanded Bureau), Rotterdam (Bureau, Standing Committee), Rome (Standing Committee) and Maastricht (Bureau).

Presidential activities

Throughout 2003 President George has been very active as the High Representative of the Assembly.

Apart from presiding over all statutory meetings of the Assembly during the year, Mr. George travelled widely in the OSCE area representing the Assembly.

He has visited several OSCE participating States including the USA, the Russian Federation, Italy, Bulgaria, Poland, the Netherlands, Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

President George also paid an official visit to Algeria, one of the OSCE's Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

He actively participated in other OSCE PA events, including the *Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum* in June and the Assembly's *Sub-Regional Economic Conference* in Bern.

President George also addressed the Plenary of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in January, and the Plenary of the NATO PA in Orlando in November.

He led an OSCE PA Delegation on the first PA official visit to the UN in November, and also participated in OSCE conferences including the *Anti-Terrorism Conference* in Lisbon, the *Conference on Preventing Xenophobia* in Vienna, and the *OSCE Mediterranean Seminar* held in Aqaba, Jordan.

PA Liaison Office Vienna

In January the OSCE PA opened a Liaison Office in Vienna, headed by Ambassador Andreas Nothelle, who, in July, briefed the Permanent Council on the outcomes of the Rotterdam Annual Session.

Journalism Award

The PA awarded the eighth OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy to Anna Politkovskaya, during its February 2003 Winter Meeting.

The winner is a journalist with the independent Russian newspaper *Novaya Gazeta* who gained international recognition for her extensive and balanced reporting in Chechnya, which drew attention to human rights abuses in the region.

I think it has been a very good year for the Assembly. We have become more coherent, are functioning better in relation to the OSCE, and I believe have a dynamism to capitalise upon.

The work we have done with the ODIHR in monitoring elections has been of a high order. We have a very good relationship to be built upon. We've done a lot of good work while going out and visiting the field missions.

I think the strength of the OSCE is the field presence where grassroots work is been done. Parliamentarians are given advice on how to work a committee system better, and judges and border guards are trained. But we can continue to do a better job, and it is within our collective hands to do it.

The PA and ODIHR have got their working practices more streamlined – that process of binding together was really evident throughout the series of Georgian elections, the Russian Parliamentary elections, and the Serb election. What better testimony can you have than members of the Assembly and ODIHR, and the men and women who went out from the capitals of many, many countries, who went to observe elections in the middle of winter, between Christmas and New Year? They showed their real commitment. I think it was these factors which helped make an even better relationship between the Institutions.

We (the PA and the ODIHR) both have a well-established commitment: to monitor and encourage countries with a young or recent tradition of

democracy who are aspiring to meet their commitments. The PA and ODIHR's expertise, with the rest of the OSCE working with us, is the way in which we have been activated.

I'm very proud of the fact that the Assembly has encouraged the OSCE to deepen its Mediterranean commitments. We have Mediterranean Partners and I believe we are well on the way to more fully involving them in the process.

So, when you add up those factors of good relationship with the OSCE and its Institutions, and the Mediterranean dialogue, I'm happy with the way things are going.

Bruce George, President of the Parliamentary Assembly



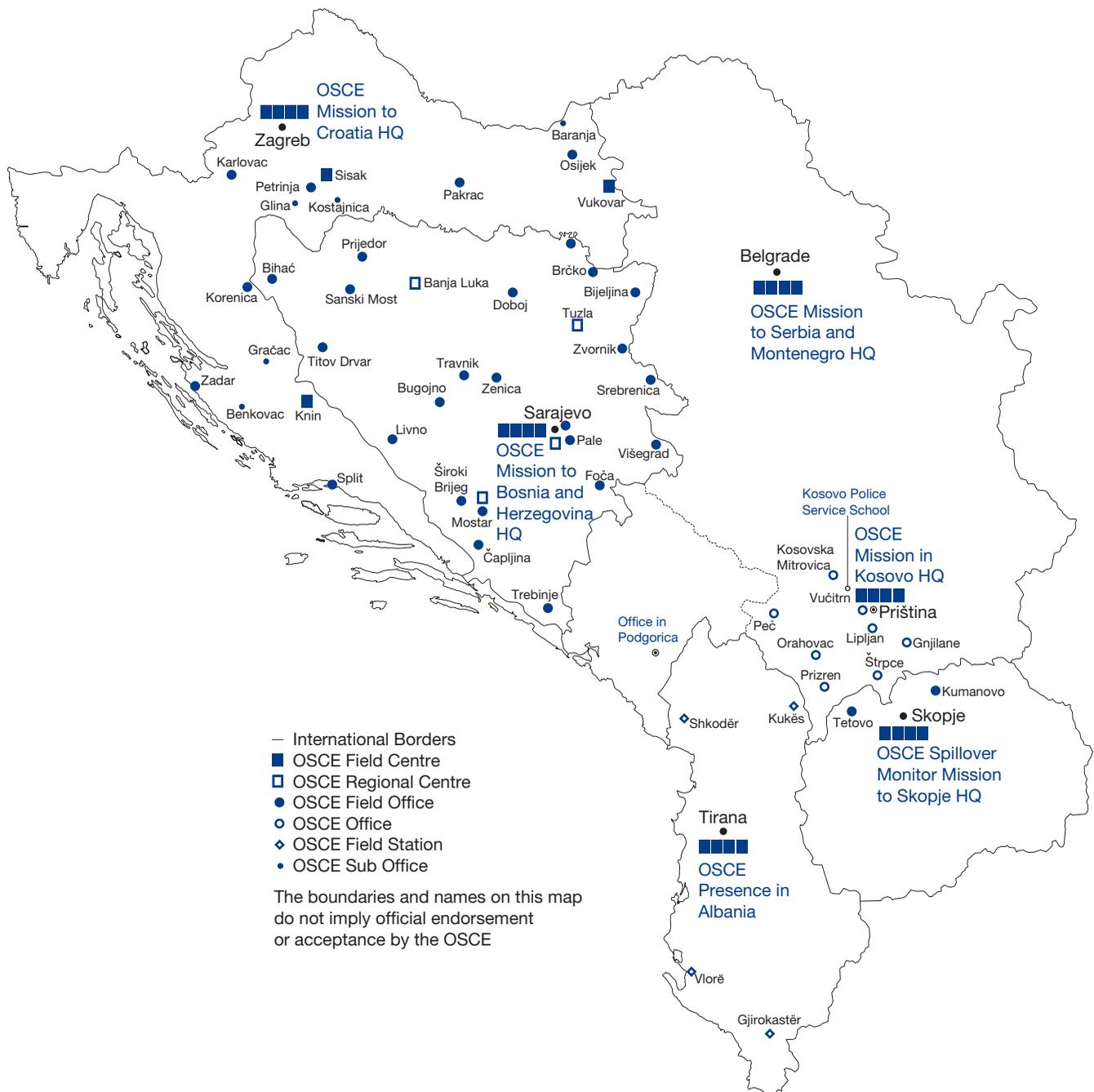


Martha Freeman/OSCE



OSCE FIELD OPERATIONS 2003

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE



OSCE Presence in Albania

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF PRESENCE

The year 2003 has been marked by a restructuring of the Presence, a refocusing of its activities, and a new mandate adopted on 24 December. These changes have helped to maintain the Presence's role as a moderator and facilitator on important political issues.

With the Albanian partners and the OSCE/ODIHR, the Presence made an important contribution to electoral reform and the adoption of the new Electoral Code in June.

The OSCE-led Technical Expert Group gathered key national and international experts who drafted a new property restitution and compensation law in October – a law which is expected to resolve the long standing property issue in Albania. The draft successfully made its way through the parliamentary committees and its adoption is expected in 2004.

In all areas of its work, the Presence has continued to co-operate actively with the Albanian Government, other state institutions, civil society and the international community in promoting democratization, human rights and rule of law.

Head of Presence, Osomo Lipponen



The OSCE recognises that the political, social and economic situation in Albania is improving.

The Presence focuses on:

- legislative and judicial reform, including property reform
- regional administrative reform
- electoral reform
- parliamentary capacity-building
- anti-trafficking and anti-corruption activities, including support for the implementation of the relevant national strategies
- developing legislation with regard to the media
- promoting good governance and projects to strengthen civil society
- police assistance, in particular training for border police.

Local government elections took place in Albania on 12 October under the new Code in 384 municipalities and communes. The Presence assisted the OSCE/ODIHR *election observation mission* in its work and also continued to follow a number of re-run elections throughout the country.



Human Dimension Activities

ELECTORAL REFORM AND DEMOCRATIZATION

The Bipartisan Committee and the new Electoral Code

The Presence facilitated and supported the work of the *Bipartisan Committee for Electoral Reform*. With the consensus of the two main parties and contribution from the smaller ones, by April the Committee had addressed most of the recommendations contained in the OSCE/ODIHR *Final Report on the 2001 elections*. Bilateral discussions between the two main parties resulted in additional amendments on other issues such as electoral administration. The resulting new *Electoral Code* was agreed by the Assembly in June, ending a decade of opposition-majority disagreement over the legal framework for elections. The two largest parties have committed themselves to a second phase of discussions on outstanding issues identified to take place after the local government elections held in October.

In the context of its electoral assistance project, the Presence funded local expertise on key sections of the Code and organised training for the media on the new provisions governing its role in the campaign and journalistic ethics in elections.

Developing national election observation capacities

Through a capacity-building project, the Presence facilitated the establishment of a *Forum of Domestic Observers* for the local government elections, which resulted in 18 organisations adopting standardised election observation methodology and issuing a joint preliminary report. In co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Presence has also developed a pool of Albanian nationals for deployment as short- and long-term election observation missions.

Local self-government

The Presence has continued to support the implementation of the government's decentralisation strategy, and has been invited to assist with facilitation and expertise in the field of territorial reform.

Supporting Parliament

The Presence's parliamentary support project on modernising the capacity of the Albanian Assembly focused on two priorities in 2003: working with the Committee on Economy, Finance and Privatisation to expand and strengthen their participation in and oversight of the annual budget process; and continuing the parliamentary administration staff training begun at the end of 2002.

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With the Committee, the project organised a series of seminars on aspects of the annual budget preparation procedure, and on the *Medium-Term Expenditure Framework and the National Strategy for Socio-Economic Development* (NSSED). In mid-March, the project organised a study visit to the Parliaments of Finland, Sweden and Poland. The conclusions drawn from the study visit provided the committee members with further evidence to support their case for amending the Organic Budget Law in favour of enlarging the Assembly's role in the budget process.

The project completed an initial cycle of introductory training courses designed to strengthen the professional skills of the parliamentary administration staff. It also collaborated with other OSCE Missions in South-eastern Europe to organise a regional conference on the role of Parliaments in human and economic development in Sarajevo, in October.

Broadening support for civil society

The *Civil Society Development Centres* (CSDCs) project – which was developed in 2001 to deliver a grass-roots development programme to NGOs and community-based groups in five Albanian regions – improved the access of regional civil society to both local government and international organisations. The centres have been increasingly involved in fostering dialogue between civil society and local government and in co-ordinating different local civil society groups. An external evaluation established the CSDCs to be the only such regional centres to offer different kinds of services and training to civil society groups.

Strengthening civil society's role in policy-making

The Presence assisted the Government in drafting a *National Strategy on People with Disabilities* by supporting an inaugural conference on the strategy and initiating an institutionalised exchange among the ministries and civil society organisations dealing with the issue. The Presence has also ensured the contribution NGOs to a *National Monitoring and Reporting Scheme*, in co-operation with the Albanian Government and a high-level German expert. A donor conference is envisaged to take place in mid-2004 in Tirana.

Enhancing equal opportunities

The Presence has been assisting the Government's National Committee for Equal Opportunities to support their efforts in drafting a *National Gender Action Plan*. In close co-operation with Albanian NGOs, the Presence is aiming to expand the existing network of women counselling centres and legal aid offices to tackle the problem of domestic violence.



Zamira M. being supported by the Legal Aid Office. Advice helped her receive a food pension from the Social Aid Office for her two children.

The Legal Aid Office in Elbasan was created as integral part of the Women Counselling Centre, after an assessment had shown the immediate need to complete the circle of support of psychological and medical help for victims of domestic violence, with constructive legal advice.

Since the Presence helped the office become operational in December 2002, 36 legal consultations have been offered to both women and men. On average, the legal aid office deals with five new court cases every month.

RULE OF LAW AND JUDICIAL REFORM

Resolving property issues

The Presence has an active role in facilitating political discussions and negotiating compromises on the issue of restitution and compensation of immovable property. An OSCE-led expert group, comprising national and international experts, has provided legal support and technical advice to the Albanian Parliament in producing a balanced law on this issue. The group has submitted the final draft law on property to Parliament.

Identifying areas to be reformed

The Presence worked on a *Legal Sector Report* in order to develop a comprehensive strategy for judicial reform, in consultation with Albanian authorities and actors in the judicial sector. The Report describes the legislative framework, organisational structure, activities and a range of challenges in this sector. As a result of early observations, the Presence has initiated the *Fair Trial Development Project* to increase transparency in court practices and to raise trial standards.

Protecting witnesses

Through Presence assistance, a Memorandum of Understanding on Witness Protection was signed between Albanian authorities and international organisations in June. The memorandum formalised the Task Force on Witness Protection, which is chaired by the Presence, and brought new actors into this body. The Task Force has been successful in relocating victims whose testimony has been crucial for the prosecution of traffickers and other dangerous criminals. The Task Force facilitated the finalisation of the *Law on Witness Protection* which has been submitted by the Government to Parliament for approval.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Fighting human trafficking

The Presence signed a Memorandum of Understanding on pre-screening of irregular migrants, with the Ministries of Public Order and of Local Government and Decentralisation, and international partners. It enables referral of the detained foreigners to appropriate procedures for asylum and voluntary repatriation. A new Memorandum is expected to extend the pre-screening to border crossings.

Through the implementation of the *Victims Assistance Team* project, which ran from October 2002 to September 2003, the Presence provided legal advice to Albanian women repatriated from western European countries. The project assisted the Albanian authorities in identifying victims of trafficking more effectively. It strengthened co-operation between the Albanian Anti-Trafficking Police Teams and other relevant governmental and non-governmental actors, as well as improved the already existing referral system with the IOM, the Ministry of Public Order and the Prosecutor General's Office.

Tackling pre-trial detention conditions

The Presence has conducted a survey on respect for human rights in pre-trial detention, which suggested that physical conditions in cells have worsened in recent years.

Working on Romani and minority issues

The Presence assisted the Government in organising the first national roundtable on Roma and in compiling the *National Strategy for Improving Roma Living Conditions*. The Presence continues to monitor the implementation of this strategy and has begun a survey to assess minority access to education.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEDIA

Supporting regulation of broadcast spectrum

The Presence produced recommendations for the preparation of a frequency plan to the regulatory body, the National Council of Radio and Television (NCRT). An important contribution towards the regulation of the broadcast spectrum, this joint project was built upon established co-operation between the Presence, the International Research and Exchanges Board and the European Radio-communications Office.

Commenting on media legislation

In July, the Presence provided the Albanian Assembly with recommendations on the draft amendments to the electronic media law. A number of suggestions were adopted. The comments were compiled by ARTICLE 19 and were channelled through the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Boosting the business climate

In co-operation with the Ministry of Economy, the Presence has supported the SME sector in Albania by bringing the Government and private sector closer through a series of nation-wide seminars on *Free Trade Agreements* (FTA). This project also published background materials on FTAs for the business community. Given the project's success and continued interest, the Ministry has sought an extension of this co-operation by planning a series of TV broadcasts with business representatives and technical experts on free trade.

Integrating youth into the democratization process

A series of *Youth Entrepreneurship Seminars* (YES) was organised in Albania. The seminars aimed at stimulating youth participation in society, through enhancing their entrepreneurial spirit and awareness of their role in the democratic process.

Promoting good governance in different stakeholders

The Presence focused on issues of good governance and transparency, to promote actions against corruption, increase the efficiency of public officials and accountability of public and private stakeholders. Technical support and training in analytical skills were provided to the Ministry of Finance, and further activities are foreseen.

A project introducing business ethics in Albanian universities has been undertaken with the aim to enable young people to run businesses without corruption. The project consisted of training seminars for lecturers and students and publication of the teaching book *Ethics, Economy and Business*.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Boosting the cross-border co-operation process

The Presence facilitated *Joint Border Co-operation Meetings* (JBCM) between the Albanian State Police and UNMiK/KFOR. The JBCM is the forum for exchange of information in the cross-border co-operation process. Following the *Ohrid Conference* in May, and in conjunction with the terms of the *Way Forward Document*, the Presence has continued to support the Albanian Government, by assisting the State Police in the implementation of the *Strategic Integrated Border Management Plan*.



'Enough' is enough!

The OSCE Presence in Albania and the OSCE Netherlands Chairmanship co-operated with civil groups to run a four-month publicity campaign, which was aimed at increasing participation in civil society. Launched on 15 March 2003, the MJAFT! (ENOUGH!) campaign targets around 3 million Albanians at home and abroad and has been hailed as the largest awareness-raising and advocacy campaign ever held in Albania. MJAFT! has activated discussions and stirred public debates on numerous important issues in the country.

OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF MISSION

Significant progress has been achieved in 2003 through an ever deepening and productive partnership between the OSCE and Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities.

The Mission dedicated substantial efforts in facilitating the implementation of major reform of the education system in BiH. In June, the State Parliament adopted a Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education unanimously; Education Ministers agreed to a Common Core Curriculum in August; and the Government ratified the Lisbon Convention and signed the Bologna Declaration.

As a result, students throughout the country will soon enjoy the benefits flowing from a common foundation for further modernisation of the education system, ensuring better quality and higher standards for all.

For the first time since the 1992-95 conflict, BiH's armed forces will have a single command and administrative structure, and wear a single uniform. The Mission reflects with pride on its contribution to these positive developments.

The Mission also worked with BiH authorities to reform governance and the public administration at the local level: citizens are the Mission's focus and especially youth who were encouraged to engage in public life and actively support on-going reforms. The restoration of pre-war property to those displaced by the conflict was again a top priority, and, in contrast to earlier years, the results in 2003 were very positive. By year's end, 93% of the claims lodged had been resolved.

Although much work remains to be done in order to see irreversible stability and economic development take root in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Mission's work in 2003 can be assessed as having made a very real contribution to improving the quality of life for the citizens throughout the country.

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina is playing a central role in fostering peace, stability and democracy in the country. In 2003, the key focus areas were:

- implementing comprehensive reforms of the education system, and promoting equal access
- promoting citizens' engagement in public life, and enhancing public accountability of elected bodies
- supporting the return of refugees and IDPs
- monitoring human rights and rule of law, and mentoring human rights institutions
- assisting implementation of OSCE's politico-military commitments and supporting reform of defence structures.

Human Dimension Activities

EDUCATION

In co-operation with BiH authorities and other international agencies, the Mission has been working to implement the education reform targets agreed upon in 2002. A Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education was passed in June, setting core standards.

Promoting structural reforms

The Mission channelled efforts into promoting structural reforms of the education systems in co-operation with the Council of Europe, European Commission, World Bank and UN agencies. Consequently, a state-level *Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education* was passed in June, setting the basic standards for education and ensuring greater mobility for all students across BiH.

Soon after, BiH authorities adopted a Common Core Curriculum, which provides a basis for the harmonisation of syllabi for primary and general secondary education, and for further modernisation of BiH education systems. The Mission has also been working with its partner agencies on developing a state-level law on higher education.

Reunifying Mostar Old Gymnasium

The Mission encouraged authorities to re-unify the Mostar Old Gymnasium, which will allow Bosniac and Croat children to attend school together. The Gymnasium was registered as a single legal entity in August. The Mission is now supporting joint extra-curricular activities to promote greater interaction between students and teachers and fund raising for its reconstructions.



The Old Mostar Gymnasium has been a symbol of quality education in the region since it first opened its doors in 1893. In recent years, the school has fallen into disrepair, and has become ethnically segregated. The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina is working to help restore the school to its former glory. The first step is to ensure that the school will welcome students regardless of their heritage. Now known as the Gymnasium Mostar, students of different ethnic backgrounds will attend the school in 2004.

Promoting vocational education

The Mission worked closely with the European Union and the Council of Europe to develop a draft state-level framework law on vocational education and training, which aims to set the regulatory stage for further modernisation of this strategic sector for the economic development.

Another priority was to encourage BiH authorities to ensure a more transparent, equitable, cost-effective and financially sustainable investment of public resources in the education sector.

Putting an end to segregation in schools

The Mission encouraged returnee children to attend school in their area of return rather than commuting to attend ethnically segregated schools. The Mission is also supporting the BiH authorities to end the segregation phenomenon of 'two schools under one roof'.

The Mission supported the work of the Inter-Entity Textbook Review Commission, whose purpose was to remove inappropriate material from school textbooks prior to the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year.



Promoting equal access for all children

The promotion of non-discriminatory access to education – be they returnees, Roma or children with special needs – is another important element of the Mission's work in this field. Summer schools for Romani children were organised with a view to encourage their regular school enrolment.

Boosting higher education in BiH

The Mission worked intensively with its local and international partners to assist BiH to take a number of important steps in the reform of Higher Education, key among these were:

- the signing of the *Convention on Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region*, in July
- the joining of the *Bologna Process*, whose objective it is to establish a European higher-education zone by the year 2010. For students in BiH, this will mean increased mobility both within the country and abroad, easier recognition of qualifications and improved quality of degree programmes.

DEMOCRATIZATION

Promoting Government accountability

The *Parliamentary Support Programme* (PSP) enhanced the capacity of BiH Parliamentary Assembly members to perform their functions. It also facilitated co-operation between the State and Entity Parliaments.

Key components of the PSP were strengthening committee work, building the capacity of parliamentary support staff and supporting co-operation with the Parliaments of other OSCE participating States. The Mission also organised training sessions for journalists to enhance media reporting on parliamentary issues.

At the local level, the Mission assisted local authorities to implement measures to increase transparency and accountability in line with the *European Charter of Local Self-Government*.

With the objective of developing more responsive and accountable governance at all levels, the Mission is supporting the BiH authorities in their efforts to fully implement the Freedom of Information Act.

Promoting citizens' participation

The Mission's activities in this area were directed at promoting the development of an engaged, informed and empowered citizenry: able to seek accountability from the Government and organise itself to meet its own needs.

Work has begun to develop an appropriate legal and regulatory framework to promote voluntary action and citizens' engagement.

Involving young citizens

Increased participation of young people in public life, in particular at the municipal level, is the aim of the Mission's Youth programme. The Mission and the Council of Europe co-organised a conference in September, to promote the development of youth policy and called on BiH authorities to implement the *European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Municipal and Regional Life*.

Through the *Successor Generation Initiative Project* (SGI), the Mission worked directly with selected young leaders from various backgrounds, boosting their ability to take part in public life and act as agents of change.

Making public administration more efficient and transparent

The Mission worked with public administrations at the municipal and cantonal levels, providing assessments, recommendations and mentoring in the areas of public finance and human resources management.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW

Reuniting returnees with their property

The Mission continued work to promote and support the substantial completion of the property repossession process by the end of the year. Efforts were made in conjunction with the Office of the High Representative, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Commission for Real Property Claims.

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The issue of refugee return at the regional level was also addressed, in partnership with the OSCE Missions to Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro and the UNHCR. A *Joint Action Plan* – which set out clearly defined steps to facilitate the regional return process – is being implemented.

The Mission is also working to ensure that returnees have equal access to social benefits, such as health care and pensions, public utilities, education and employment.

Supporting human rights institutions

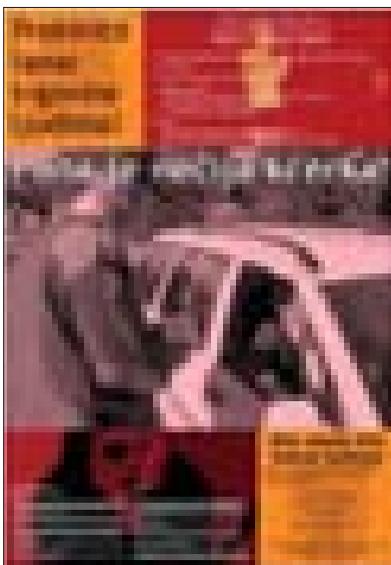
The Mission continued to monitor the implementation of the decisions of the Human Rights Chamber and to support the work of the entity ombudsman institutions as they are embedded within the domestic structures.

Monitoring the legal system

The implementation of the *Criminal Codes* and *Criminal Procedure Codes*, enacted at both State and Entity levels, were monitored to identify further legal reform needs, and to produce recommendations for the enhanced application of the Codes.

The Mission continued to monitor the domestic prosecution of war crimes to assess whether proceedings are conducted impartially, effectively and in accordance with international human rights standards.

With a view to producing recommendations to local authorities for the correct prosecution of such cases, the Mission also continued to observe trials related to trafficking in human beings, return-related violence and abuse of office.



Break the chain of human trafficking!

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina assisted a local working group to develop this anti-trafficking poster. The campaign targeted border guards, and provided advice on how to recognise potential victims of human trafficking. The OSCE's activities to combat trafficking in human beings include the monitoring of trafficking-related trials and judicial/legal reform initiatives. A joint project with the International Human Rights Law Group trains a cadre of specialized defence lawyers to represent victims of trafficking relying on existing BiH legislation and applicable international standards.

Fighting human trafficking

The Mission worked intensively with BiH authorities, local NGOs and other international organisations in their efforts to combat trafficking in human beings. There was a particular focus on supporting the BiH authorities to implement a *National Plan of Action for the Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings*.

Supporting the judicial reform

The Mission participated in the reappointment process of judges and prosecutors by providing information on the strength of candidature to the Independent Judicial Commission.

Additionally, technical assistance was provided to and through the Entity Judicial and Prosecutorial Training Centres.

Defending the rights of Roma and other minorities

Civil registration is essential as it allows children to enrol at school and to access social benefits. To this end, the Mission worked with Roma NGOs and BiH authorities to encourage Roma to register their children at birth.

The status of Romani informal settlements across BiH was assessed, examining security of tenure issues and housing assistance needs.



Top of the class!

Romani children are gaining greater access to schools in BiH, as part of Mission-supported education reforms. The OSCE has helped establish a special Roma Working Group as part of Pledge 1 of the BiH Education Reform Strategy. At Džemaludin Čaušević Primary School in Sarajevo, every Romani child in the local community has now enrolled in school.

Supporting BiH Election Commission

As a permanent member, the Mission supported and took part in the activities of the BiH Election Commission. Monitoring the implementation of the Law on Conflict of Interest, and electoral law reform, were the principal areas of concern.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Supporting the reform of defence structures

The current defence structures in BiH prevent the State from full compliance with BiH's commitments under the OSCE politico-military dimension, in particular democratic control of armed forces. The Mission participated in and supported the work of the Defence Reform Commission established in May 2003 by the High Representative. The reform aims require *inter alia* defence structures and related legislation to be fully consistent with the OSCE commitments undertaken by BiH.

The Commission concluded its work in September with the publication of its final report. The Mission then worked to galvanise the political support needed for the timely adoption of the relevant legislation related to the reform of defence structures. The BiH Law on Defence and other relevant laws were passed in December 2003.

Encouraging democratic control of armed forces

Major emphasis was given to establish functioning democratic control over armed forces – to enhance parliamentary oversight at the State level. In this regard the Mission worked with both houses of the BiH State Parliament to establish a joint committee on defence and security issues.

The Mission also continued to support the establishment of a fully operational secretariat for the Standing Committee for Military Matters.

The Mission continuing to assist implementation of OSCE's politico-military commitments

The Mission assisted BiH authorities with expertise for the drafting of *State Laws on Import and Export of Weapons and Military Equipment and on Arms Production and Trade*, to accord with the relevant OSCE documents. It also provided information technology support to enable BiH to connect to the OSCE *Communication Network* – a secure channel for military information exchange between OSCE participating States.

Implementing Annex 1B of Dayton Agreement

The Mission continued to provide support to the *Personal Representative of the Chairman in Office* for Articles II and IV of Annex 1B of the *Dayton Peace Agreement*.



Life after the army

Jasmin Razić started a business in bee keeping after leaving the army. He and thousands of other former soldiers are successfully finding jobs as part of a widespread demobilisation program. The OSCE Mission to BiH works with the IOM, the World Bank and the IMF to help ex-soldiers' transition to civilian life. As a result of military downsizing, the country reduced its armed forces to 20,000 soldiers, saving approximately € 102 million.

OSCE Mission to Croatia

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF MISSION

The change of Government in Croatia after the general elections in November 2003 comes at a time when Croatia is at a crucial point in its efforts to join the European Union. As a result of this, the OSCE Mission to Croatia is busier now than ever before. The issues covered by its mandate closely parallel those Croatia must address for EU membership. As the Government and other key political actors pay more attention to those issues, the Mission offers advice and support and facilitates and co-ordinates external advice.

There have been important positive changes in areas within the mandate in the past year. Implementation of the important Constitutional Law on National Minorities has begun with elections to the new minority councils. The Government presented a judicial reform programme that recognises some of the concerns voiced by the Mission.

For the first time, the Government has acknowledged the need to provide all refugees who wish to return with adequate housing, including those who lived in apartments with so-called occupancy/tenancy rights. Parliament adopted several media-related laws which were largely based on advice from the OSCE and its international partners.

The Mission continues to play a major role in support of the implementation of new legislation as Croatia is now awaiting the European Commission's response to its membership application.

With its widespread field presence, the Mission is in a unique position to promote reconciliation and support the implementation of legislation and programmes related to human rights protection throughout the country. During this period and beyond, the Mission will work closely with the Government in addressing issues that are linked to the accession process. Many of these issues, such as refugee return and minority rights, will require a strong commitment from all of Croatian society over a long period of time.

The Mission to Croatia was established in 1996 to provide advice on human rights, minority rights and the full implementation of legislation to Croatian authorities and relevant groups. The mandate was enhanced in 1997 and 1998 to include assistance to the Government with its commitments to the two-way return of all refugees and displaced persons.

All aspects of the Mission's mandate relate to the human dimension. The Mission has centred activities on questions related to:

- regional return
- property restitution
- media reform
- minority rights in elected bodies
- the judiciary
- public administration and civil society development
- police assistance
- war crime issues
- support for cross-border co-operation and confidence-building initiatives.

The strength of the Mission is its presence in the former war-affected areas. It has three field centres – in Knin, Vukovar and Sisak – as well as seven field offices. This has enabled the Mission to assess the progress that Croatia has made with its international commitments.

Field offices also provide advice on mandate-related issues for local and regional authorities, as well as NGOs and individual citizens.

The Mission funded the documentary series 'Somebody's Land', recognising that it was not only of interest to the refugee population and Bosnian Croat settlers, but also to Croatian society as a whole. The issues raised in the series are important in the context of Croatia's European integration processes.
Head of Mission, Peter Semneby



Human Dimension Activities

HUMAN RIGHTS

Improving the human rights situation in Croatia is the focus of all core Mission activities. This includes supporting the reform and effective implementation of Croatian legislation, the reform of the judiciary and administrative systems and the promotion of democratic values and civil society.

To raise public awareness and respect for Croatia's human rights domestic institutions, the Mission funded projects to support the Ombudsman and Constitutional Court.

The Mission also developed a nation-wide pilot project for judicial training on fair trial principles, which was conducted in the spring and autumn.

Progress on minority rights

The Mission actively monitored the implementation of the *Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities* (CLNM), which was adopted with much input from the OSCE.

The Mission funded the development and distribution of voter information in advance of the May minority council elections – one of the measures foreseen by the CLNM.

A series of training workshops for the newly elected members of the minority councils was also developed and funded by the Mission.

REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

More than 100,000 Croatian Serb refugees and displaced persons have been registered as having returned, and are living within Croatia, while 200,000 remain outside Croatia, mainly in Serbia-Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Mission, with its international partners, advised the Government on ways to remove legal and administrative obstacles which hamper the return and settlement of refugees. In that respect, it has placed emphasis on the creation of an atmosphere conducive to return and reintegration in Croatia.

Repossession of property

The Mission has monitored the implementation of a new legal regime on property repossession, which was adopted in 2002 in response to longstanding advice from the Mission.

Four joint monitoring reports have been released by the Mission, in co-operation with the UNHCR. The reports contain recommendations on accelerating property repossession and compensating owners unable to repossess their pre-war properties by the legal deadlines.

State reconstruction assistance

The Government has begun providing reconstruction assistance to significant numbers of Croatian Serb beneficiaries. This followed joint recommendations agreed with the international community on the full implementation of the *Law on Reconstruction*. The process has been virtually completed for Croatian beneficiaries.

The Mission has referred previously rejected cases to the Government for review, with positive results.

Redress for lost housing and terminated tenancy rights

Following renewed efforts by the Mission and other international institutions, the Government adopted a housing plan in June for former holders of occupancy/tenancy rights (OTR) who once lived in socially owned urban apartments. This means that refugees from Croatia's urban centres will for the first time have access to housing if they decide to return.

The Mission actively contributed to creating an implementation plan for the programme. Extensive monitoring of the process is planned for 2004.

Joint Action Plan

A *Joint Action Plan* (JAP) of the Missions to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro was adopted by the Heads of Mission in May.

The JAP is based on a set of *Common Principles on Return*, which were presented to the OSCE Permanent Council in October/November 2001.



The head of the Mission's Return Unit (left) going over Mr Jasnic's property documents with him (in July 2003), in front of his destroyed house, to which he had returned.

Mr Jasnic had returned to reclaim his property, but like so many other returnees, found his property dilapidated. The issue of housing is one of the biggest obstacles to refugee return. In the meantime he lived in the tent seen in the foreground.

The Mission is a strong advocate of speedy return of properties to refugees and reconstruction of their houses. It continued to work with the Government to push for the urgent removal of legal and administrative obstacles which hamper the return and settlement of refugees. Although the efforts of the Mission are reflected in progress on the issue, sadly, Mr Jasnic died before the process was complete.

RULE OF LAW

The Mission offered recommendations for legislative reform, in particular, on issues related to restitution of private property as well as access to court and free legal aid. Of particular concern to the Mission was the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and the Constitutional Court, many of which focused on the functioning of the judiciary.

War crimes

The Mission continued its trial-monitoring programme of approximately 70 domestic war crime trials.

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In autumn, the Mission prepared an annual review of its 2002 monitoring activities. The monitoring took on greater importance in late 2003, given the UN Security Council's enhanced focus on the capacity of domestic judiciaries as a key to the ICTY's completion strategy.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEDIA

Media legislation to European standards

In 2003, the Mission stepped up its activities as the Government reformed media legislation. Expert assistance was provided in the drafting phase by the Mission, in co-operation with the OSCE *Representative on the Freedom of the Media*, the *Council of Europe*, *European Commission* and the *Stability Pact*.

The Croatian Parliament has adopted four important media laws: the *Law on Croatian Radio and Television (HRT)*, the *Electronic Media Law*, the *Media Law* and the *Telecommunications Law*.

Libel

The Mission provided the Government with an OSCE analysis on changes to the Criminal Code which removed a provision protecting journalists from criminal prosecution. The analysis – written by the OSCE *Representative on Freedom of the Media* – recommended the decriminalisation of libel and the repeal of controversial provisions.

Strengthening local media development

Mission staff met regularly with private and public media outlets throughout Croatia to offer assistance and advice on local media development.

A series of media development activities were funded, including:

- two monitoring projects of the Media Council of the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights: on the political content of the programmes of Croatian Television (HTV), and on media coverage during the pre-election period
- printing costs for three minority newspapers, and their joint publication on housing issues
- a documentary series on refugees and returnees which is to be aired by Croatian Television (HTV).

POLICE DEVELOPMENT

The Mission's Police Affairs Officers are providing their Croatian colleagues with advice on:

- police education and training
- human resources management
- community policing
- administrative and structural reform
- international and regional co-operation.

The Mission is currently working on structural reforms. The Mission continues to chair an informal police assistance donors' co-ordination body in Zagreb.

Community policing

Community policing – based on a model of policing similar to that found in Britain and Germany – has continued to develop in Croatia with substantive assistance provided by the Mission.



In 2002/3, the Mission supported the Croatian Government in training nearly 100 community police officers – called Contact Officers – who have been working in six pilot sites across the country.

These sites include the war affected areas of Vukovar and Sisak. Initial results were positive and, in 2004, the Government intends to introduce community policing across the country, with the training and deployment of an additional 700 officers.

CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT

The 2003 *Democratization Programme* focused on two key aspects: institution building and civil society development. In addition, preparations were made for a *Public Awareness Campaign (PAC)* on *Return and Reconciliation*, in co-operation with the Government and international donors. One of the key goals of the PAC – which is expected to be launched in 2004 – is to contribute to climate conducive to refugee return.

76 projects generated by the Mission, local partners and member states were implemented, representing a total of € 1.2 million. These projects encompassed a broad spectrum of areas:

- fostering multi-ethnic co-operation and reconciliation
- strengthening the outreach and the stature of the Croatian Ombudsman institution
- improving the capacity and skills of local Governments, NGOs, Roma and other minority associations
- training members of the recently elected local national minority councils on their responsibilities under recent legislation, as well as practical guidance on organising and embarking on their work
- providing psychological and social support for victims of the war.

Multi-ethnic co-operation and reconciliation

Various local projects that brought together multi-ethnic groups were supported in 2003, including:

- women in small businesses
- cross-border projects – bringing together NGOs, local Governments and other associations from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to discuss recruitment, motivation and fostering volunteerism
- youth summer camps and clubs, study trips to Parliament, and support for young adults interested in taking part in the political and economic life of their municipalities.

OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMiK)

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF MISSION

The OSCE partnership to help Kosovo move from a troubled past to a stable future has continued apace in 2003. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMiK) has assisted Kosovo in meeting the challenges of self-government.

OMiK's tasks are far from complete. Kosovo is constantly evolving and the Mission has adapted its work to the situation on the ground. The core task of institution-building has not changed, but the Mission has restructured its plans to help ensure the sustainability of Kosovo's institutions.

The main objectives of 2003 were:

- capacity-building both within the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) and civil society
- promoting reconciliation and inter-ethnic dialogue
- monitoring, promoting, and raising awareness of human rights and rule of law, particularly issues of non-discrimination
- developing the media
- continued training and specialisation of the Kosovo Police Service



- preparing for the 2004 elections for the Assembly of Kosovo
- handing over the bodies created by OMiK to local control.

OMiK, as Pillar III of the UN Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK), has successfully adapted to new developments, and is yielding tangible results. Self-government is forming: democracy is beginning to take hold.

UNMIK and the international community continue to uphold the general policy of prescribed standards and have set attainable levels of performance for Kosovo society and the PISG, which would at some future time permit integration into a wider Europe.

The Mission looks forward to the new challenges ahead and successful co-operation with all partners.

Human Dimension Activities

ELECTIONS

OMiK is unique among all OSCE missions in that it is directly responsible for the organisation and running of elections. For the next elections in Kosovo, OMiK and a local body will share electoral responsibilities.

In 2003 – the first year without an election after three consecutive years – the focus was on planning and preparing the ground for handover of electoral 'know-how' and operational responsibilities to an emerging local counterpart.

Transferring electoral capabilities to a Kosovo authority

The Central Elections Commission (CEC) Secretariat was established as the operational arm of the future electoral management body. Its creation is a crucial element in the transferring of capabilities. To ensure its sustainability, the core staff was recruited according to local civil service rules and salaries. The CEC Secretariat and OMiK will share responsibilities for the organisation and management of the 2004 Kosovo Assembly Election.

Preparing the electoral groundwork for 2004

To increase local ownership of the process, the Elections Working Group (EWG) met throughout the year to produce consensus recommendations for modifications to the framework used in previous elections. The EWG is a consultative forum, hosted and chaired by OMiK, and composed of representatives of the main local political and civil forces. The recommendations are to be sent to the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for approval as an appropriate electoral regulation, which will define the framework for the 2004 elections.

DEMOCRATIZATION

Support to the Assembly of Kosovo

The Assembly's development as an institution, since 2001, has been accompanied by the OMiK-led *Assembly Support Initiative* (ASI). The ASI has continued to conduct and arrange training seminars on parliamentary work and policy issues, in Kosovo and abroad.

Many programmes focused on developing the capabilities of the Assembly Committees and Secretariat to manage legislation. The ASI also encouraged non-legislative work, including field visits, holding public hearings and drafting reports on policy issues.

OMiK supported the start of the *Assembly Bulletin* in the Albanian and Serbian languages, to help publicly promote the work of the Assembly to voters. Progress was made on strengthening the regional dimension of parliamentary support and co-operation.

The Mission has facilitated co-operation between the PISG assembly of Kosovo and the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia. With other OSCE Missions in South-eastern Europe and ODIHR, it organised a conference in October, which brought together parliamentarians from the region to discuss issues and ways to engage in policy-making debate.

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Supporting municipal governance

The *Municipal Assembly Support Programme* (MASP) aims to improve good governance at the local level. Over the course of the year, the programme has shifted from a technical to a more policy-orientated content: it now aims to strengthen Municipal Assembly members' skills in policy formulation and implementation, including budget and economic development issues.

OMiK also carried out the *Responsible Governance and Civic Participation Programme* – a series of citizen consultation projects designed to increase involvement with municipal structures. Other initiatives such as the *Youth Assemblies Project* aimed at enhancing young citizens' understanding of local policy-making and community issues.



136 school children from all communities and regions in Kosovo attended the three-day Junior Safety Officer Summer Camp to learn about road and school safety, conducted by the Kosovo Police Service School in Vushtrri/Vucitrn, in July.

Nurturing civic participation

Civil society organisations have progressively become more involved in holding Government institutions publicly accountable. The Mission encourages grassroots initiatives that support citizens' rights: giving attention to the relationship between communities, and promoting democratic values within communities and municipal structures.

The *Civic Dialogue Project* connects NGOs and other civic groups from Kosovo and Serbia through non-political activities and reconciliation projects. OMiK's main partners in this endeavour are the Mother Theresa Society from Kosovo and the Centre for Regionalism from Novi Sad in Serbia proper. All programmes support the participation of women in society, strengthening their contribution as decision-makers in both the political and social spheres.

On a more local level, OMiK's community centre network continues to be instrumental in promoting best practices throughout Kosovo.



Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo Pascal Fieschi at the opening ceremony of the library at the Special Institute in Shtime / Stimlje Municipality, in September.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Advising the Office of the Prime Minister

The Mission supports two advisory offices in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) – those on good governance, human rights, equal opportunity and gender; and on communities. The group has supported dialogue between the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government and UNMIK in reserved and transferred areas, such as:

- on property issues for ethnic minorities and communities
- minority employment
- anti-discrimination in employment and services
- gender issues
- cultural heritage protection.

Advice extends to other offices within the OPM, as well as to other Ministries. OMiK, through its presence in the OPM, contributes to the capacity-building of the OPM, and monitors performance of the PISG in key areas of OSCE concern.

Reforming local Government

Over the course of 2003, the Council of Europe ran a decentralisation mission, which designed a concept for local government reform in Kosovo. The experience of OMiK contributed to this effort to develop guiding principles – which aim to provide alternatives to ensure more effective and responsible local management, and improve the delivery of public services to all citizens.

Returns and Reconciliation

As part of the returns process, OMiK has concentrated on activities to make it possible for returning families to remain in Kosovo, establish themselves and build working relationships with their neighbours. The Mission has worked to ensure the conditions necessary for sustainable return, such as equal access to basic services and employment, as well as to property. It has encouraged the governmental institutions which provide these services, protections, and remedies, to respect the human rights of all, without discrimination.

OMiK's *Small Investment Minority Fund* supported the reconciliation and integration of smaller communities into society, through 47 effective inter-ethnic and tolerance-building projects. Efforts were largely conducted at the field level, and brought together communities to address common concerns. Local institutions were empowered to resolve disputes through consultation and mediation.

Through monitoring, reporting, and direct advocacy of local and international institutions, the Mission has played a key role in effectively setting the agenda on the most pressing human rights and rule of law issues in Kosovo.

OMiK continued to promote and instil a human rights culture, reaching thousands of students, educators, NGOs and PISG officials.

HUMAN RIGHTS and RULE OF LAW

Reporting on human rights concerns

The Mission continued to monitor the human rights situation in Kosovo, in particular: in relation to a functioning law enforcement and judicial system; non-discrimination issues; property issues; as well as protection from and prevention of trafficking in human beings; and domestic violence.

Major reports have focused on:

- the situation of minorities
- the status of property rights
- the functioning of the judicial system, particularly the witness protection system
- the presence and effect of parallel institutional system
- the status and availability of legal remedies.

OMiK systematically follows up with relevant institutions.

Addressing property issues and minority rights

Resolving the property situation, especially as it affects minority communities, is essential for Kosovo's development and the establishment of the rule of law. OMiK monitoring has found that property rights are not fully protected, and discrimination against Kosovo's smaller communities is active.

Though much work remains to be done, there have already been several notable successes, including the establishment of an inter-agency property working group, which has moved rapidly to address the most pressing property issues as they affect minorities. The Mission has also initiated a regional effort to develop a consistent policy for Governments to improve the human rights situation of Roma, and other vulnerable groups living in informal settlements.



'React! Violence is a crime'

OMiK generated a public awareness-raising campaign to highlight the issue of violence against women and to urge action.

Across Kosovo, public debates, live television programmes and art exhibitions were organised, and white ribbons were distributed to men to signify the pledge not to remain silent.

Strengthening anti-discrimination protection

Through its direct advocacy, OMiK helped draft an Anti-Discrimination Law which has been approved by the Government and submitted to the Assembly of Kosovo.

It aims to promote uniformity in the protection against discrimination – including in areas of employment, public and social services, education and property.

This bill, if passed in its current form, would represent one of the most progressive anti-discrimination laws in Europe.

Protecting victims of violence

Protection of victims and the prevention of victimisation are a part of OMiK's efforts to provide comprehensive assistance and support to people who are trafficked, or suffer from domestic violence.

As a first step, the Mission helped set up an interim secure facility to provide psychological and legal counselling to victims of trafficking. Similarly, the Mission has played a significant role in an inter-agency effort to develop a *Kosovo Action Plan to Combat Trafficking*. Following a conference in October, the Kosovo Provisional Institutions of Self-Government agreed to develop and adopt such a plan. The Mission also raised awareness on domestic violence and its potential effect on family and society.

Promoting professional law enforcement systems

The Mission continued to monitor the development of the legal system and assist UNMIK to ensure standards of fair trial and due process. Upon OMiK's recommendation, UNMIK is in the process of revising the witness protection system to make it more effective and compliant with international standards.

This issue has been prominent this year in Kosovo: several key witnesses in war crimes trials have either been murdered or targeted. A report is being issued focusing on the development of municipal courts.

In the field of law enforcement, the Mission, UNMIK and the Kosovo Police Service are currently reviewing and revising police custody documentation, in order to safeguard the rights of arrested persons more effectively. Also, OMiK's recommendation that police holding cells be upgraded, to bring them in line with international human rights standards, will be attained.

Strengthening the legal community

Throughout the year, the Mission worked to complete the independence and sustainability of the OMiK-created rule of law institutions, which are designed to provide support to Kosovo's growing legal community. The Criminal Defence Resource Centre (CDRC) – which provides assistance to defence counsel – will be completely independent from the Mission in 2004.

The Kosovo Judicial Institute (KJI) is well on its way to becoming an independent magistrate school. This year the KJI held its largest ever training when it instructed over 500 judges, prosecutors, police and other officials on the new criminal codes of Kosovo. The Kosovo Law Centre (KLC) continues to help educate the next generation of legal minds.

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MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Strengthening local media development

OMiK continued its media support and training programmes designed to promote the development of professional, tolerant and unbiased media in Kosovo. Support was offered in setting up local press clubs and topical training sessions for journalists. Two main themes were reconciliation and supporting minority broadcasters.

Highlights include:

- a series of multi-ethnic radio discussions on a range of issues affecting all communities
- a regional conference bringing together Serbian and Kosovo Albanian editors to discuss issues of freedom of expression and ongoing cross-boundary activities
- establishing KOSMA (*Kosovo Media Association*) – a network of 27 Kosovo Serb radio stations. Each station received equipment and training to help develop the capacity to produce and communicate news in their own language.

OMiK's Temporary Media Commissioner (TMC) has begun planning transition to the Kosovo-run Independent Media Commission (IMC), in anticipation of the IMC law. Meanwhile, the TMC had one of its most successful years in enforcing media statutes guarding against hate-speech.

POLICE EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

The goal of the Kosovo Police Service School (KPSS) – to help create a new police service – is nearly complete. Over the course of 2003, the KPSS has trained more than 700 new officers, bringing the total number of basic recruits to over 6,200, of which 16% are women and 16% represent minority communities. It is anticipated that the final target number of 6,500 basic recruits will be met by mid-2004, but further courses will be necessary to replace officers who have left the Kosovo Police Service since 1999.



The KPSS, which began its work in 1999, provides an example of best practises used for police education and development in post-conflict areas.

KPS officers are trained in international standards regarding human rights, including modern techniques in dealing with domestic violence, awareness of human trafficking and community policing.

At the same time, to create a sustainable police service, KPS officers must also broaden their skills and be trained in supervision and management techniques. Advanced and specialised police training includes investigation techniques for cases of homicide and organised crime. Addressing these issues the KPSS delivered an increasing number of specialist courses in criminal investigation, border and boundary policing, forensics and drug surveillance.

The KPSS continues to make the shift to Kosovo ownership: with the transition of international posts to local professional officers. Much of the training at KPSS is already conducted by specialised KPS officers.

Based on the successes at the KPSS, instructors have been called upon to share expertise with other police training programmes in Georgia, Afghanistan and Iraq – thus exporting this successful example to other post-conflict and developing regions in and outside of the OSCE area.

The OSCE is the acknowledged leader in the slow and difficult field of democratization, which is an unfamiliar word in the outside world, but means something worthwhile. It means getting involved in the problems of society at every level and introducing new methods of solving them, which are better than traditional methods based on confrontation and violence.

Harri Holkeri, SRSF, UN Mission in Kosovo

OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF MISSION

When referring to the reform of the police, the judiciary, war crimes trials, human rights, the fight against corruption and the media – fields in which the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro provides its assistance and expertise – we are essentially talking about OSCE direct involvement in key sectors that influence whether the transition in Serbia and Montenegro will be democratic and European.

Numerous problems that the country experienced last year notwithstanding, one must acknowledge the progress made so far. 2003 saw the adoption of the *Constitutional Charter and Action Plan on Harmonization in Serbia and Montenegro*, which paved the way towards the eventual initiation of the EU Stabilisation and Association Process.

In 2003, Serbia and Montenegro has gained membership in the Council of Europe and significant progress on the reform and democratization of the armed forces has been achieved.

The assassination of the Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic on 12 March and the 42-day state of emergency complicated the internal political situation and partly affected the continuation of the reform agenda. Nevertheless, the country succeeded to ‘stay the course’ and to achieve, also with the OSCE’s assistance, some meaningful results.

A new legislation on war crimes was adopted and the Mission, in co-operation with local authorities, has initiated the implementation of a capacity-building strategy so that domestic war crime trials can be conducted in accordance with international standards.

In the framework of the fight against corruption, the Mission provided expert support to the drafting of key laws such as the Law on Financing Political Parties, which was adopted in August.

In co-operation with the relevant Ministry, the Mission implemented several programs to uphold the rights of national minorities. A new Charter on human and minority rights was adopted in March and several national minority councils created.

The consolidation of reform to make the police and the judiciary more functional and depoliticised remains the major challenge ahead both for Serbia and Montenegro. The OSCE Mission has put great energy in assisting the reform process in these areas and it will continue to do so also in 2004.

Finally, in 2003 the consolidation of the peace process in South Serbia has continued and has been closely monitored by the OSCE Mission. The major challenge in South Serbia lies in the creation of the economic basis of security, through the activation of projects of economic development and multi-ethnic job creation.



Rory Keane/OSCE

Human Dimension Activities

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Since the assassination of Prime Minister Djindjic, the emphasis on combating organised crime has taken priority over all other aspects of police reform efforts in Serbia and Montenegro. The medium- to long-term strategy for police reform aims at assisting the Governments in implementing reform. This strategy continues to follow the six priority areas as outlined in December 2001 when the OSCE was named as co-ordinator of international support to the police reform process. The priority areas are:

- police education and development
- accountability and internal control
- organised crime
- forensics
- border policing
- community policing.

Strategy for Police reform

To tackle organised crime effectively and holistically, accountability and internal control within the police structures have been an important focus for the Mission this year.

In close co-operation with the Serbian Ministry of Interior, the Mission has also prioritised community policing in Southern Serbia. The aim of this programme is to develop a partnership between the police service and the public, which promotes multi-ethnic harmony in the region.

With support from the International Organization for Migration and the Italian and UK Governments, an important border policing project was launched in order to assist the authorities in combating trafficking and organised crime.

For Montenegro, the Mission’s relationship with the authorities has developed significantly since the formation of the *Police Accountability Strategy* and the commencement of the *Police Development Training Programme* in Montenegro. To assist the authorities in combating human trafficking and organised crime, the Mission’s Office in Podgorica instructed 500 border police officers through five cycles of specialised training.

RULE OF LAW

Combating organised crime

The Mission is closely monitoring the Djindjic assassination trials which were initiated in December. This year the Mission also supported the Special Prosecutor on Organized Crime through an ad hoc training programme, introduced during the state of emergency following the assassination. The Mission additionally provided legal advice to harmonise the special law on organised crime.

The Mission's Office in Podgorica has supported the review of the *Montenegrin Criminal Procedure Code*, which envisages special rules of procedure for offences committed by perpetrators of organised crime. It also participated in preparation of the draft *Law on the State Prosecutor*, at which the Special Prosecutor for Organized Crime institution was introduced for the first time.

War crimes

The Mission conducted an assessment on the capacity of the Ministry of Interior to conduct war crimes investigations. Looking ahead, the Mission will implement the steps of the *OSCE War Crimes Strategy* and will work on the establishment of a witness protection programme and an International Technical Assistance Office to the Special Court on War Crimes.

In April, the Serbian Government adopted the Law on War Crimes. The Mission worked closely with the Serbian Ministry of Justice by providing support during the drafting process. Through the International Bar Association, the Mission established a team of international experts which, with representatives of the Council of Europe, provided substantive amendments to the initial draft.

Since January, the Mission has also been monitoring the on-going trials of war crimes that are taking place in Serbia.

The Office in Podgorica conducted workshops on the compatibility of the Montenegrin draft Criminal Code with the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*. Consequently Montenegrin criminal legislation will be in a position to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

Fighting against corruption

Since the 2001 establishment of the Anti-Corruption Council by the Serbian Government, the Mission provides legal advice and expertise, particularly concerning a broad series of laws pertaining to the fight against corruption.

Independence of judiciary

The Serbian Ministry of Justice has announced an initiative to review criminal legislation. The Mission will provide legislative and programme assistance in key areas, through direct interaction with the Ministry and through the Council for Judicial Reform at which the Mission participates.

The Office in Podgorica continued its support of the reform of the prosecution process in Montenegro. The Office organised a workshop in June on the *Draft Law on the State Prosecutor* as well as the final public debate in September. Based on conclusions drawn from this workshop, the Ministry of Justice will prepare a consolidated version of the law for adoption – a key step in the overall reform of the judiciary in Montenegro.

Driving forward prison reform

Strategies have been set up to increase coherence of both internal and external mechanisms for the control of prisons in Serbia. These initiatives will help to ensure that prisoners and detainees have a system of appeal that is a guarantee of their fundamental rights.

The Mission continued to work structurally with the Ministry of Justice, and with the prison administration to further prison system reform. Building up training capacity to increase performance in the area of human rights has been a key priority.

Over 300 prison staff received basic human rights training and a team of ten trainers underwent 'training for trainers'. Prison governors were given prison management training in Serbia and members of the Ministry and the prison administration have benefited from several study visits. Additionally, in its efforts to increase the transparency of prisons, the Mission has facilitated a workshop between journalists and prison governors.

The Mission's Office in Podgorica supports the work of the Prison Service Training Centre (PSTC). Most notably, over half of the prison service staff have completed a course on the issue of drugs misuse. A study visit to the Netherlands was organised in August – as a part of the *Prison Management Training Programme*.

The Mission also organised a co-ordination meeting on combating organised crime during the state of emergency; and a roundtable on the future of prison reform in Serbia was held.

DEMOCRATIZATION

Parliamentary support

The Mission organised a number of round-tables, seminars and training programmes for parliamentary committees. Special emphasis was put on the Security and Defence Committee as well as the European integration committee in the Serbian and State Union Parliaments.

Accelerating refugee return

The Mission has adopted a regional approach in removing remaining obstacles in the countries of origin for refugees who wish to return from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. Programme activities are implemented in close co-operation with all international actors in the field of refugee protection, and respective Governments.

Progress in the field of refugee return has led to the adoption of common principles and a *Joint Action Plan* between three OSCE missions; and the establishment of a regional legal assistance programme. These strategies accelerate the resolution of difficulties in the area of property, statutory and acquired rights.

NATIONAL MINORITIES

Technical support was offered to Serbia and Montenegro for the 2003 adoption of the *Charter on Human and Minority Rights* – an integral part of the state union constitution. Also this year, in line with the state union *Law on National Minorities and Ethnic Communities*, the Mission was involved in supporting the process of electing National Minority Councils. To date, ten minority councils have been elected, while the election of the Albanian National Council is yet to take place.

Enabling communities to build sustainable policy

The Office in Podgorica has continued to assist communities by strengthening the legal and institutional framework for minority rights in the Republic of Montenegro. The Office continued to further implement a comprehensive training programme designed to increase the professional skills and capabilities of ministry personnel; as well as to broaden knowledge on international standards of human and minority rights protection. It has very actively assisted the expert group of the Ministry for Minorities in the drafting process of the new Montenegrin Minority law.

A national strategy for the integration of Roma

The Mission and UN partners funded and oversaw the drafting of a *National Strategy for the Integration of Roma*. The document will be publicly discussed for adoption by the Serbian Parliament and the Roma National Council. In 2003 the Mission and partners funded the work of the Roma Secretariat within the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, whose role is to facilitate the debate and further adoption of the Roma Strategy.

ANTI-TRAFFICKING PROGRAMME

The programme this year has strengthened and empowered the Serbian Republican Team to combat trafficking in human beings. It has also assisted relevant Ministries and specialised NGOs to develop and implement national plans of action to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings. Particular emphasis has been placed on the judiciary and on law enforcement.

The Mission supported the establishment of a Referral and Counseling Centre (RCC) for victims of trafficking, in close co-operation with the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Centre for Social Work in Belgrade, and two NGOs. The RCC is intended to be the main counseling and co-ordinating body of the *National Referral Mechanism* in Serbia.

Monitoring on-going human trafficking cases

The Office in Podgorica co-chaired the Montenegro Anti-Trafficking Project Board in 2003. Apart from monitoring active cases, the Board assists in the early warning identification of potential victims of human trafficking. The Office also seeks to assist the Montenegrin authorities further to institutionalise counter-trafficking policies as well as to devolve and expand effective anti-trafficking measures to the municipal level.

Capacity building of local self-government

The Office in Podgorica assists local partners in institutionalising public participation in municipalities, through the establishment of five citizen information and education centres, in the north, central and coastal regions. Such centres serve as key information resources and clearing houses for training and technical assistance, for municipal officials, local NGOs and other civic groups.

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In this respect, the Office played a significant monitoring role in one particularly sensitive case in which a deputy state prosecutor was accused of trafficking a young Moldovan woman. Following the decision of the Basic Prosecutor to drop the case, the Office assisted an OSCE-CoE expert team, invited by the Government to review the case and to recommend steps for further action.

The Office serves on a newly established inter-ministerial body set up by the Government to develop and implement a strategy covering the three core anti-trafficking pillars: prevention, protection and prosecution.

MEDIA

In the three Parliaments (Serbia, Montenegro and State Union) the Mission continued to support media committees, and the transformation into public broadcasters of state-owned RTS (Serbia) and RTCG (Montenegro).

The Mission continued to provide support to legislators and Internet providers' and users' associations to help develop a free and pluralistic Internet market, according to OSCE Freedom of the Media 2003 priorities.

Several media awareness campaigns and training exercises in Serbia and Montenegro on anti-trafficking, war crimes trials, and the environment were also undertaken. Additionally, the Mission supported the transformation (legal, financial, organisational and editorial) of municipal media outlets into multi-ethnic and multilingual local public services. It also supported Romani media outlets.

The Mission remained committed this year to supporting the rapid adoption of certain media laws, including the *Access to Information Bill*. In this regard, throughout September and October, the Mission organised five roundtables on the Serbian draft law on free access to information. Equipment was provided for the Montenegrin Broadcasting Agency to enhance the ability of the Agency to conduct media monitoring.

The Office in Podgorica has continued to support the implementation of media reform in Montenegro. Shortly it will organise a three-phased advisory project on bylaws for the broadcasting agency and a seminar for print media editors-in-chief and their deputies aimed at strengthening the professional responsibility with regard to human and moral principles of journalism.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Tackling drugs trafficking

In line with the OSCE 2003 economic and environmental dimension focus on various forms of trafficking, the Mission prepared a national strategy to counter drugs trafficking. This paper contains an overview of the situation and recommendations to enable an appropriate approach to this problem.

Supporting sustainable development

In 2003 the Mission continued to support the sustainable development of the Bjelasica and Komovi areas in Montenegro, with the co-operation of stakeholders who include the local authorities, the civil sector and local businesses.

The Mission also worked on a number of projects in support of the creation of SMEs in Serbia and Montenegro.

A new centre for environmental issues

Opened in Belgrade this year, the Centre is a joint endeavour of the Mission and the Serbian Ministry for Natural Resources and the Environment. It provides a co-ordination point between the Serbian Government and international and local environmental organisations. It is envisaged that it will act as a support structure, enabling full implementation of environmental legislation.

The Mission provided the centre with five environmental experts as part of the environmental support programme. The centre is also producing a strategy for setting up an environmental information system for Serbia.

The Mission held a second preparatory meeting on the *Environment for Europe Process* in February, in Belgrade. The meeting served as preparation for the fifth *Pan-European Ministerial Conference on the Protection of the Environment*, which was held in May, in Kiev.

The Mission supported the creation and implementation of a *Public Relations Strategy* for the Serbian Ministry for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection. This aims to increase transparency and accountability of the Ministry and its work.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Confidence- and Security-Building Measures

According to its mandate to assist and promote the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), the Mission has focused on the wider issues of the defence reform process, as well as on the implementation of the OSCE *Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)*.

Momentum for democratic control of Armed Forces

Supporting the process of defence reform, which is gaining momentum, the Mission has followed the norms outlined in the OSCE *Code of Conduct in Politico-Military Aspects of Security*, which sets out the OSCE standards for democratic control of the armed forces. Opportunity to give practical expression to these standards has been offered through the improvement of the capacities of parliamentary oversight in the defence and security sectors, as well as discussions on new relevant documents.

Partnership for destruction of SALW

The Mission's involvement in issues related to the control and destruction of small arms and light weapons has benefited from its partnership with the South-Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC). The Mission participated in monitoring several projects for the destruction of surplus small arms in Serbia and Montenegro.

Southern Serbia: consolidating the peace process

The OSCE *Southern Serbia Programme* remained on task in 2003. Emphasis was put on speeding up the implementation of the Covic Plan with the aim of building security, stability and prosperity in the region.

The Mission remains committed to the consolidation of the peace process by assisting the political actors in Southern Serbia, and helping them to gradually take full ownership of the process.

In support of consolidating a multi-ethnic environment in Southern Serbia, the Mission continued to work in the following areas:

- multi-ethnic media programmes
- support for minority rights and local self-government
- reform of multi-ethnic policing
- support for the judiciary, education and youth sectors.

OUTREACH PROGRAMME

Raising awareness of OSCE priorities and values

Throughout the year the Mission conducted an outreach campaign in the towns of Novi Sad, Subotica (Vojvodina), Novi Pazar (Sanzdak), Uzice, Kragujevac (Central Serbia), Zajecar, Bor (eastern Serbia), Budva and Niksic (Montenegro). The idea was to outline the projects currently being implemented by the Mission, as well as to research their impact.

The visits also served as opportunities for the Mission to meet with local government representatives as well as media, civil society, church and police representatives; and to familiarise itself with the situation on the ground and to adjust the Mission's programmes accordingly.

As part of the outreach campaign, the Mission also distributed notebooks to all first graders in Southern Serbia. The notebooks carried the slogan 'My house is in Europe'.



The Head of Mission's role during the state of emergency

During the state of emergency – introduced following the March assassination of Prime Minister Djindjic – the Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro, Maurizio Massari, played a vital advocacy and guiding role by outlining the importance of the rule of law as a cornerstone of democratic society.

At the height of the state of emergency, the Head of Mission consistently and clearly reminded the local authorities about reinforcing conditions necessary for the rule of law and the consolidation of democracy.

OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF MISSION

With the assistance of the OSCE and international partners, the Government achieved significant progress towards full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and admission into Euro-Atlantic Structures. In particular, the Framework Agreement requirement to train 1,000 non-majority police cadets by July 2003 was met (a joint effort between the Ministry of Interior and the OSCE), as was the passage of nearly all Framework Agreement legislation not relating to decentralisation. The successful completion of the 2002 census, with final results released in November 2003, was also a major achievement for the country – paving the way for final reforms and local elections that will occur in the forthcoming year.



A year of achievement.
The Head of Mission, Craig Jenness, addresses the 350 police cadets who finished their three-month training course on 30 July.

It was also a year of change for the international community. 2003 saw both the end of a NATO military presence and the successful completion of the EU's first military mission. The transfer on 15 December from the EU Military Force, Concordia, to the EU Police Mission, Proxima, signified the accomplishments that have been made towards the security and stability in the country. The OSCE's efforts to build confidence in the former crisis areas have contributed extensively to this progress.

There was also a clear shift in the role of the international community away from post-conflict management towards efforts in capacity-building and institutional support. That can be seen in the OSCE by the growing emphasis on project work. The Mission, in accordance with its mandate, initiated 70 projects in support of the Framework Agreement in the fields of policing, media, local self-government, rule of law and inter-ethnic relations. Many of these projects were developed and implemented in close partnership with the relevant Government officials and local and international organisations.

HQ: all units gathered under one roof

As part of its effort to maximise its effectiveness, the Mission moved to new quarters in the heart of Skopje. The Police Development and General Services units, which were previously located across town, joined the rest of HQ under one roof. This has allowed for better use of resources and facilities, more efficient communication and time management, and improved co-ordination among departments.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

POLICE DEVELOPMENT

Following the successful redeployment of the police to the former crisis areas, the Mission consolidated activities to focus on community-based policing and training.

Consolidating community-based policing throughout the country

The Ministry of Interior, assisted by the Mission, has embarked on a new form of policing aimed at bringing the police and communities together. The underlying concept is to balance robust activity with confidence-building and co-operation.

The Mission deployed 30 community policing trainers in former crisis areas to work directly with the local police. In the autumn, the Ministry of Interior assigned 32 community policing trainers to the programme. Once trained by the Mission they will assist and progressively take over the responsibility of implementation of community policing.

The Police Unit – working in co-operation with the Mission's confidence-building monitors – assisted the Ministry of Interior in setting up Citizen Advisory Groups (CAGs). These groups offer opportunity for regular, innovative meetings between local police and a broad range of citizens, such as teachers, community leaders and business people, to exchange information and discuss matters of mutual concern. So far, 46 CAGs covering over 200 villages have been established.

A benchmark of the Framework Agreement: training 1,176 cadets from non-majority communities

One of the key tasks given to the OSCE in the *Framework Agreement* was the training, by July 2003, of 1,000 new police officers from communities not in the majority. The objective was to ensure that police services will generally reflect the composition and distribution of the population by 2004.

This key target was met on schedule with the graduation of a further 650 multi-ethnic police cadets bringing the total number of non-majority cadets trained to 1,176.

The *Basic Training Programme*, which comprises a three-month academy course followed by six months of structured field training, is developed by a specialised OSCE *Police Development Curriculum Unit* focused on democratic principles, rule of law, European policing and international human rights standards.

Training for more professional and responsive policing

The PDU, in co-operation with the IOM and the Ministry of Interior, started the implementation of *Gender Awareness and Anti-Trafficking in Human Beings Training Courses*. 540 police officers will be trained.

Additionally, professional training programmes requested and approved by the MOI, were held in the fields of human rights and democratic policing as well as in drug identification.



Additional police trained in 2003:

- Field Training Officers Course: 136 officers
- In-Service Training Course: 722 officers
- Human Rights & Democratic Policing Course: 2,527 officers
- Drug Identification Course: 1,135 officers
- Road Safety Training: 14 officers
- Computer Training Courses: 137 officers
- Community Policing Courses: 943 officers.

CONFIDENCE-BUILDING

Maintaining stability and security on the ground

Confidence-Building Officers (CBOs) worked continuously throughout the former crisis areas on the maintenance of stability and security. CBOs deepened relationships between various Government entities, such as local police, community leaders and the military, as well as the local population. CBOs play a key role in defusing tension, promoting inter-ethnic relations and in working with the communities on issues of concern.

Building confidence through community projects

In addition to monitoring activities, the Confidence-Building Unit (CBU) increasingly shifted resources towards proactive projects. The initiatives pursued in 2003 included conferences on education, a broad range of youth projects, multi-ethnic sports competitions, the renovation of a school in Gostivar and a sports field in Opae – a village of mixed ethnicity that was greatly affected by the hostilities of 2001.

Most notably, in co-operation with Nansen Dialogue Centre Skopje, the unit guided 125 secondary school leaders from six different communities through a series of youth leadership conferences that focused on effective communication and inter-ethnic conflict resolution skills. Participants also received project management training and as a final stage in the programme, they designed and ran their own projects covering activities such as volunteerism initiatives, peer counselling, park clean-ups and inter-ethnic cultural outings.

The CBU also sought input and guidance from various international community partners, such as IOM and NATO, in the process of drafting a feasibility study on the reintegration of unstable populations impacted from the 2001 crisis.

The Mission assisted the Government and UNDP in a country-wide weapons collection project by observing at sites of weapons hand-in. Over 7,000 weapons were collected, which significantly contributed to a decrease in shooting incidents in the country.

Human Dimension Activities

RULE OF LAW

From monitoring to longer-term programme development

In light of the increasingly stable security situation, the activities of the Mission's Rule of Law Unit increasingly focused on programmatic areas, such as institution- and capacity-building and combating human trafficking.

The Unit continued monitoring individual allegations of physical abuse by the security forces. War crimes cases were also followed, as well as other high-profile issues such as corruption trials.

Progress was noted in the professionalism and standardisation of various domestic human rights complaint mechanisms, including the Ombudsman's Institution and the Ministry of Interior's Sector for Internal and Professional Controls.

The mission worked closely with these institutions through their reform efforts, and noted increases in public confidence.

Institution-building

The Mission contributed to the passage of a new *Law on the Ombudsman* as required by the Framework Agreement. The Law gives the institution significantly increased powers: including a new mandate regarding non-discrimination and equitable representation, as well as the establishment of six regional offices.

The OSCE is co-ordinating international support to set up these new offices and is working on a nationwide public information campaign to raise awareness and understanding of the institution and its new capacity.

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Stepping up support for NGOs

The Unit initiated a large-scale project to train and mentor domestic NGOs in the management of complaints of police abuse. This will allow the Unit to transfer much of its individual casework to these NGOs in 2004. The Mission supported a number of smaller projects, including a magazine providing basic information on legal matters and information campaigns on domestic violence in the Roma community.

The Unit spearheaded the establishment of a Trial Observation Network with 18 domestic NGOs. From July to October, observers attended over 400 criminal and civil court hearings throughout the country.

Judicial reform

In line with the Framework Agreement, the Unit is addressing the issue of equitable representation of minorities in the judiciary, and is contributing to improving the trust in, and efficiency of, the country's legal and judicial system.

The Unit initiated training programmes on alternative dispute resolution for the local judiciary. It is working with the Association of Public Prosecutors on a new draft law, and by doing, is addressing the necessity to improve the efficiency of the fight against organised crime.

The Unit also funded the publication of a *Guide to the Courts* and a project providing free legal advice in two pilot municipalities.

Combating human trafficking

Working closely with Government and civil society partners, the Unit seeks to strengthen efforts to combat trafficking in human beings.

Recent successful prosecutions since the 2002 adoption of an anti-trafficking criminal law provision are encouraging signs for this OSCE 2003 priority campaign.

The Unit funded the domestic NGOs' awareness-raising initiatives. It also co-sponsored 20 specialized training workshops – targeting almost 300 legal professionals – on improving prosecution and fair trials in cases of human trafficking.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEDIA

Working towards a balanced, objective and all-inclusive media

The Mission's Media Development Unit funds and supports a wide variety of projects aimed at improving journalistic standards and promoting a multi-ethnic approach to media. Its projects are targeted at all communities and benefit university students, print media, private broadcasters and the public service broadcaster *Macedonian Radio and Television (MRTV)*.

Setting up a training centre

The unit co-funded and established a new training centre at MRTV, which aims at improving technical, journalistic and managerial standards to help MRTV modernise to European standards. Under the management of the UK based experts Thomson Foundation, 600 staff received training at the centre.

Developing curricula

The Unit sponsors a wide variety of training programmes targeting all sectors of the media, including courses in practical journalism for St.Cyril and Methodius and South-East European University students; as well as specialist courses, such as investigative journalism or computer assisted research, at the Macedonian Institute for Journalism.

The Unit works closely with private broadcasters developing programme strands and documentary series with a strong multi-ethnic approach. It has funded a major re-branding of the Albanian language news journal LOBI, and provided business and marketing expertise to a variety of media associations in the country.

The Point Newspaper Team works with young people interested in journalism and guides them through the process of turning ideas into publishable articles. Today over 200 students from all ethnic backgrounds in Tetovo, Gostivar, and Kumanovo participate

in producing the monthly newspaper which is printed in Macedonian and Albanian languages. The journalists are engaged at all levels from editorial planning to distribution.

The Unit also monitors the media and takes a close interest in its regulation and legal framework. In 2003 it assisted and supported the drafting of a new broadcasting law which, once adopted, should help public and private broadcasters develop towards a sustainable future.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Moving on the decentralisation process

The Public Administration Support Unit (PASU) was created to facilitate the decentralisation process as stipulated in the *Framework Agreement*.

Through research and programming, PASU seeks to assist in building skills of local government officials and raise public awareness on the benefits of the decentralisation process. In 2003, in a capacity-building effort, PASU took on four National Professional Officers, who will spearhead an intense training programme for local officials.

Piloting inter-municipal co-operation

The OSCE, in co-operation with the Ministry of Local Self-Government, initiated a pilot project to promote the concept of inter-municipal co-operation, among six municipalities in the ethnically-mixed Kicevo region.

23 mayors and municipal staff of various ethnicities and political affiliations were given core training and technical assistance on municipal co-operation, strategic planning and project management.

In partnership with UNDP, the focus is now on establishing a local economic development fund.

The OSCE and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

Context

The OSCE continued its close, naturally-suited partnership with the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (SP) throughout 2003. On different occasions experts of the two organisations co-ordinated their work and have met in bilateral format, or in a wider context with the participation of other partners for co-operation. The permanent framework of dialogue offered by the OSCE has also been used by the Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact and Chairpersons of Stability Pact Task Forces.

2003 Stability Pact Activities in Areas of Interest for the OSCE

Local Democracy and Cross-Border Co-operation (LODE/CBC) in South-eastern Europe (SEE)

This SP initiative was established in November 2002 with the SP role focused on donor co-ordination, the support and development of Euroregions in SEE, the encouragement of the decentralisation process, and local capacity-building through the support of twinning and training activities.

Systematic co-operation of local actors (governmental, civic, and business) across national borders provides the practical underpinning to regional co-operation in SEE.

Strong support was received from various political levels in SEE and from implementing agencies and organisations on the ground. SP has been most successful in promoting LODE/CBC as a priority. Cross-border co-operation has been recognised as a cornerstone for broader regional co-operation and thus attracted increased and targeted donor interest.

Media

By forging co-operation between donors, international organisations and recipients, the Stability Pact Media Task Force (SP MTF) assists the development of independent and professional media within SEE.

Broadly composed Media Working Groups in all countries ensure full involvement of local actors and articulation of regional needs. The goal of the SP MTF is to ensure that necessary legal changes are implemented.

Fight against organised crime

Fighting organised crime is essential for the development of the region and requires sound judicial systems and efficient law enforcement institutions. The activities of the SP are thus aimed at capacity building, improving the legal framework and cross-border co-operation with the focus on prevention and prosecution.

To this end, the following inter-linked instruments are in place:

- the SP *Initiative to Fight Organised Crime* (SPOC)
- the SP Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings (SPTF)
- the *SP Anti-Corruption Initiative* (SPAI).

Close co-operation has been established with the *SECI* Regional Centre for Combating Transborder Crime, in Bucharest. Closely related initiatives include the *Ohrid Process on Border Management and Security*, and the SEE Small Arms Clearinghouse.

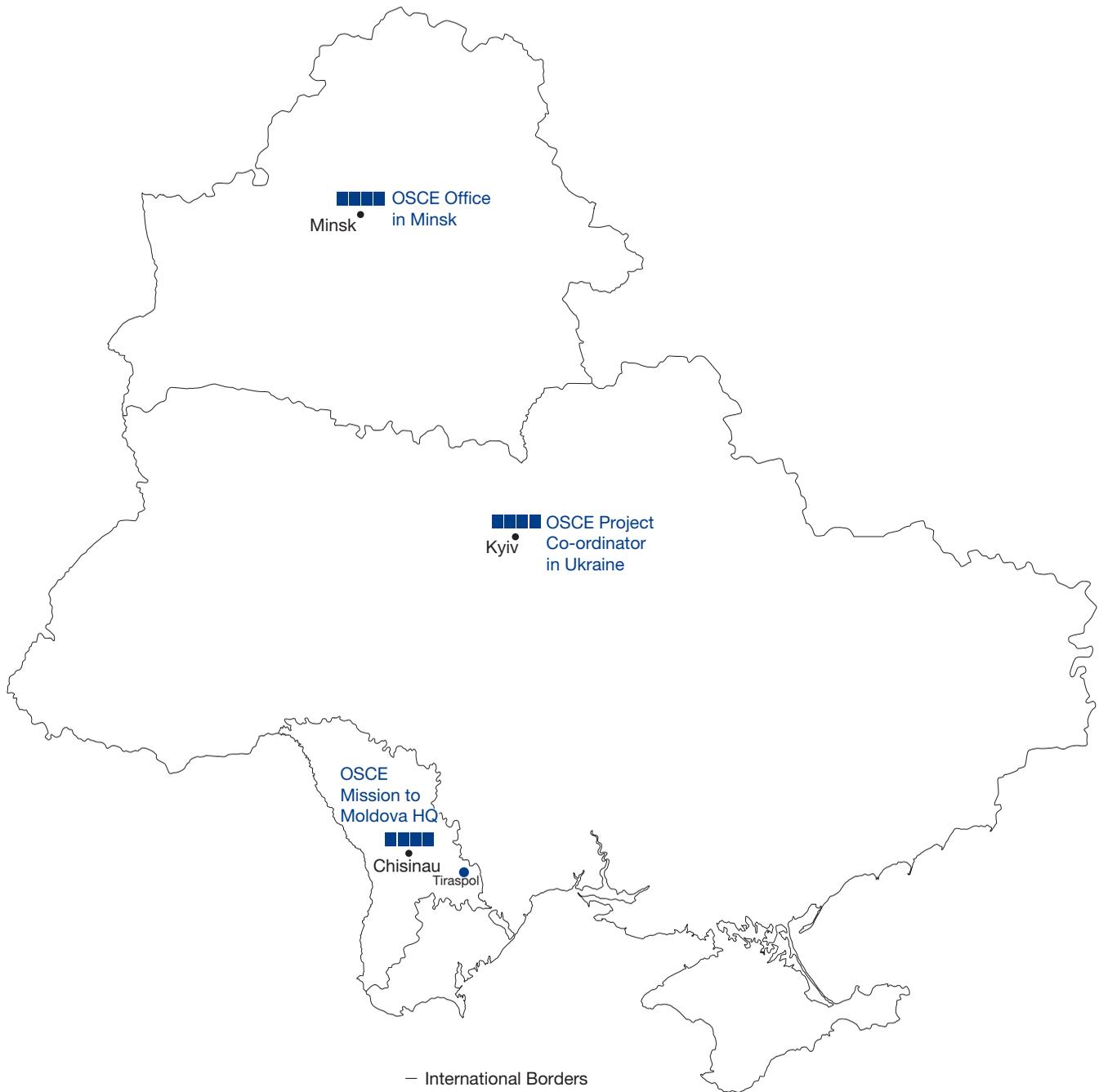
The aim of SPOC and related initiatives is to facilitate result-oriented dialogue between local, regional and international agencies on fighting organised crime. Ensuring sustainability through enhanced regional ownership is an important goal.

Managing and stabilising population movements

The merger in 2003 of the *Migration and Asylum Initiative* (MAI) and the *Refugee Return Initiative* (RRI) serves as the basis for a single, more streamlined and focused approach to managing and stabilising population movements in SEE.

The initiative aims to combine national measures with cross-border and regional efforts to render national action more effective, thus allowing the phasing out of the current activities devoted solely to the humanitarian aspects of displacement issues.

EASTERN EUROPE



The boundaries and names on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the OSCE

OSCE Office in Minsk

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF OFFICE

The year 2003 was marked with a fresh start for the OSCE field operation in Belarus.

On 30 December 2002 the Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 526, according to which the OSCE *Advisory and Monitoring Group* in Belarus was dissolved and the OSCE Office in Minsk (OOM) was established.

The Office quickly became operational and deployed its activities in conformity with its mandate. This provides for assisting the Belarusian Government in further promoting institution-building, consolidating the rule of law, developing relations with civil society, and developing economic and environmental activities.

These tasks have been fulfilled through implementation of relevant projects in the field of human and economic/environmental dimensions, as well as through monitoring and reporting activities.

Projects, such as the *Workshop on International Standards for Democratic Elections and Election Law Reform, Local Democracy and Assistance to Local Government Building, Creation of Rural SME Support Centre* – to mention just a few implemented during the reporting period – not only served the purpose of making progress in the relevant fields, but also helped develop good co-operation between the OOM and the host Government, as well as civil society.

This year's establishment of the OSCE Office in Minsk represents a fresh start for the Organization's field operation in Belarus. An effective operational characteristic of the OOM's work is the solid co-operation with ODIHR during project implementation, and other OSCE institutions in broader issues of mandate fulfillment.

Human Dimension Activities

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Local democracy and assistance for building local Government

The purpose of the project was to assist the authorities of Belarus in promoting and developing the concept of local democracy. Four study tours were organised, by the OOM and its project implementation partners, for exchange of experience of self-government in neighboring countries and to support professional contacts on the international level.

The OOM implementing partners were the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the public association Lev Sapega Foundation and the Associations of Local and Regional Authorities of Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic and Latvia.

The second stage of the project – the concluding conference on *Conceptual Issues of the Development and Perfection of the System of Local Government and Self-Government on the European Experience* – was implemented by the joint efforts of the OOM and the Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which oversees the development of the concept of local government and self-government in the country.

Five representatives of the Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe were among the participants.

Improving the electoral framework

On 22 September, 60 participants, including representatives of the Belarus election authorities, as well as representatives of political parties and NGOs, took part in a seminar on *International Standards for Democratic Elections*.

The event was organised by the OSCE/ODIHR, the OOM and the Central Election Commission of Belarus. Concluding the event, the OSCE expressed readiness to support follow-up activities on the transparency of and confidence in the election process.

Developing human rights education

The OOM supported an initiative by the Ministry of Education to publish a textbook entitled *To Schoolchildren on Human Rights* which addresses the human rights curriculum in Belarusian secondary schools. Two local NGOs and a Russian expert NGO have been invited by the OOM to offer independent comment. The Office has begun fund-raising efforts among the OSCE participating States to finance the printing of the textbook.

The Office has supported the ODIHR in implementing projects, including :

- electoral system reform seminar
- alternative sentencing
- improvement of the registration system of the population in the Republic of Belarus
- a masters degree programme – at the Centre for European and Transatlantic Studies of the European Humanistic University.

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DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEDIA

Promoting investigative journalism through an open competition

The Office signed an agreement with the International Educational Centre-IBB in Minsk on a joint project to promote investigative journalism.

Belarusian journalists were invited to enter a competition to gain a place on an international study tour to an EU country of their choosing. The journalists conducted meetings with representatives from official and non-governmental institutions. On their return, all the journalists submitted and published articles related to their investigations.

The Office facilitated the visit of delegation of journalists to the OSCE Secretariat, in co-operation with the Secretariat's Press and Public Information Section. The journalists later published articles related to their findings about OSCE structures.



At a number of meetings with Government officials, the OOM suggested that the draft of the *Law on Mass Media* be submitted to the OSCE and the Council of Europe for comment by international experts. It has been emphasised that the Law should reflect the OSCE commitments and secure a democratic environment for freedom of expression and the media.

MONITORING ACTIVITIES

Demonstrations

Several opposition demonstrations were observed in the city of Minsk, particularly in March and April. A number of participants were arrested at these events and later fined or sentenced to up to 15 days of administrative arrest by local courts. When considered appropriate, Office observers attended these court trials.

The overall situation led to increased attention towards the implementation of OSCE commitments regarding freedom of peaceful assembly.

Trials

Throughout the year, Office representatives monitored court trials. The majority of these cases concerned NGOs, including one trade union, while other court hearings dealt with charges on slander or disobeying police orders.

Addressing the closing down of NGOs became an increasingly important task for the OOM. In addition, the Office supported several Belarusian NGOs' participation in the *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting* in October, in Warsaw.

Individual complaints

The Office continued to deal with a large number of individual complaints of allegations of human rights violations, mainly regarding law enforcement agencies.

The complaints covered both civil and criminal cases: many related to violations of the right to fair trial and the treatment of prisoners.

The OOM's findings and concerns were regularly brought to the attention of Belarusian authorities. Generally prompt replies were offered and in several cases the relevant body took remedial action in response to the intervention by the Office.

The prison system

Guided by requests from NGOs and individuals, the Office carried out prison visits to further monitor the prison conditions in Belarus.

In June, a pre-trial detention centre in Minsk was visited. As a result, the OOM proposed steps to improve the situation, and expressed its willingness to assist the relevant state structures.

In August, the Office visited a Ukrainian citizen sentenced in Belarus to the death penalty. The Belarusian Helsinki Committee and other agencies were subsequently approached with a view to looking closer into the formalities of the case, and the possibility of providing a lawyer. The Office supported the plea to commute the sentence to life imprisonment.

In December, the Head of Office visited the imprisoned Professor Yuri Bandazhevsky, currently serving an eight-year term for alleged bribe-taking. The visit was facilitated by the Committee for Execution of Punishments. The case of the former rector of the Gomel State Medical Institute is believed, by Amnesty International and other organisations, to have a political background and has received significant international attention.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

The OOM has established positive working relationships with a number of governmental institutions and NGOs in the area of economics and the environment. The OOM has co-operated closely with the *Office of the Co-ordinator of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities*.

Five programmes were completed during the year. Activities focused on local empowerment, sharing knowledge from international experts on a range of topics and the dissemination of information to national experts and civil society.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Reforming the pension system

Ahead of planned reform, the OOM, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, developed a programme to invite a team of experts to Belarus for discussions on the options available for the pension system. Representatives from official and non-governmental organisations participated in the programme.

Developing rural enterprise

The Office and international partners implemented a number of tasks to help promote and develop rural enterprise, within the context of a national programme for SME development.

Two hotlines were established offering judicial and commercial advice to rural entrepreneurs. These were advertised with a national TV and radio advertising campaign

In conjunction with local entrepreneurs, the OOM provided assistance to establish a rural SME support centre in Komarova in the Myadel Region.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

Raising awareness of the Aarhus Convention

Following the recent signing of the *Aarhus Convention* by Belarus, the OOM worked with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and Eco-Prava Belarus to develop an analysis of environmental legislation.

The analysis was published in a guidebook and 1,500 copies were distributed to judges, students and libraries throughout the country.

Introducing the EU Water Framework Directive

A comparative analysis was completed on the EU and Belarus water legislation and presented for discussion to relevant managers from all regions. Two guidebooks, one for water specialists and one for the general public, were developed on the basis of recommendations made during the seminar, and were subsequently distributed widely. This project was spearheaded by the Office in co-operation with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and TACIS, and was designed to build upon the previous year's work started by TACIS.

Creating a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve

The OOM, in collaboration with the National Academy of Sciences and the Belarus Man and Biosphere Committee completed all the steps required for an application to UNESCO to create a transboundary biosphere reserve in West Polesie.

The successful completion of the project has given Belarus the option to submit a joint application with Poland and Ukraine for protected status for the reserve.



Alia Krynskaya/OSCE

A Belarusian delegation of local government representatives on a study-tour to the Czech Republic in October. This tour was realised within the framework of the OOM project Local Democracy Assistance to Local Government Building in Belarus.

OSCE Mission to Moldova

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF MISSION

For the OSCE Mission to Moldova, 2003 was a year filled with great promise, achievement, and frustration. With the exceptional engagement of the Dutch Chairmanship, in particular through the Chair's Personal Representative for Moldova, Ambassador Adriaan Jacobovits de Szeged, the OSCE played a crucial role in negotiations for a political settlement of the Transdniestrian question.

Moldova and local Transdniestrian authorities agreed to establish a Joint Constitutional Commission to draft a new constitution for a reunited country; the OSCE Mission opened a new office in Bendery to provide the venue and support for this effort. Negotiating initiatives during the fall brought Chisinau and Tiraspol to the verge of a settlement, but a final accord eluded the parties. However, the role of the OSCE, and the Mission in Chisinau, remains central in the search for resolution of this 'frozen conflict'.

The OSCE Mission also contributed to unprecedented progress in co-ordinating assistance and ensuring transparency in the withdrawal of Russian Federation arms and troops from Moldova. In a three-month period of intense activity in the spring, Russian forces withdrew over a third of the vast stores of ammunition in the last remaining major Russian Federation military asset, the ammunition depot near the northern village of Colbasna. Local resistance on the left bank prevented completion of the withdrawal in 2003, but the OSCE Mission is poised during 2004 to facilitate early accomplishment of this central point in its mandate.

Head of Mission:
Ambassador William Hill
(since 23 January 2003)
Revised budget: € 1,115,100

The OSCE Mission to Moldova also engaged on a wide range of human dimension issues. Mission members negotiated a solution for the operation of Moldovan Latin script schools on the left bank, and fought to see it implemented, without success. The Mission played an indispensable role in leading and co-ordinating the fight in Moldova against human trafficking, including initiating a major project on victim assistance and witness protection. In all of their efforts, the international and national members of the OSCE Mission team were unmatched in their dedication and professionalism in pursuit of conflict resolution and regional stability.

Political negotiations

Based on the Moldovan President's February initiative to work out a new constitution for a united federal state, the Mission actively supported the creation and work of a Joint Constitutional Commission (JCC), composed of representatives from Moldova and the Transdniestrian region. The JCC works in parallel to the ongoing political settlement negotiations.

Representatives of the three mediators - the OSCE, Russian Federation and Ukraine - have observer status in the JCC. Representatives and experts from the European Union and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission also have a designated role in advising the JCC. The Mission provided the JCC with a venue, working facilities, and other logistical support. In co-operation with the OSCE

Parliamentary Assembly, the Mission organised two seminars for JCC members and legislators from both sides, to study European models and aspects of federalism.

By the end of the year the Commission had worked out a draft chapter on human rights and fundamental freedoms. However, it failed to make progress on the federal structures of the future State and the division of competencies between local and central authorities.

By mid October the three mediators worked out a set of proposals and recommendations intended to assist the two sides in addressing disputed issues in the work of the JCC.

Concurrent with attention devoted to the question of a special status for the Transdniestrian region, the Mission expended considerable effort throughout the year in attempts to defuse tensions between the two sides, on a broad range of contentious economic and jurisdictional issues.

The Mission proposed the formation of an Economic Experts Working Group within the broader negotiating process, in response to growing tension between the sides over questions such as: legal registration of Transdniestrian enterprises; customs fees and documentation; and fixed line and mobile phone systems on the right and the left bank.

The economic experts worked actively during the second half of the year in search of compromise solutions, but with limited success.

Foremost among the objectives of the OSCE Mission to Moldova is to assist in negotiating a lasting political settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict. The Mission's mandate also includes a range of security issues, in particular the withdrawal of foreign military forces from the Republic of Moldova.

Neill Brennan/OSCE



Politico-Military Activities

THE JOINT CONTROL COMMISSION (JCC)

Military Mission members continued their efforts in 2003 to co-operate with, and support the work of the JCC – the body responsible for implementing the July 1992 Ceasefire Agreement.

The JCC is also the supervisory body for the *Joint Peacekeeping Forces* (JPF) in the Security Zone – the strip along the Dniestr River that separates the two sides of the dispute.

The Mission took part in all weekly JCC meetings in its capacity as observer.

DEMILITARISATION AND TRANSPARENCY

The Mission's efforts in the JCC toward confidence-building and military transparency bore fruit in August, when it was able to broker an agreement on full withdrawal by the Moldovan and Transdnestrian militaries of armoured vehicles held by their peacekeeping forces inside the Security Zone.

This action was based on a recommendation made by a group of OSCE military experts in 2001, but was never implemented due to a lack of consensus in the JCC.

On 27 May the JCC finally agreed on this measure, but implementation was stalled by disputes on practical details. After the meeting at the Mission headquarters on 1 August which settled these details, a total of 71 armoured vehicles were removed from the Security Zone in two stages, on 14 and 21 August. OSCE Mission members observed and verified all stages of this withdrawal.

In late August, to enhance military transparency, the Moldovan delegation unilaterally provided all other JCC participants with comprehensive data on the organisation of the Moldovan army, including the locations of military units and their personnel strength and equipment.

Unresolved issues

Notwithstanding the successes noted above, throughout 2003 work in the JCC was challenged by several longstanding contentious issues in the Transdnestrian region, including: the cutting off of utilities; pressure to move legally stationed police units; the continued closure of a bridge over the River Dniestr; and interference with Moldovan farmers in the region.

These issues were raised by the Head of Mission in several meetings with the leadership in the Transdnestrian region, but without clear resolution of any item by the end of the year.

WITHDRAWAL AND REDUCTION OF RUSSIAN FEDERATION ARMS & EQUIPMENT

The Mission was very active throughout 2003 in facilitating and supporting the withdrawal and/or destruction of Russian Federation arms, ammunition and military equipment from the Transdnestrian region of Moldova; in particular under provisions added to the Mission's mandate after the *1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit*.

This year the Mission's Programme Management Cell observed and verified the withdrawal of 11 trains with military equipment and 31 trains loaded with more than 15,000 tons of ammunition.



Neil Brennan/OSCE

The Mission financially compensated the Russian Ministry of Defence for expenses incurred during the withdrawals in accordance with agreements reached earlier.

However, authorities in the Transdnestrian region blocked the withdrawal process for four months in the summer and autumn. Consequently, it is estimated that half of the original 42,000 tons of ammunition remains in depots.

Despite extensive efforts, the ammunition destruction technologies imported in 2002 could not be used this year. Authorities in the Transdnestrian region did not permit the equipment to be brought to the destruction site – contrary to agreements reached with the Mission and the Russian Federation.

VERIFYING DESTRUCTION OF WEAPONS

The Mission co-operated successfully with OGRF military officials to observe and verify destruction of Russian military equipment on site, in Tiraspol.

In two extensive reduction periods, Russian military officials destroyed 51 armoured vehicles, all of which were types not limited by the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty.

These vehicles were platforms for guided anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles; and radiological, reconnaissance and communications units.

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Human Dimension Activities

LANGUAGE RIGHTS

Supporting parents' choice of languages in schools

The disputes over seven Moldovan schools in Transnistria continue despite agreements brokered this year by the Mission and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.



These schools use the Latin alphabet in teaching Romanian/Moldovan, and are funded by the Moldovan Government and follow the Moldovan curriculum.

Early in the year authorities in the Transnistrian region repeated threats to close the schools.

Working in close co-operation and with substantial key assistance from the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Mission reached an agreement with education and judicial authorities in the Transnistrian region at the end of the summer. This should have allowed the schools to register with local left bank authorities and function without hindrance.

Unfortunately, officials in the Transnistrian region observed neither this agreement nor an amended version mediated by the Mission in October. Instead, they reverted to previous tactics especially with respect to schools in the northern river town of Ribnita and the Transnistrian administrative centre of Tiraspol. A criminal investigation was initiated against the director and teachers of the Ribnita school. By the year's end, registration of the schools was still pending, and their future remained in doubt.

Establishing dialogue on reform of history teaching

The Mission continued to support the Council of Europe's series of seminars, *History Teaching in Moldova*. This and other related initiatives were designed to follow the Council's recommendations for teaching *History in Twenty-First Century Europe*.

ELECTIONS

The Mission worked closely with the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission of the local and municipal elections in Moldova in May and June, and took part as short-term observers in the first and second rounds of voting.

Mission members subsequently followed-up on several complaints from political parties and individuals, including those on the use of administrative sanctions by Government agencies against opposition candidates. Members observed several further rounds of repeat elections.

In November, Mission members closely followed preparations for the elections to the Gagauz Peoples' Assembly in the Autonomous Region of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri). With the assistance of an elections expert provided by ODIHR, a political assessment was conducted. Mission members visited nearly all polling stations during both rounds of the elections and followed the counting procedures in select locations.



Working with the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission

MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS

As in previous years, the Mission received and responded to a very large number of individual and group petitions and complaints from citizens on both sides of the Dniestr River.

In some cases the complainants were advised as to which Moldovan institutions they might appeal for redress, while in other cases the Mission approached appropriate officials for clarification, or requested reviews.

In addition, the Mission continued its engagement in the case of the three remaining members of the Ilascu group – Moldovan nationals convicted by Transnistrian authorities of alleged crimes during the 1992 conflict, and incarcerated in Tiraspol since then.

In March, the Mission facilitated an on-the-spot investigation by the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights, as part of the proceedings in a case brought to the ECHR by members of the group.

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND GENDER ISSUES

Stepping-up the fight

Expansion and co-ordination of anti-trafficking efforts

2003 saw the Mission consolidate and expand its anti-trafficking efforts through the establishment of a dedicated unit.

It has concentrated on assisting Moldova in monitoring, co-ordinating and advocacy, as well as in boosting capacity and institution-building.

The Mission's new unit acts as an effective focal point for co-ordinating local and international anti-trafficking efforts in Moldova, and supporting synergies.

Close co-ordination has been developed with the OSCE/ODIHR *Anti-Trafficking Unit* and the Stability Pact Anti-Trafficking and Gender Task Forces.

Similar extensive co-operation with the network of anti-trafficking staff in other OSCE Missions and institutions, international organisations and NGOs has proved effective to advancing anti-trafficking issues in Moldova.

The unit hosts monthly technical co-ordination meetings among NGOs and national and international agencies. It also maintains a database of ongoing projects to enhance anti-trafficking co-ordination and funding efforts.

Supporting the National Committee

The Mission continued to assist the Moldovan National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings in its efforts to develop a comprehensive strategy. On Mission advice, four thematic sub-working groups were founded, involving NGOs and international organisations. The Mission co-chairs the sub-group on legislation.

Reforming anti-trafficking legislation

ODIHR, the Mission and partners have provided technical assistance in the drafting of the *Moldovan Criminal and Criminal Procedure Codes*, which came into force in June. The Codes establish human trafficking as a criminal offence maximally punishable by life imprisonment. The Mission continues to provide assistance in analysis and review of criminal and witness-protection legislation.

Building local capacity and institutions

In co-operation with international partners, the Mission supported the Moldovan Ministries of Interior and Justice in developing anti-trafficking training modules for police officers, prosecutors and judges.

In order to promote responsible journalism on trafficking issues, the Mission organised a four-day intensive workshop, which was delivered by international experts to thirteen journalists.

Strengthening protection and assistance to victims

In summer, the Mission started a large-scale project entitled *Strengthening Protection and Assistance to Victims of Trafficking: Adults and Minors*. It aims to build a national referral mechanism and to develop protection measures for victims and witnesses. The project is expected to last for two years.

Through its implementing partner, La Strada, the Mission allocated financial and technical resources to provide direct assistance to victims of trafficking, especially women and children. More than 400 persons, including 260 children of victims received material, legal and psychological assistance.

Meanwhile, thirteen victims benefited from scholarships for vocational training and university education.

Advocating combating trafficking in Transnistria

The Mission has devoted considerable attention to human trafficking in Transnistria. It welcomes the new anti-trafficking provisions in the regional criminal legislation on the left bank.

GENDER ISSUES

Empowering women

The project to promote women's participation in political and public life concluded in March, ahead of the local elections.

Women Can Do It – which was funded by the Canadian International Development Agency – offered 37 seminars, during which 892 women from 318 localities were trained. Participants included representatives from twelve political parties, civil society organisations, mass media, and trade unions.

FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA

Mission concerns remained over longstanding restrictions on freedom of expression by Transnistrian authorities. In addition, during 2003 the Mission noted an unfortunate increase in cases on the right bank of alleged manipulation by authorities of the state media and pressure on the independent media.

The media situation in the Transnistrian region continued to cause serious concern. Authorities in Tiraspol continued a long-standing campaign to silence independent opposition voices and movements on the left bank, in particular through attempted closures of independent local newspapers and restrictions on other media.

On the right bank, tensions continued throughout 2003 over efforts to transform the state broadcasting company *Teledio Moldova* into a public broadcaster. Debates on this issue focused on implementation of Council of Europe recommendations and amending the national broadcasting legislation. Later in the year the Moldovan legislature chose to liquidate *Teledio Moldova* rather than restructure it.

In the process of transforming the state broadcasting company serious concerns were raised that the reform might be used to eliminate independent journalists or those critical of the current administration. There were several incidents in which journalists working in the state media were allegedly dismissed or prevented from broadcasting regular programs for political reasons.

The Mission also noted several allegations of favoritism in the allocation of radio and television broadcast licenses to private firms. Mission concerns and observations were regularly conveyed to the participating states as well as to the *OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media*.

OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine

MESSAGE FROM THE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine has worked with the country's authorities in further developing the new form of co-operation between the OSCE and Ukraine as described in the 1999 Memorandum of Understanding.

2003 was an important transition year in this relationship. A new Project Co-ordinator was appointed in April. This appointment was followed by a period of consideration with Ukrainian authorities concerning how the new form of co-operation would complement Ukraine's established institutions and its accomplishments in its goals of good governance.

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine and Ukrainian authorities – including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – is involved in the development, planning, and implementation of significant projects. Ukrainian authorities have indicated broad support for the activities of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine.

As Ukraine progresses toward targets set forth in the action plans it has developed, this new form of co-operation is yielding tangible results.

Developing a tool for articulation of activities

In order to assist in the development of new projects, the office created a database reflecting the aspirations of its host nation as described in Ukraine's action plans.

The database also includes the activities of NGOs, international organisations, and the international community active in Ukraine.

This cross-referencing tool has helped avoid duplication of efforts, and has clarified areas where the office should concentrate its resources.

Project Co-ordinator:
Ambassador David Nicholas
(since 25 March 2003)
Revised budget: € 1,136,100

Co-operation with the host country in 2003 and beyond

At the time of the appointment of the new Project Co-ordinator, several projects were being implemented in the areas of rule of law, defence conversion and social adaptation of demobilised military personnel, anti-trafficking, reform of the system of registration of citizens, and legislative drafting.

Several of these activities are ongoing: some have been completed or are entering new phases. New and additional projects have been conceived with a goal of developing wide-ranging and large-scale initiatives.

This year, this dynamic field presence has developed a true partnership with Ukraine. New projects are primarily in the areas of:

- rule of law – a set of relevant projects
- border control – including training, equipment, and border delineation
- economic and community development – especially supporting SMEs
- elections.

To help accomplish many of these projects, extra-budgetary contributions pledged for next year are considerably larger than those received this year.

RULE OF LAW

Rule of law constitutes one of the major areas of the office's activities, in the context of the determination of Ukrainian courts further to develop modern procedures.

The office offers financial and logistical support to courts and research institutes in the following areas:

- language training for judges
- publication of legal materials and research
- publication in Ukrainian of materials for judges dealing with the European Court of Human Rights
- development of a library and information centre at the Ministry of Justice for those working on European integration
- training lawyers and judges with respect to new legislation and international conventions to which Ukraine is a party
- attendance of Ukrainian lawyers, judges, and administrators at international forums, where topics in their various areas of competence are discussed.

The establishment of an administrative court system is supported as part of an ongoing implementation of judicial reform. Parliamentary committees and agencies which undertake legislative research and drafting receive assistance.

In co-operation with the Ministry of Justice, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine also supports legislative review, and harmonisation of proposed legislation with European standards.

In partnership with the Presidential Administration and OSCE/ODIHR, the office supports continuing work on the country's registration system, through international conferences and consultations with other countries which have reformed their systems to European standards.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES:

A new area for projects

Nurturing entrepreneurs

Working with appropriate Ukrainian authorities on all levels in various regions, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine is supporting efforts to create opportunities for established and would-be entrepreneurs. Through the development of employment centres, opportunities are created for education, professional assistance, and finance for SMEs.

Economic initiatives

In the context of involvement in the retraining of former military personnel and support of anti-trafficking in human beings, the office is supporting programmes which will help create conditions for economic development in run-down regions in Ukraine.

One initiative aims to create a business support infrastructure in remote areas with little or no access to business advisory services. Others envisage improving and updating existing business training materials, to provide new entrepreneurs with up-to-date legal literature reflecting provisions of *Commercial and Civil Codes* that will come into force in 2004.

Promoting vital investment

The office recognises the importance of foreign direct investment flow into Ukraine as a means of stimulating local economic activities, alleviating poverty, creating new jobs, and improving the well-being of citizens. Consequently, it is working with regional authorities to design strategies to assist in promoting investment opportunities through:

- development of long-term investment promotion plans
- preparation of investment trade fairs, and advertising Ukrainian opportunities at investment forums abroad
- networking businesses.

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine has been especially active in support of Ukraine's efforts in the fight against trafficking in human beings. As a result, Ukraine sets an example of best practice in this region. Delegations from other countries come to Ukraine to learn from its experience.

Human Dimension Activities

HUMAN RIGHTS AND ANTI-TRAFFICKING

With relevant Ukrainian authorities – especially the State Committee for Family and Youth and several NGOs – the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine and the OSCE/ODIHR support prevention of anti-trafficking campaigns across the country.

Raising awareness through targeted education and hotlines

Among the most effective trafficking prevention tools supported are the NGO-managed national and regional toll-free counselling hotlines. To date, more than 22,000 Ukrainians have called and received information about trips, work and study abroad in the context of trafficking awareness. Training for hotline consultants is provided as part of these programmes.

The education of high-risk groups and school and university students was supported within the framework of prevention campaigns, and in close co-operation with Ukrainian authorities. Over 11,000 people have attended presentations on the problem of trafficking this year.

Planning for effectiveness in the anti-trafficking campaign

During 2003, the office co-financed an assessment of needs with respect to victim identification and rehabilitation. It is also examining possible improvements for ongoing prevention campaigns. The outcome of this assessment and its consequent recommendations will be reflected in the office's activities in 2004.

Propiska-Registration of Citizens

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine and the OSCE/ODIHR are supporting the nation's authorities in the reform of the *propiska* system – the registration of citizens.

Reviews of relevant draft laws have been carried out by international experts. The experiences in this area of other countries have been studied, and Ukrainian registration legislation has been analysed. The support provided has consisted of seminars, a study trip to Lithuania, and publication of relevant materials.

In January, the Cabinet of Ministers issued a preliminary order on the registration of citizens, which is to be replaced by a new law. A draft *Law on Freedom of Movement and Freedom of Choice of Place of Residence* is ready for the second reading in the Ukrainian Parliament.

Socially re-integrating retired military personnel

Incident to downsizing of its military, Ukraine has numerous facilities and thousands of personnel in transition from military to civilian life. The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine financed a model defence conversion project on a military base. In the framework of this project, an assessment of the situation of conversion in Ukraine was carried out.

This project has provided a basis for the office's further activities in this area. Consequently, it is funding training clinics for soldiers making the transition to civilian status, in close co-operation with the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine and the National Co-ordination Centre on Conversion and Social Adaptation.

At the clinics, soldiers in transition are informed about housing and pension rights, as well as about other opportunities available. Psychological support is also provided. Special attention is paid to the development of retraining opportunities.

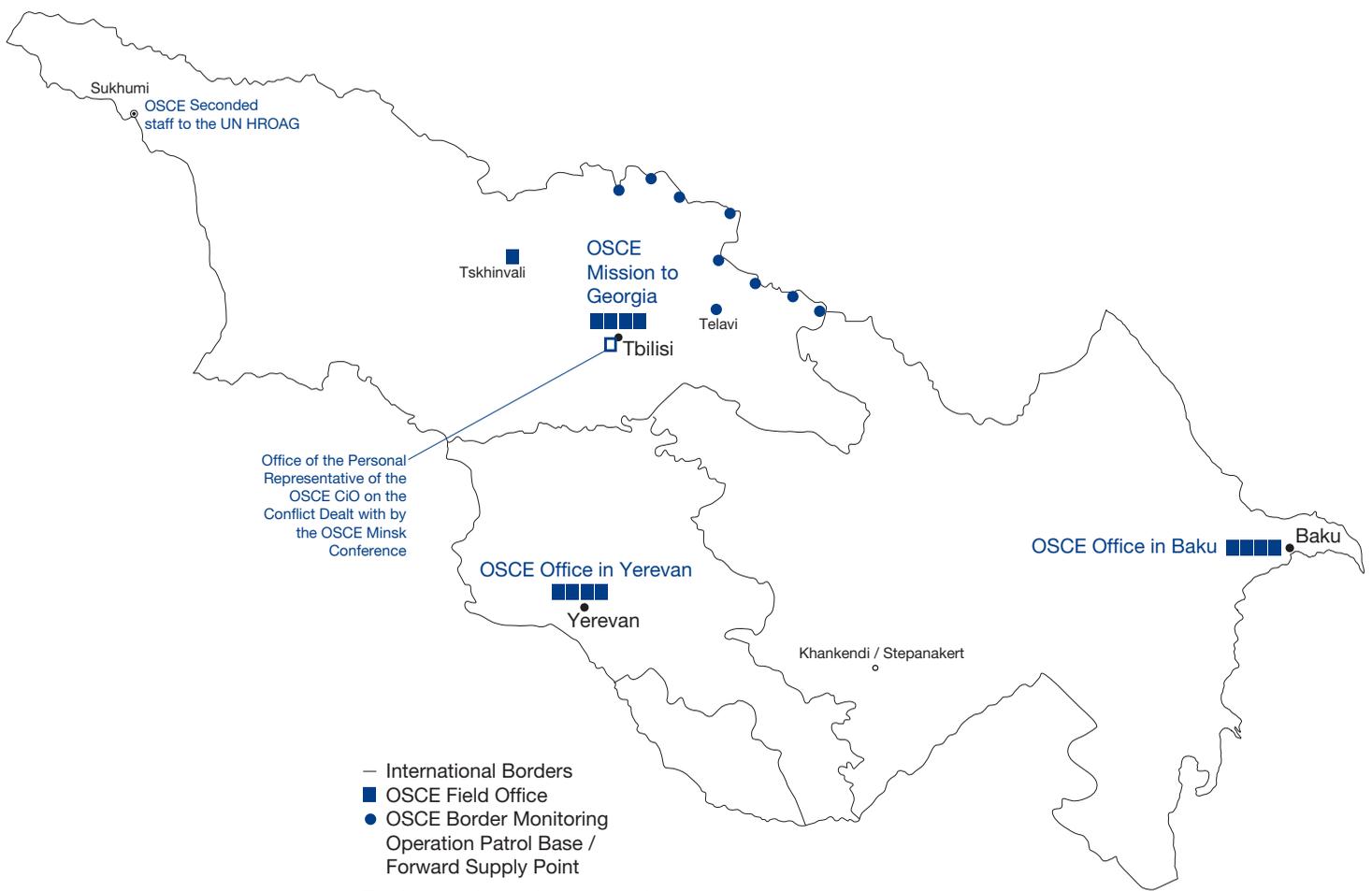
Initial steps include a new programme which is providing graduate level business management training for retiring senior officers.

ELECTIONS

Following statements by Ukrainian authorities at the highest levels which confirm the commitment to conduct fair and transparent elections, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine began to assist the attainment of the highest democratic standards of procedure. To this end, Ukrainian authorities, NGOs, and the international community have deepened co-operation.

Ahead of the forthcoming 2004 elections, a comprehensive action plan has been finalised and submitted to Ukrainian authorities for their consideration.

THE CAUCASUS



- International Borders
- OSCE Field Office
- OSCE Border Monitoring Operation Patrol Base / Forward Supply Point

The boundaries and names on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the OSCE

OSCE Office in Baku

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF OFFICE

2003 can be described, without doubt, as having been the busiest and most successful year for the Office since it was established some four years ago.

In fulfilling its mandate, the Office has focused particular attention on the rule of law and good governance as its overall priorities.

It has closely followed developments related to compliance with OSCE principles and commitments, commented on them and maintained close and meaningful dialogue with relevant authorities. The Office has striven to support implementation of those commitments by facilitating and co-ordinating activities and pertinent events. Most importantly, projects have been developed and implemented, and action plans formulated with the authorities.

The political year in Azerbaijan has been focused on the presidential elections, which were held in October. Therefore, the Office worked closely with the OSCE/ODIHR to support good practice in the election process wherever possible.

The Office has also addressed issues as diverse as trafficking in human beings and water management, anti-terrorism legislation and development of civil society, eco-tourism, freedom of the media and development of the police service.

In 2003, the country has consolidated an important commitment to fight against trafficking in human beings – one of the OSCE priority issues. With our support, Azerbaijan has ratified the Palermo Protocols and has become one of few countries to have adopted a draft National Action Plan to combat the phenomenon.

Azerbaijan has taken major steps in playing its role in combating terrorism, and the Office is facilitating support for its legislative implementation of international instruments and decisions.

Substantial OSCE resources recently allocated to the Office has given major impetus to programmatic and project-based work. Looking ahead, the Office shall build upon the newly-established emphasis on design and implementation of projects specifically aimed at supporting the realisation of the Organization's principles and commitments.

POLICE DEVELOPMENT

Building upon the successful on-going implementation of a Police Assistance Programme in Kyrgyzstan, the *OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU)* identified Azerbaijan as the next focus for an OSCE policing partnership.

A team of the OSCE /SPMU Officers visited the country in April 2003 and reached agreement in principal on priority areas for OSCE assistance.

With effective and sustainable improvements to policing in mind, expert assessment of existing Azerbaijani methods created the agenda for the *Police Assistance Programme*. This needs-assessment phase was implemented over five months and covered the following thematic areas:

- Community policing: a pilot scheme
- Strengthening of the Police School for induction training of police recruits
- Strengthening of intelligence-led drug investigation.

The core element of community policing is the emphasis on providing a service to the population, by providing social protection and defence of the community's legitimate interests.

To this end, the Office's *Police Development Project* involves:

- reconfiguration of various police services including patrol, neighbourhood inspectors, traffic police and operational investigators, in a selected jurisdiction to remove vertical divisions and provide integrated service to the population
- introduction of competitive and transparent recruitment procedures for neighbourhood inspectors
- modification of the system of measurement of police performance to include as indicators the assessment of the quality of life as well as the accuracy of crime reporting
- development of crime analysis and implementation of a strategy for public information about crime patterns
- implementation of the concept of problem-oriented policing.

Getting the basics right: dramatically improving Police School conditions

As part of the extensive package offered by the *Police Assistance Programme*, the Office and the OSCE/SPMU focused on the Police School by strengthening its curriculum and providing suitable facilities.



Head of Office, Peter Burkhard, adding the finishing touches.

Refurbishment and renovation included a new roof, replacement of the heating system, provision of two shower blocks for the sports area, and complete renovation of two floors in the teaching block of the school.

Before this work took place cadets had to study and live in dilapidated buildings with limited electrical supply and no heat regulation (up to 40°C in the summer, and freezing conditions with 90% humidity in the winter).

Strengthening of the Police School for induction training of police recruits

The building of a strong and transparent partnership with relevant local authorities was a key objective of the assessment phase of the programme. This included the improvement of the Police School, which trains new police recruits at the level of non-commissioned officers.

The Office and the SPMU focused on two main areas:

- vital refurbishment of facilities
- an extensive re-alignment of the training curriculum with best international practices and requirements of the service.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

In recent years, Azerbaijan has deployed larger contingents of armed forces to international peacekeeping effort, including Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq.

In response, the Office met with the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs to identify areas where the OSCE might best promote understanding of international norms of military activity.

Training Azerbaijani forces before international deployment

The Office provided comprehensive *Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security* training for the International Co-operation Battalion; with the Swiss Ministry of Defence and the OSCE's *Forum for Security Co-operation*.

It also issued personnel with laminated aide-memoires covering international warning signs and organisation emblems, together with a similar document on the obligations under the Geneva Convention and other obligations under International Humanitarian Law applicable to soldiers in combat.

This event has led to a closer co-operation between the Office and the Ministry of Defence, and by November a major seminar covering practical aspect of the Code of Conduct for mid-ranking officers was organised and led by Finnish Ministry of Defence experts. It is envisaged that these officers, in turn, will train other personnel.

ANTI-TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

A new plan of action

In late 2002 a roadmap of action was informally agreed, after the Office and the IOM presented an overview of the impact of trafficking in human beings to representatives of ten governmental ministries.

During 2003, the Office supported the Government in encouraging its ratification of the *United Nations Palermo Protocols*, thereby committing the country to adopting certain legislative and other instruments. This paved the way for the development of a functioning national action plan.

Azerbaijan announced the adoption of a draft national action plan at the OSCE *Economic Forum* in May.

Since then, the Office has rallied support from international organisations and bilateral representations to commence implementation of the plan. Working with the IOM and a local NGO to establish the national helpline has been a first step. The training has begun for social workers and professionals to support trafficking victims.

The Office has also initiated support of legislative reform to develop a co-ordinated response to incidents of suspected trafficking; and has started training NGOs in the skills needed to run effective awareness-raising as a means of protection for the at risk community, to manage and effectively run a toll-free helpline for potential and actual victims of trafficking and in the basic skills to manage and provide support to potential and actual victims of trafficking within the environment of a secure accommodation. Events in this sphere represent rapid progress: in November 2002 the phenomenon of human trafficking was not officially recognised in Azerbaijan, but now the country has a draft action plan based on internationally recognised agreements and best practices.

ELECTIONS

The elaboration of a new electoral law dominated the agenda of internal politics during the first half of the year. In February, the Office organised a conference, at which the author of the *Draft Electoral Code* and one of the co-authors of the opposition coalition's comment on the draft presented their views and a discussion followed.

The interventions and discussions were chaired by the Head of Office on State Television.

The Office supported the ODIHR election observation mission during the Presidential election. The election was accompanied by civil disturbance and the subsequent arrest of several hundred people, including senior opposition political figures, a religious leader and members of the press.

The Office, having observed the civil disorder, has followed the circumstances surrounding the continuing detentions of more than one hundred individuals and the alleged dismissals from employment which have occurred. With the permission of the Azerbaijan authorities, the Office regularly visited those detained and, in co-operation with ODIHR, has instituted a monitoring programme of all court proceedings which have recently commenced.

It continued to offer support to the Azerbaijan authorities in implementing recommendations of the ODIHR Election Report on election standards, and to provide whatever assistance it can in preparing for the Municipal Elections 2004.

Human Dimension Activities

Assistance to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Based on the amendments to the Constitution of Azerbaijan, adopted in the 2002 referendum, and on the *Constitutional Law on Realisation of Human Rights*, a new mechanism of protecting and restoring human rights was made available for the citizens of Azerbaijan. The Constitutional Court has been given the authority to repeal, by its decision, the norms of individual and general normative acts violating human rights.

With a view to provide an opportunity for administrative staff of the court to get acquainted with ways in which practical issues of administering a high number of cases can be approached, the Office organised a study trip for senior staff members. During the trip, three staff members, directly charged with receiving and administering individual complaints, visited a constitutional court in Poland. During their stay the participants were given an opportunity to become familiar with practices and experiences of the host court in case management and implementation of decisions.

Driving forward Bar reform

The Office launched the concept of an independent professional lawyers' organisation – the National Forum of Lawyers. The Forum has provided opportunity for over 400 lawyers to address matters of crucial importance.

At the end of the year the Office organised a one-day roundtable discussion on Bar reform, which offered:

- a platform for discussion on the legal reform suggested by the Government
- an opportunity for practicing lawyers to get involved with draft legislation.

The Office also has been engaged in a series of:

- human rights training activities for NGOs and the Ombudsman Institution
- events designed to resolve the current problem pertaining to NGO registration
- training for practising lawyers on advanced litigation skills
- training for 100 law students on court proceedings, drafting of legal documents and fair trials.

Human rights training for NGOs

Throughout the year the office organised human rights monitoring and reporting training for representatives of local NGOs.

The project included a follow-up phase during which participants were encouraged to submit proposals for a small-scale monitoring project. Three grants were awarded for monitoring of:

- availability of state-provided legal aid
- the observance of the principle of publicity and timeliness of court trials, as stipulated in article 6 of the ECHR
- the religious expression of head-scarf wearing.

Freedom of religion

The Office joined a parliamentary working group, providing a source of information and model examples of international good practice, drafting a new law on freedom of religion in Azerbaijan.

In co-operation with the ODIHR a comparative study was commissioned on how the issues that would be dealt with in the proposed law are treated in various European countries. This provided an overview of possible models for legislators. The Office stands ready to support the Government in its further efforts in implementing the resulting law.

Civic education for NGOs & Police

The Office with the Ministry of Interior organised a series of training sessions aimed at the strengthening of co-operation between NGOs and the police. Through the financial support of the company British Petroleum, the seminars were held throughout the country, and marked the start of open communication and co-operation between NGOs and structures of the Ministry of the Interior.

Freedom of Association

One of the priorities of the Office was activities in the field of promotion of full freedom of association in Azerbaijan.

A survey on the issue was compiled by the Office in co-operation with the International Centre for Not-for Profit Law, and used to inform discussion.

As a part of an overall strategy the Office implemented an NGO advocacy capacity-building project.

Together with its implementing partner, the NGO Tolerance, the Office trained and encouraged local NGOs to use the legal tools available for advocacy; as well as advocated support for NGOs facing problems with the fundamental act of registration. Emphasis was placed on the principle of the right to associate, reflected in the registration of an NGO. Legal aid was provided to those NGOs willing to pursue their rights through the ombudsman institution, the Constitutional Court, and international mechanisms.

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DEVELOPING THE MEDIA



With the aim of developing professional skills of journalists, the Office, in conjunction with the BBC Training Centre, organised training courses for Azerbaijani journalists on election reporting.

A study tour was organised for members of the newly formed independent Press Council to its German counterpart in Bonn. This visit provided the institution for media-society relations with first-hand experience of an established press council in a country with a longstanding tradition of media operating in a democratic society.

In September, a group of four young journalists had an opportunity to observe the functioning of the media in the United States of America. During their stay, they gleaned comprehensive information on investigative and factually-based reporting, and on the ways of covering potentially troublesome stories. Most importantly, during their weeklong visit in a press newsroom they experienced the skills they learnt can be applied practically.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

The Office focused much of its energy in the past year on promoting the development of SMEs and employment, particularly in the less prosperous regions outside of Baku.

Taking the leading role in introducing new business systems

In line with the Government's plans to establish business incubators as source of job creation, the Office sponsored a study tour in Austria and Hungary and a joint *OSCE/UNIDO National Workshop on Business Incubators*.

Both events brought together leading business and Government representatives to discuss the merits and best practices of existing structures.

Promoting enterprise

SME regional development is hindered by the lack of access to business training and micro-credits. In this regard, the Office harnessed the experience of international and domestic organisations, sponsoring two training programmes for particularly vulnerable population groups: women and the youth.

The Office initiated the *YES Programme (Youth Entrepreneurship Seminars)* in five western regions bordering with Georgia. The Office also sponsored training seminars for promising women entrepreneurs in ten regions of Azerbaijan. These training seminars were followed by a national workshop on women entrepreneurship with the goal of promoting the role of women in business.

Addressing poor access to micro-credit loans

The Office sponsored a *Micro-Finance Practitioners' Conference* which brought together the micro-finance community with Government and international stakeholders to pool experience and determine the way forward.

The Office also initiated an *Economic Training Programme* for municipality leaders and executive staff on themes of strategic economic planning, as well as on their role in SME development in local communities.



Cognac tasters taking the first samples of the year in Goychay, central Azerbaijan. The OSCE promotes the development of enterprise.

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC AWARENESS AND SECURITY

Supporting Azerbaijan's accession to the Aarhus Convention

On 21 September, the Office officially opened the Aarhus Public Environmental Information Centre in the premises of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan.

Consisting of a library, Internet and conference room facilities, the Aarhus Centre provides equal and open access to anyone interested in the environmental affairs of Azerbaijan. In addition, the centre's conference room is used by many non-governmental organisations for their public events and workshops.

The Office also conducted a series of events designed to promote environmental journalism, education, and non-governmental activity, including sponsoring:

- an ecological youth training programme providing environmental education for schoolchildren in ten regions of Azerbaijan
- the *Youth Environmental Congress* in Baku.

Promoting environmentally-sound business

The Office also made an effort to draw the business community into supporting environmentally sustainable business practices, and sponsored the Conference on *Corporate Social Responsibility and Ecology* in co-ordination with the Business Development Alliance. The success of this preliminary venture, in attracting a broad spectrum of participation from international businesses operating in Azerbaijan and local entrepreneurs and openly discussing environmental impact, will be followed up during 2004 with more activity oriented meetings to look at harmonising the development of specific businesses with environmental conservation and protection.

Determining water priority issues

Throughout the year, the Office held a number of regional and national meetings of water experts, in co-ordination with USAID, to build dialogue and determine water priority issues in Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus region.

Moreover, the Office lobbied the host Government for the establishment of a national water commission to help co-ordinate various stakeholders in the water sector.

The second year of the OSCE/NATO project in the Southern Caucasus on unified water standards

The Office has continued to support the OSCE/NATO *Science for Peace Programme* initiative to place 30 water monitoring stations along the Kura and Araks river basin. The project is unique in that it involves all three South Caucasian states: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The Office co-ordinated with OSCE colleagues in Georgia and Armenia on this initiative. It has facilitated fundraising from private donors for the salaries of the Azerbaijani scientists working on the programme.

COMBATING MONEY LAUNDERING

Cracking down on money laundering

As a direct result of the Office's intervention, the Government has created a high-level working group to modernise its legislation to deal with this issue more effectively.

The Office held a series of awareness-raising and policy workshops designed to assist the Government in combating the money laundering and preventing the financing of terrorism.

The first National Workshop to introduce relevant international conventions and case laws was organised by the Office. This workshop was followed by training for judges on pre-trial investigation of drug-related cases, and on developing a legal framework for combating money laundering.



OSCE Mission to Georgia

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF MISSION

The focus on the changes in the political environment in Georgia in November/December 2003 and the Mission's subsequent rapid, close involvement in the presidential and parliamentary election processes should not distract attention from the solid achievements registered elsewhere by the Mission throughout the year.

In the opening months of 2003, the *Border Monitoring Operation* more than doubled its area of responsibility and now conducts observation over a 280 km segment of the border between Georgia and the Russian Federation. At the same time, it greatly improved its technical capability to observe and report on border crossings. To achieve these results – in less than four months – required great effort and commitment from all members of the Mission team – a fact which has been warmly recognised by the new President of Georgia. The Mission, through generous contributions from participating States, was also able to improve the technical equipment of the Georgian Border Guard Security teams, enabling them better to provide the required level of security to our Border Monitors.



Although little progress was achieved in moving forward on the political processes to resolve the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, the Mission was able to register a number of practical achievements in the areas of voluntary weapons handovers, joint policing and civil society co-operation and development. Importantly, at the end of the year, agreement was finally reached between all parties on the implementation of a € 2.5 million grant, given by the European Commission to the Mission, to carry out projects related to refugee/IDP return and infrastructure improvement in the areas affected by the conflict. These projects, designed to build confidence at the community level, will be implemented in 2004 in co-operation with UNHCR and UNDP.

The Mission has also continued to assist the UNOMIG operation in the zone of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict by providing personnel and financial support to human rights projects in that region.

The Mission concentrated a great deal of resource on Human Dimension issues. Legal and technical support and assistance was directed towards both governmental and civil society structures in order to develop programmes in such areas as local self-governance, freedom of religion, strengthened human rights institutions, access to information through the media, and civil society development to promote conflict resolution. In addition, work initiated by the Mission resulted in the formal adoption of a *National Plan of Action against Torture* and has also contributed to the implementation of a *National Plan of Action against Trafficking of Human Beings*. Working with all those involved in prison reform has also been a major activity in 2003.

In the Economic Dimension, work continued on transboundary rivers and water management issues along with small business development projects in the regions of Georgia.

However, the political environment and changes in Georgia in the latter part of the year meant that the Mission became heavily engaged, at short notice, in election related issues. Throughout the year 2003, the Mission continued to chair an international Technical Working Group which provided legislative and practical advice and assistance to the Parliament and electoral authorities. Due to a lack of political will, the failure of the November election led to the change of power and an urgent need to provide direct assistance to ensure that the January 2004 presidential election marked a major step forward from previous practices.

Participating States contributed some € 4 million to the Mission to enable this goal to be met. The Mission was able to respond successfully to this challenge, establishing a dedicated election team – which is currently working on a similar programme of support for the impending, new parliamentary elections.

Finally, mention must also be made of the Mission's central role in the destruction and re-cycling of ammunition stock-piles in conjunction with the Ministry of Defence and Georgian research institutes. This is a major task, whose importance cannot be overstated.



Head of Mission Roy Reeve at the Maastricht Ministerial Council

GEORGIAN-OSSETIAN CONFLICT

Despite sporadic flare-ups of tension between the Georgian and Ossetian sides, the regularity of the process of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict settlement was maintained in 2003. This process is supported by two mechanisms, in which the Mission also participates: the Joint Control Commission (JCC) and the Experts' Groups meetings on political issues. The regularity was reflected in the number of meetings – six in all – held within the framework of the JCC.

As a result, agreements were reached on various important issues related to urgent matters, in particular, the decision to speed up:

- the process of elaboration of the Georgian-Russian programmes on *Return, Integration and Reintegration of Refugees and IDPs*, and on *Economic Rehabilitation in the Zone of Conflict*
- the release of a JCC news bulletin.

Economic rehabilitation: high on the conflict settlement agenda

The Georgian and Ossetian sides share the view that economic rehabilitation plays an increasing role in the overall settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. Discussions on the implementation of related projects were continued during the year 2003. The key projects – funded by a € 2.5 million EC grant – will focus on the areas of rehabilitation and refugee/IDP resettlement.

A financial boost for confidence-building measures

A second European Union grant in support of the JCC and the Experts' Groups has been instrumental in maintaining the dynamics of the settlement process. The pledge agreement was signed between the OSCE and the European Commission in August.

It is envisaged that part of the grant, administered by the Mission, would go towards funding the JCC bulletin and other confidence-building activities.

Seeking a peaceful resolution: meeting in The Hague

Upon the invitation of the Dutch Chairmanship, the *10th Experts' Group Meeting* took place in The Hague in October, with the participation of the authorised delegations of the sides, within the framework of the negotiation process on a full-scale settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

Despite the fact that the discussions revealed strong differences between the sides on the key issues of the political settlement and they were not able to agree upon a protocol of the meeting in The Hague, the sides reiterated their commitment to continue the political dialogue on the key issues and repeated their firm intention to continue to seek a resolution of the conflict by exclusively peaceful means.

Transparency and monitoring

The Mission has continued to monitor the Joint Peacekeeping Forces in the Georgian-Ossetian zone of conflict. The OSCE's efforts have contributed to enhancing transparency of activities and co-operation on all three sides (Georgian, Ossetian and Russian) forming the peace-keeping forces.

VOLUNTARY HANDOVER OF SMALL ARMS

The Mission has supported the Joint Peacekeeping Forces' (JPKE) programme of voluntary handover of small arms and ammunition since its start in 2000.

Projects for the benefit of the communities voluntarily handing over weapons

Within the framework of the *Rapid Reaction Programme*, the Mission continued with the implementation of small-scale targeted projects, offering goods and services to the benefit of communities that decided to voluntarily handover small arms to the JPKE.

The implementation of these projects in 2003 offered an opportunity to publicise the programme throughout the zone of conflict. Vivid interest in the Programme lets the Mission anticipate that significant progress will be made in the area of arms collection in 2004.,



Within the framework of the Joint Peacekeeping Force's programme, which is supported by the OSCE, weapons handed in voluntarily are destroyed.

The programme which awards community projects for voluntary handover of weapons also serves as a strong confidence-building measure in the zone of conflict – bringing together the Georgian and Ossetian communities in a spirit of co-operation.

In 2003 eight projects were implemented, including:

- road and irrigation canal repair
- the purchase of medical equipment
- environmental rehabilitation of illegal waste dumps.



Irrigation canal repair was one of the OSCE Mission projects for the benefit of communities. Here the Mission representative is inspecting progress.

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The Special Co-ordination Centre (SCC)

The Mission presented a plan of action to the *Joint Control Commission* aimed at enhancing the operational capacity of the SCC. The plan included the provision of additional financial and material support and police training.

A representative from the OSCE *Strategic Police Matters Unit* (SPMU) came to the zone of conflict on two occasions to refine the plan. Acceptance by conflicting sides of the final Mission/SPMU recommendations had not been finalised by the end of this reporting period.

Crime is a matter of growing concern in the zone of conflict and isolated incidents could ignite ethnic tension and violence. The Mission therefore continues to encourage both sides to increase efforts to work within the framework of the Special Co-ordination Centre.

SUPPORTING THE RESOLUTION OF THE GEORGIAN-ABKHAZ CONFLICT

The peace process has continued to be in a political deadlock since the last session of the UN-led Co-ordinating Council in January 2001 and the meeting on confidence-building measures in Yalta in March of the same year.

In 2003, the overall situation on the ground has been predominantly calm. However, following the kidnapping in the Kodori Valley of 3 UN observers in June tension rose and the situation was reported as unstable in the upper part of the Valley. All UN activities were subsequently suspended for the rest of the year in that part of the region.

Steps towards the opening of a human rights office in Gali

The year 2003 was marked by the decision of the Abkhaz side to let the UN Observer Mission to Georgia deploy a group of 20 international civilian police officers with the aim to train and equip the law enforcement bodies in the conflict zone (in particular the Gali and Zugdidi districts).

This key event in the peace process is considered the necessary step before the opening, in Gali, of the Human Rights Office – as recommended in 2001 report of the OSCE-UN Joint Assessment Mission.

At the second meeting of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General held in Geneva in July, the Abkhaz side expressed for the first time their readiness to work on the remaining obstacles that are currently preventing the opening of the office (see the Human Dimension section of this report for additional Mission activities in Abkhazia).

BORDER MONITORING OPERATION (BMO)



The work of the Border Monitoring Operation of the OSCE Mission to Georgia (BMO) continued to contribute significantly to building confidence and promoting stability in the region. This year saw the enhancement on the Chechen and Ingush segments and the enlargement of the BMO to the Dagestan segment of the border with the Russian Federation.

Border monitors conduct day patrols and night observations. Monitoring is carried out by foot patrol as well as by car and helicopter. Monitors are unarmed and have no police or border guard function. They are permanently accompanied by medical doctors and security detachments provided by the Georgian Border Guards.

ENHANCEMENT OF THE OPERATION CONCEPT

Establishing four new Bases and eleven Permanent Observation Patrols

Four new Patrol Bases and a Forward Supply Point were established on the Dagestan segment of the border. These have been created in response to the 2003 expansion of the Mission's mandate: to observe and report on movement across the Dagestan segment of the border between Georgia and the Russian Federation.

The BMO now consists of:

- 8 Patrol Bases along the border
- one Permanent Border Patrol
- a Forward Supply Point in Telavi (positioned midway between the Tbilisi Head Office and the border).

With the enhancement of the BMO operational concept commencing in May, eleven Permanent Observation Patrols were established along the 280km stretch of border, within the patrol bases' area of operation.

The BMO conducts an intensive monitoring operation with communication equipment that allows direct-time reporting between patrols and the BMO head office in Tbilisi.

Border monitors normally travel to their observation positions by helicopter. Half of the mountain Bases can only be re-supplied by air, making all three BMO helicopters a veritable life-line for the operation.



The observation, recording and reporting equipment is state-of-the-art. It incorporates thermal imagery for night observation, digital photography and video. Satellite communication enables patrols to send data directly from the observation positions on the mountains to the head office.

Human Dimension Activities

DEMOCRATIZATION

Please see Page 90
The Elections in Georgia

FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA

Filling the information vacuum

The Mission's *Freedom of the Media Programme* focused on addressing a lack of access to information by populations who are isolated geographically, socially or as a result of conflict.

A series of projects were implemented, which aimed to provide these groups with media outlets and access to information.

The Mission supported the publication of three newspapers which provide information for women in targeted communities in the zones of the Georgian-Abkhaz and the Georgian-Ossetian conflict and to Georgian IDP women. Training was provided for South Ossetian journalists with support from the Knight Foundation and the International Centre for Journalists. Two initiatives were launched to provide autonomous Internet access to civil society in Sukhumi and Tskhinvali – a key factor in boosting the development of civil society in both areas.

Monitoring legal protection of press freedom

The Mission monitored and reported on the legislative process, especially draft amendments to the Criminal Code, which, if they had been adopted, would have criminalised certain forms of libel and defamation. The Mission monitored this issue closely, and raised its concern with the OSCE *Representative on Freedom of the Media*. After his intervention, the proposed amendment was revoked.

ANTI-TRAFFICKING

The Mission has developed a broad anti-trafficking programme. It focused on supporting the Government to develop its anti-trafficking policy – through implementation of an *Action Plan against Trafficking*, which was adopted in January 2003. Support included improving the legislative base addressing this issue, and encouraging the establishment of links between policy-makers, Government officials and NGO experts.

Project activities include a translation into Georgian of:

- the *UN Convention against Transnational Crime – the Palermo Convention*
- the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*
- an initiative financed from the ODIHR Anti-Trafficking Fund to develop more comprehensive legislation complementing the changes in the Criminal Code made in June 2003.

In an effort to promote the protection of victims of trafficking, the Mission supported a project to develop standards for operators of anti-trafficking hotlines. This represents the first step towards further activities to develop a National Referral Mechanism.

RULE OF LAW

Access to legislation

The Mission pays specific attention to the population's access to information on legislation. The publication of judgements made by the Constitutional Court and the availability of Georgian translations of multilateral conventions are of special importance.

Monitoring legal reforms

The Mission's monitoring and reporting role also covers institutional reforms of law-enforcement and prosecution, including the investigation process.

Special attention is given to the ongoing penitentiary reform: the Mission supports the Ministry of Justice by elaborating upon a draft code on penal execution issues. Assistance is provided in creating conditions for drafting the code using local specialists and their expertise, national practitioners and NGO representatives.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Supporting comprehensive measures against torture

The Mission supported the National Security Council (NSC) in elaborating the *National Action Plan against Torture 2003-2005*, which came into force by presidential decree on 27 September.

In order to bolster this plan, eight roundtables were conducted with the Mission's financial support, throughout the country, with a broad participation of law enforcement agencies, civil society, human rights defenders, the NSC and the Office of the Public Defender.

To ensure a transparent and democratic drafting process, the Mission launched a web-site with the NSC to present the draft anti-torture plan for public comment. The new plan is seen as a model for others because of its practicality in carrying out effective measures against torture practices.

Strengthening human rights defenders

The Mission assisted the Public Defender's Office (PDO) in strengthening its capacity and building a network of practitioners in the regions.

The Mission delivered several comprehensive training sessions on the protection of human rights to all staff members of the six regional offices of the PDO.

With the protection of the rights of detained persons in focus, the Mission organised regional roundtables for human rights defenders, lawyers and local law enforcement bodies.

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Consolidating human rights knowledge

Booklets on the role of the Public Defender's Office and on the rights of detained persons in Georgia were compiled and disseminated. The Mission also provided the regional Offices of the PDO with national and international legal textbooks.

Monitoring human rights violations

Monitoring of alleged human rights violations, and rendering legal and administrative advice to complainants, represent a key component of the Mission's human rights portfolio. A human rights officer receives individual human rights complaints, ensuring appropriate referral of many to a growing number of national legal assistance services and the Public Defender's Office.

Legal and administrative advice is rendered to individuals complaining about breaches of human rights, particularly those related to religion and fair trial. The Mission follows proceedings where the case may set precedent or could reach the European Court of Human Rights.

The Mission continues to monitor closely the situation of religious minorities, both in society as well as in the courtrooms. It follows the increasingly frequent cases of violence, harassment and defamation perpetrated by extremists against various non-orthodox religious groups.

Human rights in Abkhazia

The Mission seconded a human rights officer to the UN Human Rights Office Abkhazia, Georgia (HROAG).

The mandate of this office is to address current human rights problems by providing direct support and protection in individual human rights cases, and by focusing on preventing future human rights violations.

In this perspective the Mission seeks to address the local population, local de facto authorities, NGOs and law enforcement officials to improve and strengthen human rights awareness.

In addition, the Mission's human rights activities in Abkhazia include six projects, which address the promotion of awareness through training programmes and the media.

All the projects sponsored by the Mission involve young people throughout Abkhazia. At the same time, effort was made to increase local NGOs' management capacity.

Ethnic minorities

The OSCE *High Commissioner on National Minorities* has been active in Georgia since 1997, focusing mainly on issues related to the situation in Samskhe-Javakheti, a region with compact Armenian settlement.

The promotion of socio-political integration and thus prevention of tension in this region revolves around four areas:

- language – teaching Georgian to civil servants and students
- law – translation of election materials into minority languages, and supporting legal advice and information centres
- information flow – supporting Armenian translations of Georgian news broadcasts, and developing the skills of Samskhe-Javakheti journalists and their colleagues from Tbilisi
- monitoring inter-ethnic relations.

An extensive three-year programme on minority issues launched in April

Projects have been designed to raise awareness about minority issues, build confidence and develop capacities in language, the media, law and monitoring.

To drive this programme forward, a Programme Manager from the Office of the HCNM joined the Mission in September 2003.

The € 1 million programme was brokered by the OSCE and funded by the Canadian Agency for International Development and the UK's Global Conflict Prevention Pools.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

This year, monitoring of economic and environmental issues from a security perspective – especially the gas and electricity sectors – has been balanced with an increased focus on activities supporting:

- good governance
- SME development and trade
- access to governmental information on environmental matters.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Anti-corruption and good governance

In an effort to address issues hindering the development of the Small and Medium Size Enterprise (SME) sector, the Mission supported the publication and distribution of 4,000 booklets on best practice in customs and border procedures, for the use of traders and customs officers.

The Mission and the German Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ) worked together to initiate entrepreneurial training for young people. Training was offered in the area around the cities of Rustavi, Gardabani and Marneuli – an area of particularly high unemployment. The Marneuli region is mainly populated by an Azeri ethnic minority.

The Mission initiated discussions with the Government and civil society on the development of a Centre promoting the *Aarhus Convention*, which addresses access to information, decision-making and justice in environmental matters. The Centre hopes to support access to governmental information on environmental issues, as well as foster a partnership between the Government and civil society sectors in this area.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

The second year of the OSCE/NATO project in the Southern Caucasus on unified water standards

The Mission has continued to support the OSCE/NATO *Science for Peace Programme* initiative to place 30 water monitoring stations along the Kura and Araks river basin. The project is unique in that it involves all three South Caucasian states: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The Mission supported two meetings for project colleagues in Armenia and Azerbaijan. It is also boosting national expertise by supporting the training of young Georgian water specialists.

ACTIVITIES RELATED TO DESTRUCTION OF SURPLUS MILITARY STOCKPILES IN GEORGIA

The first of the two projects initiated in 2003 is concerned with the tens of thousands of shells, bombs and missiles of all types located throughout the country.

The second project concerns toxic waste, decaying and damaged munitions that are contaminating the land on which they have been dumped. Approximately 1,000 hectares have already been contaminated in the ammunition storage sites, but a much larger area has been made inaccessible through that contamination. Neutralisation of contaminated soil is the aim of the next stages of the project.

A centre for recycling and destruction of ammunition

By May, the first stage of the project to recycle and destroy stockpiles of ammunition and bombs on former Soviet bases was completed with the construction of a dedicated facility at the former base of Dedoplistskaro.

The Mission arranged for:

- the installation of equipment for the separation of the various components of artillery ammunition
- the dismantling of thousands of rounds of ammunition
- the reprocessing of gunpowder for industrial use.

The second stage of the project started in August and is due for completion in June 2004, and involves:

- further conversion of the ammunition recycling centre to include modern living accommodation for the employees
- transportation of ammunitions to the centre from other bases
- destruction of dangerous and unstable bombs and the assessment of soil pollution on the former bases.

First stages in the project to neutralise dangerous chemicals

Tons of dangerous chemicals, such as napalm and decontamination chemicals, were transported from the bases where they were located to a special facility in Tbilisi.

The chemicals were neutralised using safe and ecologically-friendly methods, and samples of soil were taken for analysis.

All the activities listed above were funded from contributions by Finland, Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden, Turkey and the UK.



Stockpiles of munitions in whatever condition might become a source of materials for terrorist groups and a lethal hazard for unwary scrap collectors or inquisitive children. The Mission involvement is in line with its commitment to combating terrorism and its policy of environmental protection.

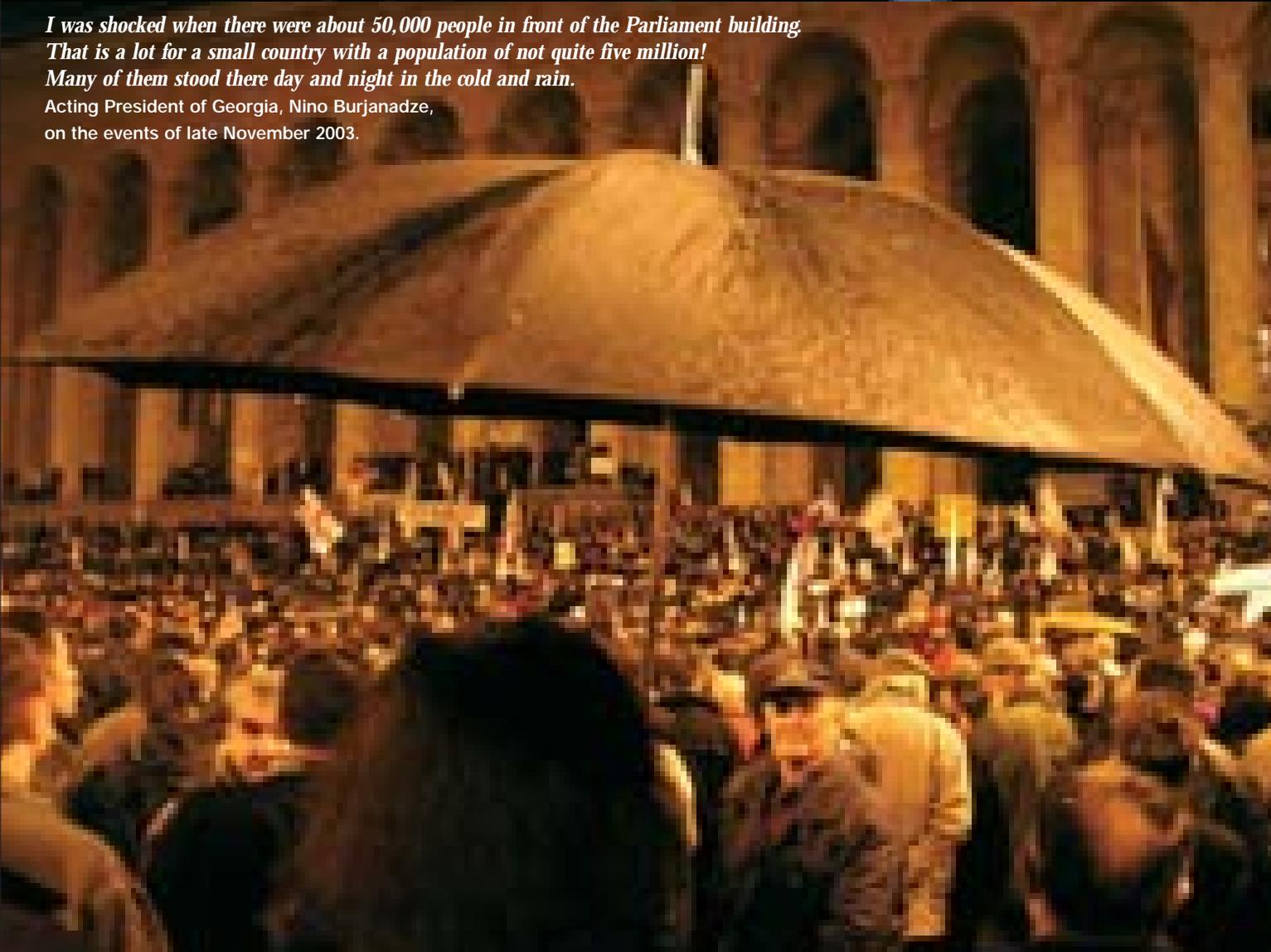
In 2003 the Mission embarked on two projects related to safely ridding the environment of needless ammunition, remaining from the recent past in Georgia.



THE ELECTIONS IN GEORGIA

I was shocked when there were about 50,000 people in front of the Parliament building. That is a lot for a small country with a population of not quite five million! Many of them stood there day and night in the cold and rain.

Acting President of Georgia, Nino Burjanadze,
on the events of late November 2003.



Concerning assistance to the elections in Georgia, the OSCE demonstrated its commitment to democratization, and an unrivalled ability to respond rapidly and effectively to an unforeseen need, with tangible results.

Ahead of the November parliamentary elections, the OSCE/ODIHR established the election observation mission, and the OSCE Mission to Georgia played a leading role in the efforts of the international community to advise the government of Georgia on points of concern. The critical nature of these points was proved correct by the events leading to the resignation of President Shevardnadze following peaceful protests rejecting the results of the election. By November, public demand that the elections take place fairly was greater and better articulated than at any time since Georgia's independence.

After the events of November, the OSCE responded to Georgia's calls for assistance for the impending presidential and parliamentary elections in January and March 2004 respectively.

Within the short timeframe between the events of late November and the 4 January elections, the Organization rapidly galvanised and implemented assistance:

- the participating States pledged some € 6 million at a donors' meeting which was swiftly convened by the Netherlands Chairmanship
- the *Georgia Elections Assistance Programme* (GEAP) was designed and set up within the OSCE Mission to Georgia and Phase I was successfully implemented
- the OSCE/ODIHR re-established, with continuity, the international election observation mission, and was re-joined by short-term observers from the OSCE *Parliamentary Assembly* and other international organisations
- the OSCE *Conflict Prevention Centre* co-ordinated liaison between donors and the Mission.

The metamorphosis in 45 days from an old system to the beginning of a new one was truly phenomenal.
President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Bruce George, on election standards in Georgia.

THE MISSION TO GEORGIA'S DEMOCRATIZATION ACTIVITIES

Assistance to the November elections

Promoting fair parliamentary elections

In close co-operation with the ODIHR, the Mission played a leading role in the efforts of the international community to advise the Government of Georgia on points of concern, which if not met, would seriously undermine the credibility of the parliamentary elections. By playing a co-ordinating role in both technical assistance efforts available to address these points and in the political message warning of their necessity expressed through an UNDP-led Ambassadorial Working group, the Mission endeavoured to help the Government navigate through the period building up to the election.

International co-ordination of electoral assistance

Throughout the reported period, the Mission chaired a *Technical Working Group on Elections* (TWG), comprising experts and working level representatives of diplomatic Missions. This group in turn provides technical support and analysis to an *Ambassadorial Working Group* (AWG) whose aim is to politically engage the Georgian authorities on elections issues.

Through its participation in both groups, the Mission promoted a unified approach among all international players, and presented a

series of recommendations in advance of the November parliamentary elections. Through co-ordination of technical assistance and political message, the Mission laid the groundwork for the planned ODIHR *election observation mission*.

Assistance to the CiO/Council of Europe

Ad Hoc Selection Committee for the CEC Chairpersonship

The Mission provided an *Ad Hoc Selection Committee* consisting of representatives of the OSCE CiO and the Council of Europe with technical and logistical support, as it engaged in the consultation process on selecting the Chairperson of the Central Election Commission. The resulting nominations of three candidates were presented to President Shevardnadze on 30 August.

Assistance to implement anti-fraud measures in the election code

In August, the Georgian Parliament adopted the long awaited amendments to the *Unified Election Code*. Among other anti-fraud measures included in the law, was *Article 52* which stipulated the use of indelible ink to prevent multiple voting. Following consultations with the Georgian authorities and political parties, the ODIHR recommended the adoption of this measure.

THE ODIHR ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

In September, the OSCE/ODIHR established in Georgia what was to become one of the OSCE's longest and largest election observation missions. It took part in regular meetings with the OSCE Mission to Georgia, where it drew on briefings from Mission, and in return, offered updates on the technical and legal aspects of the elections as they unfolded.

Ten election experts were based at the mission's Headquarters in Tbilisi and 21 long-term observers in the regions to closely monitor and analyse the entire electoral process, including campaigning by political parties, the work of the election administration and of the local authorities, the media, the legal framework, as well as election-day and appeals procedures.

Shortly before election day, the mission was enhanced by some 400 short-term observers from 43 OSCE states, who together with parliamentarians from the Parliamentary Assemblies of the OSCE and the Council of Europe, and the European Parliament, were deployed throughout the country to monitor the voting, vote count and tabulation of results. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office appointed the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as special co-ordinator for the short-term observation.

The 2 November parliamentary elections were critically assessed by the observation mission as marked by widespread and systematic fraud, and as falling short of a number of OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections.

The second round of parliamentary elections, scheduled for 24 November and to be observed by nearly 400 international observers, was never held due to events that resulted in the resignation of President Eduard Shevardnadze the day before. A proportional component of the elections was cancelled by the Supreme Court on 25 November and a presidential election was called for 4 January 2004.



Rapid reaction: at the Ministerial Council in December, the participating States pledged assistance for the 2004 elections in Georgia.

From left to right: President of the Parliamentary Assembly Bruce George, the 2004 Chairman-in-Office Solomon Passy, Acting President of Georgia Nino Burjanadze, and 2003 Chairman-in Office Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.

THE OSCE PARTICIPATING STATES' PLEDGE

A donors' auction at the OSCE Ministerial Council

At the OSCE Ministerial Council in Maastricht on 1-2 December 2003, the Acting President of Georgia, Nino Burjanadze appealed for financial assistance for the impending presidential and parliamentary elections in January and March 2004.

Capitalising on the presence of dozens of foreign ministers in Maastricht, the Netherlands Chairmanship of the OSCE decided to convene a donors' meeting. As a result, the participating States pledged some € 6 million.

Setting up the assistance programme

€ 4 was directly administered by the OSCE Mission to Georgia. Consequently the Georgia Elections Assistance Programme (GEAP) was set up to provide for international technical and financial support to the country's electoral process in view of the presidential and parliamentary elections. (Of the pledged € 6 million, the European Commission gave € 2 million to the UNDP for election related projects).

The designed programme consisted of two phases, the first of which focussed mainly on the preparation for the 4 January presidential elections, while the second dealt with the parliamentary elections scheduled for 28 March. Phase II of GEAP was to build upon and continue the activities established in Phase I.

To ensure transparency and co-ordination, an ambassadorial working group, chaired by the OSCE Mission to Georgia, met regularly in Tbilisi.

Co-ordinating between political donors and the Mission to Georgia

In Vienna, donor meetings were chaired by the OSCE Secretariat. As well as playing a pivotal role in liaison between the donor participating States and the OSCE Mission to Georgia, the Secretariat's *Conflict Prevention Centre* also assisted in the rapid identification and deployment of additional expert election personnel.

From the outset, close, effective and productive co-ordination was established between international donors, Government and electoral administrations and civil society. Within the Mission, a dedicated Task Force was established, using contracted international election experts together with Mission members. The need was to work rapidly in order to produce improvements in Georgia's election standards and record.

The Head of the OSCE Mission to Georgia, Roy Reeve

THE OSCE GEORGIA ELECTIONS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (GEAP)

Assistance to the 2004 elections

The assistance provided by the OSCE participating States within the Framework of the GEAP Phase I enabled the timely transfer of funds from the Ministry of Finance of Georgia to the election administration bodies, to cover salaries of election officials. This provided a crucial contribution to realising the presidential elections within an extremely tight timeframe. The Programme also enabled the civil society to play an important role in promoting much needed confidence of the public in the electoral process, through domestic observation, training and media campaigns.

Phase I of the programme consisted of nine projects for the 4 January 2004 presidential elections covering three main programmatic areas:

- direct financial and technical assistance to the Central Election Commission
- funding of the main domestic observation and parallel vote tabulation programme
- funding of a diversity of voter education campaigns.

Providing financial support for the Election Administration

During past elections, election officials' salaries were paid late, if at all. As a fundamental basis of any anti-corruption strategy, the Ministry of Finance of Georgia obliged itself to pay salaries in time for those involved in the election administration. This was made possible by the funding of basic election administration operational and logistical costs provided by the OSCE.

Supporting the Public Information Campaign

Financial and technical support was provided to the CEC Public Information Unit to develop and implement a voter registration campaign and a voting day information campaign. In this way it was ensured that the proactive media policy applied by the CEC led to increased public confidence, awareness and participation in the electoral process.

Training of Election Commission Staff

Among the shortcomings in the election administration identified by international observers was the inability of the Central Election Commission (CEC) to carry out training for District and Precinct Election Commission staff. To meet this need a training programme was prepared under the directions of the CEC and drawing on the lessons learned during the previous elections. Fully funded by the OSCE the programme was implemented in co-operation with IFES and UNDP. The training targeted the Precinct Election



The practice of marking voters' thumbs at the polling stations ensured that the same people would not be able to vote again that day.

Commission Chairs, Deputy Chairs and Secretaries and reached a total of 6,144 staff from 2,513 different precincts. The training received top ratings by the participants and significant improvements of the election administration were apparent on Election Day.

The GEAP funded a comprehensive training programme for election commission staff in order to improve Election Day performances. A total of 6,144 commission members from 2,513 precinct election commissions underwent training through this programme.

Anti-fraud measures - voter marking

Building on experiences from the November elections, the GEAP conducted an expanded programme to support the anti-fraud measure of voter marking with indelible ink. This measure was deemed necessary to increase voter confidence in the electoral process. Practical aspects of the programme included:

- the procurement of inking supplies for the CEC
- provision of technical assistance for implementation
- a series of public education activities, including the production of television spots and public information posters.

Support for Domestic Election

Monitoring and Parallel Vote Tabulation

GEAP provided the Georgian NGO International Society for Fair Election and Democracy (ISFED) with resources to conduct a countrywide observation. In total some 2,550 ISFED volunteers were deployed in the vast majority of polling stations and district commissions. ISFED successfully monitored the pre-election period, polling, counting and results consolidation, as well as conducted parallel vote tabulation.

Voter Education Campaigns

With the aim to increase public knowledge of - and ultimately participation in - the electoral process, four different voter education projects were conducted. In total 13 local NGOs were involved and successfully reached local communities throughout most of Eastern and Western Georgia. While the community based voter education attracted a broad audience, one project was implemented specially aimed at engaging the younger voting age population.

The Secretary General, Ján Kubis (right) and Head of the Mission to Georgia, Roy Reeve, at the Maastricht Ministerial Council.



Effective and productive co-ordination was vital for the success of the Georgia Elections Assistance Programme - both within the Organization and also with international donors, Government and electoral administrations and civil society.

THE RE-ESTABLISHED OBSERVATION MISSION



The Director of the ODIHR Christian Stroh (right) with the head of the election observation mission Craig Jenness, at a briefing in Tbilisi on the election observation findings.

The ODIHR re-established its election observation mission on 7 December. The 37 long-term observers included a large majority of the previous mission's staff. 13 observers were based in Tbilisi while 27 were deployed in the regions. Again the long-term mission was joined by short-term observers shortly before Election Day: 450 observers from 37 countries were led by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President.

The observation mission concluded that the 4 January presidential elections demonstrated notable progress over previous elections, and in several respects brought the country closer to meeting OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections.

Please also see the ODIHR chapter on page 129 for an account of the ODIHR's work on elections.



By November, public demand that the elections take place fairly was greater and better articulated than at any time since Georgia's independence.

Without the strong will of the international community to support the young Georgian democracy, the Georgian people and Government would have faced very serious problems in attempting to conduct the mid-term presidential elections in accordance with the timeframes established by the constitution. I would like to thank donor countries and international organisations for providing the immediate and effective financial and technical support and consultations.

It is very difficult for me, as a citizen of Georgia, to find enough words to express my appreciation for the enormous moral support which the democratic world has expressed towards Georgia.

**Chairman of the Central Election Commission,
Zurab Chiaberashvili**

OSCE Office in Yerevan

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF OFFICE

This year was marked with a number of important events and developments for Armenia. In the first half of the year presidential and parliamentary elections were held. The Office was very active in hosting the international working group on elections which served as a forum for co-ordinating activities among international actors in Yerevan in preparation of the elections. On the more technical side, the Office assisted the Central Electoral Commission with the procurement of transparent ballot boxes, which were used for the first time in the CIS countries.

A major OSCE Police Assistance Programme was launched establishing a partnership between the Armenian Police and the OSCE. The first preparatory seminar for the Economic Forum – an important OSCE event in this field – was hosted by Armenia. The Office also focused on promoting good governance initiatives and in particular continued its efforts on combating corruption.

This year the Office has seen important developments in Armenia's legal reform: the newly adopted Criminal Code, the Law on Freedom of Information and the Law on Ombudsman are just a few examples where the Office has also had its share of involvement.



The Head of the Office in Yerevan, Vladimir Pryakhin (left) and Armenian Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian welcome the OSCE Chairman in Office during his visit to the South Caucasus in October.

The Office has been operational since 2000. It has been given a broad mandate to contribute to security- and stability-building in Armenia through development of democratic institutions in the country, strengthening civil society and promoting OSCE standards and principles.

Having this flexible mandate, the Office co-operates equally with Government, Parliament, civil society, media and international community. Therefore, the Office has often been requested to act as a facilitator – a channel between various players.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

ELECTIONS

General monitoring and reporting

As part of its ongoing monitoring and reporting on the political situation and developments in the country, the Office continued to focus on election related issues. Assistance and briefings were provided to the election observation missions of the OSCE/ODIHR, OSCE/PA and the Council of Europe.

Following the issuance of the ODIHR observation reports on the presidential and parliamentary elections, the Office again took up the issue of electoral reform and began co-ordinating efforts to provide input into not only revising the electoral code, but also to mechanisms to improve the overall administration of elections in Armenia.

This led to joint recommendations on the electoral law and the electoral administration being produced by OSCE/ODIHR and the Council of Europe Venice Commission in December. The Office is following up on these recommendations with roundtables on electoral reform.

The International Working Group on Elections

The Office continues to chair the *International Working Group on Elections*, which contributed to exchange of information, better co-ordination of activities, as well as co-operation among international players in providing election related assistance.

Transparent ballot boxes

The Office assisted the Central Electoral Commission by arranging procurement and delivery of transparent ballot boxes, which were used in all polling stations during the presidential and parliamentary elections. Such ballot boxes were used for the first time in Armenia and on the territory of the CIS.



In total, about 5,400 ballot boxes were supplied, a thousand of which were further provided temporarily to Georgia for its November parliamentary elections. The use of ballot boxes contributed to the general transparency of the electoral process and was assessed by the OSCE and CoE observation missions as a progressive step.

Improvement of the voter lists

The Office facilitated and supported a project on improving voter's lists: efforts were focused on the standardisation and systematisation of the population registers in local communities before the elections.

The voter list project covered 22 target communities throughout Armenia, which constituted approximately 27% of voters.

This brings the total number of the voters covered to approximately 70%. This figure includes data from the 20 communities where the software was installed through previous analogous projects.

Support of this important work by the Office continued beyond the elections.

Freedom of Assembly: rallies and demonstrations connected with the presidential elections

Following the reported cases of administrative detentions of demonstrators, the Office investigated and monitored the right to peaceful gatherings and freedom of assembly.

A set of recommendations was developed to remedy the situation, and emphasis was put on the need for effective legislation to guarantee this constitutional right.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

A new anti-corruption strategy

The Office has continued co-ordinating the International Working Group which assists the Government in elaborating and adopting a national anti-corruption strategy. The newly created coalition Government prioritised the fight against corruption, soon after accession. Efforts have resulted in the adoption of a strategy, subject for further discussion and elaboration. The Office facilitated public discussions on the strategy and intends to assist in its implementation.

National recognition of the Head of the Office in the fight against corruption

At the July opening of the national anti-corruption resource centre, the former Head of Mission was presented with an award for his contribution in the fight against corruption in Armenia.

MILITARY AND SECURITY ISSUES

Professional to Professional: the Office organises an anti-terrorism workshop

The overall objective of this results-oriented workshop was to improve the command and control structures in the event of a contingency, and to address the security sector's operational and legislative capacity in the fight against terrorism.

In the course of the workshop five case studies were tackled:

- aircraft hijacking
- public building siege
- vehicles contingency
- diplomatic representation siege
- sensitive strategic installations – nuclear power plants.

Police Reform

After several visits from the OSCE *Strategic Police Matters Unit*, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed, establishing a partnership between the Armenian Police and the Office. Ahead of the *Police Assistance Programme* scheduled for 2004, a needs assessment mission identified the following objectives:

- introducing a pilot community policing scheme in the Arabkir police district in Yerevan
- strengthening of the Police Training Centre for induction training of police recruits and refresher courses
- strengthening of the emergency response capacity of the police in Yerevan.

Drafting anti-terrorism legislation: implementing the 12 UN protocols and conventions

The Office organised an expert seminar on implementation of UN *Security Council Resolution 1373* and international anti-terrorism agreements. This initiative was realised in co-operation with Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, OSCE *Action against Terrorism Unit*, OSCE/ODIHR, UNODC and UNCTC.

Connecting Armenia to the OSCE Communications Network

The Office technically assisted the connection of Armenia to the modernised OSCE *Communications Network* – a secure channel for the exchange of military information between participating States.

Practical Training on Code of Conduct

The Office and international partners trained the Armed forces on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security – with a focus on the practical issues of democratic control, international humanitarian law and the rights and duties of service personnel.

MEDIA

Co-ordinating NGOs and donors in the field

The Office launched an informal media legislation working group for international organisations as well as local and international media NGOs. This forum for information exchange provides the opportunity to draw up joint measures – to tackle issues more effectively.

Increasing transparency: adoption of the Law on Freedom of Information

The law was adopted following the Office's assistance to a joint working group of representatives of NGOs, the Government and the National Assembly. It affects the media and public alike, and is a boost for increasing transparency of governmental institutions, and represents a successful manifestation of the Office's anti-corruption endeavors. As part of a civil initiative, the Office was requested to assist the implementation of the law.

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MEDIA MONITORING

In co-operation with the OSCE *Representative on Freedom of the Media*, the Office continued to follow and report on the state of the media in Armenia.

Particular attention was given to the distribution of broadcasting frequencies, notably the case of two TV stations, A1+ and Noyan Tapan, who lost their frequencies in 2002. The Office monitored and reported on all tenders where the above-mentioned participated.

At the request of the President of Armenia and the OSCE Chairmanship, the Office will conduct monitoring of the media situation with assistance from OSCE *Representative on Freedom of the Media*.

Human Dimension Activities

Supporting creation of the Ombudsman Institution: a decisive step in defending human rights

After Armenia committed itself to adopting a law establishing an ombudsman institution in line with its accession to the Council of Europe, the OSCE/ODIHR provided legal analysis of the new draft law. It emphasised the importance of appointment and dismissal of the defender by the legislative branch rather than the executive.

The Office, the OSCE/ODIHR, the Parliament and the Council of Europe co-organised an expert workshop on amendments to the draft law. The *Law on the Human Rights Defender*, which passed in October, retained the transitional provisions on the defender appointed by the President.

The Office also chairs the international working group on ombudsman. This group has served as a forum for discussing issues related to the adoption of the law which took place in October. Following the adoption of the law, the group serves as forum for discussing important aspects of the establishment of this institution.

Spearheading the leading human rights awareness campaign

More than 5,000 people from different target groups took part in 160 presentations organised by a public awareness team supported by the Office, which aimed at deepening understanding of:

- human rights standards and best practices
- legislation and protection mechanisms at the domestic and international levels
- 16 different human rights topics corresponding to main areas of OSCE activities.

In addition to the 16 existing movies used during the presentations, two new films were produced on the Armenian judiciary and children's rights. The movies were produced by the Office in co-operation with ODIHR and serve as a basis for the presentations held by the public awareness team. The Office is encouraged by increasing demand for presentations to continue this project.

Creating a monitoring mechanism for prisons

The Office, OSCE/ODIHR, the Ministry of Justice and civil society co-operated on the drafting of a legal basis, ahead of the formation of the civil society monitoring group of penitentiary institutions. The decree adopted by the Minister of Justice was amended in order to provide for wider monitoring powers to the group and increase its independence from the Ministry. A similar mechanism is also foreseen for police custody facilities.

Introducing alternatives to military service

The Office, together with ODIHR, assisted the Armenian authorities by providing expertise on the new law on alternative service, which was adopted in December 2003. During the expert workshop, which was jointly organised by the Office, OSCE/ODIHR, the Parliament and the Council of Europe, authors of the draft agreed to introduce changes with respect to the following issues:

- eligibility for alternative service
- nature and length of the service
- selection and appeal procedures
- stages at which conscientious objectors can apply for alternative service.

Promoting freedom of conscience, religion and belief

The Office closely follows the state of religious freedom in Armenia and maintains regular contact with the different religious denominations and groups present in the country. Particular attention is given to legal and structural aspects of religious freedom as well as conscientious objection.

Training NGOs in human rights monitoring and reporting

Following the training of Armenian NGOs by experts of the Polish Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, three monitoring projects were implemented by Armenian NGOs on the following areas:

- procedural safeguards concerning pre-trial detention
- rights of secondary school students to physical integrity and personal dignity
- fulfilment of equal rights, and access to quality secondary education for urban and rural students.

Handling individual human rights complaints

Since 2000, the Office has been involved in handling of individual complaints on alleged human rights violations. The Office defined a procedure of receiving complaints and established a systemised database. It also works closely with the relevant Armenian authorities for resolution of the individuals' complaints.

Capacity-building of prison staff

At the request of the Ministry of Justice, the Office and OSCE/ODIHR, Penitentiary Reform International, and Open Society Institute organised the 'training of trainers' on the secure management of prisons. Interactive training methodologies were utilised, to set up a local pool of experts for training on international standards and best practices.

Additional prison management 'training of trainers' is planned for the prison social and psychological services – a newly established structural unit in Armenia's penitentiary system, which has been supported by the Office throughout its development.

The Office with the OSCE/ODIHR has been assisting the development of the Ministry of Justice Law Institute into a fully-fledged prison training centre. The institution-building process started with an assessment study of the Law Institute carried out by an international expert in December 2003. Based on the report the future policy in the institution building component of the training centre will be drawn up.

THE FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Driving forward anti-trafficking laws

In co-operation with the OSCE/ODIHR, the Office provided expert assistance to include an article criminalising trafficking into the new Criminal Code.

The Office also provided assistance with the development of effective implementation mechanisms, and the protection of victims' human rights.

The broader programme addressing organised crime and anti-corruption involves a project to develop a consistent legal framework for effective criminalisation of trafficking and victim and witness protection. It deals with legislative gap analysis and the review of a package of draft legislation, and amendments to the *Code of Criminal Procedure*.

Other anti-trafficking activities included:

- arranging the expert review of the draft *National Plan of Action (NPA)*
- assisting the preparation of a consolidated matrix of projects for international organisations and local NGO actors.

Improving assistance to victims of trafficking

In July 2003, the Office – in co-operation with the OSCE/ODIHR and the OSCE Project Co-ordinator's Office in Ukraine – organised a study tour to Ukraine on trafficking victim assistance and the development of a National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

The study tour brought together relevant Government officials and NGO representatives to introduce them to the NRM concept and to international and regional best practices in trafficking victim assistance.

As a follow-up, the Office organised a debriefing session to identify the existing gaps and to brainstorm strategies. Recommendations produced as an outcome of the discussion were presented to the Interagency Commission on Human Trafficking under the Government of Armenia.

In December 2003, the Office in co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IOM, ODIHR and US Embassy in Armenia organised a workshop on trafficking victim identification and referral. Law enforcement, NGOs, personnel from Armenian Embassies in Greece, United Arab Emirates and Russia, as well as, Russian consular representatives in Turkey, and border guards participated as essential elements in the emerging National Referral Mechanism.

GENDER ISSUES

Furthering women's role in society

Expertise was provided to develop a national plan of action which seeks to define basic policy for the Armenian Government on the position of women in society.

Its long-term goal is to fulfil Armenia's constitutional provision on equal rights and opportunities for men and women.



Women's rights and leadership 'training of trainers'

In 2003, activities emphasised developing women's leadership skills. Participants regularly conduct workshops in their respective communities to raise awareness on women's rights and to enhance grassroots activity.

Promoting gender education

The Office in co-operation with OSCE/ODIHR implemented a project to introduce academic courses on gender issues into the system of secondary and higher education. The Office also promoted institutionalisation of gender studies as an academic subject in the curriculum of universities.

Combating domestic violence

Senior level police officers from Yerevan and the neighbouring regions have been given awareness-raising training on domestic violence, as part of a joint initiative of the Office, OSCE/ODIHR and the local NGO Women's Rights Centre to raise their awareness of domestic violence.

The Office works closely with other international and local actors on this issue. In September, the Office co-organised an online discussion for police officers and NGOs on prevention and combating domestic violence, including effective models of Government-NGO collaboration and policing.

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Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Bringing together policy-makers

In co-operation with the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the OSCE/OCEEA, the Office organised the *First Preparatory Seminar for the 12th Economic Forum*, in Yerevan in November.

Support for development of SMEs was at the top of the agenda for the 200 policy-makers from the participating States and international organisations. The Office will seek ways to elaborate follow up programs together with respective authorities and business community.

Combating money laundering and suppressing the financing of terrorism

Comprehensive legislation and effective structures to tackle money laundering and financing of terrorism were discussed at the first such national workshop, which was organised by the Office in co-operation with the OSCE/OCEEA and UNODC.

The Office has been driving this agenda in 2003 by:

- drawing up a plan of action with Armenian authorities
- establishing an inter-ministerial working group
- co-ordinating efforts to create and advise a *Financial Intelligence Unit* in Armenia
- organising two workshops for parliamentarians on legislative framework.

Protecting economic competition

Following the successful seminar on competition policy, the Office worked in partnership with the *State Commission on the Protection of Economic Competition* to establish their public Internet site. The purpose of the Internet site is to provide information on the State Commission and policy reform in the field of competition policy.

Providing expertise for Labour Code Reform

The Office contributed to the draft of a new Code to ensure compliance with international standards and conditions conducive for implementation. The Office co-organised an expert workshop in October to discuss the draft and recommendations.

Promoting Entrepreneurship to Young People (YES Project)

The Office launched this project to enhance business thinking in the youth and to provide feasible support for further business initiatives. The project offered business classes for 16-25 year olds, and introduced students to supportive institutions. The television programme *Entrepreneurship among Young People – Problems and Perspectives* was produced as part of the project.

Developing chambers of commerce and industry

Fostering international partnerships for the Chambers of Commerce

To introduce institutional provision of business services, the Office organised, with the German Technical Co-operation ProSME, a study tour to Germany for top and middle management.

The Office engaged in the institutional development of national and regional Chambers of Commerce. An assessment was conducted of the needs of the *Chamber of Commerce and Industry Network of the Republic of Armenia* by an international expert. The deliberations – on which the Office will base future assistance – looked at internal and external aspects of the activities of the Chambers, relations between national and provincial Chambers, services offered and training needs.

Initiating economic strategy for the remote province of Syunik

The Office brought together for the first time all stakeholders to discuss the factors inhibiting local economic development in the remote province of Syunik. A working group of public and private sector representatives was subsequently established to formulate a local area development strategy.

***The Aarhus Centre:
new location, new agenda***

After discussions with the Ministry of Nature Protection and the *Board of Experts*, a new location was identified and agenda for the Aarhus Centre was adopted. The Public Environmental Information Centre (Aarhus Centre) was established in 2002 on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the OSCE Office in Yerevan and the Ministry of Nature Protection, to assist Armenia in implementation of the Aarhus Convention (UN Convention on *Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making, and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters*).

Activities of the Centre include:

- creating the web-site of the Centre
- filming the underground resources of Armenia
- training of environmental journalists
- raising environmental awareness among the students and schoolchildren
- organisation of public hearings on assessment of environmental impact
- establishing an environmental award competition for journalists.

The second year of the OSCE/NATO project in the Southern Caucasus on unified water standards

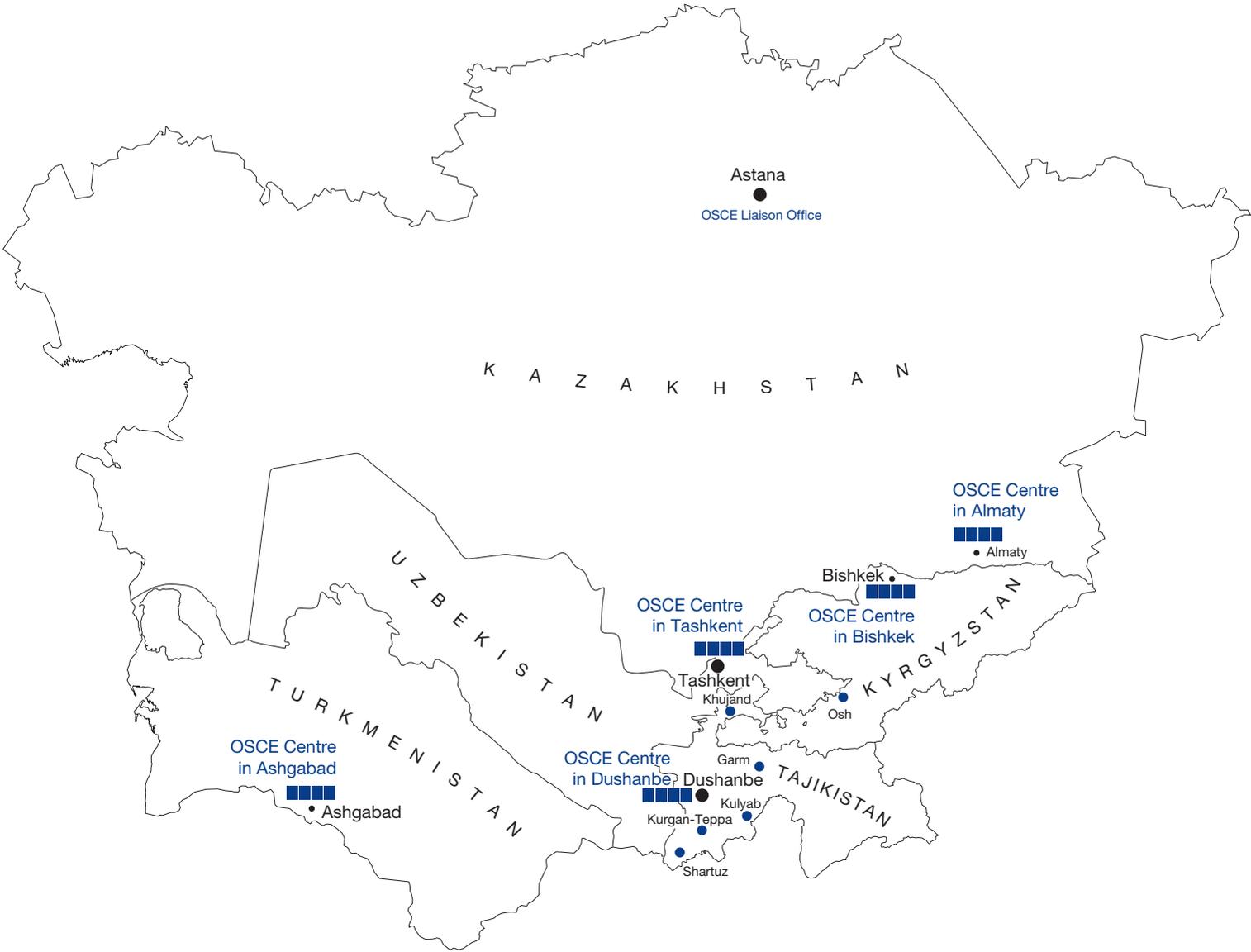
The Office has continued to support the OSCE/NATO *Science for Peace Programme* initiative to place 30 water monitoring stations along the Kura and Araks river basin. The project is unique in that it involves all three South Caucasian states: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The training of experts has been successfully completed and based on the new methodology, data collection, sampling and analysis has begun.



Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, Vladimir Pryakhin (right), presents an award for best radio journalist to Heghine Buniatian from Internews Armenia. The environmental journalism competition was established as part of the new agenda of activities of the Aarhus Centre.

CENTRAL ASIA



- International Borders
- OSCE Field Office

The boundaries and names on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the OSCE

OSCE Centre in Almaty

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF CENTRE

The OSCE Centre in Almaty continues to play a leading role in co-ordinating efforts with the Kazakhstani authorities, civil society and international organisations. It surveys political, legal, and economic developments to promote stability in the country, while assisting Kazakhstan in meeting its OSCE commitments.

A key role has been played in helping Kazakhstan to reform its penitentiary system, which has now become an example of 'best practice' in the Central Asian region. Further work continues to be done in the fields of legal reform and training of personnel.

At the same time, OSCE/ODIHR obligations have been emphasised in the formulation of a new media law and in amendments to the election law. Numerous roundtable processes and expert analyses have been undertaken to assist the Kazakhstani authorities in this area.

The Centre maintains a flexible approach to new challenges, which has allowed it to re-balance activities across all three dimensions. One key result was that a quarter of 500 repatriated (Oralman) women were successful in starting up their own businesses, following a seven-month training programme.

The introduction of additional funding for activities has enabled the Centre to deepen its role by providing expertise across various fields of relevance to authorities and civil society. An assessment police programme, civic lobbying training and youth development are examples of this.

This commitment to assisting Kazakhstan in reaching its goals of democratic reform and respect for human rights in the context of economic development and environmental concern is firmly set to progress in 2004.

This September, the Centre opened a new Liaison Office in the Kazakhstani capital, Astana, staffed by one Liaison Office Co-ordinator. This has enabled the Centre to strengthen its co-operation with governmental partners, while retaining close contact with the NGO community which continues to base itself primarily in Almaty.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Exploring international security models

Kazakhstan is taking steps to scrutinise various security models to ensure state security and stability. In this context, the international conference *The New Parameters of Security in Central Asia: Eurasian, European and Atlantic Aspects* was organised.

This event, which took place in June, was supported by the OSCE Centre in Almaty and organised by the Kazakhstani Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of Kazakhstan (KISI). The Centre suggested the agenda and experts to analyse the correlation between the security in Central Asia and geopolitical processes, as well as to reveal the relationship between the Central Asian, Eurasian and Euro-Atlantic policies in the context of security.

Capacity-building for skilful border management

In the framework of the border security project, the Centre provided urgently needed technical assistance to a military unit training centre for border guards in Almaty. The equipment was donated at the request of instructors of the training centre, and was used to introduce interactive techniques to their lessons, and to publish manuals.

Addressing the issue of drug trafficking in Central Asia

One of the priorities of both the OSCE and Kazakhstan is to effectively prevent and combat drug trafficking. This is especially important when considering that Kazakhstan is the country of transit from Europe to Asia.

With this in mind, in co-operation with the KISI, the Centre held a conference to discuss a wide range of topical issues related to drug production, abuse and trafficking.

Different models for combating this acute scourge were scrutinised for possible application in Central Asia. The conference findings were widely distributed to all parties involved in tackling this issue and implementing strategies.

Facilitating trade

In the framework of its customs support project, the Centre and international partners launched the *International Trade Guide* project aimed at enhancing levels of professionalism in customs officers. It also sought to raise the awareness of external economic actors with regard to current customs procedures, rights and legislation in the Republic.

The guide is a country-specific document that provides businesses with information on all requirements related to the import and export of commodities. A regularly updated version will be made available on the Internet.

A New Police Assistance Project

The *Police Assistance Project* has been initiated by the Centre and the OSCE *Strategic Police Matters Unit*. It is anticipated that, in the longer run, the project will assist Kazakhstan in setting up a modern and advanced system for exchanging and storing information, in line with international standards.

This project has been launched in co-operation with the Department of Criminal Information of the Kazakhstani Ministry of the Interior.

Work has begun on the implementation of the larger OSCE police project, *Creation of the Core of the Operational Information Analysis System in the Kazakhstan Police*, due in 2004.

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IMPROVING THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Developing election law

Amendments to electoral legislation have been an important focus for the Centre and the OSCE/ODIHR during recent years.

The Centre continued to promote OSCE standards with regard to amendments of the election law. In May, it opened a dialogue between state authorities and political parties through a roundtable. NGOs, the media and the general public also took part in the forum entitled *Upcoming Electoral Processes in Kazakhstan: 2003-2006*.

In addition, the Centre distributed to state officials and political parties the *ODIHR/OSCE Preliminary Assessment of the Draft Amended Election Law*, and held a finalising round table with political parties on further improvement and development of the electoral draft law.

The Centre worked closely with the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) on electoral developments, and co-ordinated meetings between the CEC and the OSCE/ODIHR.

In context of the OSCE PA *Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum*, which took place in Almaty from 7-9 June 2003, ODIHR Ambassador Christian Strohal addressed issues impacting free and fair election processes. He also had the opportunity to meet with the head of the Central Election Commission.

Monitoring electoral process

Monitoring the process of autumn's local *Maslikhat* (local governing body) elections was a key area of activity. As observers, the Centre's staff monitored the process and supported the work of the two designated ODIHR experts.

Throughout the period, co-ordination between the monitors and the political parties was well developed. ODIHR's observations of these local elections under the existing law were presented widely to the appropriate parties.

MEDIA ISSUES

Shortcomings in freedom and professional development of the media in Kazakhstan were repeatedly highlighted by the Office of the OSCE *Representative on Freedom of the Media* (RFoM).

In co-operation with the OSCE/RFoM, the Centre has been offering additional assistance to support the quality of local journalism and to remove obstacles to free and independent media.

Media legislation

The Centre has actively contributed to the process of improving media legislation and has provided legal expertise to the state authorities. The Centre has distributed a preliminary legal analysis of the draft *Law on Mass Media* and has participated in parliamentary hearings, since the draft was presented in October.

Promoting journalists' freedom of expression

The Centre organised a two-day seminar on defamation in the media and international standards in this field. The February event, which was organised jointly with local and international partners, provided local journalists and lawyers with first-hand information on legal precedents and international standards in the field.



The Centre, with the support of the OSCE/RFoM opened an Internet café for journalists on its Almaty premises. The facility offers journalists, media students, academics and NGO members free access to the Internet and the OSCE Centre's library, as well as the associated wealth of OSCE, foreign and local publications pertinent to this field.

Survey of Kazakhstani Journalists:

This was the first study of local journalism in the country. The survey explored how journalists see mass media and freedom of speech, problems faced, and the role of the OSCE in tackling issues.

This sociological study was collated from 680 questionnaires pooled from 13 cities of Kazakhstan. It was undertaken by the Centre, in co-operation with local media NGOs and international donor organisations.

Encouraging media professionalism

In an effort to raise journalistic standards in local media, training and competitions have been organised by the Centre. The regional journalist awards were presented for the best publication in the ecological field and the most impressive journalistic work on the issue of the death penalty.

Kazakhstani economic journalists were given the opportunity to benefit from expert tutorials. A three-day training seminar was offered on writing techniques.

Meetings with the media

The Centre initiated monthly meetings with the media aimed at increasing the transparency and visibility of OSCE activities in the field.

During these meetings the Centre briefs journalists on its recent activities, answers their questions, and distributes OSCE official bulletins, reports and publications.

**CIVIL SOCIETY MATTERS****Promoting civic dialogue and raising awareness**

The Centre has paid close attention to promoting civic dialogue and educating citizens about their civil and political rights, through supporting a number of projects.

This programme raised awareness on political and electoral processes and civil administration in different regions of Kazakhstan, and was administered by NGOs in co-operation and with the support of authorities.

The Centre has sponsored a training session for civic lobbyist trainers in several regions, with international experts offering instruction.

The training, implemented with the national NGO *Echo*, aimed at increasing a political participation of civil society and endowed the participants with negotiation, fund-raising, effective lobbying and public relations skills, as well as basics of national legislation.

Education

The Centre has launched activities for introducing special courses on the OSCE into curricula of local universities. Discussions have fostered close co-operation, including liaison with the OSCE Academy in Bishkek and partner academic institutions.

The Centre has initiated the resource donation to local universities and public libraries with a supply of OSCE and NGO literature.

Human Dimension Activities**PRISONS AND THE JUDICIARY****Penitentiary system reform**

A key success of the Centre for the past years has been the reform and humanisation of the penitentiary system. Special attention has been given to interactive training for prison personnel on the basics of human rights.

Other important elements include the transfer of arrest facilities from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Justice. The Centre has also supported discussions on introducing public monitoring of penitentiary institutions in Kazakhstan.



Participants of the two-day seminar on pre-trial detention facilities later visited one of the local prisons to gauge progress.

Judicial reform

The Centre has followed the issue of transfer of the sanction of arrest from the Public Prosecutors' Office to the courts, which has been a priority in the OSCE/ODIHR work during the year. The OSCE views such transfer as a key to promoting fair trials in Kazakhstan.

It has also continued its support to the Judges Training Academy, and has introduced a new programme of training for young lawyers, focusing mainly on young professionals from the regions.

Discussion on the death penalty

The Centre has supported the Government's policy to intensify a discussion within the country on the abolition of the death penalty. In January the Centre hosted a meeting of the Co-ordination Council on the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Kazakhstan, with the participation of governmental institutions and human rights NGOs.

The Centre has offered expertise on reforms to accommodate life-imprisonment as an alternative to the death penalty. A conference was organised by the Centre which highlighted the international experience in this field and proposed necessary changes.

These activities have contributed to plans to introduce the life-imprisonment measure from the beginning of 2004.

ANTI-TRAFFICKING

The anti-trafficking efforts of the Centre have been undertaken in close co-operation with the IOM, which assumes a leading position on the issue. Joint activities have supported the adoption of amendments to legislation and the appointment of the Government focal point on trafficking issues.

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CIVIL SOCIETY

Supporting the NGO community

The Centre has put particular effort into the issues of legislation concerning NGOs, and has focused on the related draft law. An OSCE/ODIHR-commissioned analysis of the draft law suggested that it would seriously inhibit the work of civil society.

Support to civil society has also included jointly arranging a roundtable in Almaty in June, with OSCE/ ODIHR, Kazakhstan's Ministry of Culture and Information and Public Accord with financial assistance from the Finnish Government.

By way of follow-up, a group of leaders of Kazakhstani NGOs compiled their own recommendations which were put in an open letter to the President. In October, the draft law was withdrawn from the agenda of the Parliament.

Gender issues

The Centre's activities on gender issues have built upon achievements of the extensive 2002 programme. The main focus has been on promoting women's participation in the local elections. A series of training events and round-tables were arranged in order to encourage and assist female candidacy. On 'Women's Day', 8 March, an appeal was launched to vote for women in the forthcoming elections.

Ethnicity and migration

Inter-ethnic tolerance is a key priority for the Kazakhstani Government and society. To support these efforts, the Centre arranged a seminar on the role of media in improving inter-ethnic accord.

It also continually monitored the situation of ethnic groups, and commissioned research on migrant workers in Southern Kazakhstan.

INDIVIDUAL COMPLAINTS

The Centre continued to receive citizens' complaints, which serve as a valuable indicator of the human rights situation in Kazakhstan.

Many reflect the lack of public knowledge about institutional avenues of assistance. With this in mind, the Centre has supported a publication by the High Commissioner for Human Rights of Kazakhstan informing the public of appeal procedure.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

The Centre has taken on 20 substantive projects in the economic-environmental sphere. Its new capacity was mainly due to increased financial resources, which also offered the opportunity to draw up medium- and long-term projects. Special attention has been given to environmentally problematic regions.

As a result of increased funding, the Centre has been able to take on a considerable number of projects, and look to the medium- and long-term. Some newly formed projects included:

- enterprise for repatriated women
- promotion of SME rights
- training of economic court chairs and judges
- research in the field of transparency in the oil and gas sector
- development of business-oriented farming.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Encouraging entrepreneurship of repatriated women

After gaining independence, Kazakhstan launched a programme aimed at bringing Kazakhs living abroad back to their motherland. This process encountered a range of problems connected with adaptation of the Oralman returnees.



The Centre developed a seven-month project that addressed repatriation issues through promoting the participation of repatriated Oralman women in SMEs.

Around 500 women were trained in basic entrepreneurial skills including:

- bureaucratic processes and language
- introduction to support networks
- assistance for obtaining micro-credits to start their own business
- marketing
- recruitment and maintenance.

Enterprises were set up as the result of the project.

Empowering entrepreneurs

In recognition of the importance of the establishment of sound SMEs for economic and political stability, the Centre conducted a mid-term project in this field: *State Inspections and Entrepreneurs: Ethics of Interrelations*.

Within its framework, several activities were conducted:

- monitoring of SME inspections
- surveying relations between entrepreneurs and inspection officials
- training for entrepreneurs on taxation issues
- two conferences.

The project provided a good opportunity for entrepreneurs to meet with various state agencies, and raise issues of common concern. The Centre plans to build upon the solid foundations for project work in the coming years.

Development of cross-border co-operation

The efficient work of customs is essential for the development of SMEs in the border regions of Kazakhstan and Russia. A project aiming at promoting cross-border trade was co-organised by the Centre with other international organisations, and local and central Governments.

Guaranteeing the accessibility of information about customs procedures and taxes was a main objective of the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES**Radiological mapping**

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many radiological production facilities were abandoned, resulting in the leaking of dangerous substances. The population in many cases is not aware of the danger. One such hazardous place is Aktau and its surroundings.

The Centre and local environmental authorities launched a project on mapping radiological activity in and around the city. The conclusions of the examination, and those of an independent radiological expert, were presented in a clear and accessible publication.

The project raised awareness of the potential dangers to the local population, and informed local authorities.

Implementation of the Aarhus Convention

The Centre has expanded its efforts to promote the Convention and monitor its indicators.

This project included a public information campaign, and the organisation of long-distance conference communication about the realisation of the Convention.

The main stakeholders – state officials, NGOs and international and local experts – also participated in a three-day workshop, where they developed monitoring systems, built up their skill-base, and identified areas where gathered information could be practically applied.

Supporting eco-journalism

The Central-Asian Festival of Environmental Journalism was supported by the Centre.

This meant the production of an environmental information compact-disc; the development of eco-tourism through supporting local communities and eliminating administrative barriers; and the organisation of a conference on ecological problems in the city of Balkhash and other areas.



Great importance is attached to the mapping and distribution of data on environmental health hazards. The Centre anticipates continuing in this direction, guided by OSCE principles of ecological awareness-raising.



Monitoring the ecotourism project: the Centre's staff members and their local partners for co-operation.

OSCE Centre in Ashgabad

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF CENTRE

The Centre's activities focused on promoting and enhancing the dialogue with the host country and on stimulating the country's interest in OSCE values, commitments and activities.

The Centre expanded co-operation and interaction with the host country, international presences and organisations, as well as local NGOs. The Centre continued its comprehensive approach regarding the implementation of projects in all three dimensions, in close collaboration and consultation with its partners. It participated actively in the formulation of the UN Development Assistance Framework and the Common Country Assessment of the UN System.

Proceeding from a balanced cross-dimensional approach, the Centre's programmes were aimed at strengthening the development of civil society, the rule of law and human rights; establishing the framework for restructuring the economy towards a market-oriented system; and raising public awareness of environmental issues.

The Centre facilitated several high-level official missions to Turkmenistan, such as the visits of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and his Personal Envoy for Central Asia; as well as the visit of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. The meetings of the Chairman-in-Office and his Personal Envoy with the country's President and other Turkmen officials were very important steps towards dialogue and co-operation between the host country and OSCE.

While condemning the assassination attempt of 25 November 2002, the OSCE continued to monitor the measures taken by Turkmen authorities. It encouraged the Government to co-operate with the OSCE within the framework of the Moscow Mechanism evoked by ten participating States; and drew attention to the report of the OSCE Rapporteur which contains a number of recommendations and emphasises that follow-up is necessary, within the UN and by the International Community as a whole.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Promoting transparency in military issues

The Centre and the OSCE *Conflict Prevention Centre* organised a two day training workshop on implementation of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) and other agreed OSCE documents in the political-military dimension.

This aimed at promoting awareness of practical questions regarding the OSCE's CSBMs and the information exchange regime and its principles regarding transparency in military-related issues. The training also included practical exercises.

Representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security and from the State Border Service participated. The workshop offered a good opportunity to foster dialogue and co-operation with the Turkmen authorities and to identify areas of common interest in promoting the implementation of existing instruments on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

First regional forum on development and security

The New York-based *Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum*, the UN and the OSCE Centre participated, as co-organisers, in the Forum on *Conflict Prevention and Sustainable Development for Central Asia*, an event hosted by the Government of Turkmenistan.

Issues and opportunities for Central Asia were high on the forum's agenda, with special reference to those of border, transit and trade.

Representatives from all Central Asian states discussed how requirements for border security and customs procedures can be balanced best through improved co-operation on trade development.

The meeting in Ashgabad was the first in a series of informal dialogue events between the countries of the region and their international partners; and contributed to enriching the dialogue and co-operation in respect of critical development and security issues.

Media

In the area of media support and promotion, the Centre provided information on its own activities and on regional initiatives of the OSCE in general. Media representatives stressed the need for expanding contacts with the OSCE by attending events organised by the Organization outside Turkmenistan.

Promotion of Human Security

The Centre assured the translation of the Human Security Commission report *Human Security Now* into Russian and its publication and distribution in Turkmenistan. During the launching ceremony, it was stressed that the report should be seen in the light of the increased challenges the world faces as well as the enhanced opportunities. With human security the objective, there must be a stronger and more integrated response from communities and states around the world.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

First regional seminar on Environment and Security in Central Asia

In 2003 the Centre and the UNDP office in Ashgabad co-organised the first regional seminar on *Environment and Security in Central Asia* within the framework of the *OSCE/UNDP/UNEP Environment and Security Initiative*. The Initiative aims to facilitate a collaborative and consultative process, integrate the links between natural resources and foreign and development policy thus promoting peace and human security. Participants were delegations composed of Government officials and NGOs from all Central Asian states. Participation was very active and a positive feedback on the event, as well as on the Initiative itself, emerged from comments of the participants. At the conclusion of the seminar a joint declaration was adopted. The first phase of the Initiative was concluded by a presentation at the *Ministerial Conference on Environment for Europe* in Kiev and *OSCE Economic Forum* in Prague in May 2003.

Raising the level of environmental awareness

In co-operation with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education, the Centre organised three one-day seminars in the regions outside Ashgabad, aimed at increasing the level of environmental awareness of secondary school students.

The seminars were part of a national environmental programme. The second phase anticipates involving teachers.

Focal point for the implementation of the Aarhus Convention

The Centre supported the establishment of an office for the National Focal Point for the Implementation of the Aarhus Convention at the Ministry for Environmental Protection.

The Focal Point is equipped with information technology, and gives advice to NGOs and the general public on issues relating to the Convention and the environment.

The Centre published the Russian translation of the booklet *NGOs and Environmental Government Institutions: towards Co-operation*. This complemented the Centre's regional seminar on the Aarhus Convention held in May 2000.

Strengthening SMEs

The Centre helped the Union of Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan to establish, renovate and equip a resource centre which should enhance its advisory and training activities.

The Union organised, with the Centre's support, four roundtables on registration, licensing and taxation of SMEs as well as four training events on best business practice. Two of these events were organised in the regions outside the capital.

The Centre published four guidebooks for entrepreneurs on the roundtable themes: *Registration of legal entities*, *Licensing of activities*, *Taxation of legal entities* and *Banks and banking activity*. Support was also given to the Union to establish its own web-site and to procure the required hardware, as well as to upload information.

Planning for future support to the SME sector was initiated, with a specific emphasis on women and young entrepreneurs. The OSCE-initiated YES programme was used as guidance in the drafting process.

Improvement of tax administration

The Centre assisted the *State Tax Service* to review and improve its taxation mechanism on the basis of contemporary IT applications.

It further helped the Tax Administration improve their web-site. An NGO was commissioned to compile and distribute a guidebook on taxation of NGOs in Turkmenistan.

Human Dimension Activities

HUMAN RIGHTS

Training on international human rights legislation

This is the fourth year that the Centre has held a one week training session on international legislation in the sphere of human rights. The training was aimed at raising the awareness and increasing knowledge of human rights among Government officials and NGO representatives.

Monitoring alleged human rights abuse cases

The Centre followed an increasing number of individual complaints, including on the lack of adequate legal resolution, social benefits, denials of exit visas, and status issues. Harassment complaints of NGO members and different religious groups were also filed.

Of special concern for the Centre were relatives of those sentenced for their alleged participation in the assassination attempt on the President.

Capacity-building NGOs

The Centre increased its support for the civil society sector, and had regular meetings with NGOs on issues such as development of a civic society, education and gender. NGO members were helped to attend OSCE events and organise seminars. The Centre assisted NGOs as they offered legal guidance to citizens and in crisis intervention for juveniles. It also supported a shelter for homeless children in Ashgabad.

On numerous occasions the Centre acted as a bridge between civil society and the international donor community, thus intensifying co-operation and support.

The Centre assisted in the reconstruction of the Crisis Centre for Youth and Women: the first of its kind in Ashgabad.

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RULE OF LAW

Bringing Turkmenistan's legislation into line with international standards

In co-operation with Turkmen authorities, the Centre organised five roundtables on the draft of the *Civil Procedural Code*.

This series of roundtables is aimed at assisting the host country in bringing its legislation into line with international standards and best practices, in order to facilitate the transition to a market economy.

The roundtables covered principles underlying civil legislation, the role and mandate of judges, prosecution, international commercial arbitration, and special procedures and cassation.

Roundtables of this kind have proved to be most effective in promoting legal reforms.

Promoting legal ethics

In co-operation with the *American Bar Association's Central and Eastern European Law Initiative* (ABA/CEELI) and the Turkmen Young Lawyers Association (TYLA), the Centre conducted two roundtables. These came as part of a series of meetings on legal ethics dedicated to theoretical, practical and interactive issues regarding lawyer-client relations.

Women's rights

International Protection of Women's Rights and interactive case study exercises were the Centre's contribution for a one-day seminar organised by the ABA/CEELI.

The participants who represented civic organisations and state institutions have reported they particularly found the Centre's case study exercise an effective tool for promoting women's rights.

The gender issue is one of the many areas where the Centre and international organisations combine their efforts to promote the rule of law in Turkmenistan.

The Centre also began the implementation of a project on the role of women in Turkmenistan. The topic of the interactive seminars is the implementation of the *Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*, and focuses on health and education.

OSCE Centre in Bishkek

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF CENTRE

The OSCE Centre in Bishkek has had a busy year promoting the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments in the political, human, economic and environmental aspects of security and stability.

The Centre has contributed to the continuing reform agenda through co-operation and assistance, and has encouraged dialogue between the Government, civil society and the donor community.

After February's Referendum for a new version of the constitution, amendments to the electoral, criminal and political party legislation became a focus for the Centre.

Improving the rule of law has become a priority for the Government. The Centre has responded by assisting with legislation assessment, the participation of a good governance consultative body, and organising conferences on penal reform.

The upgrading of the Kyrgyz Police Academy – part of the OSCE Police Assistance Programme – began as soon as the August Memorandum of Understanding was signed. The Centre has co-operated with the OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit on this programme, and both have promoted the participation of civil society, as agreed by the OSCE Chairmanship and the Kyrgyz Government.

The Centre has continued supporting civil society; and one of the pillars of the Centre's work in this area has been the deepening of co-operation between OSCE institutions and local NGOs.

The legal action taken against some newspapers, was among the topics addressed at the fifth Central Asia Media Conference. The Centre organised the regional event in close co-operation with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of

the Media; and will use the resulting Bishkek Declaration as a basis for further work with the Kyrgyz media. Initiative to create the OSCE Academy as a regional centre of competence and education in the field of international security and co-operation, and promotion of OSCE principles, received broad recognition. Its further development will be one of the main challenges for the Centre.

The Centre is focusing its 2004 activity on the following priorities: support to the local, parliamentary and presidential elections 2004/2005, support to legislation reform following the approval of a new version of the constitution, and conflict prevention activities in the south of the country.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

CONFLICT PREVENTION AND CONFIDENCE-BUILDING

The Centre continued its efforts to re-establish and facilitate dialogue between the Government and civil society. It has also continued to support the conflict prevention activities of international and local NGOs.

The Centre's field office in Osh held a series of seminars, bringing together women and authorities, to establish conflict management skills in the Southern Kyrgyzstan district of Aksy, which had suffered from violent clashes in 2002.

Prevention of extremism and terrorism

Extremism as a result of difficult socio-economic conditions, ethnic divisions and external influence, is a latent security risk in the whole Central Asian region. Taking up this issue, the Centre in co-operation with the Kyrgyz State Commission of Religious Affairs and ODIHR organised a Conference on the Freedom of Religion and Belief. It focused upon the role of religion in a modern, democratic society and the combat against extremism and terrorism.



Representatives of all religious communities of the country adopted a collective Statement and Plan of Action, which will be implemented in a series of follow-up activities.

Observing borders in the South of Kyrgyzstan

This ongoing monitoring resulted in several reports to the OSCE participating States and the *Conflict Prevention Centre*.

The field Office in the Southern Kyrgyz city of Osh is geographically beneficial for the close following of border issues and for facilitating cross-border co-operation.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

The Centre and OSCE/ODIHR are assisting the Government and Parliament in bringing legislation into line with the new Constitution. This activity began in the summer after the *Constitutional Referendum* of February produced a new version of the Constitution. The focus of assistance is offered in the drafting process of electoral, criminal and political party legislation.

The Centre fosters close relations with parliamentary structures to ensure participation of all political forces and civil society in the drafting process.

THE OSCE ACADEMY

Institution building and developing the curriculum

The Centre has supported the newly opened Academy in further development of its concept, in placing particular emphasis on and participation of Central Asian States. It has also supported the building of the personnel and material infrastructure.

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By the end of the year, the Academy had established all necessary management and controlling bodies, developed a curriculum for a pilot course of international studies with a Central Asian focus, and selected lecturers and students for the initial semester to start in February 2004.

In co-operation with the OSCE and European partner institutions, the Academy also conducted a series of lectures, workshops and seminars in the field of security policy and conflict transformation. This will be continued and expanded in 2004.

Police development

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the OSCE and the Kyrgyz Government in August on the implementation of a *Police Assistance Programme*.

The Programme is based on the findings of several needs assessment missions. It contains eight project areas, ranging from criminal investigation and drug interdiction to public disorder management and community policing.

Several projects were launched immediately after the signing, including the upgrading of the Kyrgyz Police Academy.

The Centre worked closely with the OSCE *Strategic Police Matters Unit* in setting up a Project office. Both have promoted the participation of civil society, as agreed by the OSCE Chairmanship and the Kyrgyz Government.

Anti-Terrorism Measures

On behalf of the OSCE *Action against Terrorism Unit*, the Centre organised a regional seminar, in September, on the issue of falsification of travel documents. This nurtured closer co-operation of border guards and law enforcement bodies of four Central Asian States.

DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Monitoring and assessment of party legislation

Ahead of the 2004 local and 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections, the Centre has been focusing its attention on the party system of Kyrgyzstan, including the creation and development of new and existing parties.

In particular, the Centre assisted the efforts of OSCE/ODIHR, international organisations and NGOs, in assisting parties and legislators to draft a new law on political parties.

Promoting parliamentary relations

As a part of its close co-operation with the two chambers of the Kyrgyz Parliament, the Centre has supported contacts with Parliaments of other participating States. Eight Kyrgyz parliamentarians from both chambers were offered the opportunity to attend the OSCE *Parliamentary Assembly's June Central Asian Regional Forum* in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEDIA

Identifying challenges

Working closely with the OSCE *Representative on Freedom of the Media*, the Centre organised the annual *Regional Media Conference*. Discussions on problems and challenges for the media and journalists throughout four Central Asian States resulted in the adoption of a *Bishkek Declaration*. The document lists clearly identified concerns and recommendations, which will be taken as a basis for further work with the Kyrgyz media.



Peter Feltham/OSCE

Throughout the year, the Centre monitored court cases against Kyrgyz media and supported a Media Resource Centre in Jalal-Abad, which offers communication infrastructure to local journalists.

Human Dimension Activities

Assessment of the Constitutional Referendum and local elections

The forthcoming local, parliamentary and presidential elections in 2004 and 2005 set the agenda for joint activities of the Centre and OSCE/ODIHR, who will be focusing on the improvement of the electoral system.

During the process bringing of the *Electoral Code* in line with the new version of the constitution and international standards the Centre facilitated contacts between the Central Election Commission, parliamentarians and OSCE/ODIHR. It supported the reviewing of draft amendments, provided recommendations to legislative bodies and undertook other follow-up activities.

DEMOCRATIZATION AND GENDER

Leading on from the OSCE/ODIHR project *Women Leadership, Lobbying and Networking*, the Centre focused on activities promoting participation and equality of women in politics and elections.

It conducted conferences and fact-finding missions for the identification of activities aimed at the strengthening of female candidacy for the forthcoming election cycles.

RULE OF LAW AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Legislation assessment

The Centre has continued to support OSCE/ODIHR in assessing the Kyrgyz legislation and in introducing recommendations for its adaptation to international standards and obligations, particularly in the field of criminal law.

Following an initiative of the Kyrgyz Government, the Centre joined other international organisations and financial institutions in setting up an independent consultative body, which will support the newly created Public Council for Good Governance. This Council is devoted to combating corruption and promoting best practices.

JUDICIAL REFORM

Reforming the penal system and criminal law

Aiming at the humanisation of the penal system, the Centre closely co-operated with the Kyrgyz Ministries of Justice and Health as well as local NGOs.

With ODIHR, it organised conferences and round tables on penal reform, re-socialisation and alternative forms of punishment and participated in the monitoring of health and human rights conditions in prisons.

Special attention was paid to juvenile justice and the human rights training of prison staff.

HUMAN RIGHTS

One of the pillars of the Centre's work with civil society has been the facilitation of contacts and co-operation between OSCE institutions and local NGOs – who are important partners and sources of information, expertise and inspiration in all kinds of events, including seminars and the *Human Dimension Implementation Meetings*. The other focus is on capacity-building for local NGOs and strengthening civil society.



Peter Falch/OSCE

Two of the Centre's main projects in the field of human rights monitoring and reporting were based on previous years' training. They culminated in a regional follow-up conference held in Almaty. Projects for the next stage are being considered by the Centre and ODIHR.

As a third party, the Centre facilitates dialogue and co-operation between NGOs and state institutions. In particular, results of NGO research and monitoring activities on human rights and legal reform are presented in round tables and discussed with representatives of the Government.

OMBUDSMAN

The Centre and OSCE/ODIHR has always actively supported the creation of the Ombudsman in Kyrgyzstan. In close co-operation with UNDP, it assessed the needs of the new institution, and provided assistance in the setting up of its office and infrastructure. It facilitated fact-finding missions on the Ombudsman institutions abroad, and provided training to staff. Awareness-raising events and publications were also supported.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Environmental security and the Mailu Suu Nuclear Dumps Project

The Centre established itself as the co-ordinator of international efforts aiming at the resolution of the environmental threat created by unsecured nuclear dumps in Kyrgyzstan and throughout the region.

An international conference and several follow-up events resulted in the creation of a database, which will clarify strategic areas for further rehabilitation activities.

At the same time, the Centre supported information events and publications designed to create public awareness of the affected areas, in particular the Mailu Suu valley.

In December, the Centre organised an international conference on emergency response to environmental security risks through the Central Asian region. The conference fostered bilateral co-operation between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan for initiatives to reduce threats to environmental security.

SME: sharing best practice

Any legal environment favourable for the development of SME must include feasible mechanisms of conflict resolution. For this reason, the Centre organised a regional conference on *Dispute Resolution as an Instrument to Facilitate SME Operations in the Business Environment* and promoted the creation of mechanisms on both national and regional levels. It provided extensive exchange of experience and examples of best practice in CIS and EU countries.

Encouraging women to take the lead in local conflict resolution

Having in mind Southern Kyrgyzstan's borders, ethnic composition and the socio-economic situation, the Centre's field office in Osh generated a number of conflict prevention activities. These included a series of training sessions and a conference on the role of women in conflict prevention, in the Jalal-Abad province of Southern Kyrgyzstan.

Women from the Aksy region – an area which suffered from violent clashes between police and local protesters in 2002 – took part in these events alongside women from all over the province, NGOs, governmental officials and journalists. Some participants were relatives of victims of the 2002 disturbance, at which several people were killed.

As a result of the training and the acquired techniques in conflict prevention and resolution, the women became more aware of their possible contribution to peace and the importance of participation in civil society.

They formed networks and identified solutions and legitimate ways to realise their rights. These included how to co-operate with NGOs, international organisations, as well as how to conduct constructive dialogue with local authorities.

The participants drafted and adopted a joint Appeal of Action, which listed clear aims and objectives for women's participation in conflict resolution and the democratization process.

The OSCE Centre in Dushanbe

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF CENTRE

The mandate of the operation in Tajikistan was enhanced in October 2002 as a reflection of the progress made since the end of the civil war. The OSCE's refocused mandate has allowed further expansion of activities in the economic and environmental field in 2003.

Activities of the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe (CiD) have been refocused, expanded and developed this year, to encompass new initiatives. A first for the OSCE – the Centre initiated Tajikistan's initial internationally supported mine clearance action. A mine survey project was launched with the implementing partner, NGO Swiss Foundation for Mine Action.

Increased provision for project funding in the budget has offered additional possibilities to respond to numerous requests for assistance and provide effective support to the Government and civil society of Tajikistan. The emphasis in 2003 has been on fostering political dialogue; supporting civil society and democratic institutions; monitoring of human rights; and local capacity-building. The CiD has been focusing its attention on election preparation ahead of the 2005 General Election.

The Centre has engaged in a range of projects which support reform of the penitentiary system, independent media and gender equality.

A good co-operative relationship with Tajik authorities has been developed, on a wide range of topics, including the economic, environmental, human and political aspects of security and stability. The new mandate also offered the possibility to broaden activities, and a new field office was opened in the Southern town of Kulyab. The increased stability in the eastern province allowed for the deployment of an international officer to the Garm field office. 2003 has also seen the creation of two new sections for project co-ordination and economic affairs.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Improving the election system

The CiD has been focusing its attention on election preparation ahead of the 2005 General Election. It welcomed the Tajik Parliament's positive response to the OSCE invitation to start discussions on the recommendations on legislation, which were drawn from OSCE/ODIHR observations of previous elections in the country.

Encouraging signs for the ongoing democratization process

At the April *Working Conference on Preparation for the 2005 General Elections*, participants agreed to improve election legislation and practice. Consequentially, a working group was set up comprising members of the Parliament and political parties. The OSCE/ODIHR offered its expertise to ensure compliance with international standards for democratic elections. Its draft recommendations were forwarded to Parliament.

Other election activity included the CiD and OSCE/ODIHR political assessment of the June constitutional referendum process.

Fostering political dialogue and democratic processes

In the framework of the CiD project *Training workshops for political parties in Tajikistan*, the first round-table attended by all political parties was conducted in Dushanbe, in September. It was followed by four workshops in the Northern, Southern and Eastern provinces of Tajikistan. The aim was to provide training on the role of political parties in a democratic society, with special emphasis on the discussion of the Tajik *Law on Political Parties*. It also enhanced the dialogue between parties in Tajikistan.

The Centre supported the Public Council in organising discussion sessions on political parties and elections, freedom of belief and interethnic relations. The objective of the project is to facilitate the direct and open dialogue between the Government and civil society, involving representatives of political parties, movements, associations, national minorities and NGOs.

The seminars on law and religion which have been implemented in the Northern Sughd region in 2003 have been very successful and should be expanded to the Southern Khatlon province of the country. They are considered to be a valuable tool for encouraging dialogue between religious leaders and local authorities

Workshop on politico- military aspects of security

Tajikistan has invited OSCE assistance in implementing the OSCE politico-military commitments. In May, the Centre, the OSCE *Conflict Prevention Centre* and *Forum for Security Co-operation*, organised a key workshop on this subject: *Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and the Confidence- and Security-Building Measures*.

Connecting Tajikistan to the OSCE Communications Network

As a follow-up activity to the workshop, the Centre assisted the Tajik Ministry of Defence in joining the OSCE Communications Network.

The network is a newly modernised and secure system to exchange military information under the *Vienna Document*, the *Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe* (CFE), the *Treaty on Open Skies*, as well as for other correspondence between OSCE participating States.

The Centre provided the host State with assistance in the field of drafting anti-terrorist legislation and offered advice on adopting and implementing measures under the *UNSCR 1373*, whilst ensuring full respect for human rights commitments in the drafting and implementing process. The *National Workshop on Legislative Implementation of UNSCR 1373* held in October was organised in co-operation with ODIHR and UNODC.

Both workshops aimed at implementing the *Programme of Action* that was endorsed at the *Bishkek International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terrorism*, of December 2001.

Counter-terrorism initiatives

Combating money laundering and other means of financing terrorism topped the agenda of a workshop held by the Centre, in co-operation with OCEEA and UNODC in Dushanbe in October.

The goals of the event were:

- to raise awareness on the technical and legislative aspects of money laundering and the financing of terrorism
- to familiarise participants with legal and administrative tools to help in the fight against these phenomena
- to identify needs for further legislative development in this field to speed up the process of preparing and ratifying new laws in accordance with international conventions and standards.



OSCE



MINE ACTION: A first for the OSCE

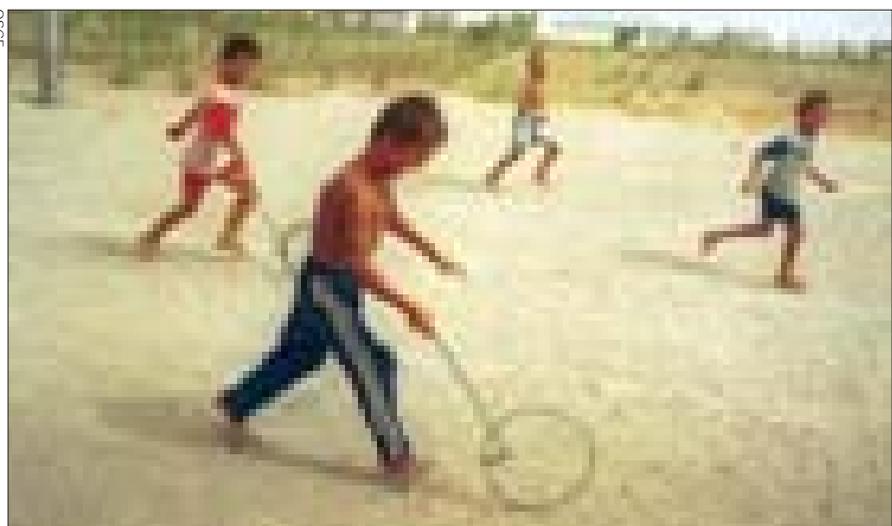
In late 2002 the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe reacted to a request from the Tajik Government to mobilise international support for mine action in Tajikistan.

In May OSCE CiD signed an agreement with the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) on implementation of the project Mine Action in Tajikistan. During its implementation, specially trained local mine survey teams have been identifying and marking dangerous areas and carrying out technical surveys on selected sites where necessary. The work has concentrated on the areas of Tavildara, Sagirdasht, and Rasht Valley.

Achievements for the project in 2003:

- two mine survey teams were fully trained and equipped
- survey teams were deployed by the beginning of September
- 157 settlements were surveyed
- 8,000 kilometres of roads were covered the survey
- identification, logging and marking of 21 mine / UXO contaminated areas were achieved
- previously reported contaminated areas were discounted; this is an estimated 124 kilometres of roads and 29 sq kilometres of land.

OSCE



Human Dimension Activities

Tajikistan is implementing reforms in light of OSCE commitments and international standards. The Centre supports these reforms via training and educational initiatives, information, assessment of draft legislation, capacity-building and monitoring.

This year the Centre's activities focused mostly on prison reform, labour migration, reform of the judiciary and prevention of torture.

The Centre also facilitates development of guidelines for action on specific issues, by means of workshops.

Prison reform

As a result of OSCE initiatives the penitentiary system was transferred from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Justice. A commission responsible for its reform was created and structural improvements have been introduced.

The Centre continued to support study trips for prison officials abroad. In addition, it facilitated an expert assessment of the draft *Programme on Reform of the Penitentiary System of Tajikistan for 2003-2008*. It also organised a roundtable on the role of NGOs in prison reform.

The Centre pulled together the experience of these activities and developed guidelines for further action.

Reform of the judiciary

Tajikistan has completed the reform of the Criminal Code, while other laws are at different stages of elaboration.

To complement ongoing reforms, the Centre has supported initiatives to reinforce the role of lawyers.

The Centre facilitated, through a conference, creation of the National Association of Tajik Barristers. This followed the establishment of regional associations, and was implemented in co-operation with the Open Society Institute and the American Bar Association.

Prevention of torture

During 2003, the Centre was presented with almost 100 individual human rights complaints. Some 25% were about ill-treatment in the course of criminal investigations.

Following a request from the Office of the General Prosecutor of Tajikistan, the Centre, and international partners, organised a two-day conference on prevention of torture. The Centre also supported the participation of Tajik Government officials and NGOs in international events on prevention of torture.



Labour migration

Seasonal labour migration involves hundreds of thousands of people every year. Migrants have very little, if any, knowledge of their rights and obligations.

The Centre published a guidebook on fundamental rights of labour migrants, prepared in co-operation with the IOM, two Tajik NGOs and the Ministry of Labour. It is envisaged that this practical help will be distributed within a larger planned IOM initiative for an information centre.

FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA

Ensuring public access to information

This remains an important area of focus for the Centre, in a system where information and media outlets are very limited. To this end, information boards have been built for citizens in remote regions. They provide up-to-date material about current events, governmental activities, the OSCE and NGOs.

Supporting independent media

In the context of promoting democracy though a pluralistic media, the Centre has supported the establishment of independent news agencies. Those who have benefited from the long-term project include Varorud in Khujand, northern Tajikistan, which now thrives as a self-sustaining, credible and independent media outlet.

Reporting corruption

The first workshop on corruption reporting for Tajik journalists was organised in October in Dushanbe. More than 40 journalists from all regions took part in the event, which was organised jointly with Transparency International. Tajik media outlets were provided with small grants to report corruption.

Encouraging amendments to the Media Law

A draft *Media Law* was presented to Tajik authorities by the joint OSCE-Internews Working Group as a follow up to the December 2002 conference on the subject.

GENDER EQUALITY



Expertise on gender equality legislation

The OSCE Centre offered expertise on the parliamentary draft *Law on Gender Equality*. The adoption of the law will represent a step towards fulfilment of the Tajik Government's international commitments taken by ratifying the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. It also reflects a move towards implementation of the State programme on *Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women in Tajikistan for 2001-2010*.

Gender education

2003 was the third academic year for the Legal Clinic on Education, which is specially oriented to women's rights. The law students gained practical experience through arguing human rights issues with senior school pupils. This offered the additional benefit of promoting gender equality in schools.

The Centre, which monitors and promotes this ODIHR project, has received calls for further work from the appreciative community.

Informing vulnerable groups on trafficking in human beings

The Centre has completed the countrywide public awareness-raising campaign on trafficking in human beings. This activity counteracts the widespread lack of information about the issue in this country of origin. With the assistance of the Centre's Field Offices, the project has reached vulnerable groups in remote areas. The Centre has been pivotal in bringing together the ODIHR directives and the IOM initiatives.

The major focus: awareness-raising

Resources allocated from the OSCE Unified Budget provision have been used to implement several awareness-raising projects on:

- human and economic rights of women
- women's rights in Islam
- handling case of violence against women
- trafficking issues
- business training.

The CiD and its field offices closely monitor and work with the local NGOs in the implementation of the projects in the remote areas, as well as in the districts around the capital, which are usually left out of mainstream of training.

This Centre attaches great importance to rights-awareness work, in view of the large number of uninformed war widows and labour migrants' wives, as well as the growing number of girls denied primary education and being offered for marriage as young as 13.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

In 2003, the Centre in Dushanbe received a new mandate, emphasising economic and environmental activity. The Centre responded by opening a specialised Economic Office, and stepped up its work in this field throughout Tajikistan.

Practical boost for SMEs

Entrepreneurship training and micro-credits have been key to the OSCE economic development strategy in Tajikistan.

Through its field offices, the Centre launched these schemes the breadth of the country. Since August, 2,000 entrepreneurs and farmers have been trained in marketing, accounting and business law as well as farming skills.



During the OSCE seminars, farmers learned how to produce natural pesticide preparations from local plants. The Centre was encouraged to hear farmers from the Navdi district in Rasht Valley later report improved fruit harvests.

The Centre leads and co-ordinates this initiative, which has been implemented by various international organisations and NGOs.

Mobilisation for local social and economic development

2,000 members of village organisations in an isolated mountainous region have been mobilised in a project aimed at building local administrative capacities for social and economic development. The project also has a micro-credit element.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

Aarhus Convention activities

The OSCE CiD has been building upon the solid foundations laid last year, when several awareness-raising workshops were held on the Convention. In 2003 several projects and seminars have focused on further awareness-raising activities and implementation of the provisions of the document.

Work in this area has included:

- establishing the Dushanbe Aarhus Information Resource Centre in September
- hosting and organising the *3rd Regional Festival on Environmental Journalism* in October. Two Afghan journalists were among the entrants for the high-profile Central Asian event
- ensuring compliance of legislation with Aarhus Convention. The Centre provided an international consultant whose conclusions and recommendations were presented – in Russian, Tajik and English – to governmental and non-governmental actors.

The Environment and Security Initiative

The Centre has been actively promoting the joint initiative of the OSCE/UNDP/ UNEP on *Environment and Security in South Eastern Europe and Central Asia*.

This initiative focuses on environmental challenges throughout the region such as polluted water, radioactive waste and water sharing. The Centre held a national workshop on the second phase of the initiative, at which the following three pillar activities were discussed:

- risk/vulnerability assessment and monitoring
- capacity building and institutional development
- policy development and implementation.

FIELD OFFICES

The Centre has five field offices in the cities of Garm, Khujand, Kulyab, Kurgan-Teppa and Shartuz, which are primarily involved in following the regional political and security situation.

In 2003, the OSCE returned its international presence to the office in Garm, in the Rasht Valley, after political and social stability was re-established. To expand the Centre's activities in the southern region, a new field office in the Kulyab District was opened.

The field offices maintain close contact with the local authorities, and they are able to gather first-hand knowledge from the community. The field offices contribute to the Centre's reporting, which is regularly submitted to the participating States. Field officers have also been in consultation with local authorities on the resolution of a number of different issues and have promoted OSCE principles.

Building on the OSCE's established tradition of promoting civic education awareness, all five field offices conducted summer camps for 14-19 year-olds on:

- democratic processes and institutions
- elections
- law-making
- civil society
- drug abuse prevention
- environmental protection.

The youth camps fed into the yearly civic education programme, which is co-ordinated by OSCE in rural schools.

Urgently-needed information boards, featuring newspapers and political and social bulletins, have been put up in town centres. Thus, the field officers ensure up-to-date material to be posted in areas, which have little to no access to radio, television and papers.

In promotion of human rights awareness the OSCE Human Rights Cinema Festival was brought to the field regions. It marked the first time in 10 years that people in the south had the opportunity to experience cinema. The public attending the festival was given information on OSCE activities throughout the country.



The OSCE provides and updates urgently-needed bulletin boards.



Welcoming the OSCE Human Rights Cinema Festival

OSCE Centre in Tashkent

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF CENTRE

The OSCE Centre in Tashkent (CiT) works actively with the Government of Uzbekistan, international organisations and NGOs to carry out its responsibilities in all three OSCE dimensions, which are based on the concept of comprehensive security.

As prescribed by our mandate, we cooperate closely with local authorities. In a spirit of constructive interaction, we benefit from their ideas and proposals in order to reach common understanding about how the Centre may assist Uzbekistan to implement its OSCE commitments.

The Government has been actively participating in CiT events and proposing joint projects in a spirit of partnership. This interaction has led to open discussions on the issues of money laundering, trafficking of human beings, prison reform and torture. In some cases action plans have been drawn up.

Also during 2003, the CiT has benefited from additional funding. It has been able to expand its programmatic work in the politico-military and economic-environmental dimensions, as a result of the additional human and financial resources approved by the OSCE Permanent Council. The extra funding and local staff has boosted professionalism and productivity.

The Centre has also maintained and developed contacts with our regular partners, UNDP, UNODC, ICRC and UNHCR on issues of common interest including refugees, minorities, trafficking of weapons, drugs and human beings, and money laundering.

The CiT concurs that transformation to a more open society in Uzbekistan is a long-term goal. It recognises that in joining the OSCE, and helping to establish the CiT, the Government has demonstrated a commitment to building a future based on democratic and internationally shared values.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

To promote security, the CiT implements projects related to arms control, preventive diplomacy, confidence- and security-building measures.

In addition, it promotes the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments in the sphere of democratization and strives to address them through its targeted project works.

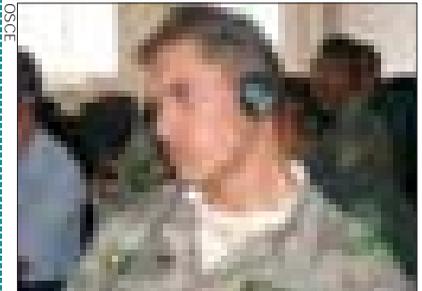
PROMOTING SECURITY

Promoting the politico-military Code of Conduct

In May, the CiT organised a workshop dedicated to the *Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and the Confidence- and Security-Building Measures*.

Representatives of the Defence and Interior Ministries, the Parliament and other governmental bodies attended the workshop. It has been noted that capacities must be built up in implementing the *Vienna Document*.

Capacity-building border officials



An OSCE expert team conducted a two-week training session at the Uzbek-Afghan border crossing point Termez-Hayraton. This initiative aimed to enhance the capacity of both countries' border guards and customs officials to interdict illegal arms shipments.

This promoted not only the internal co-operation between Uzbek border, customs and police authorities, but also between Afghan and Uzbek officials.

The initiative was well received and the participants gave positive and substantive feedback to the OSCE expert team, which is building foundations for envisaged follow-up practical training conducted on various border crossing points.



The successful border officials' training programme at the Uzbek-Afghan border enhanced capacity and boosted co-operation.

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PROMOTING FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA

Ongoing legal assistance to journalists

To give journalists the possibility to realise their rights, the CiT and Internews Uzbekistan, support a legal clinic for journalists. The clinic employs two local lawyers who provide local journalists with legal consultations and representation.

Free access to information

In November, the CiT established an Internet café to offer journalists free use of the Internet. The space for the facility is donated by the newspaper *Pravda Vostoka*, and is located in the same building as the main Tashkent press newsrooms.

ELECTIONS

Monitoring the parliamentary reform process

In anticipation of the December 2004 parliamentary elections, the Centre has initiated a series of round tables on elections, where OSCE embassies and international organisations share information about election issues, as well as any of their programmatic activities.

Human Dimension Activities

The OSCE is dedicated to work closely with the authorities and representatives of civil society to improve the human rights situation in Uzbekistan.

The overall aim of this work is to contribute to the rule of law in Uzbekistan and the development of a strong and vibrant civil society.

The implementation of international standards in Uzbekistan receives special attention.

Monitoring the human rights situation

During the year, the Centre monitored trials and received complaints by individuals. It also conducted field visits in order to reach the Uzbek society outside Tashkent. This comprehensive activity is essential for identification of areas of special concern and to initiate appropriate remedies in accordance with OSCE commitments.

Promoting prison reforms

As stated in the Report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, the task to prevent and combat torture within the law enforcement system remains of utmost importance for all actors in Uzbekistan.

In response to the report, the prison administration in Uzbekistan has invited the CiT for close co-operation on prison reform. The CiT conducts training for prison staff and supports Uzbek NGOs in monitoring places of detention.

Eleven officials and NGOs have received special training on international penitentiary standards in preparation for future activities.

Empowerment of women

To strengthen women's participation in public, the CiT is conducting advocacy and leadership training. This programme is valuable, especially in regard to the forthcoming parliamentary elections 2004, where it is hoped to see women more actively involved.

Preventing and combating trafficking in human beings

In line with the then Netherlands Chairmanship priority, the CiT is strongly committed to preventing and combating this modern form of slavery that affects men, women and children in Uzbekistan.

In co-operation with international and national partner organisations, the CiT is implementing a country-wide awareness-raising campaign. The law enforcement agencies are also receiving specialised training under this programme to enhance their capacity to fight trafficking.

Results of the Centre's human dimension projects

An early indication of the success of these programmes has been the activation of relevant NGOs and officials. Their increased awareness and capacity for tackling the issues of trafficking and torture is envisaged. Also anticipated are improved prison conditions, a more active civil society and a strengthened civic role for women.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

During 2003, the CiT significantly increased its programmatic activities in the field of the economic and environmental dimension.

It concentrated its activity on monitoring and reporting to OSCE bodies to inform on issues, their causes and consequences.

Officers regularly travel to the provinces to meet with governmental officials, private sector and civil society representatives to deepen the understanding of the economic and environmental situation in Uzbekistan.

The Centre raises Uzbek awareness of the need for sustainable economic development and sound environmental management practices. It assists the Government in addressing economic and environmental challenges, facilitates contacts, and promotes information exchange with local authorities, universities, research institutions and NGOs.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Capacity-building of entrepreneurs

SME development is promoted, especially in rural areas of Uzbekistan, among women and the youth. The Centre has conducted a series of workshops to increase entrepreneurial skills and the legal knowledge of people living in the provinces and mountainous areas.

Training ranges from the very basics of entrepreneurship to advanced business development techniques. In partnership with the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan, the CiT established an information centre devoted to SME issues.



Promoting environmental legal advocacy

In order to enhance entrepreneurs' access to information about the legal and practical aspects of running a business, the Centre and the National Chamber of Commodity Producers and Entrepreneurs began work on a handbook entitled *How to Be a Successful Entrepreneur*, for wide circulation.

Combating money laundering

In partnership with the Central Bank of Uzbekistan and the UNODC, the CiT organised the national workshop on combating money laundering and suppressing the financing of terrorism.

As a follow up of the October event, the organisers plan to work with the Government to review draft legislation for compliance with international standards, and to explore the possibility of establishing a financial intelligence unit.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

The CiT continues to work to promote public participation in environmental decision-making and, in particular, Uzbekistan's accession to the Aarhus Convention.

Environmental protection in Mahallas

The Centre is committed to facilitating Mahallas – local community organisations – in their efforts to step up activity in environmental protection. To this end, it has conducted a series of roundtables for Mahalla leaders. An overview of Uzbekistan's environmental laws and an introduction to relevant state structures have been offered.

Identifying environmental risks

Supporting NGOs

The Centre has continued to support the activities of the local environmental NGO Armon, focusing on:

- providing seminars about environmental topics
- identifying potential local leaders for grassroots environmental initiatives
- creating a database on environmental information
- conducting mass-media campaigns to increase public participation in environmental protection matters
- providing free legal consultation.

As part of the joint OSCE/UNDP/UNEP *Environment and Security Initiative*, the CiT helped organise a national workshop which focused on identifying existing and potential environmental risks in Uzbekistan, and facilitating an exchange of opinions about how to prevent environment-related conflicts.

OSCE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ESTONIAN EXPERT COMMISSION ON MILITARY PENSIONERS

OSCE Representative: Mr. Uwe Mahrenholtz | Revised budget: € 120,000

CONTEXT

The main task of the OSCE Representative is to participate in the work of the *Estonian Expert Commission on Military Pensioners* which makes recommendations to the Government on the issuance of residence permits to former military personnel in Estonia.

ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Reducing short-term residence permits

The Commission has been successful in further downsizing the number of short-term residence permits (one to three years) to about 450. The number of longer-term (four to five years) residence permits has reached 10,000. All told, there are now approximately 10,500 holders of valid temporary residence permits.

In 2003, 15 requests of residence permits were refused. The majority of these refusals affected beneficiaries of the *Russian Officers Resettlement Programme* of the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Since the Commission took up its work in 1994, a total of 280 requests have been rejected. However, many more applicants have been granted permits on the basis of humanitarian exception than have been refused.

Permanent residence permits

On 24 October 2002, the *Estonian State Court* (Supreme Court) ruled that foreign military retirees and families listed under the 1994 *Bilateral Accord on Social Guarantees* were eligible for permanent residence permits. The Ministry of Interior later introduced a bill to amend the *Aliens Act* by unequivocally excluding the possibility to grant permanent residence permits to military pensioners.

The amendment was adopted on 17 December and proclaimed by the President on 30 December 2003.

The OSCE Representative has voiced his concerns over the amendment, as it ignores the State Court decision and amounts to a unilateral modification of the Bilateral Accord.

As a result of the court findings, hundreds of permanent residence applications piled up and were summarily refused pending further directives. These now await a final decision.

The issue of privileged status still under dispute

No progress has been made on the question of according a number of ex-servicemen and their families – who have been presented to the Estonian Government on additional lists in 1994 – the privileged status of military pensioner under the terms of the 1994 Bilateral Accord. While Russian authorities have certified these former officers as military pensioners, Estonia continues to refuse to grant them this status.

As a consequence of this, some of the former officers and families in question have been denied extension of their residence permits and are facing expulsion.

The OSCE Representative has appealed to the Government to have these cases re-examined with a view to possibly granting exceptions for humanitarian reasons.

The continued presence of beneficiaries of US-financed housing

The continued presence in Estonia of a number of beneficiaries of the USAID *Russian Officers Resettlement Programme*, who had pledged to leave the country, keeps Estonian authorities occupied with elucidating muddled arguments for residency claims. The issue is complex and will only be remedied gradually. It is further confounded by the fact that a large number of the beneficiaries are protected under the 1994 Bilateral Agreement, and can therefore not be refused residence permits.

OSCE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE LATVIAN-RUSSIAN JOINT COMMISSION ON MILITARY PENSIONERS

OSCE Representative: Mr. Helmut Napiontek | Revised budget: € 11,800

CONTEXT

In 2003, the OSCE Representative continued to provide assistance in the implementation of the 1994 Agreement between the Latvian and the Russian Governments on social guarantees for military pensioners of the Russian Federation and their families residing in the Republic of Latvia.

In accordance with *Article 2* of the Agreement, the tasks of the OSCE Representative are:

- to consider, together with the Latvian and Russian parties, appeals on matters involving the rights of military pensioners
- to participate in the adoption of recommendations and decisions on the basis of consensus
- to consider, at the request of either party, questions relating to the application of the provisions of the Agreement.

A recent annual update in June 2003 counted 18,438 persons eligible under the Agreement; that is 280 persons less than in October 2002 (against an initial figure of 22,320 in 1994).

ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Focus on the individual

To a large extent, military pensioners' recent appeals related to social questions have been resolved by the respective Latvian local administrative bodies in co-operation with the relevant Russian authorities.

Long-pending individual cases, which were brought to the attention of the Commission and were mostly related to the status of residence, have been solved to the extent possible.

Interpretation of the Agreement's provisions

In particular in 2003, differing legal interpretations on some of the provisions of the 1994 Agreement related to housing have become increasingly important since this is an issue which is affecting military pensioners and their families more frequently. Based on a legal examination, the Commission is currently considering a common approach for further handling of problems related to housing issues.



THE INSTITUTIONS

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights | The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities | The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media



THE OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE ODIHR, CHRISTIAN STROHAL

The ODIHR has enriched its vital role as the main OSCE Institution dealing with the human dimension, a cornerstone of the Organization's comprehensive security concept. This year, the Office has moved towards more long-term and inclusive planning – capitalising upon the synergy of the Office's experience and expertise, the increasing capacity of participating States' institutions and the strengths of other OSCE bodies.

The Office has responded to several new challenges and demands on its capacity. This year has seen the creation of a new Human Rights Section, expanding what was primarily a monitoring role. It works closely with the other two main sections of the ODIHR: Democratization and Elections. This strengthening of the Office's capacity to assist States and other OSCE bodies emphasises the importance of human rights for the Organization as a whole. The new section will also be a valuable catalyst for developing more effective training and increased support of field missions, as well as enabling a more thematic approach to issues.

Calls to address concerning trends in racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination in the OSCE area have prompted the Office to sharpen its focus on these potential causes of conflict. It has also defined objectives through the new *Action Plan for Roma and Sinti*.

In line with the Netherlands Chairmanship's focus on anti-trafficking, the ODIHR is harmonising a more integrated approach to pertinent efforts. It is bringing together all dimensions of the OSCE's work for a comprehensive strategy for tackling this complex scourge.

The Office also has driven forward work on its traditional core tasks: fostering democracy and the rule of law; promoting and protecting human rights; addressing pertinent shortcomings; and reminding participating States of their commitments in this respect.

As Europe's leading election observation agency, the Office has had a busy 2003 schedule of 12 observation missions, including those to Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Georgia, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, and the UK. Extended technical assistance has been offered to resident OSCE Missions, including the organisation of Europe's first forum for domestic election observer groups, in Zagreb.

Steps have been taken to develop a longer-term approach to observation, including more follow-up between elections and greater focus on implementation of ODIHR recommendations.

For the year ahead, the Office looks forward to channelling the benefits of its newly strengthened capacity into tackling human dimension issues and will continue to spearhead comprehensive strategies, at national, regional and international levels.

Although based in Warsaw, the most visible part of the ODIHR's activities takes place in the field: observing elections and running a large number of assistance projects in participating States to address shortcomings in the rule of law and democratic institutions, human rights and elections.

The Office's increased capacity through a new Human Rights Section, and its emphasis on increased synergy between OSCE bodies, has resulted in a more comprehensive approach to all areas of its work.

ELECTIONS

The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights is Europe's leading agency in the field of election observation. On the basis of its 1994 mandate in which OSCE participating States invited ODIHR to undertake long-term assessment of electoral processes, before, during and after election day, the OSCE/ODIHR has steadily proven its value for systematic, encompassing and verifiable election observation.

In 2003, the ODIHR again demonstrated its commitment to improve electoral processes in the region, through the deployment of the 3,400 observers necessary to conduct the 12 election observation missions that took place during the course of the year.



The ODIHR's unique and tested methodology provides an in-depth insight into all the necessary elements for a democratic election process, including the legislative framework, the administrative preparations, the political campaign and the media. While the Office's election observation methodology was designed first and foremost to serve OSCE participating States, its accumulated experience has also served as a model for the European Union, the Southern African Development Community, and more recently the African Union, in the development of their own respective election observation activities.

The ODIHR has further developed its methodology to respond to new challenges and maintain a leading role in the election field, and the ODIHR *Election Observation Handbook* was thus updated in 2003 and is due for release in 2004.

Throughout 2003, the Office put greater emphasis on the follow-up to election observation recommendations. The recommendations that result from an observation mission are formulated to address the existing shortcomings in relation to the OSCE election commitments and other international standards for democratic elections. Throughout the year, as always, the ODIHR stood ready to co-operate with participating States in addressing such recommendations and realising their implementation.

Election Observation

The calendar of elections that the Office observed in 2003 is provided below.

ODIHR Election Observation Schedule 2003

Country	Type of Elections	Date
Montenegro/Serbia and Montenegro	Repeat presidential	9 February
Armenia	Presidential	19 February/5 March
Montenegro/Serbia and Montenegro	Repeat presidential	11 May
Armenia	Parliamentary	25 May/15 June
Moldova	Municipal	25 May/8 June
Albania	Local Government	12 October
Azerbaijan	Presidential	15 October
Georgia	Parliamentary	2 November
Serbia/Serbia and Montenegro	Presidential	16 November
Croatia	Parliamentary	23 November
Russian Federation	Parliamentary	7 December
Serbia/Serbia and Montenegro	Parliamentary	28 December

The ODIHR again enjoyed close co-operation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly during its election observation missions throughout 2003, and also with the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly and Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, and the European Parliament.

In addition to the deployment of its election observation missions as outlined above, the Office continued its practice of deploying occasional election assessment missions in participating States with a longer-standing democratic tradition to examine specific issues and promote best electoral practices. In the course of the year, the ODIHR undertook an assessment of local assembly elections in the United Kingdom. It also made a working visit to the United States of America to follow the special gubernatorial recall vote in California.

The Office continued to support OSCE field missions to conduct assessments of elections on those occasions when an ODIHR observation mission was not deployed. The ODIHR offered its assistance to resident OSCE field presences for the assessment of referenda or elections in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Moldova.

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In addition, a joint assessment mission of the ODIHR and the Council of Europe Secretariat visited the Russian Federation in March in connection with a referendum on the draft constitution and election laws of Chechnya.

Through the voluntary fund established in 2001, the Office continued to diversify the national profile of its election observation missions by recruiting election experts and qualified observers from Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.



Technical Assistance

In June, the ODIHR presented a progress report to the Chairman-in-Office on *Existing Commitments for Democratic Elections in OSCE Participating States*. The result of a working group of election experts assembled by the Office, this document sets forth a comprehensive inventory of existing universal and regional norms for democratic elections and examples of best practice as reflected in ODIHR observation reports.

The first European forum for domestic election observer groups was organised in Zagreb in late June in conjunction with the European Commission. The forum was initially a recommendation of the 2001 *Human Dimension Seminar* and was the largest meeting of its kind ever held in Europe. The forum built on previous ODIHR work to strengthen the capacity of domestic observer groups, including preparation of a *Handbook for Domestic Election Observers*, which was presented at the forum.

As an example of increasing follow-up assistance, the ODIHR provided technical advice to the bipartisan parliamentary committee in Albania that was tasked with revising that country's Election Code. The committee successfully addressed most of the recommendations contained in the Office's final report on the 2001 elections. In June, the Parliamentary Assembly approved a new Election Code largely based on the work of the committee.

The Office also initiated a meeting with the Central Election Commission of Belarus, funded by the European Commission, entitled *International Election Standards and Electoral Law Reform*. This technical-assistance project was intended to provide an ongoing framework for discussions – between the authorities, election administration, political parties and a broad spectrum of civil society – on electoral law reform in advance of parliamentary elections, expected in the autumn of 2004.

The Office also prepared a comparative study: *Laws and Regulations Restricting the Publication of Electoral Opinion Polls*.

Election Law Reform and Reviews

The Office continued to provide assistance to participating States in meeting their commitments through the *Electoral Legislation Alert and Assistance Programme*, which provides expert advice on election law reform on the basis of a voluntary fund established for this purpose. This fund provides the ODIHR with the necessary flexibility to quickly respond to requests to support reform of election-related legislation.

In 2003, the Office completed a technical-assistance programme related to the adoption of the Election Code in the Republic of Azerbaijan and conducted various activities related to election law reform, including the following legislative reviews:

- Revised Draft Election Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (joint preliminary assessment with the Venice Commission)
- Electoral Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (joint final assessment with the Venice Commission)
- Draft Amendments to the Election Law of Tajikistan
- Draft Amendments to the Election Law of Kazakhstan (preliminary assessment)
- Pending Amendments to the Election Code of Kyrgyzstan
- Parliamentary Election Law of Croatia
- Laws for Elections to Legislative Bodies to Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales/United Kingdom
- Electoral Law and the Electoral Administration in Armenia (joint recommendations with the Venice Commission).

HUMAN RIGHTS

A new section for new possibilities

This year's expansion of the ODIHR's *Monitoring Unit* offers more depth, breadth and volume to its output. The new *Human Rights Section* has boosted its capacity to address, from a human rights perspective, thematic areas of concern and other human dimension activities.

At the same time, traditional focus remains sharp: work continues on freedom of religion or belief and monitoring and reporting on the use of the death penalty. Additionally, the section now takes on:

- human rights training
- providing support to field missions
- conducting assessments on various human rights issues, including human rights and fair trials associated with anti-terrorism measures.

To complement this new direction, the section has increased its research, review and assessment capacity and has furthered co-operation with other international organisations active in the human rights field.

ANTI-TERRORISM

The primary aim of the ODIHR's work in this area is to ensure that anti-terrorism measures taken by participating States fully comply with OSCE commitments and international human rights law. The capacity and approach of the new Human Rights Section has resulted in a substantial programme of assistance to participating States, especially related to the implementation of UN conventions, protocols and Resolution 1373, which constitutes the global legal framework for international action against terrorism.

In 2003, the Office's anti-terrorism work fell into three programme areas:

- human rights analysis
- preventive action
- technical legislative assistance.

Compiling a resource for lawmakers

In conducting analyses of human rights protection in measures against terrorism, the ODIHR compiled anti-terrorism legislation introduced in all OSCE participating States. This compilation – which will be posted on the Legislationline website (<http://www.legislationline.org>) – is envisaged as a resource for lawmakers in the OSCE region.

Comprehensive assistance in implementing international conventions

The ODIHR's programme on technical legislative assistance supports participating States' work to ratify and implement the 12 UN conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, together with UN Security Council Resolution 1373. The ODIHR carried out a number of technical-assistance workshops in 2003 in co-operation with the OSCE's *Action against Terrorism Unit* and the UN Office for Drugs and Crime.

In February, a regional workshop on the implementation of UN Resolution 1373 was held in London for Central Asian states. In April, similar workshops were conducted in Azerbaijan and Georgia, using Canadian expertise and funding from the Government of Canada.

In response to a request of the Government of Kyrgyzstan, a two-day seminar was organised in June using experts from the ODIHR, the UNODC, and the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Technical-assistance workshops were held in Baku in September and in Yerevan in October.

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FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

The ODIHR expanded its work in this area in 2003 to include the context of the fight against the root causes of terrorism.

The ODIHR organised a *Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting* on this subject in July, in co-operation with the OSCE Chairmanship. The conference examined, and sought to develop, best practices among participating States in accommodating freedom of religion or belief and its manifestations. The conference resulted in recommendations on measures that the OSCE states and international organisations can take to protect their citizens' right to freedom of religion more effectively.

In this complex and sensitive area of concern, the ODIHR is guided by its Advisory Panel on Freedom of Religion or Belief. A special contact group is examining how the Advisory Panel might be reformed to continue to provide the necessary guidance to prepare for the expansion of ODIHR's work in this area. The Panel was involved in a number of projects in 2003 in co-operation with Governments and other groups throughout the OSCE region. One of the most prominent projects was the review of the compatibility of the 1998 *Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan On Freedom of Worship and Religious Organizations* with international standards and commitments, which was presented to the Uzbek authorities in June.



The ODIHR is also funding a *Website Guide for Tolerance Education*, which is currently being undertaken at the Jagellonian University, Krakow (<http://tolerance.research.uj.edu.pl>). Bringing together information on some 50 organisations in three languages (English, Polish, and Russian), the main target groups are teachers and students.

DEATH PENALTY

The ODIHR released its annual background paper on the use of the death penalty in the OSCE region at the yearly *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting* held in October. The paper is intended to be of service to participating States, making information on the use of the death penalty available to the public.

Activities were conducted in Kazakhstan throughout the past year to promote discussion and exchange of expertise on the death penalty and its application, the moratorium on the death penalty, and life imprisonment. This included a televised national debate, which was co-funded by the ODIHR, and an overview of the current legislation and statistics relating to the death penalty nationwide.

The ODIHR, the OSCE Centre in Almaty, and the Kazakh Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law organised an intensive four-day training session for NGOs and representatives of state bodies entitled *Information Campaign on the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Kazakhstan: Strategy and Techniques*. Follow-up training was also conducted.

HUMAN RIGHTS TRAINING

In accordance with its new focus on human rights training and capacity-building, the Human Rights Section carried out a dedicated programme in 2003. In October, it published a handbook for OSCE field personnel on how to handle individual complaints of human rights violations.

The section conducted two training sessions for OSCE field personnel in line with the guidelines contained in the handbook. After a pilot training session in Yerevan, a second session was conducted in Tashkent in September for the Central Asia OSCE centres. The sessions harnessed the expertise of the Training Unit of the OSCE Secretariat, as well as with the training co-ordinators in the respective field operations. The section also provided specific modules for the EU-led training programme for civilian crisis management.

In November, the section and the OSCE *Training Unit* organised the first *Human Dimension Forum* in Vienna, bringing together staff of the field missions and the ODIHR to exchange experiences and to explore potential for increased co-operation.

DEMOCRATIZATION

Flexibility and continuity

Promoting compliance with OSCE commitments and building democratic institutions remain at the centre of the Democratization Section's efforts. The section continued to strengthen administrative capacities, the judiciary, as well as ombudsman and civil society institutions. Programmes seek to facilitate exchanges of best practices and experience between participating States and to solidify gains made in democratic institution-building, civil society, and democratic governance.

Democratization programming activities are sub-divided into two primary areas:

- longer-term, multi-year, institution- and capacity-building programmes
- and shorter-term, high-impact projects.

This 'double-impact' methodology has proved a successful shift in outlook and approach to programme work: enabling both flexibility to deal with urgent needs and the continuity necessary to provide longer-term technical assistance.

The ODIHR's democratization activities are primarily conducted across five thematic fields of work:

- rule of law
- civil society
- gender equality
- combating trafficking in human beings
- freedom of movement and migration.

In South-eastern Europe, the section provides a number of regionally oriented programmes and projects and facilitates the co-ordination of human dimension activities in the OSCE Missions on the ground.

The ODIHR works in more than 20 countries, spearheading nearly 100 projects, as well as a large number of projects directly implemented and/or administered by the ODIHR through the *Anti-Trafficking Projects Fund*, the *Grassroots Democracy Programme*, and its anti-torture activities.

RULE OF LAW

The concept of rule of law forms a cornerstone in the OSCE human rights framework. The definition in the 1990 OSCE *Copenhagen Document* provides the guiding principles for the ODIHR's work in this area.

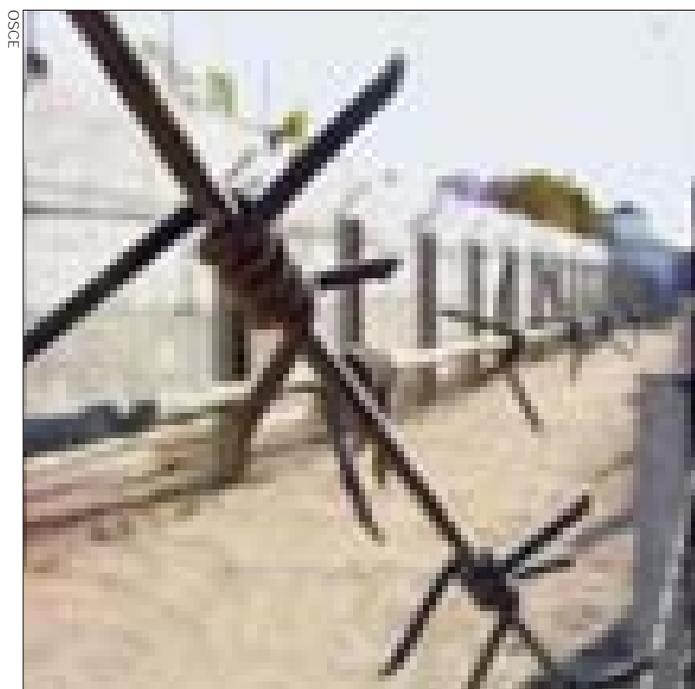
The notion of rule of law does not merely describe a formal legality but also aims at justice based on the full acceptance of the supreme value of the human identity and rights.

The ODIHR's rule-of-law work aims to assist the process of making practical changes to ensure rule of law throughout the OSCE region.

Longer-term criminal-justice reform

A number of projects on prison reform have been conducted this year, including in pre-trial detention and alternative sentencing. The ODIHR has also been working with authorities in Central Asia on the demilitarisation of prisons, calling for prisons to be transferred from the authority of the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Justice. This transfer has been done, at least partially, in most countries in Central Asia.

The ODIHR has also co-operated with other international and non-governmental organisations to introduce alternatives to imprisonment and to appropriately decriminalise certain offences in order to reduce the prison population – a precondition for successful prison reform.



As part of its ongoing assistance to reform criminal-justice systems, the ODIHR also implemented a prison service training programme to assist Governments in Central Asia and the Caucasus to improve the functioning of their prison systems with a view to compliance with international standards. The prison service training programme – within the longer-term reform strategy – involved instruction in human rights standards, as well as taking steps to improve the security and treatment of prisoners. Through these programmes, the ODIHR also encourages greater contacts between prison officials within the region: a summer school was conducted for participants from throughout Central Asia. In addition, the Office has also been an advocate for reform at the political level.

In 2003, the ODIHR began to promote alternative sentencing in Belarus. A conference was conducted in November, bringing together experts from other countries in the former Soviet Union and from Eastern Europe to discuss how to improve implementation of existing Belarusian legislation on alternative sentencing.

Galvanising the battle against torture

As torture remains a standard investigation technique in many countries in the OSCE region, the focus of the ODIHR's anti-torture work last year was on the pre-trial stage of criminal prosecutions.

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The ODIHR provided practical training and conducted programmes to give lawyers and human rights workers additional tools to combat torture in their own countries. Ongoing assistance has also been provided in the development and implementation of national action plans to combat and prevent torture in Georgia and Uzbekistan.

The ODIHR and the OSCE Centre in Tashkent hosted an international conference entitled *Redress for Torture, National and International Mechanisms* in July. The conference discussed Uzbekistan's progress and future challenges in bringing its legislation and practices into line with international standards on prohibiting torture.

In the past year, the Office has provided direct support and technical assistance to developing legal clinics in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. These clinics give law students an opportunity to gain practical experience either by handling legal cases under the supervision of a lawyer or through conducting 'streetlaw' or legal-literacy programmes.

A new programme began in Kazakhstan in the autumn to provide training for lawyers. Through this programme, the ODIHR is raising the quality of Kazakh legal services through nurturing tangible improvement of the basic skills of legal practitioners.

GENDER EQUALITY

The ODIHR considers the promotion of gender equality as not just an instrument to combat discrimination but also as a means for ensuring democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights.

Although the ODIHR addresses gender issues through all OSCE channels available, the majority of its work is conducted in the form of targeted programmes in several countries. This ensures a tailor-made approach.

Gender equality has been recognised as a key element for peace, prosperity, and sustainable democracy in the OSCE region. In line with OSCE commitments, the ODIHR strives to promote equality between women and men and to advance the rights of women. The active participation of women in public life and the equality and contribution of women to democratic processes in the OSCE region are crucial objectives for this Office.

Programmes for 2003 – which represent the bulk of gender work – were conducted in five main areas:

- women's leadership development
- building and strengthening local expertise on gender issues
- gender education for the younger generation
- integration of gender aspects into the work of Government structures
- preventing and combating domestic violence against women.

Gender landmarks in the Caucasus and Central Asia

These programmes have successfully established a number of important milestones in the development of gender activities and women's movements in the South Caucasus and Central Asia. They have created and supported strong NGO networks in Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan; built teams of qualified local trainers; and have inspired and initiated community initiatives for women outside the capitals and larger cities in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

A new level of governmental and civic co-operation

Programme activities aimed at Government structures and civil society have resulted in unprecedented co-operation and joint initiatives. Benefits of this interaction are evident in work on combating domestic violence, more effective national plans on gender equality and education, and strategies for equal participation of women in elections in the South Caucasus and Central Asian States.



A think tank for women in public life

In May, the ODIHR organised a *Human Dimension Seminar* on the participation of women in public and economic life, which provided a forum for discussion of the achievements, shortcomings, best practices, and lessons learnt on this topic. Recommendations called for gender equality to be an integral part of the OSCE's politico-military, economic, and human dimensions.

MIGRATION AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

The ODIHR Migration Unit was created with the intention of addressing a multitude of challenges related to increased population mobility – one of the main characteristics of a modern, globalised society. Particular attention is given to assisting the newly independent states to shift from a regime where internal and external population movements were tightly controlled to one where migration could contribute to stability, security, and development of societies.

Reforming legislation systems

The Office has also worked on overcoming the legacy of restrictions on internal movements in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. In two countries of the former Soviet Union, new laws were passed to enable the creation of civil-registration systems. This would allow individuals the freedom to choose residence without forfeiting public services.

In Ukraine, the ODIHR has been involved in the reform effort on the technical level by organising a seminar and arranging for training visits to countries where the reforms have progressed further along; and in reform on the political level by giving expert presentations at hearings organised by the Human Rights Committee of the Ukrainian Parliament.

Propiska reform in Belarus

The Belarusian authorities requested the ODIHR to assist in sharing international experience in this area with Belarusian partners. The objective was to develop a conceptual basis for a transition to a new population-registration system: one that allows free movement within the territory of the country.

Promoting dialogue on migration issues

Enhanced exchanges of information and best practices in migration management were the focus of a series of international and regional seminars organised by the ODIHR, in co-operation with the IOM. There is also an effort to encourage the participating States to develop a common attitude to migration indicators, which would enable them to develop co-ordinated approaches to migration policy. One of the meetings in the framework of the ODIHR-IOM seminars brought together representatives of the Russian Federation and states of Central Asia to discuss the situation of migrant workers. The issue featured again at a special session at the OSCE *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting* in October.

Reforming border services

In 2003, the ODIHR completed its involvement in a programme that provided 15 Azerbaijani border guards with training at the Border Service Training Centre in Poland. A conference on the reform of border services in Central Asian and Caucasus countries provided an opportunity to share the experiences gained as a result of this project. The impact of the training will be monitored by the ODIHR in co-operation with international actors in Azerbaijan.

STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY

Over the past year, the NGO Unit implemented a series of activities under its four programmes:

- civic diplomacy
- civic dialogue
- NGO participation in OSCE events
- training in human rights monitoring and reporting.

Reuniting Abkhaz-Georgian families – 10 years of cease-fire

The ODIHR assisted in creating a vital channel of communication between local NGOs and authorities to ensure safe mutual visits for 4,000 mixed families. This represents the first opportunity for families to be safely reunited 10 years after the Georgian-Abkhaz cease-fire. As part of a civic diplomacy programme, this initiative was undertaken in partnership with the Abkhaz-Georgian Mixed Families Association. In the second half of this project, up to 30 NGO activists from throughout Georgia, including the separatist regions, will receive extensive training in human rights, networking, negotiation and reconciliation skills with the aim of opening up communication channels.

Completing the watchdog training programme

This training programme – which increased the skills of NGOs in monitoring and reporting techniques – drew to a close in 2003. The conclusion was marked by two regional conferences (Kazakhstan and Georgia) that assessed the effectiveness of the past training and defined future strategies. The three-year initiative was implemented in partnership with the OSCE Missions and the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights in Warsaw.

The civic dialogue programme

The NGO Unit organised a series of NGO-Government meetings in Central Asia.

In Kazakhstan, a two-day international conference on *Strengthening Human Rights Guarantees of the Parties in the Criminal Process* was held in February in Almaty. It was followed in June by a high-profile roundtable to discuss the Kazakh draft law on NGOs.

In Kyrgyzstan, a September meeting in Issyk-Kul gathered the Central Election Commission and the NGO Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society to discuss the proposed amendments to the Election Code. Soon afterwards, a two-day meeting was held on *The Rights of the Child in Orphanages*, bringing together relevant NGOs, directors of orphanages, and relevant Government officials.

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FOCUS ON SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

One of the chief aims of the ODIHR's democratization activities has always been the strengthening of civil society in countries in transition: the goal here is not just to bring about democratic conditions but also to ensure their viability. Fulfilling a key role, the NGO Unit monitors legal developments concerning NGOs and facilitates their participation in major OSCE events.

Throughout the region, the ODIHR participated in a range of training and capacity-building efforts, as well as expert assessments. Working with the relevant OSCE field operations, the ODIHR has co-ordinated human dimension activities and provided regional programming where needed. Special attention was given to specific issues, such as:

- improving the capacities of ombudsman institutions
- refugee returns
- local-government reform
- youth
- civil society
- war crimes
- fair trials, judiciary and penitentiary reform.

A joint effort for parliamentary development

In October, five OSCE Missions, the ODIHR, and the OSCE *Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities* organised a parliamentary development conference in Sarajevo. It brought together legislators from some 15 different Parliaments inside and outside the region.

Building reconciliation and democracy

The ODIHR and OMiK jointly worked to build links between civil society leaders in Serbia and Kosovo to enhance their co-operation for reconciliation and democratic processes in the region.

The ODIHR also pursued return-related processes and expert assessments on human rights institutions. For example, with the Mission to Croatia, an analysis of Croatia's ombudsman institution was produced, which was followed by a roundtable discussion involving the main political and governmental parties, NGOs, and the European Commission.

The ODIHR has continued to place an emphasis on its regional prison reform programme, which continued in 2003 to address training needs, best practices, and regional co-operation.

COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

The ODIHR actively participated in major OSCE anti-trafficking events throughout the year, including the *11th Economic Forum* and the *1st OSCE Police Experts Meeting*.

These events illustrate an integrated approach to anti-trafficking efforts, bringing together all dimensions of the OSCE's work for a comprehensive response to this complex phenomenon.

Most notably, in July, the OSCE Permanent Council adopted the OSCE *Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings*, which was further endorsed at the Maastricht Ministerial Council meeting.

The Office has been active in instilling standards, as well as assisting participating States with the development of national plans of action and referral mechanisms. Several grassroots initiatives were carried out in 2003. In the Caucasus region and the Russian Federation, these projects resulted in the increased capacity of various women's organisations to raise awareness about trafficking and to assist at-risk groups. The ODIHR also partnered with *Anti-Slavery International* and NGOs in Western Europe to assess victim-protection measures in countries of destination and to raise awareness of the need for a better response in the region. The ODIHR also continued its close co-operation and co-ordination with the *Stability Pact Task Force* and Geneva-based IGO *Contact Group on Trafficking and Smuggling*.

In 2003, the Office prepared new publications that will assist participating States in their efforts to address trafficking and support its victims. One such, the *Handbook on Designing and Implementing National Referral Mechanisms* elaborates guidelines and principles, including an overview of the necessary assessment tools and legal framework. With its SEE RIGHTS initiative, the ODIHR - in co-operation with UNICEF and the UNHCHR - continues to monitor responses to trafficking in human beings in South-eastern Europe.

Synergy of field operations:

the ODIHR Anti-Trafficking Project Fund

By the end of 2003, the Anti-Trafficking Project Fund, established by the ODIHR in 2001, had supported more than 30 projects in 13 OSCE countries, including a number of regional activities. Through administering the fund, the ODIHR enhanced its co-operation with the OSCE field missions through providing expertise, promoting information-sharing and exchange of best practices, and formulating overall regional perspectives. This synergy has boosted the Organization's response to diverse and urgent anti-trafficking priorities that may arise throughout the OSCE region.

FOCUS ON LEGISLATION

Expanding the human dimension legislation database

<http://www.legislationline.org> is a free-of-charge, online database designed to provide easy access to international and national legislation related to OSCE human dimension commitments. Launched in 2002 as a project with a focus on South-eastern Europe, the database doubled in size in the past year, adding an

additional 1,800 pieces of legislation. It also expanded in geographic scope to cover the entire OSCE region; an additional 20 country summaries were added - bringing the total to 30. The site contains some 200 legal analyses, and the site's news service offers about 40 law-related stories a month.

A growing reference and monitoring tool

As demonstrated by the list of subscribers to the site's monthly newsletter, <http://www.legislationline.org> is increasingly used by OSCE Missions and other organisations for fieldwork.

Underlying this trend is an increasing reliance on the database by those who assist Governments in reforming their legislation, as well as by those who advocate such reforms.

The site has proven useful for lawmakers who have used it for their work, particularly in combating human trafficking or for drafting legislation on other human dimension issues such as elections and gender equality.

In Serbia and Montenegro, legal materials from the site have been used as reference materials for preparing new legislation against human trafficking. In Albania, a similar approach was followed to gain an insight into how election disputes are resolved in a range of other OSCE countries.

Since October, anti-terrorism legislation has been systematically collected, analysed, and put online. Similarly, further steps have been taken to upgrade the data-collection mechanism regarding domestic legal measures affecting Roma and Sinti communities.

Contact Point on Roma and Sinti

Established within the ODIHR in 1994, the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues has, for the past decade, been carrying out a work programme dealing with the following priority areas:

- advancement of the political rights of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE region, including enhanced participation in elections
- acute crisis prevention and crisis management in post-conflict areas
- enhancing interaction between OSCE structures, Governments, international organisations and Roma or Roma-related NGOs to develop synergies and common approaches
- fostering and supporting the development of civil society among Roma communities. In 2003, the Contact Point gave special attention to this effort in the Balkan region.

As tasked by the 2001 OSCE *Bucharest Ministerial Council*, the Contact Point in 2003 co-operated with an OSCE Working Group to develop an *Action Plan for Improvement of the Situation of the Roma and Sinti in the OSCE Area*.

In April, the Contact Point brought together Roma and Sinti activists and Government officials to join discussions with representatives of national Governments at the OSCE *Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Roma and Sinti Issues*. National delegations and NGOs from across the OSCE region met and shared experience, successful practices, and a frank discussion of key issues in overcoming discrimination and the barriers to full integration.

While on the one hand consulting frequently with the members of the OSCE Working Group for the Action Plan, the Contact Point organised a series of meetings for Roma and Sinti policy experts in order to gather their views of drafts of the Action Plan. The language proposed by Roma and Sinti groups was closely studied and widely used in the Working Group's final draft.

The Contact Point has also been engaged in consulting national authorities. The Contact Point assembled a meeting in February - with Albanian authorities, the OSCE Presence in Albania, and the Council of Europe - in Elbasan, Albania, on *Policy-making on Roma and Egyptians in Albania, focusing on education and the protection of children's rights in multi-ethnic communities*. This meeting enabled similar communities to share experience and to find common approaches to their common hardships. As one outcome of this meeting, the Government adopted a new national strategy for Roma communities.

The Contact Point joined a conference in Budapest in July regarding the proposal of a *Decade of Roma Inclusion*. The Contact Point remains engaged in dialogue with national Governments, especially in Central and South-eastern Europe, that have committed to participate in, and support, the Decade of Roma Inclusion initiative.

The Contact Point put strong emphasis on its project work on the political integration of, and long-term solutions for the needs of, Romani internally displaced persons (IDPs) in post-crisis areas. It held two regional roundtables on durable solutions for IDPs: the first in January, in Sarajevo, and the second in July, in Skopje.



Education is a core element of successful social integration policies and can be a means of promoting the diversity of cultural and linguistic experiences that make our societies such rewarding places in which to live.

Rolf Ekeus, High Commissioner on National Minorities

THE OSCE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES

The nature of contemporary conflict in the OSCE region has undergone profound transformation. Part of the evolving challenges faced is the tension between national majority and national minorities.

To respond to this challenge, the *Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe* (CSCE, later OSCE) in 1992 decided to establish the post of *High Commissioner on National Minorities*.

The High Commissioner's function is to identify – and seek early resolution of – ethnic tensions that might endanger peace, stability or friendly relations between the participating States of the OSCE. His mandate describes him as 'an instrument of conflict prevention at the earliest possible stage' when effective intervention can significantly reduce the threat of potential outbreak of violent conflict.

The High Commissioner has a two-fold mission: first, to address and de-escalate tensions before they ignite and, second, to act as a 'tripwire', meaning that he is responsible for alerting the OSCE whenever such tensions threaten to develop to a level at which he cannot alleviate them with the means at his disposal.

MESSAGE FROM THE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES, ROLF EKEUS

In 2003 the OSCE *High Commissioner on National Minorities* (HCNM) continued his involvement in the OSCE area in conformity with his mandate to provide early warning and, as appropriate, early action in regard to tensions involving national minority issues. When necessary the High Commissioner took action, as required, to stabilise situations of potential conflict. He further continued to explore possibilities to extend his activities to other minority-related areas, including work on thematic issues, inter alia, addressing the issues of racism, xenophobia and discrimination, the so-called 'new minorities', and citizenship - together with related issues of identity, belonging and inclusion. He also addressed socio-economic aspects of inter-ethnic relations, also in the context of combating terrorism.

Special attention was given to the subject of the use of minority languages and the broadcast media. During a conference held in Baden, Austria, on 24-25 October 2003 a new set of guidelines developed by a panel of independent experts under the auspices of the HCNM was presented with a view to encouraging the development of minority language broadcast media across the OSCE. The HCNM also pursued short or long-term activities in the form of various projects, which support his political activities.

In the context of the expansion of Euro-Atlantic structures, the HCNM revisited the issue of rights of persons belonging to national minorities in a wider Europe. In particular, he urged the European Convention to provide for a stipulation concerning national minorities which would explicitly demand the respect for and protection of national minorities.

During the reporting period, the High Commissioner was active in several OSCE participating States.

Hungary

The *Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries* (sometimes referred to as 'Status Law') was first adopted on 19 June 2001 and came into effect in January 2002. The law was designed to give citizens of neighbouring countries and resident in these countries certain benefits, based on their ethnic Hungarian origin. Its provisions caused considerable contention over territorial jurisdiction and related issues, between Hungary and some of its neighbours.

In 2003, the High Commissioner has continued his engagement in the situation around the *Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries* in order to facilitate a resolution to the issue. In June 2003, the Hungarian Parliament passed amendments to the Law which reflected many recommendations made by the High Commissioner. The scope of the amended law was limited to support for education and culture, and intended benefits were not restricted to ethnic Hungarians.

The High Commissioner devoted considerable attention to resolving outstanding differences between Hungary and Romania, and between Hungary and Slovakia, after the amendment of the Law. Complex and lengthy dialogue resulted in the conclusion of agreements between Hungary and its neighbours designed to eliminate a problem which had persisted in bilateral relations for more than two years.

Moldova

Efforts to resolve language and education issues affecting inter-ethnic relations in Moldova have been augmented this year. The successful realisation of a three-year project has improved the teaching of the State language to children belonging to minority communities. Two textbooks were published and over 1,200 teachers were re-trained in a new technique which has been well received by practitioners, their students and Moldavian education officials alike.

The High Commissioner continued to work with the Government to harmonise language legislation with international standards. He paid particular attention to the plight of six schools in Transdnistria that face difficulties in registering with the regional authorities for teaching Moldavian/Romanian in the Latin script. In the summer his office worked in close co-operation with the OSCE Mission to Moldova to resolve the problem of school registration.

Estonia

The High Commissioner visited the new Government in Estonia in the summer, and learnt of its priorities regarding national minority issues and social integration.

Dialogue began on the further implementation of minority education reform and the High Commissioner expressed his willingness to support the social integration process through project activities. He continues to follow the naturalisation process.

Latvia

The High Commissioner continues to be engaged in a dialogue with all interested parties in Latvia on issues such as the promotion

of naturalisation, the social integration process and the ratification of the *Council of Europe's Framework Convention on National Minorities*.

He visited the country in spring to discuss the minority education reform with the authorities and representatives of pupils, parents and teachers. He urged the sides to continue the dialogue on the reform and to maintain a high quality of education for all students.

The High Commissioner is implementing two projects in support of his mandated activities in the country – one is to examine and identify in co-operation with the authorities and NGOs – additional and complimentary means for the promotion of the social integration process in the country.

The other is to improve the implementation of the *State Language Law* by the *State Language Inspectorate* by elaborating guidelines for a liberal interpretation of the law.

Ukraine

The High Commissioner has supported the office of the Ombudsman in implementing a project to monitor and analyse the situation of national minorities at a regional level in Ukraine.

The results of this project are to be published and will form the base for the further involvement of the High Commissioner in the country.

Additionally, he continues to follow the situation of different ethnic communities on the Crimean peninsula, and in particular how the return of formerly deported peoples was affecting the area.

Croatia

In December 2002 the Croatian Parliament finally adopted the *Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities*. The High Commissioner had been actively engaged in the drafting of this law and on a number of occasions had provided his opinion.

The HCNM is now following the process of transformation of the guarantees established in the law into the legislative framework of the country, as well as the efforts to implement these legislative provisions.

To this end, the HCNM forwarded to the Croatian Parliament comments on the *Draft of the Law on Amendments to the Law on the Election of Members of Representative Bodies of Local and Regional Self-Government Units*.

The High Commissioner has funded and monitored the *Knin Legal Aid Project* and, in co-operation with the Joint Council of Municipalities, a similar project in the Danube region.

The objective of the projects is to provide legal aid and representation in courts and during administrative procedures, for persons belonging to minorities (mostly ethnic Serbs and returnees), to help them return to their apartments and houses and to recover their property.

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Serbia and Montenegro

The High Commissioner has continued to work closely with the authorities, in particular the State Union Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, especially on implementation of the *Law on the Protection of National Minorities*.

In this respect a full-time professional staff post was opened in Belgrade with a view to enhancing the assistance the High Commissioner can render to the Government.

The High Commissioner's Liaison Officer is also responsible for monitoring political and social developments regarding minority issues in Serbia and Montenegro. The Office of the HCNM has maintained regular contacts with representatives of various minorities in Serbia and Montenegro and conducted a number of field visits to assess potential for conflict.

After the adoption of the *Constitutional Charter of the Union of Serbia and Montenegro*, the High Commissioner concentrated on the issue of the *Charter on Human and Minority Rights*, in particular Chapter III of this document that includes the rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

In February, the High Commissioner forwarded his comments to members of the Constitutional Commission. The Charter was finally adopted at the end of February 2003 and it provides a good framework for the guarantees of minority rights in conformity with international standards and practices of good governance.

The High Commissioner also provided his opinion on draft bilateral agreements on the protection of national minorities, which Serbia and Montenegro intends to sign with some of its neighbours.

In Montenegro a draft law on national minorities has been under preparation. The High Commissioner has been closely engaged in the drafting process, *inter alia*, organising consultations in October in Vienna, with the members of the Montenegrin Expert Group. The ultimate aim is to harmonise Montenegrin legislation with 'union' legislation, in particular the *Constitutional Charter*, as well as with international and national standards regarding minority rights protection.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The High Commissioner visited the country in March where he discussed with representatives of the Government and minorities various aspects of implementation of the *Ohrid Framework Agreement*, especially including issues relating to education, decentralisation and the use of language.

On the inter-ethnic aspects of education and the use of language, the High Commissioner is currently considering ways of providing the Macedonian Government with expert advice.

The census of the population and households in Macedonia was conducted between 1 and 15 November 2002. The High Commissioner has been involved through participation in a Steering Committee to oversee and to give political guidance regarding the process. In its final report the Steering Committee

underlined that 2002 census has been carried out successfully and professionally, in accordance with international census standards.

The High Commissioner, as a member of the Board, continues to support the SEE University in Tetovo – a project launched by the HCNM in 2001.

At the beginning of the 2003/2004 academic year, the SEE University registered almost 4,000 students, of whom about 15% are non-Albanian. Of this year's new enrolment, non-Albanians at this multicultural and multilingual institution have been raised by 10% to 25%.

The High Commissioner also promotes and supports the *Transition Year Programme*, which seeks to increase the number of ethnic Albanians admitted to state universities in Skopje and Bitola. The programme provides intensive examination preparation courses in the Macedonian language for Albanian-speaking students in the fourth year of secondary school.

Turkey

In January, the High Commissioner visited Turkey for the first time, to begin a direct dialogue with the authorities: in particular on the important reform process initiated in 2002. The High Commissioner is currently looking at ways of continuing the co-operation with the Turkish Government on issues of concern to the High Commissioner in the reform packages with a view to realising their effective implementation.

Georgia

During the period under review, the High Commissioner continued good and close co-operation with Georgian authorities and international institutions. This was especially evident in support of better integration of the population of Samtskhe-Javakheti into mainstream Georgian society. This region is located in the South of Georgia and is predominantly inhabited by ethnic Armenians.

As a follow-up of the *UNDP/HCNM Conference on Promoting Integration and Development in the Samtskhe-Javakheti Region* that was held in November 2002 in Tbilisi, the HCNM launched a multi-sector *Conflict Prevention and Integration Programme in Georgia*.

Through various projects the High Commissioner is promoting media development, legal education and management of interethnic relations, as well as supporting better information flows between the region and the centre of the country.

Assistance is also being provided to the Government to improve Georgian-language education in the region. Implementation of nine of the eleven programme projects is well underway. The High Commissioner also continued his work concerning the return of the Meskhetians, who were deported by the Soviet regime from Samtskhe-Javakheti in 1944.

He encouraged dialogue between all interested parties, including the Meskhetians themselves, with a view to solving this issue. On his initiative, a Joint Assessment Mission – comprising HCNM,

UNHCR, Council of Europe, and IOM representatives – was conducted in Krasnodar Krai, the Russian Federation, in October.

The High Commissioner is also engaged in Abkhazia – a region that he visited in March. In Sukhumi, the High Commissioner met representatives of the breakaway regime as well as staff of the United Nations/OSCE Human Rights Office.

The High Commissioner expressed his concern about the plight of schools in the Gali district that are encountering difficulties in teaching in the Georgian language. He emphasised that international standards require that any authority controlling territory and people – even if not recognised by the international community – must respect the human rights of everyone, including those of children who wish to study in their mother tongue.

The High Commissioner appealed to the Abkhazian leadership to show flexibility regarding the ‘teaching in the mother tongue’ issue and to ensure that it was resolved in full accordance with international norms. He also expressed his readiness to assist the Abkhazian authorities with practical projects.

Democratic processes and legislative reform in Georgia have continued to be supported.

Through a project funded by the High Commissioner, national minorities of the country received increased access to legislation and election materials during the parliamentary elections of 2 November.

The Russian Federation

In May, the High Commissioner visited Moscow for meetings with officials, parliamentarians and representatives of national minority groups and academics. Discussions focused on a variety of topics, in particular the Meskhetian population in the Russian Federation.

In October, two of the High Commissioner's advisers participated in a fact-finding interagency expert mission to Southern Russia – which included representatives of the UNHCR, the CoE and the IOM. The main focus of the mission was the Meskhetians residing in Krasnodar Krai and the difficulties that some members of this community have experienced in obtaining Russian citizenship.

Kazakhstan

In October, the High Commissioner initiated a project in Southern Kazakhstan designed to help Uzbek schools in the region to prepare their students for the state examination – a prerequisite for higher education in Kazakhstan. In recent years, ethnic Uzbek students have faced difficulties in achieving the necessary grades in the examination to enter higher education institutions.

The state examination is conducted in the Kazakh and Russian languages and because of existing educational provisions, many Uzbek students do not have the language fluency needed to pass. The High Commissioner project aims to provide supplementary classes for Uzbek students in one of the two languages.

For a second year, the High Commissioner has continued to support a project to monitor interethnic relations in Kazakhstan. The monitoring provided the Kazakhstani Government and the OSCE with information and analysis of inter-ethnic relations in the country.

Kyrgyzstan

The High Commissioner undertook two visits to Kyrgyzstan. In April, the High Commissioner sponsored, together with the non-governmental organisation *Cimera*, a roundtable in the city of Osh entitled *Multilingual Education and Mother-Tongue Education for National Minorities in Kyrgyzstan*.

With the Ministry of Education of Kyrgyzstan and the Assembly of the People of Kyrgyzstan, the High Commissioner convened conference *Education as a Means of Integration in Multi-ethnic Societies*. Following the conference a working group was established and supported to develop practical recommendations for promotion of integration through educational policy and practice.

In 2003, the High Commissioner continued to support a project designed to regularly monitor inter-ethnic relations in the Southern regions of Kyrgyzstan for the Kyrgyz Government and the OSCE. The High Commissioner also continued his support for a project to help to train Government officials in the management of inter-ethnic relations and minority issues. This project is conducted together with the Academy of Management under the President of Kyrgyzstan.

The High Commissioner also continued to extend support to the Assembly of the People of Kyrgyzstan for the production of the bulletin *Ethnic World* and to maintain the Assembly's web-site.

Tajikistan

In July, the High Commissioner visited Tajikistan for the first time. During the visit he met with governmental officials, representatives of national minority communities and NGOs. During the meetings, the issue of the provision of legal assistance to Tajikistan in the development of legislation in respect to national minorities was discussed.

Turkmenistan

On his visit in November, the High Commissioner had the opportunity to discuss a range of issues pertaining to national minority communities in Turkmenistan.

A particular focus was on issues of education, language and citizenship. During the visit, the High Commissioner undertook a visit to the Dashoguz region, and met with members of the international community working in Ashgabad.



THE OSCE REPRESENTATIVE ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA

In 2003, his sixth and last year in Office, Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, focused on several long-term projects that have re-defined the work of the Office. These projects dealt with such topics as media and the Internet, media in multilingual societies, libel and defamation, and media concentration and editorial independence. Books dealing with these topics were published by the Office.

The OSCE Representative conducted several short term projects and continued his monitoring activities.

Selected Country-Related Issues

ARMENIA

The OSCE Representative closely followed the Armenian debate on libel and the open letter addressed to Armenian Parliamentary Speaker, Arthur Baghdasaryan, on 17 June. The letter voiced concern on libel and slander in the new *Criminal Code* and was signed by several heads of diplomatic missions in Yerevan, including the Head of the OSCE Office in the capital.

On 18 July, the OSCE Representative made a statement expressing regret that two independent television companies in Armenia – *A1+* and *Noyan Tapan* – had not been awarded broadcasting licenses as a result of the tender announced by the National Commission on Television and Radio in Yerevan.

BELARUS

In May, the OSCE Representative raised with the authorities the suspension of one of the nation's leading independent newspapers, *Belarusskaya Delovaya Gazeta*, as well as *BDG-For Internal Use Only*, and the official warnings against several other independent newspapers.

The OSCE Representative was also concerned with the closure of IREX and Internews offices in Minsk. These two organisations have greatly assisted in the development of independent media in Belarus. The closure of the bureau of Russia's *NTV* television network in Belarus – for allegedly slandering the Government in its 25 June report on the funeral of the Belarusian writer, Vasil Bykov – was also seen as another act of repression against alternative media voices in the country.

CROATIA

The OSCE Representative has been dealing with several issues in Croatia; among them, supporting the work of the OSCE Mission in the field of media legislation.

On the *Electronic Media Law* – that was analysed by his Office – experts' comments were to a large extent incorporated. However, concerns remain regarding legal provisions dealing with libel: an issue raised on several occasions with the authorities.

ITALY

The OSCE Representative has repeatedly expressed his concern about the dangers to media freedom in Italy resulting from the concentration of control over both private and public broadcasting media in the hands of the Prime Minister. These concerns were deepened by two bills approved on 22 July by the Italian Parliament: the *Gasparri Bill* on broadcasting reform which would allow companies to have interests in more than one news media category, and a bill to regulate conflicts of interest between ownership of a profit-making enterprise and holding public office.

Experts considered that both bills failed to set serious limits to a monopoly.

KAZAKHSTAN

The OSCE Representative has closely monitored the case of journalist Sergei Duvanov, and has intervened with the Kazakh authorities on several occasions.

Mr. Duvanov continues to serve his sentence on charges that have been questioned by several legal experts and after a court hearing



that has been broadly criticised for many irregularities. According to independent international observers at his trial held in early 2003, neither Mr. Duvanov nor his lawyers were given enough time to review the case against him and prepare his defence. The numerous consequent complaints filed by the defence lawyers of procedural irregularities were all rejected by the judge. Also, reportedly, Mr. Duvanov's right to confidential consultations with his lawyers was severely restricted. Although the judge admitted that procedural irregularities had occurred during pre-trial investigations, this was not taken into account in favour of the defendant as the basic principles of criminal law require.

Before this trial, Mr. Duvanov had repeatedly faced problems with governmental authorities, including a criminal case for reportedly having insulted the honour and dignity of the President of Kazakhstan.

Another area of attention this year was the case of the editor of a Kazakh newspaper. On 17 November, Mr. Ermurat Bapi was convicted to a one-year suspended prison sentence for 'deceitful business activity' and tax evasion. On 22 July, the OSCE Representative asked for more information about the closure of Mr. Bapi's newspaper *SolidAT*, which was sentenced by an economic court for issues over the founding documentation. The Almaty district court also prohibited Mr. Bapi from 'publishing activities' for five years.

RUSSIA

In the Russian Federation, it is through television that the majority of citizens receive their news. Over the past year, the OSCE

Representative intervened with the Russian Government and spoke out publicly when privately-owned television networks, staffed by a team of journalists who offered Russian viewers an alternative viewpoint, were forced to close down. He was also greatly concerned to learn of the dissolution by the Russian Government on 21 June of *TVS*, Russia's last remaining private television company with a national reach.

The OSCE Representative has recently intervened with the Russian Government about the case of two journalists from the Ural city of Perm. Konstantin Sterledev and Konstantin Bakharev – of the Perm regional daily *Zvezda* – were put on trial after publishing in autumn 2002 two articles about alleged methods used by the regional office of the FSB. The OSCE Representative was encouraged to learn that the Perm city court found the two journalists not guilty this year.

The OSCE Representative continued to be very concerned about the media blockade around the Republic of Chechnya. This obstruction of the flow of information inhibits Russian, Chechen and international media recipients from knowing what is really taking place there. The isolation of the Republic prevents any rehabilitation of journalism and updating of media technology which is urgently needed.

SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

On several occasions, the OSCE Representative raised several times the matter of the appointment of members of the Broadcasting Council, in Serbia (Serbia and Montenegro).

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The Representative, publicly suggested the best solution would be to re-elect the Council in full compliance with established procedure. This would close the issue and provided the Council with the legitimacy it needs to function properly.

TURKMENISTAN

In regard to freedom of expression in Turkmenistan, the OSCE Representative has remained gravely concerned. On several occasions he drew attention to the abuse of the TV media to humiliate those individuals who were accused of taking part in an alleged assassination attempt against the country's President.

The OSCE Representative has voiced great concern over the new definition of 'treason' established in the country in 2003. The People's Council of Turkmenistan has outlined that treason constitutes, among other things, 'fostering doubts among the people regarding the domestic and foreign policy of the first and permanent President of Turkmenistan the Great Saparmurat Turkmenbashi', as well as 'defaming the state'. Under this definition, the People's Council suggests that any individual who scrutinises any action of the President is now liable to life imprisonment without any possibility of parole or amnesty.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Freedom of the Media and the Internet

It is intended that this project should provide a broader context for a public debate on the challenges posed by the new information and communication technologies to freedom of expression and the media.

A conference was organised in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, in June. More than two dozen international experts were brought together to discuss possible Internet-related pitfalls for freedom of expression.

As well as the OSCE, other participants included members of academia and the media, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, and a number of NGOs from Europe and the U.S.

The results of this conference were condensed in the *Amsterdam Recommendations (see Annex 1)*. The main point being that while existing laws could be used to ban illegal content on the World Wide Web, no measures must target the infrastructure of the Internet as such.

In July 2003, the OSCE Representative proposed a set of principles to guarantee the editorial independence of media in Central and Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union.

These principles concern media that have been or are in the process of being acquired by Western conglomerates. They set out the criteria that the media owners voluntarily adhere to. The German media company *Die WAZ-Gruppe* and the Norwegian *Orkla Media AS* have already agreed to support these principles.

Freedom and Responsibility: Media in Multi-lingual Societies

This project dealt with the constructive role media could and should play in combating discrimination, promoting tolerance and building stable peace in multi-lingual societies. It is envisioned that this project will aim to overcome prejudices and intolerance about members of minorities in the media. The project investigated the practical working environments of the media in some OSCE participating States: Switzerland, Luxembourg, Serbia and Montenegro (Southern Serbia), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Moldova. At the end of the project country reports were produced. A concluding conference took place in Switzerland in March and a booklet was later published in several languages.

The impact of media concentration on professional journalism

This project involved the collection and evaluation of data in selected Western and Eastern European countries to establish the influence of the growing concentration of ownership on the intellectual and economic independence and freedom of professional journalism.

Particular attention was paid to the following issues:

- cross-ownership of TV/radio and print media
- the influence of the Internet on the profitability of the print media – i.e. loss of revenue due to an increasing relevance of the Internet for classified advertisements
- the political, financial and legal pressure on free and responsible journalism, which might undermine pluralism and journalistic freedom.

OSCE



Addressing challenges for the media of EU and accession States

On 10-11 March the OSCE Representative held a conference on *Public Service Broadcasting: New Challenges, New Solutions* in Ljubljana, Slovenia; in co-operation with the European Institute for the Media and the Radio and Television Company of Slovenia.

The meeting addressed key challenges facing broadcasters in the EU member states and in the candidate countries for accession. Case studies based on national experience provided insights into current dilemmas facing the broadcasting sector: the digital proliferation and liberalisation of the media markets *vis-à-vis* a sustainable, independent and responsible public service broadcaster.

Building media freedom: The Spiegel Affair – an example from Germany

This was published in September in Russian, and aimed to demonstrate to the Russian-speaking OSCE participating States, that which motivates German politicians to be outspoken in their support for freedom of expression.

Its message is in the spirit of the recently deceased Rudolf Augstein, founder of *Der Spiegel*, and is related to his personal interest in the political developments in the former Soviet Union. The publication documents the 1962 *Spiegel* affair. It includes reports from *Der Spiegel* of that time and comments made by witnesses on the occasion of the affair's 40th anniversary, including an interview with Rudolf Augstein.

The OSCE Representative has been following for a long time the issue of libel and specifically its misuse in many of participating States. A roundtable was organised in November involving legal experts, politicians, NGOs and journalists – victims of libel harassment among them. Libel was discussed in the context of guarantees for freedom of professional and responsible journalism.

The participants focused on decriminalising libel and repealing insult laws that provide undue protection for public officials. They agreed that overuse or misuse of libel and insult laws, to protect the authorities or silence the media, were clear violations of the right to information and free expression.

Participants also agreed on a set of recommendations to Governments, Parliaments and judicial bodies on the abolition of criminal libel (see *Annex 2*).

The 5th Central Asian Media Conference: in September, Kyrgyzstan

Media in Multi-Cultural and Multi-Lingual Societies was held in Bishkek, and was attended by journalists, Government officials, members of Parliament and civil society from the four Central Asian states: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Participants from Turkmenistan were not able to attend because they were denied exit visas by the state authorities.

In general, the OSCE Representative has concluded that media freedom in all the Central Asian states has deteriorated over the past year. Over the whole region, many journalists have come to

take as way of life: libel cases, both physical and psychological pressure, imprisonment on questionable charges, and denial of access to information.



OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve (right), at the 5th Central Asian Media Conference, Bishkek

Review of media law in Tajikistan

A conference was organised in Dushanbe at the end of 2002 to discuss the conditions for the media within the current legal framework that regulates it. Prior to that a 15-person working group was established by OSCE and *Internews* to prepare a draft of a new media law for Tajikistan. The working group, consisting of parliamentary and governmental experts, media lawyers, journalists and NGOs, convened during a six-month process discussing all aspects of the legal media landscape, ending its work in spring 2003.

Furthermore, a thorough review of all the media laws in force in Tajikistan was commissioned to compare their compliance with international standards. The review presents recommendations for improvement in many areas.

The participants at the Conference agreed that the working conditions for Tajik media radically differ today from those in existence when the current media legislation was adopted and that some changes were inevitable. The participants agreed on a set of recommendations directed at the Government and Parliament in Tajikistan to start the process of improving the standards by adopting a new media law.

Internet cafés and legal clinics in Central Asia

In Kazakhstan, an Internet café for journalists was opened in February as a joint project between the OSCE Centre and the OSCE Representative. This initiative directly improves access to information for local journalists. Similar projects are being developed in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In Almaty, a legal clinic giving independent advice and expertise on media issues to the courts and defence lawyers was opened in February. A project proposal for a legal clinic giving free advice to journalists in Uzbekistan is also ready for consideration by donors.

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Supporting free media in Azerbaijan

The Representative and the OSCE Office in Baku organised a study trip to the US for young Azerbaijani journalists. A follow-up seminar will be organised in 2004. The purpose of the project is to contribute to the improvement and understanding of the functioning of a free media in Azerbaijan.

Setting up a legal defence fund

In November, the OSCE Representative established the *Veronica Guerin Legal Defence Fund* that would provide support to journalists who are being prosecuted in the OSCE region. Through voluntary donations by OSCE participating States, human rights organisations and individuals, the Fund would be able to provide appropriate legal defence for those in need. Relevant cases involving journalists would be referred to the Fund by OSCE field presences and *bona fide* NGOs.

ANNEX 1:

AMSTERDAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Convinced that no matter what technical means are used to channel the work of journalists to the public – be it TV, radio, newspapers or the Internet – the basic constitutional value of freedom of the media must not be questioned;

Reaffirming that this principle, which is older than most of today's media, is one that all modern European societies are committed to;

Alarmed that censorship is being imposed on the Internet and new measures are being developed to prevent the free flow of information;

Reaffirming the principles expressed in the Joint Statement by OSCE, UN and OAS in London on 20 November 2001;

Taking note of the Council of Europe Declaration on freedom of communication on the Internet from 28 May 2003.

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media invited representatives from academia, media, specialised NGOs from Europe and the U.S. as well as from the European Parliament, Council of Europe, European Commission, and OSCE to take part in a conference on 'Freedom of the Media and the Internet' held 13-14 June 2003 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

During the conference the following recommendations, proposed by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, were made:

Access

The Internet provides a number of different services. Some of them are still in the development phase. They serve as tools, often indispensable ones, for citizens as well as journalists and thus are important for a free media landscape. The technology as such must not be held responsible for any potential misuse. Innovation must not be hampered.

Access to digital networks and the Internet must be fostered. Barriers at all levels, be they technical, structural or educational, must be dismantled.

To a considerable extent the fast pace of innovation of digital networks is due to the fact that most of the basic code and software are in the public domain, free for everyone to use and enhance. This free-of-charge infrastructure is one of the key elements of freedom of expression on the Internet. Access to the public

domain is important for both technical and cultural innovation and must not be endangered through the adoption of new provisions related to patent and copyright law.

Freedom of Expression

The advantages of a vast network of online resources and the free flow of information outweigh the dangers of misusing the Internet. But criminal exploitation of the Internet cannot be tolerated. Illegal content must be prosecuted in the country of its origin but all legislative and law enforcement activity must clearly target only illegal content and not the infrastructure of the Internet itself.

The global prosecution of criminal content, such as child pornography, must be warranted and also on the Internet all existing laws must be observed. However, the basic principle of freedom of expression must not be confined and there is no need for new legislation.

In a modern democratic and civil society citizens themselves should make the decision on what they want to access on the Internet. The right to disseminate and to receive information is a basic human right. All mechanisms for filtering or blocking content are not acceptable.

Any means of censorship that are unacceptable within the 'classic media' must not be used for online media. New forms of censorship must not be developed.

Education

Computer and Internet literacy must be fostered in order to strengthen the technical understanding of the importance of software and code. This is necessary so as to keep open a window of opportunity for defining the future role of the Internet and its place in civil society.

Internet literacy must be a primary educational goal in school, training courses should also be set up for adults. Special training of journalists should be introduced in order to facilitate their ability to deal with online content and to ensure a high standard of professional journalism.

Professional Journalism

More and more people are able to share their views with a widening audience through the Internet without resorting to 'classic media'. Privacy of communication between individuals must be respected. The infrastructure of the Internet is used for many different purposes and any relevant regulatory bodies must be aware of that.

Journalism is changing in the digital era and new media forms are developing that deserve the same protection as 'classic media'.

Traditional and widely accepted values of professional journalism, acknowledging the responsibility of journalists, should be fostered so as to guarantee a free and responsible media in the digital era.

ANNEX 2:**PARIS RECOMMENDATIONS**

The participants at the *conference on Libel and Insult Laws*, organised by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media and Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and held in Paris (France) on 24-25 November 2003, discussed existing libel legislation in OSCE participating States. They took into account international standards relating to freedom of expression, including article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and shared standards and commitments of OSCE participating States. They focused on decriminalising libel and repealing insult laws that provide undue protection for public officials.

They agreed that over-use or misuse of libel and insult laws to protect the authorities or silence the media were clear violations of the right to free expression and to information and should be condemned.

The participants approved the following recommendations to Governments/officials, legislatures, judicial bodies and funding agencies in OSCE participating States:

To Governments/officials:

- Governments should support decriminalisation of libel and the repeal of so-called insult laws, particularly to the extent that they provide special protection for the 'honour and dignity' of public officials.
- The party claiming to have been defamed should bear the onus of bringing a defamation suit at all stages of the proceedings; public prosecutors should play no role in this process.
- Public officials, including senior Government officers, should be open to more public scrutiny and criticism. They should exercise restraint in filing suits for defamation against the media and should never do so with a view to punishing the media.

To legislatures:

- Criminal libel and defamation laws should be repealed and replaced, where necessary, with appropriate civil laws.
- In cases where they are retained, the presumption of innocence should be applied.
- So-called insult laws, particularly those that provide undue protection for public officials, should be repealed.
- Civil defamation laws should be amended, as necessary, to conform to the following principles:
 - > only physical or legal persons should be allowed to institute defamation suits, not public or governmental bodies
 - > state symbols and other objects (such as flags, religious symbols) should not be protected by defamation laws
 - > proof of truth should be a complete defence in a defamation case
 - > in cases involving statements on matters of public interest, defamation defendants should benefit from a defence of reasonable publication where, in all the circumstances, it was reasonable to disseminate the statement, even if it later proves to be inaccurate

> reasonable ceilings should be introduced for defamation penalties, based on the current economic situation in each country.

To judicial bodies:

- The scope of what is considered to be defamatory should be interpreted narrowly and, to the extent possible, restricted to statements of fact and not opinions.
- Where libel is still a criminal offence, the presumption of innocence should be applied so that the party bringing the case has to prove all of the elements of the offence, including that the statements are false, that they were made with knowledge of falsity or reckless disregard for the truth and that they were made with an intention to cause harm.
- Where libel is still a criminal offence, courts should refrain from imposing prison sentences, including suspended ones.
- Non-pecuniary remedies, including self-regulatory remedies, should, to the extent that they redress the harm done, be preferred over financial penalties.
- Any financial penalties should be proportionate, taking into account any self-regulatory or non-pecuniary remedies, and refer to demonstrable damages only, not punitive damages.
- Defamation laws should not be used to bankrupt the media.

To funding agencies:

- Funding agencies, in providing aid to OSCE participating States, must take into account the attitude of regimes that crack down on freedom of expression, notably through the misuse of libel.





THE SECRETARIAT

Action against Terrorism Unit | Conflict Prevention Centre | Human Resources | Management and Finance | Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities | Prague Office | Senior Adviser on Gender Issues | Strategic Police Matters Unit |

and PARTNERSHIPS FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION | Interaction between Organisations and Institutions in the OSCE Area | Interaction with Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation and Organisations and Institutions outside the OSCE Area

I am confident that with our management reforms we will provide the OSCE with a competitive edge by becoming faster and more transparent when conducting operational activities. Indeed our management reforms have drawn the attention of partner organisations like the UN, NATO and the EU.

Ján Kubiš, OSCE Secretary General

THE SECRETARIAT

Development and Reform: Gathering Speed

The Secretariat, like the rest of the Organization, is re-equipping itself to be even better prepared to support the participating States, the Chairmanship and the Organization's Fund Managers to deal with the new threats to security in the 21st century. In 2003, the Secretariat vigorously implemented the Management Reform, and was increasingly entrusted with core substantial tasks and strengthened capabilities in areas such as policing, counter-terrorism, border security and management, and anti-trafficking. It also enhanced its co-operation with key partner organisations.

The *Conflict Prevention Centre* (CPC) continues to provide key advice to the Chairmanship and active support to all OSCE missions and field activities. In addition, it has strengthened its analytical capacity and provides a focal point for border security and management issues.

A Project Co-ordination Cell, established earlier this year within the CPC, works closely with other Secretariat departments and OSCE Institutions, in order to ensure a consistent approach to project management within the Organization.

The CPC continues to fulfil a key function in the politico-military dimension of security. It is providing support and input to the Forum for Security Co-operation, assists with field projects on the OSCE *Code of Conduct*, helps with the OSCE's work on *Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)*, and has provided important input to the discussion on peacekeeping.

The CPC played a key role in compiling the *Best Practice Guide on SALW*. It also provided support to the Chairmanship in organising the first *Annual Security Review Conference*.

The Centre has played its role in strengthening links with Central Asian participating States by organising an internship programme for young people from Central Asia. It has also provided assistance to the OSCE Academy in Bishkek.

The *Strategic Police Matters Unit* (SPMU) has quickly established itself as an innovative and highly operational unit, with proven expertise in police assistance.

The *Police Assistance Programme* for Kyrgyzstan is designed to help the Kyrgyz authorities to introduce advanced policing concepts and practices. In Kazakhstan, the unit provides technical assistance to support the Ministry of Internal Affairs' transition to intelligence-led policing.

In Armenia and Azerbaijan, Memoranda of Understanding have been signed with the respective Governments to launch technical and community assistance projects designed to improve longer-term police institution-building.

SPMU intends to build on its track record of supporting policing in South-eastern Europe – in co-operation with OSCE Missions – by co-operating with the European Commission's programme of *Community Assistance to Reconstruction, Democratization and Stabilisation (CARDS)*. The Unit has also substantially contributed to the *Ohrid Process*, particularly with regard to the assessment of border-policing needs of States in South-eastern Europe.

The Unit also shares experience on other policing-related issues. A productive two-day meeting of over one hundred police experts was held in Vienna in September, which focused on the law-enforcement aspects of combating the trafficking of women and children.

Preventing and combating terrorism remains a high priority for the OSCE. In 2003, the first Head of Unit was appointed to the *Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU)*. His arrival has enhanced work on anti-terrorism, including the creation of a work plan with specific projects, which reflected the spirit of counter-terrorism commitments in the Bucharest, Bishkek and Porto Ministerial Council documents.



The Unit has effectively strengthened working relations with the UNCTC, UNODC and other international organisations. In sharing project databases, the ATU has developed for the first time a comprehensive assessment of anti-terrorism capacity-building programmes in the OSCE region. ATU has responded to requests from participating States for assistance in ratifying and implementing the twelve UN counter-terrorism conventions.

This unit is focusing on three particular issues: travel document security; the threat posed by Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS); and the smuggling of radiological materials.

OSCE activities in the *Economic and Environmental Dimension* are increasingly geared towards addressing new threats to security and stability. These include combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism, corruption, the economic impact of trafficking in human beings, drugs, and small arms and light weapons.

All activities have been given fresh impetus by the *New Strategy Document*. This has provided a new framework for the activities of the *Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities* (OCEEA) as well as guidance for enhancing the OSCE's capabilities in this field.

The rapidly increasing importance of project work within this dimension has resulted in the creation of a *Project Support Unit* (PSU), whose task it is to assist Officers as well as OSCE missions during the phases of project development, implementation, reporting and fundraising.

The Secretariat continues to foster internal co-ordination and synergy of expertise. Efforts to combat the scourge of trafficking have been strengthened by the *Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings* adopted in July. The Secretariat makes use of its existing resources, such as the *Senior Adviser on Gender Issues*, the

OCEEA, and the SPMU, as well as trafficking experts in other OSCE institutions and field operations.

Threats to security are multifaceted: the need for international co-ordination, collaboration and complementary activity is more pressing than ever. In response, the OSCE has devoted increased time and effort to external co-operation in 2003.

The Secretariat has continued to strengthen its links, at all levels, with traditional partner organisations like the United Nations and its agencies, the European Union, NATO and the Council of Europe.

The Organization has worked closely with the UN on addressing emerging threats to peace and security. Relations between the OSCE Secretariat and the EU have deepened over the past year, both with the European Commission and the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU.

Consultations with NATO have continued at various levels. Topics of discussion included terrorism, border management and security, disarmament, small arms and light weapons, implementation of confidence- and security-building measures, as well as regional issues.

Regular meetings with the Council of Europe have enhanced practical co-operation and underlined common commitments, for example, in combating the trafficking in human beings.

The Secretariat continues its role of supporting the OSCE's relations with its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. Afghanistan was welcomed as the newest Partner in the spring. The OSCE has hundreds of staff in the Secretariat and Institutions, and thousands of international and national employees in the field, from 42 participating States. It is therefore encouraging that the decision was taken this year to adopt OSCE Staff Regulations. The OSCE now has a set of clear, comprehensive and binding

regulations and rules applicable to all staff, from locally recruited mission members to the Secretary General.

The *Department for Human Resources* (DHR) has also introduced a new performance appraisal system. It is deepening and widening its training programme to cover new skills such as media coaching and negotiation techniques, in addition to the well-established mission member and general induction courses.

The security of all OSCE staff is of paramount importance. The OSCE is mindful of the obligation to reduce risks faced by local and international staff while they carry out the international community's mandate, often under difficult conditions. A review of the Organization's security management system has been initiated.

A quiet revolution in the management of the OSCE is taking place. Extensive reforms that are currently being introduced should change the way that the Organization does business, making it more efficient, effective and transparent while it implements the participating States' decisions. The OSCE's Management Agenda, which was launched in late 2001, has been strongly supported by the participating States and welcomed by external auditors. It is now moving into the next operational stage.

The Management Agenda is designed to provide participating States with a distinctive management tool. It enables the Organization to implement and make operational the political decisions taken by the Permanent Council with speed and flexibility. It also increases cost-efficiency and transparency.

Changes initiated in the past few years, particularly within the *Department of Management and Finance*, are starting to bear fruit. The reforms touch all managerial and operational aspects of work: from determining clearly defined management responsibilities, authorities and accountability to setting programme objectives and resources; from managing human, financial and material resources to managing knowledge and improving information and communication systems.

The new *Integrated Resource Management System* – also known as IRMA – is at the core of management reforms. IRMA will deliver best practice in our management processes for human, financial and material resources.

These processes will be supported by modern IT systems working from a single database. IRMA will give managers the information they need to work effectively and efficiently within a system that is properly controlled and regulated. While it will strengthen the work of the Fund Managers, it will also ensure a common management approach, streamline work processes and centralise organisation of management information. The implementation of IRMA is on time and on budget.

REACT – the primary mechanism for recruitment for OSCE field operations – will be integrated smoothly into IRMA in a way that preserves the complete functionality of the system, including the rapid deployment of personnel.

The reform of the budget process is another important aspect of the management reforms.

Under the new proposed format, the 2004 *Unified Budget Proposal Programmes* are presented with clearly set out objectives and outputs, which are in line with the mandate of the respective fund. Both the proposed financial and human resource requirements are outlined for each programme, and are linked to the achievement of objectives and outputs.

The Organization has also tackled the important issue of extra-budgetary contributions. In January, a comprehensive Financial Instruction was issued which regulates the acceptance, management and reporting of extra-budgetary contributions. Full implementation of this Instruction will be possible with the roll-out of IRMA.

As part of the reform of information management, an *OSCE Intranet* was developed.

Full connectivity among all parts of the Organization is being created. This will increase the exchange of information, information security and the interoperability of all activities. These improvements have been made while reducing, by € 7 million, the OSCE's annual expenditures for information communications and technology since 2001.

Great improvements were made in the management of income and expenditure and control over assets. A computerised interim payroll solution to administer human resources – the largest cost component – was created.

Internal Oversight

Throughout the year *Internal Oversight* conducted audits, inspections and investigations to provide reasonable assurance that OSCE activities comply with the regulatory framework, internal controls are in place, and that cases of fraud, waste and mismanagement are properly investigated. Specifically, 13 field visits were made, 10 audit reports were issued with over 30 recommendations, and assistance was provided in two investigations. This work was substantial and was successfully undertaken, but the overall implementation of the 2003 work plan was hampered by staff vacancies.

The on-going management reforms and the efforts towards greater accountability in field activities dictate the need to strengthen Internal Oversight.

While adequacy of internal controls and compliance with rules and regulations continued to underpin the audit work, more attention is paid to developing strategies for such areas as value for money reviews and evaluations, in order to improve efficiency and transparency. Among the elements of good corporate governance planned for is the creation of an audit committee to oversee the activities of audit work, and strengthen oversight strategies and priorities. Also, Internal Oversight will continue its rigorous recruitment efforts to ensure the presence of the highest qualified staff.

The Action against Terrorism Unit

Established in 2002, the Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) serves a permanent co-ordinating role in the overall efforts of the OSCE in preventing and combating terrorism.

Under the mandate of the Bucharest decisions, the *Action against Terrorism Unit* (ATU) is the focal point for OSCE counter-terrorism co-ordination and liaison with other relevant regional, sub-regional and international organisations. In this respect, it works closely with the UN *Counter-Terrorism Committee* and the UNODC in Vienna. ATU liaises closely with these and other organisations to provide capacity-building assistance requested by participating States.

As an example of such assistance, ATU in 2003 organised two regional workshops on travel document security. The first was held in Ohrid, Skopje and the second in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Recognising the link between travel document security, border control and the restriction of terrorist movement, both workshops represent crucial counter-terrorism measures in the respective regions. They inspired excellent participation, resulting in strengthened regional co-operation.



Man Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS). Through the Forum for Security Co-operation, the ATU has informed participating States of threats posed by these weapons and radiological materials.

In response to the desire of participating States to address other pressing anti-terrorism concerns, ATU has informed participating States through the OSCE *Forum for Security Co-operation* (FSC) of the threats posed by *Man Portable Air Defence Systems* (MANPADS) and radiological materials. In addressing these issues ATU has strengthened ties with the *International Civil Aviation Organisation* (ICAO) and the *International Atomic Energy Agency* respectively. ATU also works closely with other OSCE offices and representatives to support related activities in the areas of policing, anti-trafficking and preventing money laundering.

Responding to concerns of OSCE delegations that respective programmes should not overlap, but rather complement non-OSCE projects, ATU has completed an assessment of all bilateral and multilateral counter-terrorism and law enforcement assistance programmes in the OSCE region, which are relevant to UN *Security Council Resolution 1373*.

Recognising that co-operation and the timely sharing of information are vital counter-terrorism measures, ATU has launched an official website (<http://www.osce.org/atu>) containing not only information about OSCE anti-terrorism programmes but also links to other organisations and partners in the fight against terrorism.

Highlights of activities include:

- Supporting the participating States, Chairmanship, Representative of the Chairman-in-Office and Secretary General in activities geared towards preventing and combating terrorism
- The compilation of a comprehensive overview of OSCE activities in this area: *2003 Update on the Implementation of the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism, including the Bishkek Programme of Action*
- Effective implementation of programmes to strengthen the capacity of participating States in anti-terrorism efforts
- Regular updates of the ratification status of the 12 *UN Conventions and Protocols* by OSCE participating States and co-ordinating assistance on their ratification and implementation
- Working with ODIHR and UNODC to assist participating States' efforts to draft national anti-terrorism legislation
- Establishment and maintenance of working-level ties with the UNCTC and other relevant organisations
- Together with the new *Project Co-ordination Cell* (CPC/PCC) co-ordinating and developing projects and activities related to terrorism
- Facilitating liaison with potential donor States for terrorism-related project proposals.

The Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU)

A systematic process for profitable long-term collaboration

The six-stage systematic process of delivering a police assistance programme, established by the SPMU – and noted in its previous form by the Permanent Council as the mode of operation to underpin all future police related assistance activities – has provided the architecture for long-term collaboration with several participating States during 2003.

The process comprises critical needs assessment, information gathering, programme formulation, programme implementation, independent evaluation, and conclusion or transition. It has anticipated the European Commission's wish for similar accountable practices by contracting national and international organisations to progress justice and home affairs matters in South-eastern Europe.

The Police Assistance Programme for Kyrgyzstan, comprising eight technical and community projects, is being implemented by a resident international police programme manager and a Kyrgyz police national co-ordinator. The Presidential Administration is relating the outputs of the programme to its long-term police reform plans.

In Kazakhstan, the SPMU is providing technical assistance to support the Kazakh Ministry of Internal Affairs' transition to intelligence-led policing.

In Armenia and Azerbaijan, Memoranda of Understanding have signalled the start of a three-project technical and community assistance programme respectively. Each is linked to the activities of other countries and to the plans of UNODC, as a basis for longer-term police institution-building activity.

In Georgia, the SPMU is making arrangements for the representatives of Georgian/South Ossetian and Georgian/Abkhazian police officers to be trained at the Kosovo Police Service School, as part of the reconciliation strategies of the OSCE and UN Missions.

The SPMU has substantially contributed to the Ohrid Process, particularly with regard to the assessment of border-policing needs in the SEE States.

During September, the SPMU organised a two-day meeting of police experts in Vienna, intended to focus on law-enforcement aspects of combating the trafficking of women and children. The meeting attracted over one hundred participants with an additional 21 experts invited as discussion leaders.

The meeting resulted in, inter alia:

- the creation of the first police and law enforcement contact directory for anti-trafficking practitioners
- expert assistance to the newly established Serbian Police Anti-Trafficking Unit in Belgrade
- the initiation of a major criminal investigation in both the UK and Latvia in relation to a complaint received concerning an Internet-based child pornography ring
- the invitation for the OSCE to join Interpol's Steering Group on Human Trafficking
- a series follow-on police practitioner workshops, the first of which will focus on investigating sexual crimes and is scheduled for July 2004.

The OSCE, represented by the Senior Police Adviser has recently been invited to serve as one of the *National and Trans-national Law Enforcement Organisations* on the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

More activities of the SPMU are detailed in the Field Operations section of this report.

Report of the Director for Human Resources

Strengthening and streamlining

The work of the Department of Human Resources has gone hand in hand with the Organization's efforts to improve its management system, streamline work processes and strengthen and build up its existing capacities.

After several years of intensive negotiations with participating States, the adoption of the Staff Regulations constitutes a major contribution to the establishment of a comprehensive regulatory framework in the OSCE.

In addition, the introduction of a common staff performance evaluation system throughout the OSCE at the beginning of 2003, which encompasses all categories of staff and mission members, is a significant step in the establishment of best management practice in the Organization.

The Recruitment Section has given priority in its work to filling newly created posts in the Secretariat in 2003. This reflects the increase in project-oriented activities in the Organization, namely in the OCEEA, SPMU, CPC and other Departments and Units of the Secretariat.

Project activities also figured prominently in the OSCE Missions and smaller Offices, with the result that requests to the Recruitment Section increased significantly, for guidance and assistance in connection with the hiring of experts, consultants and other project staff under Special Service Agreements. 106 vacancy notices for contracted positions were issued in 2003. 9,860 applications for these posts were processed in the *Recruitment Database*. The number of interviews held throughout the year for vacant posts increased and reached 64 with 342 candidates in total. Within the same period 4,000 nominations for 517 seconded field positions were received and screened.

The major task of the Section has been to assist the development of an IT-based recruitment system within the context of the IRMA.

The Personnel Section has focused on streamlining work processes as part of the development and preparation for the implementation of the IRMA project. This meant simplifying staff entitlements, standardising forms and clarifying responsibilities. An interim automated payroll system has been successfully implemented in the Secretariat, all the Institutions and several of the larger missions.

With the approval of the Staff Regulations, the Section has been working on adjusting the regulatory framework to make the implementation and application of these Regulations throughout the Organization as direct and transparent as possible – one of the biggest tasks being the issuance of Staff Instructions.

A new insurance provider has been awarded the contract for the OSCE *Emergency Medical Evacuation Policy*, which the Organization provides to all international mission members and any staff member or local mission member on duty travel. Work on the improvement of the services of the *Provident Fund* has also been ongoing.

In an effort to make the human resources processes more transparent and equitable across the Organization, work on the classification of posts continued. During the course of 2003, 114 posts have been reviewed and classified according to *International Civil Service Commission* (ICSC) standards.

The Training Section, through centralised resources, continued to co-ordinate and implement all staff training activities throughout the OSCE. It has also provided support to participating States in their efforts to prepare future secondees adequately for their challenging assignments.

Among the numerous staff training activities conducted in 2003, the personal coaching of Heads of Mission and Senior Officials in dealing with the media attracted particular interest. Improving negotiation techniques was the objective of another successful initiative: a training programme *Advanced Negotiation Techniques for Multilateral Diplomacy* introduced the concept of interest-based, principled negotiation.

In an effort to tap existing internal resources, the co-operation and involvement of OSCE Institutions in staff training also increased significantly in 2003, the notable examples of such co-operation being a workshop for OSCE staff on minorities at risk, conducted with the OSCE/HCNM and the first *Human Dimension Officers' Forum* in Vienna, organised in partnership with the OSCE/ODIHR.

The production of the *Resource Manual on Managing OSCE Programmes and Projects* represented a highlight of the Training Section's contribution to the institutional effort.



The Secretary General, directors and staff of the Secretariat regularly visit and review activities of field operations.



The OSCE has hundreds of staff in the Secretariat and Institutions, and thousands of international and national employees in the field, from 42 participating States.

Report of the Director for Management and Finance

The OSCE is driving forward the ambitious reform process that will change quite dramatically the way the OSCE is doing business.

The aim of the Management Agenda is to provide participating States with a distinctive management tool that enables the organization to implement and operationalise the political decisions taken by the Permanent Council with speed and flexibility, while also improving cost-efficiency and transparency.

The reforms touch all managerial and operational aspects of the Organization's work:

- from clearly determining respective management responsibilities, authorities and accountability, to setting of programme objectives and resources
- from managing human, financial and material resources, to managing knowledge and improving information and communication systems.

The Unified Budget

The reform of the budget process is one of the most important aspects of the management reforms. The Unified Budget is a core tool for the Permanent Council in directing and controlling the work of the OSCE. While mandates determine the general direction for the Organization's work, the Unified Budget sets out a solid annual framework for operational activities.

The PC Decision 486 on *Improving the Budgetary Management* was a landmark decision for turning budgets into a key communication and management tool. It was followed by another PC Decision on the OSCE's *Unified Budget Process*, which endorsed OSCE's adherence to programme budgeting, linking programme objectives to programme resources and codified the budgeting cycle, from establishing programme priorities to reviews and financial closure.

The new proposed format adopted for the presentation of the 2004 *Unified Budget Proposal* reinforces these principles. Accordingly, under each Fund, Programmes are presented with their objectives and outputs clearly set out and in line with the mandate of the respective Fund. Both financial and human resource requirements proposed by Fund Managers are presented for each Programme, and are linked to the achievement of objectives and outputs. Programmes are presented under the main categories of policy/management Programmes and thematic Programmes.

Within the context of the on-going work to develop the OSCE's new *Chart of Accounts*, an extensive review has been conducted of the reporting requirements which will need to be supported by the future data structure of the Organization. Accordingly, the cost category structure has also been revised, with a view to supporting these requirements, and is reflected in the 2004 Unified Budget Proposal.

Extra-budgetary contributions

The important issue of extra-budgetary contributions has also been tackled. In January this year a comprehensive Financial Instruction was issued which regulates the acceptance, management and reporting of extra-budgetary contributions. The full implementation of this Instruction will be possible with the roll-out of IRMA.

Common Regulatory Management System

A sound and up-to-date regulatory management system is crucial for an organisation which must act quickly and efficiently in response to political priorities identified by the participating States. With the Staff Regulations adopted in summer of this year, new Financial Regulations have been submitted to the Permanent Council, and are currently under discussion by the Working Group of the *Advisory Committee on Management and Finance*. The new Financial Regulations emphasise and clarify responsibility, authority and accountability and retain the primacy of political decision-making.

IRMA

***IRMA is at the heart of the management reform.
Implementation is on time and on budget.***

The new *Integrated Resource Management System*, IRMA, is at the core of the management reforms. IRMA will deliver best practice in our management processes for human, financial and material resources. These processes will be supported by modern IT systems working from a single database. IRMA will give managers the information they need to work effectively and efficiently within a system that is properly controlled and regulated.

While it will strengthen the work of the Fund Managers, it will ensure a common management approach, streamlined work processes and the central organisation of management information. The aim is to create an in-house capacity to start, manage and close field operations, programmes or projects anywhere in the

OSCE area, with the help of the *Yellow Laptop* that is connected to the centrally administered IRMA system. It would provide the OSCE with a civilian rapid deployment capacity, enabling it to react quickly to new political challenges.

IRMA is the reform component that requires a very complex implementation process involving most parts of this Organization.

This is being managed carefully through a rigorous oversight mechanism, which reviews weekly the progress made and takes decisions to overcome any bottlenecks. Leading IT and management consultants are also assisting the process. The participating States are being provided with quarterly reports, and a recently established ACMF Working Group is also reviewing the progress made in IRMA implementation.

The implementation of IRMA is on time and on budget! As originally planned, the roll out of the finance modules has started on 5 January 2004 and will be followed by budget and human resources modules in April and finally the inventory and payroll by the end of the year.

Information and Communication

DOC.IN – for effective information management

Knowledge and expertise is the working capital of the OSCE, therefore the document management mechanism Doc.In has been introduced as a first step to ensure a single standard for document management.

OSCE Intranet

Simple to use and control, the newly developed OSCE Intranet exploits modern IT capability to make documents and reports instantly available to all staff.

Full Connectivity and Interoperability

Full connectivity among all parts of the Organization is being created. This will increase the exchange of information, information security and the interoperability of activities. All these improvements have been made while reducing the OSCE's annual expenditures for ICT by € 7 million since 2001.

The Report of the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC)

The last twelve months have witnessed a substantial increase in the Organization's practical, project-oriented activities, both from a Secretariat perspective and for the field missions, especially those in the Caucasus and in Central Asia.

This has required additional support to ensure efficiency, relevance, coherence and co-ordination with other international actors. Field trips have acquired an increasingly operational character. Regional and broader co-ordination meetings with the Heads and representatives of the OSCE field presences and institutions have become an ever more important operational tool to ensure a transparent and efficient interaction within the Organization. Likewise, relations with other institutions have taken on an increasingly operational role, requiring special attention from the CPC.

The establishment of better institutionalised contacts with partner organisations at the global, regional and sub-regional level represents a key tool to ensure synergy, efficient co-operation, and complementary action.

Mission Programme Section

The primary point of co-ordination in the OSCE Secretariat for all field activities in support of the CiO's priorities

The *Mission Programme Section* is divided into four regional desks, each of them acting as the primary point of co-ordination in the OSCE Secretariat for issues related to a group of field operations: the Caucasus desk, the Central Asia desk, the Eastern Europe desk and the South-eastern Europe desk.

In 2003, the activities of the *Mission Programme Section (MPS)* were defined by the priorities of the Dutch Chairmanship. While devoting more attention to Central Asia and the Caucasus through the addition of two new Mission Programme Officers, increased activity was channelled into supporting the efforts of the Chairmanship towards a political settlement in Moldova, while continued attention was given to developments and activities in South-eastern Europe.

In addition to providing programmatic expertise on a number of substantive issues at the request of the Chairmanship, the MPS continued to act as the primary point of contact and co-ordination in the Secretariat on all OSCE field activities and the repository of institutional memory in this regard. The CPC was called upon to play a central role in preparing and often chairing various high-level meetings and consultations within the OSCE and with international partners, such as the UN, CoE, EU and NATO. MPS contributions were key to the success of these meetings.

As far as events in the field are concerned, the Mission Programme Officers (MPOs) prepared and took part in Chairman-in-Office visits to their respective areas of responsibility. Co-operating closely with the host missions, officers organised the *Regional Heads of Mission Meetings* as well as a number of visits to field operations by OSCE Permanent Representatives and other delegation members.

In terms of substantive output, Officers provided guidance to the OSCE field operations on programmatic and policy issues in connection with Ministerial and Permanent Council decisions. They conveyed key messages from the Chair and the Secretary General to the field, thus ensuring appropriate follow-up and oversight in the implementation of the participating States' decisions.

Officers assisted field operations on specific issues, for example, in providing expertise for the *Georgia Border Monitoring Operation Review Reports*. The MPOs also maintained close contacts with representatives of participating States' delegations in Vienna.

The MPS held regular regional Task Force meetings within the Secretariat, in close co-operation with the OSCE Chairmanship. The Task Force meetings benefited from the participation of the representatives of the various units and Institutions of the OSCE



OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre Director Lamberto Zannier (centre) with First Deputy Foreign Minister Talantbek Kuschubekov (left) and Kyrgyz Prime Minister Nikolai Tanaev at a meeting on nuclear waste in Mailuu-Suu, Bishkek, 16 April.

and contributed to the effective resolution of specific issues within mission areas. They also facilitated the process of political consultations within the OSCE, contributing to the harmonisation of various inputs into unified policies, and thus ultimately ensuring a coherent and consistent application of OSCE policies. The Caucasus desk also held regular Task Force meetings on Chechnya, organised in close co-operation with the OSCE Chairmanship.

As part of their daily work, MPOs reviewed incoming reports of the field operations and prepared talking points, briefings and background information for the Secretary General and the Chairmanship. They also provided assistance to field operations in dealing with management issues, including the preparation of the narrative portion of their 2004 budget submissions.

During 2003, the MPOs have further increased their assistance to field operations in all aspects of project management and implementation, in close co-operation with the *Project Co-ordination Cell*. MPOs provided guidance on project priorities and applied their own expertise to support project work contributing to the fulfilment of the OSCE field operations' mandates. Examples of this are the close involvement in support of projects of particular significance, such as the co-ordination of assistance to facilitate the removal and destruction of Russian ammunition and armaments in Moldova, the co-ordination of initiatives of assistance for elections in Georgia or the establishment of an OSCE Academy in Bishkek, with a view to starting a pilot semester in early 2004.

As well as other activities in 2003, the Central Asia desk of the MPS assumed responsibility for organising the internship programme for Central Asian participating States, which intended to familiarise young professionals from Central Asia with the political goals and organisational structures of the OSCE.

The Operations Planning Unit and Situation/Communication Room

A key section of the Conflict Prevention Centre

The renamed *Operations Planning Unit* has been busy in playing a full role in assisting the Chairmanship-in-Office and Delegations with support from the Secretariat. The Unit's recently assumed roles – of providing a focal point for border issues and a significant contribution to areas of analysis and research – have both been in demand this year.

- In line with its planning mandate, the OPU has continued to provide option papers for the Chairmanship when called upon to do so. Additionally, its wider mandate has ensured that it has been able to assist the Chairs of the informal Working Groups covering *Peacekeeping, Threats to Stability in the Twenty-First Century*, and the *Reform of the Organization*. The OPU also gives assistance to the Chairmanship in respect of the outputs from the *Annual Security Review Conference* and the ongoing follow-up process.

- Where border management and security issues are concerned, the OPU – in close co-operation through its liaison officer with the Stability Pact, NATO, and the EU – ensured the full involvement of the OSCE in the preparation, conduct and the follow-up of the *Ohrid Regional Conference on Border Management and Security in SEE* in May. As a follow up to this 'living' process, the OSCE, *inter alia*, launched a five-week long mission to the region in order to carry out a full needs assessment.
- As part of the process of ongoing development of operational links with partner organisations, the OPU was represented throughout at the first joint *NATO/EU Crisis Management Exercise (CME 03)* in November, and took part in a number of international seminars in order to share lessons learnt from its experiences.
- Additionally, the continual enhancement of operational liaison structures with other international organisations has deepened through both formal and informal staff-level meetings with representatives of partner organisations. The OPU also continues to provide detailed 'in house' presentations to delegations and bodies from participating States and to representatives from other international organisations.
- The Situation/Communication Room has continued to provide a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week service to the OSCE. The team of duty officers remain the point of contact for the Organization, particularly out of working hours. Among its many services, the Sitroom ensures the timely passage of information during times of crisis to the departments concerned; it supports the medical evacuation process in Missions when necessary, and provides an early warning function through its constant monitoring of media outlets.

For 2004 the OPU will not only continue to support the Organization through the fulfilment of its core functions but also through the development of its capacities, particularly in the field of border related issues. This will permit greater focus on the many issues involved, and will result in greater support to the Chairmanship and delegations towards the development of a strategy for the Organization in this increasingly vital sector.

Forum for Security Co-operation Support Unit (FSC SU)

Supporting the FSC with expertise

The Unit has continued to support to the FSC and delegations by providing expertise and monthly reports on *Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs)*.

Regular annual assistance was provided to prepare the *Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting* and the *Annual Security Review Conference*, as well as to compile deliberations on the FSC contribution to the OSCE *Strategy Document*. This support consisted of providing pertinent background papers. The Unit also provided similar input to the FSC discussion on the *OSCE Strategy for the 21st Century*.

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Fulfilment of separate tasks in support of the FSC resulted in the compilation of two overviews: the assessment of responses to the *Code of Conduct*, Question 1 on measures against terrorism, and a study of OSCE practices with regard to the *Man Portable Air Defence System* (MANPADS).

The Communications Network:

modernisation for efficiency reliability and security

2003 has been an eventful year for the computer-based Network that provides direct communication links between the capitals of participating States. This ambitious initiative to upgrade the system's efficiency, reliability, and security has been completed, on time and on budget.

The system is now more efficient, reliable, and cost-effective, through introducing secure Virtual Private Network Internet technology and new, integrated software. The upgraded Communications Network joins a number of initiatives to enhance the Organization's competitive edge and value in the challenge of conflict prevention.

While all participating States have made a political pledge to participate in the Network, Georgia, Moldova, Iceland and Armenia are the first to join since modernisation. Several others have taken initial steps to become linked up. This brings the total number of members using the system to 44.

The OSCE *Communications Group* – a working body reporting to the FSC – is responsible for network oversight. Through these mechanisms, the Forum plays a central role in fulfilling the OSCE security mandate.

Small Arms and Light Weapons

The main emphasis in 2003 has been on the development of *Best Practise Guides*, which provide practical guidance to participating States to help fulfil their commitments related to the OSCE Document on SALW. The Unit played a major role in planning, co-ordinating, editing, and publishing these guides.



The FSC SU also contributed to practical implementation in the field by organising a border issue training programme in October, involving Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, entitled *Combating Illicit Trafficking of SALW through Border Management Assistance*.

The Unit participated in the July UN Biennial Meeting on the implementation of the *UN Programme of Action*, its preparatory meeting in Ljubljana in March, as well as various other arms-control related seminars.

Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security

The FSC SU provided assistance to the field missions by organising seminars related to the *Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security*. In May 2003, two seminars were conducted in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan with the relevant administrative authorities, with the aim of raising awareness of the Code's provisions.

In June, the CPC, in close co-operation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, organised a seminar in Kiev for parliamentarians of the CEE states regarding the *Code of Conduct*, particularly the democratic control of armed forces.

Other Regional Events and Seminars

In order to improve implementation of annual OSCE commitments, the FSC SU conducted a workshop in Turkmenistan in September, which was related to the annual exchange of military information. Workshops included those on the *Code of Conduct* and the information exchange under the provisions of the *Vienna Document 99*.

The unit also contributed its expertise to several other regional events, including seminars on CSBMs in Bali and Seoul, and in support of OSCE partners for co-operation.

Project Co-ordination Cell (PCC)

Assisting field operations in project identification, development and implementation

Project activities have increasingly become instrumental in contributing to the fulfilment by OSCE field operations of their respective mandates. To provide expert assistance and guidance primarily to field operations in their project-related work, a streamlined support unit was created in the *Conflict Prevention Centre*: the *Project Co-ordination Cell* (PCC). This new unit is staffed by a *Senior Project Management Co-ordinator* and a *Project Assistant*.

As the OSCE progressively develops more projects, the new PCC serves as a focal point for all questions related to project management in the OSCE. It contributes to the development of an organisation-wide programme management approach.

In 2003, the PCC and the Training Section of the Department of Human Resources of the OSCE Secretariat consolidated the vast know-how on project management available throughout the Organization. This will result in the publication of a resource manual on *Managing OSCE Programmes and Projects*.

Another key task of the PCC is to co-ordinate the assessment of project proposals submitted by OSCE field operations. For this purpose, it works with the expertise in the Secretariat and Institutions, to provide field operations with comments and suggestions on the substantive, political, financial, aspects of their project proposals.

The co-ordination of the assessment process has led to increased information-sharing on project activities within the Organization and is aimed at building-up institutional memory within the OSCE.

In 2003, the Senior Project Management Co-ordinator conducted project management training workshops in Vienna, in several field operations in South-eastern Europe, and the Caucasus.

To increase transparency, accountability, and to avoid duplication of activities, the PCC maintains the OSCE Projects Database, on which more than 300 projects are listed. A summary of these projects can be found at <http://www.osce.org/osceprojects>.



The Senior Adviser on Gender Issues

Focus on mission staff training on gender mainstreaming, anti-trafficking in human beings and the implementation of the Code of Conduct

The Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, together with Austrian legal experts from the Ministry of Interior, conducted staff training for over 300 mission members, on OSCE commitments regarding gender equality and combating trafficking in human beings.

On the basis of case studies, they explored the role of OSCE staff members in monitoring the status of women, violence against women and anti-trafficking activities, particularly with regard to the responsibilities of law enforcement and the engagement of civil societies in the respective countries.

The training sessions were also used to draw the link between the standard of behaviour of international staff and the image and credibility of the Organization, thus stressing the importance of complying with the OSCE *Code of Conduct*, which prohibits the affiliation with any person who is suspected of being involved in activities that violate international law or human rights standards. In view of the newly adopted staff regulation and rules, mission members were also briefed about their rights and duties in promoting and maintaining a professional working environment free of discrimination or abuse of power.

With a view to strengthening the potential of Missions to provide such a working environment, the Senior Adviser also organised mediation training which was attended by nominated staff mediators.

With the help of a professional mediator, they exchanged information and examined best practice with regard to conflict prevention and conflict settlement within the Organization. As a result of the recommendations made by the mediators, such training and roundtables will be organised more frequently in order to enhance networking and capacity building among the specialists.

The issue of trafficking in human beings has been the main focus of the Dutch chair. The Senior Adviser has actively participated in anti-trafficking events, including the preparatory meeting to the OSCE *Economic Forum*, the meetings of the Expert Team of the Stability Pact's Task Force on Anti-Trafficking, and the consultations of the Executive Board of the Regional Clearing Point of the Stability Pact.

The Senior Adviser had co-ordinated the Secretariat's contribution to the development of the *Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings* and regularly contributed to the meetings of the informal *Working Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking*.

In the framework of its implementation, the Senior Adviser is developing staff instructions and relevant material for mission members in order to ensure that staff members are fully aware of the problem of trafficking. Strategies are in place for further enriching the training.

Report of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA)

A new strategy for increased and effective involvement in economic and environmental activity

The importance of the OSCE's involvement in the Economic and Environmental Dimension has grown considerably in 2003. The Organization has addressed a range of issues of pressing international relevance with an impact on security, such as:

- the economic impact of trafficking in human beings, drugs, and small arms and light weapons
- combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism
- corruption.

The OSCE has also worked on the development of SMEs, water management and the Environment and Security Initiative.

New Direction: New Strategy Document

The OSCE's 2003 *New Strategy Document* provides an effective framework for the activities of the Office of the Co-ordinator as well as guidance for enhancing the OSCE's capabilities in the Economic and Environmental Dimension.

At the OSCE *Ministerial Council in Porto* in December 2002, OSCE participating States called upon the Permanent Council to develop a *New Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension*.

The document was designed to complement the 1990 Bonn Document, and simultaneously provide recommendations and commitments for addressing economic and environmental threats to security and stability in the OSCE region in the 21st century.

Discussions on the New Strategy Document were held within the framework of the Economic and Environmental Sub-Committee from January to November 2003.

Creating of a Project Support Unit

The rapidly increasing importance of project work within the Economic and Environmental Dimension resulted in the creation of a *Project Support Unit* (PSU) within the Office of the Co-ordinator, whose task is to assist Project Officers in the Office as well as OSCE Missions during the phases of project development, implementation, reporting and fundraising.

The Unit actively encourages the transfer of know-how between field presences and the OCEEA and is building up an institutional memory of past and ongoing projects as well as a list of model projects.

In the economic and environmental dimension, the OSCE has continued to play an important catalytic role in international efforts to tackle economic and environmental threats to security.

During 2003, the OCEEA contributed to numerous meetings organised by the EBRD, UN and NATO. The OCEEA also continued to raise awareness about security threats stemming from economic discrepancies in the OSCE area, while suggesting means and methods to counterbalance rising economic and environmental challenges.

Economic Activities

11th Economic Forum 2003: Anti-trafficking dominating the agenda

The 2003 OSCE priority of anti-trafficking was reflected at the *11th OSCE Economic Forum in Prague* which was dedicated to the topic, under the title *Trafficking in Human Beings, Drugs, Small Arms and Light Weapons: National and International Economic Impact*.



The choice of the theme emphasises the international importance of the problem which affects all OSCE States, as well as the particular need for analysis of economic aspects in developing an effective response. Two preparatory seminars on the issue were organised in 2003 in the run-up to the Economic Forum. The first had been held in the Bulgarian capital Sofia in November 2002 under the title *National and International Economic Impact of Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons*.

- The 2nd Preparatory Seminar *National and International Economic Impact of Trafficking in Human Beings* was held in Ioannina, Greece on 17-18 February
- The 3rd Preparatory Seminar *Trafficking in Drugs: National and International Economic Impact* was held in the Uzbek capital, Tashkent, on 17-18 March.

The Economic Forum itself focused on the joint aspects of the different types of trafficking, such as poverty, a lack of domestic economic perspectives, lacking awareness of the problem and the traffickers' financial channels.

Discussions resulted in recommendations for follow-up action, such as the development of a comprehensive anti-trafficking programme by the OCEEA, and provided valuable input for the OSCE *Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings* which was adopted in July.

The OSCE's role in the fight against trafficking is particularly important given the broad field presence of the Organization which allows it to tackle some of the economic root causes on the ground.

Fields of economic action for the OSCE in the fight against trafficking include assistance in providing better and accessible education, professional training, and job creation. These issues will remain on the OCEEA agenda under the theme of the *12th Economic Forum* in 2004.

Stimulating poignant and constructive discussion

On 15 September, the OCEEA organised the screening of the award-winning film *Lilja 4-ever* in Vienna, which was followed by a discussion on awareness-raising and trafficking in human beings. The audience consisted of Austrian policy makers and the media as well as OSCE staff and delegations. Efforts are currently underway by, among others, the OSCE Office in Baku and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, to replicate the event.

Forward planning for 'New Challenges for Building Institutional and Human Capacity for Economic Development and Co-operation'

The first preparatory seminar for the forthcoming *12th Economic Forum* in 2004, was organised in the Armenian capital Yerevan, on 17-18 November. The seminar focused on the role of the OSCE and its participating States in creating and improving the conditions contributing to the development of SMEs in the OSCE area.

Globalisation

The OSCE Dutch Chairmanship and the OCEEA jointly contributed to the organisation of a conference on Globalisation in Vienna. The main purpose of the conference was to discuss the role the OSCE can play as a regional security organisation in maximising the benefits of globalisation as well as addressing its risks and challenges in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Combating the financing of terrorism and the money laundering

To address the issues of the money laundering and financing of terrorism, the OCEEA, in co-operation with the UNODC Global Programme against Money Laundering, continued to organise a series of national workshops throughout the year. These were held in Armenia and Azerbaijan in spring, in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in October.

Representatives from national institutions, Government ministries, the Central Bank, offices of the prosecutor general, customs, judiciary and parliamentary committees, the banking sector, as well as experts from the UN, Austria, Canada and Croatia participated in these events. They exchanged their views and experience in legislative and technical aspects of money laundering, with the aim of assisting the development of necessary legislation and administrative structures.

Youth Entrepreneurship Seminars (YES)

SMEs are the biggest and most dynamic source of job creation in both market and transition countries. Engaging the young generation is a highly effective way to realise economic potential and provide alternatives for vulnerable citizens in transition economies.



The success of the *Youth Entrepreneurship Seminars (YES)* in Bosnia and Herzegovina – which was conducted in partnership with the World Bank's *Southeast Europe Enterprise Development Initiative (SEED)* – has underlined the importance of providing young people with a new perspective for the future, as well as the value of encouraging their participation in the socio-economic reforms underway in their countries. The project aimed at helping stem the flight of young people from transition countries.

OSCE booklet on best practices in combating corruption

The OCEEA is currently in the final stages of preparing this booklet. The most efficient anti-corruption measures, which regulate civil service and political activities, are depicted with excerpts from legal provisions, comments on enforcement and results, policy implications and experiences. The booklet is intended to become a reference document on implementing anti-corruption measures.

SMEs and capacity-building

Given the importance of SMEs in the economic transformation process within the OSCE area, the OCEEA has actively encouraged and supported SME development throughout the year, especially in economically vulnerable areas.

Activities in 2003 included the training of women, the unemployed, members of village organisations and young people, predominantly from outlying areas and conflict-prone border regions. Capacity-building projects – such as legal support and the establishment of information centres or websites for business support – have also been key areas of focus. Other projects involved a job creation scheme aimed at unemployed women in underserved regions of Tajikistan.

One of the most successful projects supported by the Economic Dimension was the Youth Entrepreneurship Seminars (YES) in Bosnia and Herzegovina in cooperation with World Bank, whose replication in the other OSCE Mission areas (Central Asia, Caucasus) is being actively encouraged by the OCEEA.

Environmental Activities

The importance of environmental activities in the OSCE area continued to grow in 2003, with a rising number of projects underway or under consideration. Among these are:

- the *Environment and Security Initiative*
- joint efforts of the OCEEA and UNESCO to facilitate inter-state consultations on the creation and joint management of a *Man and Biosphere Reserve* in the Polessie Area on the borders of Belarus, Poland and Ukraine
- efforts to facilitate an agreement between Moldova and Ukraine on transboundary water issues as regards the sustainable the management of the Dniestr River.

Ongoing Activities

Progress in the joint South Caucasus water project

Other on-going activities include a joint project with NATO in the Southern Caucasus on unified water standards in the Kura and Arraks rivers. The project is unique in that it involves all three South Caucasian states: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. A midterm review of the project was presented to delegations at the first preparatory seminar for the 12th Economic Forum.

Central Asia

In Central Asia, the OCEEA is supporting Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan along with the UNECE in the creation of a transboundary river commission for the management of the Chu and Talas rivers. This project serves as an example of successful interstate co-operation on water management in the region.

South-eastern Europe

The OCEEA also supports the parties to the *Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin* in South-eastern Europe in their efforts to establish an interstate water commission and to achieve the implementation of the Agreement.

Environment and Security Initiative – completion of phase one

The first phase of the *Environment and Security Programme (EnvSec)* – a three-year initiative between the OSCE, UNEP and the UNDP – was completed in 2003 with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the three organisations on 14 November in Vienna.

The programme assessed key environmental issues relevant for security in South-eastern Europe and Central Asia and involved two rounds of regional and national consultation as well as the launch of an awareness-raising campaign.

The first phase resulted in two regional assessment reports which were presented visually in a series of maps which graphically outline the major threats to the environment and security in the region and a three-year action programme of activities aimed at abating the identified risks. The next phase will aim at further developing the assessment methodology and following up priorities from sub-regional assessments.

The Programme will also expand to cover the Southern Caucasus and the Western NIS in 2004 while maintaining a close dialogue with partners, Governments and the people concerned.

Further details on the economic and environment activities of the OCEEA within the OSCE Field Missions and Presences can be found in this Annual Report's chapter on Field Operations.

OSCE



The 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. At that time, the Secretariat was located in Prague.

As an integral part of the OSCE Secretariat based in Vienna, the Prague Office participates in many important projects for streamlining information from the creation of a document up to its public release and co-operates with the OSCE Secretariat's *Press and Public Information Section* and *Conference Services*.

As from previous years, during 2003, regular mailings of the OSCE Newsletter and listings of new releases selected by the Prague Office staff from CSCE/OSCE documents derived from the Hofburg document distribution counter continued. By the end of the year a newly created and continuously updated mailing database contained 2,700 active subscribers who received 2,700 English and 370 Russian copies of the OSCE Newsletter. A new service of receiving documents in electronic form on CD-ROM on a quarterly basis has been offered to depository libraries (their current number reaches 65), the worldwide important information sources for scholars, academics, experts, and the public. Upon request, OSCE publications such as the Handbook, the reference manual of the OSCE Decisions, and the Annual Report were circulated in both printed and electronic versions.

The Prague Office also assures regular posting of journals, decisions and other documents adopted by the OSCE negotiating and decision-making bodies in all six OSCE working languages to the web. In addition, the Office offers an electronic selection of newly released documents in order to give the public a complete picture of OSCE activities through documents released to the public (http://www.osce.org/docs/new_releases/). The Office is co-operating with the PPIS online section in introducing a database-driven approach to the online documents library by re-uploading of existing documents collections.

The well-established OSCE *Researcher-in-Residence Programme* enables the Prague Office to open its archives to researchers from all over the world. During the course of 2003 a total of fourteen researchers, mostly from academic institutions, several professors,

PhD. candidates and students finalising their Master's degree theses participated in the programme. The Office assisted in making contacts for interviews with Secretariat, mission staff members and heads of national delegations. Three highly qualified researchers have traveled to mission headquarters and regional offices where local and international staff assisted them with various components of their research projects. Their works are available in the Prague Office library.

The *11th Meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum* took place in Prague from 20 to 23 May 2003. As with all preceding Forums, the Prague Office provided extensive support for this event in co-ordination with the OSCE *Office of Economic and Environmental Activities*, the Dutch Chairmanship, Conference Services and the Czech Foreign Ministry.

Highlights of activities:

- Collection of CSCE/OSCE conference documents, publications, and public information materials
- Maintenance, update, and compilation of CSCE/OSCE documents in existing archive collections (e.g. sequentials, topical)
- Creation of a new archive collection of closed down missions (Belarus, Estonia, Kosovo, Latvia)
- Expansion of the current archive space and improving existing stocks
- Maintenance of a small reference library
- Answering general public queries and specific research requests
- Regular mailing of the OSCE Newsletter, creation of listings of selected new releases and subsequently mailing the requested new releases to subscribers
- Support of OSCE depository libraries with full sets of documents of new releases
- Creation of a new mailing database
- Posting of OSCE journals, decisions, and other documents to the web
- In co-operation with the PPIS re-uploading of documents into an on-line documents library
- Running the *Researcher-in-Residence Programme* (14 researchers in 2003)
- Running an internship programme (7 interns in 2003)
- Support of the *11th Meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum*.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SECURITY & CO-OPERATION

Annual Report on Interaction between Organisations and Institutions in the OSCE Area

The OSCE and its key international partners – notably the United Nations, the European Union, the Council of Europe, and the North-Atlantic Treaty Organisation – are undergoing a profound process of institutional transformation and adaptation to a changed international environment.

Responding to obligation, the OSCE maximises the opportunity to co-operate and co-ordinate closely with other international bodies in an effective and efficient manner, in order to play its distinct role in the framework of international collective security. Effort to deepen contact with other international organisations, NGOs and academic institutions has never been greater, reflecting the premium placed on external co-operation by the OSCE Netherlands Chairmanship.

No single State or organisation can, on its own, meet the challenges facing us today. Co-ordination of the efforts of all relevant organisations is therefore essential. The OSCE seeks to expand its relations with all organisations and institutions that are concerned with the promotion of comprehensive security within the OSCE area.

**OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the
Twenty-First Century, adopted at the Eleventh Meeting of the
Ministerial Council (Maastricht, 1-2 December 2003).**



Co-operation with other international bodies is one of the key tools the OSCE has at its disposal in order to promote comprehensive security.

Based on the *Platform for Co-operative Security* adopted at the *Istanbul Summit* in 1999, and relevant decisions of the *Bucharest* (2001) and *Porto* (2002) *Ministerial Councils*, which pledged the OSCE's commitment to strengthen co-operation and information exchanges with other organisations and institutions, this Organization's external contacts have noticeably increased in 2003.

At the *Maastricht Ministerial Meeting* of 1-2 December, the OSCE participating States adopted a series of decisions and strategies that explicitly called for intensified co-operation with other international, regional and subregional organisations and institutions at both the political and the working level, most notably the *OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century*. In response, the OSCE undertakes the following:

- commits to providing an effective framework for co-operation with other international actors in order to address these threats in a co-ordinated and complementary way
- announces to continue to organise information-sharing and co-ordination meetings on specific topics with subregional organisations in its area
- proposes to establish a new ad-hoc consultative mechanism, in consultation with other international organisations and institutions, as part of the overall effort to jointly analyse and cope with threats.

Serving as a forum for institutionalised political dialogue, consultations and negotiations among its own participating States, the OSCE also sees its added value in offering itself as a flexible ad hoc framework for information sharing and consultations with

other international, regional and subregional organisations and initiatives. As outlined in the 1999 *Platform for Co-operative Security*, through such a framework 'various organisations can reinforce each other drawing on their particular strengths.'

In 2003 in particular, the OSCE actively sought to serve as such a framework. Partner organisations, such as NATO, the CoE and the CIS, were invited and presented their views at the first *Annual Security Review Conference* (ASRC). They were also engaged in the process of elaboration of the *OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century*. The European Union, also participated fully in the ASRC and was itself involved in the preparation of the Strategy.

Moreover, in June, the OSCE Secretary General convened in Vienna an information sharing meeting of Central Asian States with international organisations and institutions on co-operation in Central Asia. High-level representatives of the five Central Asian participating States, and Afghanistan as an observer, as well as representatives of 24 international and regional organisations, international financial institutions and bilateral development agencies, took part in the meeting. It was a poignant exchange of opinions and information on the priorities and needs of Central Asian countries, and about international approaches and activities in the region. All participants emphasised their strong commitment to increased information exchange, consultation and co-operation on Central Asia, both at the level of headquarters and in the field, and acknowledged that a degree of harmonisation of their strategies and approaches towards the region is essential. It was agreed to continue with the process of information sharing and to enhance international co-operation in Central Asia, taking into account individual institutional mandates and comparative advantages. Future co-operation could focus on such areas as meeting regional security challenges, promoting and supporting good governance

and civil society development, and facilitating regional economic reconstruction and development.

As a result of the meeting, mechanisms for consultation and co-operation at the political and the operational level have been significantly improved, including co-ordination on policy, thematic and regional issues. At this occasion, traditional information exchange among partner organisations has been supplemented with a degree of co-ordination of policy planning and implementation.

The annual *Target-Oriented*, and the *Tripartite High-Level Meetings* regularly bring together the OSCE, CoE and the UN Office in Geneva, as well as the European Union (through the European Commission and the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The meetings constitute a further important forum for bringing about a co-ordinated international response to global and regional threats to human security.

Discussions at this year's Tripartite High-level Meeting, held in Geneva on 13-14 February, focused *inter alia* on co-operation in the fight against terrorism. Participants underlined the need for a common framework for combating terrorism more effectively while respecting human rights and where applicable, international humanitarian law.

The United Nations



Reminding participants that 'most of the challenges we face are bigger than any single one of us', UN Secretary-General addressed the *Fifth High-Level Meeting* between the UN and Regional

Organisations on new challenges to international peace and security, including international terrorism, held in New York on 29-30 July. With this, he was referring to the changing nature of modern security challenges, which requires well-co-ordinated and concerted global, cross-boundary and cross-regional strategies and solutions. In this respect, the United Nations intensified its dialogue with international and regional organisations. 2003 also saw two other high-level meetings with regional organisations, which were convened by the Chairman of the Counter Terrorism Committee and the President of the Security Council, in March and April respectively.

Discussions confirmed that the heads of the regional organisations all felt the need for strengthened working relationships – regardless of regional boundaries. There was a spirit of readiness and willingness to exchange information regularly, with the aim of tackling security-related, cross-boundary issues.

In the course of the year, the OSCE Secretary General held regular consultations with principals of various parts of the UN System. Reciprocal high-level contacts were extended to the respective inter-governmental bodies, the UN General Assembly and the OSCE *Permanent Council*. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office addressed the UN General Assembly, while both the outgoing and incoming Special Representatives of the UN Secretary-General for Kosovo were invited to address the OSCE participating States. Relevant members of the UN family also took active part in a number of regular events in the OSCE calendar, such as the *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting* and the *Economic Forum*, as well as regular meetings of heads of OSCE Missions. In particular, the UN Economic Commission for Europe gave a substantive contribution to the drafting of the OSCE *Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension*.

Daily consultations continued to take place between the UNHCR Liaison Unit in Vienna and the OSCE Chairmanship, participating States and Secretariat. UNHCR offers regular contributions to OSCE informal working groups, *Human Dimension Meetings*, *Tripartite High-Level and Target-Oriented Meetings*, as well as OSCE *Ministerial Councils*. In an effort to highlight issues of common concern at the highest policy level, High Commissioner for Refugees, R. Lubbers, was invited to address the OSCE *Permanent Council* in April. In order to encourage a harmonised approach to the issue of internal displacement and its translation within national legislation, a joint OSCE-UNHCR informal briefing for OSCE participating States was organised in October.

Working level contacts with the UN continued to expand in 2003. On 8 May, a working level meeting was held in Vienna between the OSCE Secretariat and Troika and the UN Departments for Peace Keeping Operations and Political Affairs. Further regular working level contacts were kept between substantive units of the OSCE Secretariat and their relevant counterparts in the UN. For example, crime experts from the OSCE Secretariat's *Strategic Police Matters Unit* (SPMU) meet every six weeks with counterparts from the UN Supply Reduction and Law Enforcement Section; while the OSCE Secretariat's *Action against Terrorism Unit* (ATU) is actively working with the UNODC on the organisation of the third meeting of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee (UNCTC) with international, regional and sub-regional organisations, to be held in Vienna in March 2004. In response to the desire of participating States to address concerns about Man Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS) and radiological materials, the OSCE/ATU has also co-operated closely with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency respectively. In the politico-military dimension, the FSC Support Unit in the OSCE Secretariat's *Conflict Prevention Centre* (CPC), in conjunction

with the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Government of Slovenia, co-organised the sub-regional UN-OSCE *Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in South-Eastern Europe*, in Ljubljana, as part of the preparation for the *First Biennial Meeting* in New York in July. The Unit also continues to maintain close ties with the UNDP-Stability Pact regional SALW Clearing House in Belgrade.

Concerning the economic and environmental dimension, the *Office of the Co-ordinator on OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities* (OCEEA), in co-operation with the UNODC Global Programme against Money Laundering (GPML), continued to run the commonly developed National Workshops on combating money laundering and suppressing the financing of terrorism in interested participating States. In November, the Co-ordinator also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNDP and UNEP on co-operation within the framework of the *Environment and Security Initiative*. With regard to the work in the area of anti-trafficking, the OSCE Secretariat's *Senior Adviser on Gender Issues* is working together with UNHCR, UNOHCHR and ILO, exchanging information on their latest developments regarding policy and programmes.

The OSCE *Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights* (ODIHR) established close working relations with various members of the UN family on issues related to its mandate, ranging from, *inter alia*, monitoring and assessing responses to trafficking in human beings in South-eastern Europe (with UNICEF and UNOHCHR), assisting new Ombudsman offices in several countries (with UNDP), economic empowerment of women (with UNECE) to gender equality (with UNIFEM, UNECE and UNDP).

Aside from maintaining regular contacts with relevant UN departments, the OSCE *High Commissioner on National Minorities* (HCNM) has co-operated with UN specialised agencies in relation to specific matters. For example, the HCNM is co-operating with UNDP in a multi-sector programme in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia aimed at the social integration of the region and its population within the Georgian society.

In Kyrgyzstan, the HCNM is co-operating in the area of education with UNESCO and UNDP. In the Russian Federation, the HCNM has worked in close co-operation with UNHCR and IOM regarding the situation of the Meskhetians in Krasnodar Krai. The Office of the OSCE *Representative on Freedom of the Media* provided the UN with material on the media situation in some OSCE participating States at the request of the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression.

It was in South-eastern Europe (SEE) in particular that the partnership between the OSCE – through its field operations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, including Kosovo – and the UN was particularly close. Throughout the region, a closely co-ordinated structure has been put in place by the various players from the international community, frequently in the form of inter-institutional working groups, task forces and Principals' boards. The agenda for future OSCE-UN co-operation in SEE will be determined by further developments in the situation in the various countries, in particular in relation to the EU's Stabilisation and Association Process and the disengagement process initiated by most organisations on the ground.

On the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding signed together with the Albanian Government, UNHCR and IOM, the OSCE Presence in Albania has worked on a project aimed at the pre-screening of irregular foreigners detained in Albania. With regards to border management and security, the OSCE Presence has been supporting and facilitating joint border co-operation meetings between the Albanian State Police and UNMIK/KFOR. The Presence has also been conducting joint activities with UNDP aimed at promoting economic growth in rural areas and income substitution programmes, which provide background support to the small arms and light weapons collection process and to the drugs eradication programme. Together with UNODC, a public awareness campaign has been conducted in the framework of the international day on drugs.

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Naum Prifti during the test of the installation of a new water pump in his village

Naum Prifti is just one of the 350-strong population of Stravec, central Albania, who now has water in his home, after the OSCE and UNDP completed the joint project on the use of photovoltaic systems for water pumping in rural areas.

Photovoltaic powered (solar-powered) pumps have proven to be one of the most appropriate technologies for village water supplies in situations where hand pumps are unable to meet the demand. They can be used to pump water from boreholes, open wells, canals and rivers, as in the case of the OSCE/UNDP project, which is implemented by the Energy Efficiency Centre in Tirana.

The OSCE and international partners played a key role in raising public awareness about the importance of use of alternative sources of energy to help reduce poverty in remote areas, and to get the basic services provided.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the OSCE Mission works in close co-operation with a number of United Nations agencies and specialised programmes, in the framework of specialised ad hoc steering groups and task forces, on issues ranging from property law implementation (together with UNHCR), education (together with UNICEF), public administration reform (together with UNDP) and trafficking in human beings (together with, *inter alia*, OHCHR and UNICEF). Outside of the above frameworks, the Mission established additional forms of co-operation on issues such as youth and good governance and small arms and light weapons, with UNDP; conscientious objection and alternative service, with UNDP and UNOHCHR; combating employment discrimination, with UNOHCHR and UNHCR; and facilitating access to health care, harmonising pension entitlements between BiH Entities and promoting Roma rights, with UNHCR.

The OSCE Mission to Croatia co-operates with the UNHCR in assisting the country's authorities in the creation of adequate conditions for the sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons. The Mission also co-operates with the UN ICTY Liaison Office to promote strengthening of the monitoring of domestic and international war crimes prosecutions and the search for missing persons.

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje has been working with UNDP in the framework of a pilot project to promote inter-municipal co-operation in the ethnically mixed region of Kicevo. In the latter part of the year, the Mission also worked with UNDP on a weapons collection project by monitoring weapons hand-in sites.

Issues related to Roma have been at the centre of co-operation between the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro and the Council of Europe, UNHCR, and UNOCHA, with focus on promoting the adoption of a national strategy for the integration and empowerment of Roma. In the area of return of refugees, progress has been made this year by means of the adoption and practical execution of the *Joint Action Plan for the Implementation of the Framework for Enhanced Regional Co-operation on Return, Property and Acquired Rights Issues*, which is usually referred to as Common Principles on Return. The Joint Action Plan has been developed by the OSCE Missions to Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia, together with the three offices of UNHCR in these countries. In the framework of the Regional SALW Clearing House, established in Belgrade under the auspices of the UNDP and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the Mission to Serbia and Montenegro has also been involved in a programme to enable the destruction of surplus quantities of small arms and light weapons.

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMiK) is the institution-building pillar of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). As such, OMiK engages in significant daily interaction at all levels with the United Nations within the interim administrative structure. Outside of UNMIK, but nevertheless pursuant to its goals as the institution-building pillar, OMiK maintains wide-ranging collaboration with other UN organisations and agencies. For example, OMiK has an active Community Policing Working Group with the Kosovo Police Service and the UNDP. Regular surveys on the situation of ethnic minorities in Kosovo have been published by the Mission together with UNHCR.

In the South Caucasus, the OSCE Mission to Georgia supports the UN-led peace process in Abkhazia, Georgia. In particular, the Mission participates in the Co-ordinating Council. The Mission has seconded a human rights officer to the UN Human Rights Office in Abkhazia, Georgia (HROAG). Moreover, the Mission is implementing projects in Abkhazia, which are conducted jointly or in close co-operation with the UN. The Mission and UNHCR co-operate closely in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. The UNHCR participates in the Joint Control Commission (JCC) activities related to repatriation matters. The Mission is also working together with UNDP and UNHCR on the implementation of projects on rehabilitation of basic infrastructures and projects in support to returnees and IDPs in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, which is financed under the € 2,500,000 European Commission grant. With regard to the election process, the Mission participates in the UNDP chaired Ambassadorial Working Group, which is a forum for discussion and co-ordination of policies in this field. Apart from that, the Mission is chairing the Technical Working Group on election matters, which is composed of representatives of donors and implementing partners, such as the UNDP, the EC and the CoE. The Mission also holds regular meetings with UNHCR, IOM, CoE and ICRC representatives to share information e.g. on human rights monitoring, refugee and IDP issues and on issues related to the repatriation of a population deported from Georgia in 1944 (referred to as Meskhetians or Meskhetian Turks).

The Office of the *Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference* maintains regular contact with the UNHCR Offices in Baku, Yerevan and Tbilisi, providing information on conditions in the zone of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It also provides relevant data to assist in the formulation of eventual post-settlement needs assessments on returns.

The OSCE Office in Yerevan co-operates with UNDP, the largest UN representation in Armenia, on issues related to, *inter alia*, anti-corruption, ombudsman, elections, trafficking and gender. In the military/security field a joint seminar on implementation of *UNSCR 1373* was organised together with UNODC, under the auspices of the UNCTC. Still with UNODC, the Office has worked on the organisation of the first national workshop on ways to combat money laundering and financing of terrorism. The Office co-operates with UNICEF on anti-trafficking activities and organised joint training of police officers dealing with juveniles.

In Azerbaijan, the OSCE Office in Baku currently engages in a number of activities aimed at promoting human rights with the UNOHCHR, as well as refugee and IDP related issues, in partnership with UNHCR. The Office's counter-terrorism activities, in co-operation with UNODC, concentrated on combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism, pre-trial investigation and adjudication of drug-related offences and implementation of anti-terrorist legislation. In the economic and environmental dimension, the Centre's activities concentrated on the issue of industrial parks and business incubators, and were conducted in co-operation with the *Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities* and UNDP and UNIDO.

The OSCE Office in Minsk co-operates with a number of organisations from the UN family, in particular, with UNDP, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNODC and UNOHCHR. For example, a project on the development of rural enterprises has been implemented together with UNDP, while UNESCO has contributed to an initiative by the Office on creating a trans-boundary biosphere reserve.

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine was one of the co-financers of a project initiated by UNICEF in May aimed at providing an assessment of human trafficking in Ukraine. Further activities on anti-trafficking, as well as border issues and community development are conducted by the Project Co-ordinator with UNHCR and UNDP. In co-operation with IOM and other organisations, the Project Co-ordinator co-organised five training seminars for prosecutors and investigators and other law enforcement bodies on the use of mutual legal assistance and extradition treaties with other countries on issues related to money laundering and the fight against trafficking in human beings.

The OSCE Mission to Moldova co-operates closely with UNICEF, UNOHCHR and UNDP on issues related to action to combat trafficking in human beings, and acts as one of the principal co-ordinators of international efforts in this field.

Close partnerships with UN agencies in Central Asia have been established by the OSCE field presences in the region, in order to achieve greater synergies in their efforts to assist the five Central Asian participating States in complying with OSCE commitments in all three dimensions of security. For example, a number of workshops were organised by all five OSCE Centres in the region in the framework of the joint OSCE, UNDP and UNEP *Environment and Security Initiative*.

In addition to the above initiative, the OSCE Centre in Almaty has also conducted a project on the Chu and Talas Rivers together with the UNECE, aimed at the creation, in 2004, of a bilateral committee between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. As a result of a project aimed at the facilitation of participation in SMEs by Oralman repatriate women, conducted in co-operation with local NGOs and ILO, around 500 Oralman women from five regions in Southern Kazakhstan received training on basic entrepreneurial skills, and nearly 80 started their own businesses and obtained micro-credits to support their ventures.

Together with UNDP, the OSCE Centre in Ashgabad supported the organisation of a forum on conflict prevention and sustainable development for Central Asia by the New York-based NGO Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum. This was the first in a series of informal exchanges between the countries of the region and their international partners. The Centre also organised, together with UNHCR, a fourth training course on international human rights legislation. Furthermore, in an effort to support implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Centre participated in a training-of-trainers initiative organised by UNICEF.

In order to address one of the most pressing security problems in Tajikistan, the UNDP and the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe have established, and currently co-chair, a Donors Consultative Committee for Mine Action. UNDP is funding the establishment of the Tajik Mine Action Centre, which is the main data collecting body in Mine Action in Tajikistan. In the course of the year, UNIFEM contributed 50% of the costs for the OSCE project aimed at providing an analysis of the gender equality laws of Tajikistan. The Centre is also engaged in promoting the establishment of a working group on election legislation together with the UN Office for Peace Building in Tajikistan.

In partnership with the Central Bank of Uzbekistan and the UNODC, the OSCE Centre in Tashkent, together with the OCEEA, organised in October a national workshop on combating money laundering and suppressing the financing of terrorism. The Centre also co-operates with UNDP on the implementation of recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture in Uzbekistan.

The OSCE Centre in Bishkek has been conducting a number of activities in co-operation with UNODC on counter-terrorism issues, such as countering money laundering and the financing of terrorism and on drafting anti-terrorism legislation.

The European Union



Co-operation between the European Union and the OSCE has continued to strengthen in the course of 2003. Further mechanisms for co-operation at the political level have been introduced. These include meetings of the respective Ministerial Troikas (on 25 February and 29 September respectively), in which the Secretary General also participated; and briefings by the OSCE Secretary General to the EU's Working Group on OSCE and the Council of Europe. The EU is, in any case, a permanent participant in day-to-day OSCE business in Vienna and elsewhere.

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It is represented in the *Permanent Council* and other OSCE bodies by the Delegation of the EU member State holding the Presidency of the EU Council of Ministers together with the European Commission (EC), which participates in the work of the main OSCE bodies through its Delegation to the International Organisations in Vienna. Moreover, several representatives of the European Union, notably the Head of Delegation of the European Commission representation or the EU Special Representative in the countries of the Western Balkans have been invited to address the OSCE *Permanent Council* in the course of the year.

Working relations between the OSCE Secretariat and the European Commission, and the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union (GSC), have also been considerably strengthened. In November, the OSCE Secretariat's *Conflict Prevention Centre* participated in an observer capacity in the NATO/EU *Crisis Management Exercises* (CMX/CME). On 28 May, the first formal staff level meetings between the OSCE Secretariat and the EC and the GSC took place in Vienna. It is envisaged that such meetings will be part of a regular process of consultations. Several other ad hoc working level consultations took place in the course of the year.

The OSCE Secretariat's *Strategic Police Matters Unit* (SPMU) and *Conflict Prevention Centre* participate in the meetings of the EC's Central Asian Border Service Initiative Group (CABSI), set up under the framework of the EC TACIS Border Management for Central Asia (BOMCA) programme. Together with the Conflict Prevention Centre, the SPMU was also engaged in the post-Ohrid review of border management/policing in the Western Balkans. The SPMU kept frequent contacts with the GSC's Police Unit; particularly with regard to the EU Police Mission to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, EUPOL Proxima, launched on 15 December.

Consultations were conducted between the *Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities* and the EBRD's Turn Around Management Group on identifying co-operation in support of SMEs and institutional capacity-building.

Since 1998, the OSCE/ODIHR has been carrying out a number of joint programmes with the EC. These programmes are co-funded by the EC's *European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights*. Programmes implemented in 2003 include the second joint programme on advancing democracy in Belarus, the regional legislative website for South-eastern Europe <http://legislationline.org>, the first joint programme on conflict prevention and human rights capacity-building in the Caucasus, mainstreaming and empowering of Roma (in collaboration with the Council of Europe), and the second joint programme on advancing democracy and human rights in Central Asia.

An ODIHR expert was selected to take part in the European Experts Group on Trafficking in Human Beings, which was set up by the EC in September. The ODIHR also represents the OSCE as a partner in a consortium working on a project on penitentiary reform in South-eastern Europe as part of the European Commission's *CARDS Regional Programme*. The ODIHR is also part of the advisory board that will direct the project.

The ODIHR and a European Commission-funded network of non-governmental organisations co-organised the largest forum ever held for domestic election observer groups in Europe.

At the end of 2003, the ODIHR launched a project to develop and publish guidelines for media monitoring during election observation missions. This will be completed in 2004 in conjunction with the European Commission.

Since 2001, the ODIHR has co-operated with the Council of Europe and the European Commission on the programme Roma and the Stability Pact in South Eastern Europe. Under the aegis of this programme, the ODIHR began a project in 2003, which will run through 2005, aimed at enhancing the participation of Roma and related communities in electoral processes.

The OSCE *High Commissioner on National Minorities* maintains close contacts with various parts of the European Commission, including its Legal Service and the Directorate General for Enlargement, mainly with regard to existing and draft law and practice in numerous States..

In South-eastern Europe, the OSCE field presences have been working with the European Union presence on the ground, assisting the host countries in areas relevant in the context of the EU's Stabilization and Association Process (SAP); on issues of mutual concern, such as civilian crisis management, judicial reform, democratization, institution building, human rights and refugee return. OSCE-EU co-operation in countries such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro, including Kosovo, has been successful in providing a climate conducive to stabilisation, normalisation and ultimately integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures.

The OSCE Presence in Albania continues to co-operate with the Delegation of the European Commission in Albania on issues related to the negotiations on a *Stabilization and Association Agreement* with Albania. Work has also been conducted on establishing a new donor co-ordination mechanism to replace the Friends of Albania Group. This new mechanism will be led by the European Commission, and the OSCE Presence will have responsibility for democratization and human rights issues. Furthermore, the Presence has co-operated with the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) and the Police Assistance Mission of the European Community to Albania (PAMECA) on elections and police matters.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the OSCE Mission worked closely with the High Representative / EU Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, on all aspects related to the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, as well as the SAP. The European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM) and the OSCE Mission co-operated in the context of the inter-agency Working Group on Anti-Trafficking in Human Beings. Together with the Delegation of the European Commission to BiH, the OSCE Mission participated in the work of the inter-governmental task force on public administration reform and of the Education Issue Set Steering Group.

In Croatia, many aspects of the OSCE Mission's work were directly affected by the country's EU accession bid and its efforts to meet the Copenhagen Criteria for membership. Co-operation and co-ordination on policy issues and joint diplomatic initiatives regularly took place with the EU and other international partners, including joint demarches to the Prime Minister and other Government officials. Both the OSCE Mission and EU representatives participated in a number of joint working groups with other partner organisations on issues such as refugee return, police assistance and donor co-ordination. The Head of the OSCE Mission made his first presentation in December on progress in Croatia at the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC).

In Kosovo, both the OSCE Mission (OMiK) and the EU are part of the pillar structure of the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK). In the framework of the EU's SAP *Tracking Mechanism for Kosovo*, OMiK has provided extensive input on matters relating to governance, the functioning of the Assembly of Kosovo, elections and referenda, the judiciary, human rights and the rule of law (including property rights), freedom of expression and minority protection.

The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje has enjoyed an especially close relationship with the Office of the EU Special Representative (EUSR), the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) and the EU Military Force (Concordia) in all three dimensions of security. Under co-ordination of the EUSR, the OSCE, NATO, the EC, EUMM, EU Concordia, UNHCR, and others met twice weekly to discuss the general political and security situation. Further areas of co-operation with the EU include police reform, democratic policing, border police, reconstruction and refurbishing of local police stations and overall security of the country. In April 2003, a Police Experts Group has been created in Skopje in order to facilitate operational co-ordination among organisations involved in police reform. Close co-operation with EUMM was particularly important in the police redeployment process. In the Caucasus region, co-operation between the OSCE and the EU has been significantly enhanced, *inter alia*, following the appointment of an EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus (EUSR). The *Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference* has established close contacts with the EUSR during 2003. In Armenia, the OSCE Office regularly participates in EU monthly meetings. Funding was also received from the EC

South Caucasus Fund to implement OSCE/ODIHR *Projects on Prison Security and on Human Rights Monitoring and Reporting*. The EC is also a member of the anti-corruption working group chaired by the OSCE Office. In Azerbaijan, the OSCE Office and the EU had regular meetings on election and associated issues. In Georgia, the EC provided funds in support of regular meetings and activities of the Joint Control Commission (JCC). As part of the third phase of an on-going EU rehabilitation programme in the region, which has been implemented in co-operation with the OSCE, the EC also provided € 2.5 Million for an OSCE programme aimed at rehabilitation in, and return of IDPs/refugees to, the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, to be implemented in 2004. Strong political support was provided by the OSCE Mission to Georgia for the participation in the JCC by the EC, which now also attends the Experts' Group meetings on political issues. Together with the EC, the Mission regularly participates in the roundtable on rule of law. The Delegation of the European Commission in Georgia and Armenia further participated in the Technical Working Group on elections, chaired by the OSCE Mission.

In Belarus, the OSCE Office in Minsk and the Delegation of the European Commission to Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus, together with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection, developed a project on the EU Water Framework Directive. This project continues the work started by TACIS in the field of water management in 2002. In Ukraine, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator has been co-operating with the EC EuropeAid on a project on training for democracy and human rights education for the Ukrainian military, aimed at unit commanders, students of military academies and new recruits.

In Central Asia, the EC represented a major source of funding for human rights projects implemented by ODIHR in the region. Several of the OSCE Centres in the region have established a dialogue with the EC delegation in Almaty on possible co-operation within the *Border Management Central Asia Programme*, as part of TACIS. The OSCE Centre in Almaty has also co-operated on a number of projects on penitentiary reform, where the European Commission has acted both as a donor and as a substantial partner. The European Commission is also supporting the OSCE *Police Assistance Programme* in Kyrgyzstan.

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The common goals of the EU and the OSCE are creating synergies, not competition. The EU knows that it can count on the capabilities of the OSCE and on its operational instruments. The OSCE knows that it can count on the continuous support of the Union in its endeavours.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Roberto Antonione,
at the OSCE Permanent Council Meeting, 10 July.

The Council of Europe



Co-operation with the Council of Europe was given new impetus over the reporting period.

The 12th high-level meeting between the two organisations was held on 5 February, in The Hague, at the invitation of the Dutch Chairmanship of the OSCE. It followed a '3+3' format, bringing together not only the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Secretary General, and CoE Chair of the Committee of Ministers and Secretary General, but also the Presidents of the two Parliamentary Assemblies. Discussion focused on co-ordination of policies and potential areas for co-operation between both organisations in the field. Participants stressed their commitment to combating trafficking in human beings and welcomed progress on the OSCE action plan and preparations for a CoE convention on the issue. Further to agreement with the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, the OSCE CiO proposed a joint OSCE-CoE technical assessment mission to Chechnya in the Russian Federation, on the planned referendum.

At the invitation of the CoE Chair of the Committee of Ministers, the 13th OSCE-CoE high-level meeting took place on 5 November in Chisinau in the '2+2' format. The meeting focused on developments in the Caucasus and South-eastern Europe as well as on trafficking in human beings and terrorism. In a further effort to intensify co-operation and achieve greater synergies, it was agreed that in 2004, co-operation arrangements between the OSCE and the CoE would be reviewed. The *Common Catalogue of Co-operation Modalities* will consequently be updated and revised.

The annual OSCE-CoE '3+3' meeting at the level of senior officials on 11 July in Strasbourg brought together working level representatives of both organisations' Chairmanships, Secretariats, and Parliamentary Assemblies. The meeting reviewed co-operation and current or planned activities, to prevent unnecessary overlap and ensure best use of limited resources. The OSCE representatives briefed on a range of practical issues stemming from the first *Annual Security Review Conference*. Follow-up action agreed included closer links between the CoE Directorate General of Legal Affairs and the OSCE's *Action against Terrorism Unit*, as well as increased co-ordination in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

When addressing the OSCE *Permanent* and *Ministerial Councils* and the CoE Sessions of the Committee of Ministers, the two Secretaries General respectively stressed the continuous need for a coherent and determined approach to activities both at regional and sub-regional level to the fight against terrorism and trafficking in particular.

An excellent example of practical co-operation was the decision of the OSCE and the CoE to appoint a joint team of international experts to visit Podgorica in order to investigate and report on the issue of human trafficking in Montenegro. The OSCE, together with the CoE, will assist the Government of Montenegro to implement the recommendations of the report and the proposals of the Government in this respect. On behalf of the OSCE, the ODIHR participates in the negotiations on the preparation of a European convention on action against trafficking in human beings, as a member with observer status of the CoE Committee of Ministers' Ad Hoc Committee on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CAHTEH). The Council of Europe reiterated that a new convention would help build the legal framework for the OSCE Action Plan to combat trafficking in human beings.

In the field, both organisations increasingly engaged in concerted efforts and built on each other's specific experiences and strengths. The OSCE operations in various CoE member States, are, *inter alia*, effective instruments for facilitating the process of implementation and monitoring of CoE commitments concerning the situation of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

With the South Caucasus continuing to be a priority, for both organisations, there was close co-operation in Azerbaijan between the OSCE and the CoE. The two organisations organised joint visits to prisons and places of detention in order to ascertain conditions of detention and treatment of inmates. Moreover, the OSCE and the CoE both participated in the formulation of a *National Action Plan Against Trafficking in Human Beings*. In Armenia, the OSCE Office continued its close co-operation and co-ordination of activities with the CoE, including organisation of joint events addressing alternative military service and ombudsman legislation. In addition, the Office works very closely with the CoE on the issues of freedom of media, electoral reform, and human rights particularly with regards to issues of detention and religious freedoms.

The result-oriented co-operation between the OSCE and Council of Europe is exemplary in many respects: working in Sarajevo and Belgrade, in Baku, Yerevan and most recently in Tbilisi or even in Chechnya, co-ordination action in combating terrorism and trafficking in human beings, on election issues and the judiciary.

**Secretary General of the Council of Europe,
Walter Schwimmer, at the OSCE Permanent
Council Meeting, 24 July.**

The *Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference* continued to maintain close contacts with the Rapporteur on Nagorno Karabakh of the CoE Parliamentary Assembly during 2003.

The OSCE Mission to Moldova co-operated with the Council of Europe in the framework of the Joint Constitutional Commission (JCC), with regard to the functioning of democratic institutions, in connection with the regional elections in Gaguzia and in the field of human rights. Experts from the CoE Venice Commission were invited as observers to the Joint Constitutional Commission, and were tasked to work out a new constitution for a reunited Moldova. In October, the Venice Commission commented on the draft chapter on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms elaborated by the JCC.

The OSCE's *Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights* (ODIHR) worked closely with the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly and its Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), whose delegations took part in OSCE/ODIHR observation missions for presidential elections in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Serbia and Montenegro, parliamentary elections in Armenia, Georgia, and the Russian Federation, and municipal elections in Moldova and Albania. The ODIHR co-ordinated its analysis of election-related legislation with the Council of Europe's Venice Commission, publishing joint reviews of the Election Codes of both Armenia and Azerbaijan. The two institutions also worked together on projects aimed at improving international standards for democratic elections and to develop a database of election-related laws.

In South-eastern Europe in particular, the OSCE, through its Representative on Freedom of the Media and its field operations has substantially intensified co-operation with the CoE in the area of the media reform. Together with the CoE, the OSCE assisted legislators in Serbia and Montenegro in developing three key pieces of legislation: the *Act on Broadcasting*, the *Act on Telecommunications*, and the *Act on Public Information*. In Kosovo/Serbia and Montenegro, the CoE contributed to the legal review of the draft law establishing the Independent Media Commission (IMC).

NATO and OSCE share the common objective of helping to consolidate Europe as common security space from which wars will no longer start.

Terrorism finds a fertile breeding ground where there is bad Government, where there are dysfunctional institutions, and where there is no respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The OSCE is the standard bearer of these norms, and it has a critical role to play in the new security environment.

NATO Secretary General in 2003, Lord Robertson, at the OSCE Permanent Council meeting, 6 November.

Demonstrating the complementary nature of the work of both organisations, the CoE ran a Decentralisation Mission in Kosovo (CoEDM), which designed a concept for local self-government reform in Kosovo. The CoEDM team presented its final report to the UNMIK SRSG in November 2003. The report contains recommendations for a local self-government reform proposing the creation of new sub-municipal units named 'local communities'. During the research phase, the CoEDM team consulted with OMiK HQ and field staff, building upon OMiK's expertise in working with local Government. When the CoEDM concluded its mission, the UN SRSG suggested that OMiK should lead the co-ordination of the follow-up to the final report recommendations. OMiK will continue to work closely with UNMIK and other agencies, as well as with the local central and municipal authorities on the road ahead.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation



In his address to the OSCE *Permanent Council* on 6 November, NATO's Secretary General, Lord Robertson, reiterated that a longstanding objective of NATO is one shared with the OSCE: to contribute to the consolidation of Europe as a common security space from which wars will no longer start. He further reported on the increasingly pragmatic and effective co-operation between NATO and the OSCE over the last few years, and the scope for broadening and deepening this co-operation in the future.

At the level of the respective Headquarters, regular OSCE/NATO staff level meetings were held in the course of the year. The contents of discussions at these meetings have come to include cross-cutting thematic issues such as terrorism, border management and security, small arms and light weapons, and economic and environmental activities, as well as regional issues such as co-operation on the Mediterranean dimension of both organisations. Significant in terms of enhanced co-operation at the operational level was the attendance, as observers, of representatives from the OSCE Secretariat's *Conflict Prevention Centre* at the NATO/EU Crisis Management Exercises (CMX/CME) in November.

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The implementation of the recently adopted OSCE *Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition* (SCA) foresees more of the close co-operation between the OSCE Secretariat's *Conflict Prevention Centre* and NATO while developing and implementing potential projects on the disposal and destruction of ammunition surplus.

In 2003, the OSCE has been deeply involved in the Ohrid process on border management and security in South-eastern Europe. In close co-operation with Stability Pact, NATO and the EU, the OSCE organised the Ohrid Regional Conference which was held in May. Regional countries and Partner International Organisations committed themselves to foster better security and stability in the region. A programme proposal was presented by the OSCE at the *First Ohrid Review Meeting in Belgrade* in November; and an assessment report was circulated to the participating countries of South-eastern Europe, and to partner organisations (NATO, EU and Stability Pact).

OSCE-NATO co-operation was especially active in the field. Throughout South-eastern Europe the two organisations worked together as part of a closely structured and co-ordinated international community presence in the region. In this context, both organisations take part in regular meetings of Principals of organisations with a presence in the country, aimed at providing regular inter-agency co-ordination and information exchange on developments in the respective host countries. NATO's support of OSCE activities in the region also extends, in some cases, to the provision of security to and possible medical evacuation of OSCE personnel on the ground.

In the course of 2003, the OSCE Presence in Albania has been working with NATO on Border Management issues, for example, by supporting the NATO Partnership for Peace through the joint border meetings with the Albanian Border Police and KFOR, as well as the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMiK). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, both the OSCE Mission and the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) co-chair the Defence and Security Steering Group. Also, the OSCE Mission is represented in the Joint Military Commission, SFOR's body for co-operation with local military forces. In the course of the year, the OSCE Mission, together with SFOR and the Office of the High Representative (OHR), has provided assistance to the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina on drafting legislation on arms imports and exports and on arms production and has also co-operated with SFOR on arms exports controls and on the conduct of inspections under the provisions of the Vienna Document.

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the OSCE Mission to Skopje and NATO have been actively co-operating on confidence-building activities in former crisis areas. Together with NATO, the UNHCR, the European Commission (EC) and others the Mission meets twice weekly under the co-ordination of the EU Special Representative to discuss the general political and security situation. In Kosovo, OMiK maintains close links with the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR). KFOR provides a substantial contribution to ensuring a secure environment for OMiK activities, especially in relation to the conduct of elections in Kosovo. Mechanisms to address and co-ordinate responses to political violence during the elections campaign period were successfully established. Also, KFOR has established a liaison office at the OSCE, while OSCE Offices in the field regularly interact with KFOR by exchanging information and recommending action.

A major area of co-operation between the OSCE and NATO is environment and security. The *Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities*, as well as the OSCE Offices in Baku and Yerevan and the OSCE Mission to Georgia are all actively participating in the OSCE-NATO project *South Caucasus River Monitoring*, which is funded by the NATO Science for Peace Programme, as well as by the OSCE and Statoil. The goal of the project is to re-establish a water monitoring system and unified water quality database by the three South Caucasian countries, which jointly share the Kura-Araks water basin. Furthermore, NATO has already pledged support for the joint UNDP-UNEP and OSCE *Environment and Security Initiative*, and will probably formalise the partnership by signing an MoU with the partner organisations.

The OSCE Mission to Moldova co-operates with the NATO Conventional Arms Control Co-ordination Section with regard to the withdrawal of Russian military equipment, arms and ammunition from the Transdniestrian region of the Republic of Moldova. While the OSCE Mission inspects the trains bound for Russia before their departure from Moldova, the NATO Conventional Arms Control Implementation Section co-ordinates the 'far-end' inspections of the trains in Russia. In 2003, a total of 42 Russian military trains departed Transdniestria: 11 trains contained military equipment and 31 trains carried ammunition.

The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

OSCE field presences and Institutions continued to work in close partnership with the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, taking active participation in a number of initiatives under the aegis of the Pact.

OSCE Missions to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro, including in Kosovo, have given a substantive contribution to the works of the Stability Pact's Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings. For example, the OSCE Mission to Serbia and

Montenegro, in co-operation with ODIHR and other international and national partners, sponsored close to 20 specialised training workshops for prosecutors, judges and lawyers on improving prosecution and fair trials in cases of human trafficking.

In an effort to promote compliance with the OSCE *Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons* (SALW) and the destruction of surplus weapons, OSCE Missions to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro also contribute to the works of the Regional SALW Clearing House, established in Belgrade under the auspices of the UNDP and the Stability Pact.

Further activities in co-operation with the Stability Pact included promoting by the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, parliamentary co-operation on human and economic development in SEE and promoting media development in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Furthermore, the OSCE *High Commissioner on National Minorities* and the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje have co-operated with the Stability Pact and other partner organisations during the Roma refugee crisis in May. In the economic and environmental dimension, the *Sava River Initiative* has seen the creation and implementation of a multilateral agreement between Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro on the integrated management of the Sava River. The programme is co-ordinated by the OSCE, the Stability Pact and SECI.

The International Organization for Migration

Especially in the fight against trafficking in human beings, International Organization for Migration (IOM) has proven to be an important partner. The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, along with the country's Ministry of Interior and IOM signed a Memorandum of Understanding for implementation of the gender awareness and anti-trafficking in human beings training courses. The IOM will co-fund the training for the host country's national police. In Armenia, the OSCE Office co-operated closely with IOM on anti-trafficking, migration, refugee, and displacement issues (together with UNHCR) and held a joint workshop on victim identification. In Azerbaijan, the Office worked hand-in-hand with the IOM and the host Government to formulate a national action plan against trafficking in human beings which will be implemented in the course of next year. The OSCE Mission to Georgia participates in the anti-trafficking roundtable chaired by the IOM.

Co-operation between the ODIHR and the IOM has helped encourage, *inter alia*, numerous countries in the Caucasus and in Central Asia to develop common approaches to migration indicators, which would enable them to develop common approaches to migration policy and have a better-informed dialogue on migration with other OSCE participating States.

ICRC

Contacts with the ICRC in the field included *inter alia* continued interaction between the *Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference* and his assistants and the ICRC in Yerevan, Baku and Stepanakert/Khankendi.

The OSCE and the ICRC have also maintained relations at the headquarters level. The ICRC attended the OSCE *Ministerial Council* in Maastricht and the OSCE *Parliamentary Assembly* in Rotterdam. The ICRC has been closely associated to the work on the OSCE *Handbook of Best Practices on Small Arms and Light Weapons*. In addition to attending the *Annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting* as in previous years, the ICRC was invited to deliver an introductory speech at Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on the Prevention of Torture.

The ICRC also took an active part in the Seminar on terrorism and human rights co-organised by the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office in The Hague.



We have learned to work closely with those agencies that are actively helping countries to develop their own national strategies, such as the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings.

The OSCE Secretary General, Ján Kubiš.

Annual Report on Interaction with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-Operation and Organisations and Institutions Outside of the OSCE Area

Within the framework of dialogue and co-operation with Mediterranean and Asian Partners¹, the OSCE *External Co-operation Section* continued to advise and support the Secretary General, the Chairmanship and the Troika members (Bulgaria and Portugal) that chaired the respective Mediterranean and Asian Contact Groups. In 2003, relations with regional organisations beyond the OSCE region also continued to be pursued and developed.

Co-operation between the OSCE and the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation

A number of activities, organised with the support of the OSCE Secretariat's *External Co-operation Section*, in areas of common interest, took place with a view to intensifying relations between the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation.

The Secretary General and other OSCE representatives participated in the annual OSCE *Mediterranean Seminar* held in October in Aqaba, Jordan. The Secretary General highlighted the readiness of the OSCE to reach out to the Mediterranean Partners by transferring OSCE expertise in discussions with officials, experts, the public and academics in the Partner States through the holding of workshops. This was a new evolving mechanism of co-operation, and one way of disseminating and exchanging information in all the areas covered by the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. During the Seminar participants underscored the need to intensify the dialogue between the participating States and the Mediterranean Partners and to achieve better exposure of the OSCE to a wider audience in the Middle East.

With reference to the Mediterranean dimension, the Secretary General was invited to address the first Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean, organised by the OSCE *Parliamentary Assembly*, in Rome in October, which focused on strengthening security in the Mediterranean. The event brought together parliamentarians from the participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. The SG underscored the importance of inter-institutional support within the OSCE family, including the OSCE/PA with reference to the OSCE Mediterranean dialogue as an important contribution to maintaining related issues high on the agenda of the Organization. He added that interaction with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation took place at

numerous OSCE forums, and covered different areas, including security issues. The OSCE, he said, was prepared to share its expertise and to provide insight into current developments and is open to reciprocal enrichment provided by its partners. The OSCE Mediterranean dimension increasingly forms an integral part of the agenda during staff-level meetings between the OSCE Secretariat and other international organisations and institutions.

A joint workshop was co-organised between the OSCE and Korea in September in Seoul on the applicability of OSCE *Confidence- and Security-Building Measures* (CSBMs) in Northeast Asia revisited. In his inaugural statement, the Secretary General welcomed the exchange of views on different aspects relating to the OSCE CSBMs that could provide an inspiration and input which might be useful for peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and the wider region. He welcomed the launching in 2003 of the Contact Group with the Partners for Co-operation in Asia under the chairmanship of Portugal. China and Indonesia participated as members of the ASEAN Regional Forum.

Following the PC decision (No. 537) on establishing relations with Afghanistan as a new Partner for Co-operation, the *External Co-operation Section* of the OSCE Secretariat, welcomed two groups of diplomats from the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs for briefings and discussions in the OSCE Secretariat. Both events were sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The subjects discussed included, *inter alia*, partnership status and its possible further development, the human dimension, freedom of the media, CSBMs, anti-terrorism issues, strategic police matters and gender issues.

Co-operation with Organisations and Institutions outside the OSCE Area

Representatives of the League of Arab States and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) visited the OSCE Secretariat in June with a view to forging closer relations with the OSCE on subjects of common interest and to learn more about the OSCE's experience, principles and procedures. In the course of 2004, it is envisaged that experts from the OSCE Institutions and the Secretariat will make reciprocal visits. The OSCE Secretary General met with his counterparts from both the Arab League and the OIC.

¹ Please also see the Reports of the Chairpersons of the respective Contact Groups with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and Partners for Co-operation in Asia, on Page 29.

Combating trafficking in narcotics is one major area where the OSCE can play a role in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Other areas are border-control issues and police capacity building, in which the OSCE has excellent expertise.

Afghan Foreign Minister, Abdullah Abdullah, addressing the Permanent Council, 4 December.

The OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Ján Kubiš, and the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office, Ambassador Daan Everts – upon the invitation by the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Mr. Abdelouahed Belkeziz – attended, as observers, the 30th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers. It took place on 28-31 May in Tehran, Iran. While in Tehran, the high OSCE officials were received by the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conferences (OIC). On this occasion the SG of the OIC made particular reference to the OIC's interest in the experience gained by the OSCE and its Institutions. The OSCE Secretary General also participated in the 10th Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held on 16-18 October in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

Relations with the African Union were underpinned by a visit to Vienna by the Algerian Minister for African and Maghreb Affairs, H.E. Mr. Abdelkader Messahel. In talks with the OSCE Secretary General and Troika members, he discussed the possible exchange of information and co-operation with regard to the African Union's Africa Centre on the Research and Study of Terrorism to be based in Algiers, with the objective of assisting African States in implementing their anti-terrorism commitments. Other topics in which the OSCE shares experiences with the African Union are early warning, conflict prevention as well as confidence-building in the politico-military sphere. An OSCE Secretariat representative participated in a workshop on early warning organised by the African Union in Addis Ababa in October. It brought together selected experts to assist the AU Commission in determining a road map for the establishment of a Continental Early Warning system. The OSCE/ODIHR's experience in election observation was also called upon by the African Union.

An OSCE Secretariat representative participated as a 'resource person' in a conference of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) on preventing and combating terrorism in Addis Ababa, pursuant to the OAU/AU *Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism*. The purpose of the meeting was to explore the impact of international terrorism on IGAD member states, to raise awareness of existing initiatives and related programmes at international and regional level.

Active co-operation with the Organization of American States Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (OAS CICTE) was established by the OSCE *Action against Terrorism Unit* (ATU) in March. This has led to the frequent sharing of work plans, best practices and lessons learned on the working level. One of the practical outcomes of this co-operative relationship was the establishment of the OSCE *Counter-Terrorism Network* to replicate the similar OAS CICTE network. Also, akin to the meeting hosted by the OAS in October, the OSCE/ATU, in co-operation with UNODC, will host a follow-up to the Special Meeting of the UNCTC with international, regional and sub-regional organisations in March 2004. In its turn, the OSCE has shared with OAS CICTE its experience, best practices and lessons learned while pursuing practical efforts in protecting human rights in the fight against terrorism, including the work done by the ODIHR. The OSCE/ATU and OAS CICTE continue their co-operation through active sharing of information and the co-ordination of meetings. Together they stand ready to share their experience and best practices with other regional organisations, as recommended by the UNCTC.

A representative of the OSCE Secretariat's *Conflict Prevention Centre* (CPC), contributed to a meeting on creating the foundation for the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security which took place in June, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The OSCE's experience in building common political and security values through confidence- and capacity-building was presented along with co-operation mechanisms. In December, a CPC representative participated in a UN implementation meeting on small arms and light weapons (SALW) which was held in Cairo with the participation of the member States of the Arab League.

Annex 1: the Department of Human Resources: Statistics of OSCE Staff

International Staff in Field Operations

Staff on board on 31 December 2003

Nationality	OSCE Mission in Kosovo	OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzeg.	OSCE Mission to Croatia	OSCE Mission to Georgia	OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje	OSCE Mission to Serbia and Monten.	OSCE Mission to Moldova	OSCE Presence in Albania	OSCE Centre in Almaty	OSCE Centre in Ashgabad	OSCE Centre in Bishkek	OSCE Centre in Dushanbe	OSCE Centre in Tashkent	OSCE Office in Baku	OSCE Office in Minsk	OSCE Office in Yerevan	The Pers. Rep. of the CIO on Conflict Dealt with by the Minsk Conference	OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine	Total for Missions/Centers/Offices
Albania	1	1																	2
Armenia	1	1		1	1										1				5
Austria	10	5	3	5	6	2		2			1					1		1	36
Azerbaijan	1	1		2	1														5
Belarus	1		1	6	3							1							12
Belgium	4	1			1	1													7
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2			1	1	1													5
Bulgaria	13	1	1	6								2			1				24
Canada	9	7	4		1		1	1											23
Croatia	2			2	1			1											6
Czech Republic	2	3		6	1			1										1	14
Denmark	1		1		2														4
Estonia	4			1	1	1													7
Finland	1		1	3	8			3		1									17
France	22	12	7	4	9	5		4			1	2				2			68
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia				1															1
Georgia	4	2	1		1														8
Germany	39	17	6	5	6	3	1	4		1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	89
Greece	6		1			2													9
Hungary	4	1		6	2			1				1						1	16
Iceland	1																		1
Ireland	2	4	1	5	4	4		2											22
Italy	8	11	5	2	2	5	1	1				1							36
Japan		1						1											2
Kazakhstan																			0
Kyrgyzstan	1			1		1								1					4
Latvia		1		1		1			1			1							5
Liechtenstein																			0
Lithuania		1		1															2
Luxemburg																			0
Malta																			0
Moldova	2	1	1	3				1		1		2	1						12
Netherlands	5	2	1	2	4	6	2			1	1	1							25
Norway	3	2		1	5	3						1							15
Poland	7	4	2	6	3		2												25
Portugal	1		2		2	1													6
Romania	7		1	5	2			1		1	1								18
Russian Federation	1	4	1	7	1						1	1				1			17
Serbia & Montenegro																			0
Slovakia			1	2	1	1								1					6
Slovenia	2				2				1										5
Spain	9	3	1		6	1		1											21
Sweden	13	2	2	3	3	3			1		1		1		1				30
Switzerland	2	4		2	3						1			1					13
Tajikistan	2				1														3
Turkey	8	1		5	18	2					1		1						36
Ukraine	1		2	4	3	2										1	1		14
United Kingdom	37	18	7	6	14	7	1	2		1				1	1		1		96
United States	37	17	7	7	17	5	1	4	1			1	1	1		1		1	101
Uzbekistan																			0
Total	276	128	61	111	136	57	9	30	4	6	9	14	5	6	5	7	6	3	873

Total Numbers of Internationally Recruited Staff in Field Operations, Secretariat and Institutions

Staff on board on 31 December 2003

	Missions	%	Secretariat & Institutions	%	GRAND TOTAL	%
Albania	2	0,2	0	0,0	2	0,2
Armenia	5	0,6	1	0,5	6	0,6
Austria	36	4,1	18	8,7	54	5,0
Azerbaijan	5	0,6	0	0,0	5	0,5
Belarus	12	1,4	3	1,5	15	1,4
Belgium	7	0,8	3	1,5	10	0,9
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5	0,6	2	1,0	7	0,6
Bulgaria	24	2,7	8	3,9	32	3,0
Canada	23	2,6	6	2,9	29	2,7
Croatia	6	0,7	3	1,5	9	0,8
Czech Republic	14	1,6	0	0,0	14	1,3
Denmark	4	0,5	3	1,5	7	0,6
Estonia	7	0,8	1	0,5	8	0,7
Finland	17	1,9	7	3,4	24	2,2
France	68	7,8	5	2,4	73	6,8
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1	0,1	0	0,0	1	0,1
Georgia	8	0,9	1	0,5	9	0,8
Germany	89	10,2	16	7,8	105	9,7
Greece	9	1,0	0	0,0	9	0,8
Hungary	16	1,8	1	0,5	17	1,6
Iceland	1	0,1	1	0,5	2	0,2
Ireland	22	2,5	3	1,5	25	2,3
Italy	36	4,1	4	1,9	40	3,7
Japan	2	0,2	0	0,0	2	0,2
Kazakhstan	0	0,0	3	1,5	3	0,3
Kyrgyzstan	4	0,5	1	0,5	5	0,5
Latvia	5	0,6	0	0,0	5	0,5
Liechtenstein	0	0,0	1	0,5	1	0,1
Lithuania	2	0,2	0	0,0	2	0,2
Luxemburg	0	0,0	1	0,5	1	0,1
Malta	0	0,0	1	0,5	1	0,1
Moldova	12	1,4	3	1,5	15	1,4
Netherlands	25	2,9	8	3,9	33	3,1
Norway	15	1,7	3	1,5	18	1,7
Poland	25	2,9	9	4,4	34	3,2
Portugal	6	0,7	0	0,0	6	0,6
Romania	18	2,1	4	1,9	22	2,0
Russian Federation	17	1,9	9	4,4	26	2,4
Serbia & Montenegro	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Slovakia	6	0,7	4	1,9	10	0,9
Slovenia	5	0,6	1	0,5	6	0,6
Spain	21	2,4	4	1,9	25	2,3
Sweden	30	3,4	9	4,4	39	3,6
Switzerland	13	1,5	5	2,4	18	1,7
Tajikistan	3	0,3	0	0,0	3	0,3
Turkey	36	4,1	3	1,5	39	3,6
Ukraine	14	1,6	3	1,5	17	1,6
United Kingdom	96	11,0	22	10,7	118	10,9
United States	101	11,6	24	11,7	125	11,6
Uzbekistan	0	0,0	2	1,0	2	0,2
Total	873	100,0	206	100,0	1079	100,0

Non-represented countries: Andora, Cyprus, Monaco, San Marino, Serbia & Montenegro, Holy See, Turkmenistan

Annex 2: the Revised Budget

OSCE Revised Budget for the year 2003

	<i>Revised Budget in Euro</i>	
General Fund (Secretariat)	27.580.600	16,2 %
Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights	9.892.200	5,8 %
High Commissioner on National Minorities	2.379.600	1,4 %
Representative on Freedom of the Media	835.600	0,5 %
Minsk Conference	1.403.800	0,8 %
OSCE Missions and Field Operations	16.392.600	9,6 %
Large OSCE Missions and Projects	111.679.200	65,6 %
TOTAL	170.163.600	100,0 %

OSCE Revised Budget for the year 2003 by Geographic Region

	<i>Summary by Region in Euro</i>	
General Fund and Action Against Terrorism Fund	27.580.600	16,2 %
Institutions	14.511.200	8,5 %
Eastern Europe	3.215.600	1,9 %
Central Asia	6.810.000	4,0 %
Caucasus	22.983.300	13,5 %
South-East Europe	95.062.900	55,9 %
TOTAL	170.163.600	100,0 %

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For more information, please visit the
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The OSCE is a vital organisation which continues the work set out in the Helsinki Final Act in 1975, which is perhaps one of the most profound documents on the rights of individuals that has ever been promulgated.

The OSCE continues to do vital work not only at conferences but much more in sending teams out across the Euro-Atlantic region to assist with elections, to assist in finding resolutions to issues, to represent people with respect to their human rights, and to help nations find their way to make a better life for their people. In this way the OSCE has been playing a vital role in the 21st century.

**US Secretary of State, Colin Powell,
at the 11th Ministerial Council Meeting in Maastricht**

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