

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe



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Opposition supporters protest outside the Federal Parliament building in Belgrade

OSCE welcomes democratic change after election in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Chairperson supports FRY's integration into international bodies

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe has warmly welcomed the democratic changes that have taken place in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), following the presidential election held on 24 September, and has offered its support for the integration of the country into international bodies.

In a statement issued on 6 October, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Austria's Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-

Waldner, voiced her satisfaction, saying: "The will of the people, expressed in the presidential election of 24 September, has won despite all manipulations, illegal moves and delaying tactics of Slobodan Milosevic. I welcome the fact that this breakthrough took place in a responsible way and that the security forces respected the will of their own people. I admire the courage of the Serbian people."

She recalled that the past decade of rule under Milosevic had brought

tremendous suffering for the people of former Yugoslavia: "Four wars, hundreds of thousands of people killed, millions of refugees and displaced people are part of the sinister developments of his era."

"I expect that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, under the new democratic leadership, will soon become an integral part of the international community. As Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, I will support the integration of the Federal

Republic of Yugoslavia in international bodies”, Ms. Ferrero-Waldner added. Ambassador Albert Rohan, Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for South-eastern Europe, had met with President Kostunica on October 7, delivering a message of Ms. Ferrero-Waldner containing the expressed wish of welcoming the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as participating State to the OSCE.

One early consequence of the transfer of power from Milosevic to the winner of the poll, the Yugoslav opposition leader, Vojislav Kostunica, was the release of the two British members of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, who had been held by Yugoslav authorities since their arrest in early August. They had been seized on their return to the province from neighbouring Montenegro, together with two travelling companions from Canada, and accused of spying. In another development, a critical Serbian journalist imprisoned for human rights reporting was released after an appeal court overturned his conviction for espionage (see inside feature article on the RFOM’s daily bulletin on media situation during the FRY elections).

Earlier, when the outcome of the first round of voting had been thrown into doubt by the refusal of the authorities to acknowledge the popular will, the OSCE Chairperson had been one of the first voices among other international leaders to express concern about the possibility of manipulation or repression. In a statement on 5 October, she had appealed to the Yugoslav army and police not to use force against the demonstrators in Belgrade and other cities of Yugoslavia. She also described the reported initial decision of the Constitutional Court (later reversed) to annul the presidential election, as “an illegal attempt to manipulate the vote.”

During the actual election process,

Mrs. Ferrero-Waldner cited the substantial differences between the figures published by the Federal Election Commission (FEC) and the findings of non-partisan groups as well as opposition sources. She had called for a verification of the election results by international experts, offering OSCE assistance in this process.

Noting that the Opposition has conducted a detailed parallel vote count in all polling stations, she had urged the Commission to publish the full details of all the results, “if it has nothing to hide.”

“Elections should be transparent, public events”, she said, “But for the past two days the FEC has been invisible, releasing no information publicly, while denying the opposition their right to have representatives in the Commission and access to important election data.”

Opposition Courage

She also praised the Opposition for its courage and stamina during this process of peaceful democratic change, and recognized the contribution of domestic observers who managed to monitor the process and report their findings.

The Chairperson pointed out that the months leading to election day had been characterised by harassment and attempts to suppress the independent media, by the persecution and intimidation of non-governmental organizations, and by the disappearance of a former President of Serbia, Ivan Stambolic, on 25 August.

The main election monitoring body of the OSCE, the Warsaw-based Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) was unable to monitor the election, having been denied entry to conduct a technical assessment and subsequently to deploy an election observation mission.

Consequently, in accordance with its mandate, the ODIHR published a report

of its preliminary findings and conclusions without the benefit of an in-country observation mission. Instead it was based on information compiled from other reliable sources.

The report concluded that the 24 September elections in the FRY had fallen far short of the minimum standards for transparent, accountable, secret, fair and free elections.

In a critical assessment of the Yugoslav election legislation, released on 30 August, the ODIHR concluded that the laws governing the 24 September elections in the FRY would not be in line with international standards and failed to guarantee a transparent election process. According to the ODIHR, there was no adequate provision to ensure effective monitoring by election observers and the mass media. Moreover, the legislation did not contain any requirement to publish voting results immediately at each level of the tabulation process, thus opening the way for serious malpractice, which was later witnessed.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly also issued a statement on the FRY election in which its own recently-elected President, Adrian Severin, a member of the Romanian Parliament, offered on behalf of the Assembly to reopen dialogue with Yugoslav parliamentarians.

“Whatever the outcome of the elections, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will be open to constructive dialogue with the new parliament, or parliamentarians who demonstrate their own willingness to enter into such a dialogue and who are independent enough from the present Government. “That would improve peace and stability in South-eastern Europe and, of course, be in the best interest of the citizens of Yugoslavia”, he said.

(This Newsletter went to press during further rapid developments in FRY).

OSCE BiH Mission launches anti-corruption campaign in run-up to general elections

In a country where over 50 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) comes from the underground or “black” economy, and where smuggling, bribery, and economic fraud are common, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has taken up the challenge of convincing citizens that the forthcoming elections can make a difference in combating corruption. Alongside the preparations of the general elections on 11 November, this campaign is a major aspect of the current work of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

By Anita Vandenberg

On September 15, the OSCE officially launched its anti-corruption campaign with a press conference featuring Robert Barry, Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH. It is not by coincidence that this drive will run simultaneously with the campaign for the 11 November General Elections. The campaign’s purpose is to raise public awareness about the importance of transparency and accountability in government, and to convince voters that corruption is not an inevitable part of politics.

“There’s a special moment of decision when people are walking into the polling place and deciding for whom they are going to cast their vote. And that’s why we are making a public campaign about this now, focussed on the forthcoming elections,” said Mr. Barry, speaking at the campaign launch. He emphasized that the campaign does not target any one political party, but urges voters to determine which officials are corrupt, and to vote against them.

The campaign slogan, *Nadglasajte korupciju*, calls on the peoples of the Federation to raise their voices and vote against corruption. (*Nadglasajte korupciju* is a clever play on words in the local languages of BiH, simultaneously meaning to vote against corruption and to drown out corruption with the sound of people’s voices). The goal is to educate voters about the various types of corruption and how it impacts on them in their

day-to-day lives, particularly in relation to jobs and the economy.

Corruption is widespread in Bosnia and Herzegovina – for example, in the north-eastern town of Tuzla, schools were painted four times in one year. In addition, there are charges that Tuzla officials paid 100 per cent upfront for tombstones for exhumed victims of the Srebrenica massacre, even though their contract stated that officials were only supposed to pay 30 percent in advance. Those tombstones were never delivered.

In parts of Republika Srpska, clerks have adopted the illegal practice of only issuing ID cards to non-Serbs if they can get a statement from two Serbs indicating that the individual in question did not leave their place of residence during the

war. In the north-western town of Sanski Most, a high government official allegedly embezzled \$450,000 in international aid, intended to provide agricultural feed and farm equipment, and gave it to his brother to start a bank. And in Zvornik, on the Serbian border, officials overlooked a number of illegally constructed cottages that were built in a protected area along the river Drina.

Corruption hinders economic development in BiH. Several foreign investors have gone bankrupt or left the country with tales of bribery, red tape, and corrupt inspectors, and there are allegations of serious corruption in the privatization process, including charges that the Sarajevo Holiday Inn was sold for less than a quarter of its value. The sale of the Hol-



OSCE / MISSION TO BIH

Billboards in Sarajevo advertising OSCE’s anti-corruption campaign were set up in the pre-electoral period

iday Inn has been cancelled as a result, and is currently under investigation.

The OSCE BiH Mission is particularly concerned about corruption because over the next few years the country must begin to replace international aid with private sector investment. If corruption is not addressed, it will hinder economic reform, and BiH will see its economy decline as the international community presence diminishes. Without international donations, BiH's GDP growth in 1998/99 would have been at a *negative* one per cent. Studies suggest that if corruption were eliminated and an efficient system of tax and customs collection put into place, the entity budgets in BiH might be in balance right now, without international aid.

"Corruption is a serious problem in transitional societies," said Mr. Barry. "Until there is real political will to overcome it, corruption and economic crime will remain a significant obstacle to the development of a stable, free-market economy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ultimately, this means fewer jobs for the people."

The OSCE Mission, together with its partners, has undertaken measures to fight corruption. These include the draft Freedom of Information law, which will

allow people to request files, documents and information held by public authorities; the Law on Party Financing which requires political parties to submit detailed financial records; the Provisional Election Council's electoral rules and regulations concerning illegal occupants, conflict of interest and the use of public funds. There is also the Municipal Infrastructure Finance and Implementation training programme, through which the OSCE provides training to municipal officials on budgeting, project development, and infrastructure management.

The upcoming weeks of the anti-corruption campaign will see billboards, newspaper ads, television and radio spots, matchbooks, a factsheet, and a 12-page voter education brochure that will be distributed through newspapers across the country. These products will also be featured on the OSCE BiH website in order to reach the more than 200,000 out-of-country voters.

The Mission's democratization department will co-ordinate public tribunes and roundtables to reach the most politically closed and sensitive areas of the country, while the media affairs

department has run a journalist training programme to train BiH media professionals in investigative journalism techniques. Journalists from approximately 40 media outlets from the two entities, the Republika Srpska and the Federation of BiH, were involved in this training.



Logo for OSCE's anti-corruption campaign

Already there has been significant interest in the anti-corruption campaign from local media, citizens and the international community. "We feel that this campaign will resonate well with voters who are ready to hear the message that they have the power to make changes happen", said OSCE Spokesperson, Luke Zahner, "the ballot is a very powerful tool."

Anita Vandenbeld is a Public Information Officer in the OSCE BiH Mission

Imaginative public information tools encourage Kosovo voters to turn out for the polls

By Robert Schupp and Alexander Nitzsche

Flashing lights, pulsating music, people dancing – this could be a disco. But Kosovo's town centres are these days the stage for a performance of a very special kind: every Saturday night, until Election Day, the "OSCE Radio Roadshow" has been out on the streets, bringing to citizens throughout the province one simple message –

to go out and vote on 28 October!

The Radio Roadshow is but one of several diverse media the OSCE Mission in Kosovo is using in the run-up to the municipal elections to encourage citizens to vote and to explain to them the electoral procedures. Since late September, the "Video Box Van" has also been travelling with the roadshow

throughout the province, giving voters the opportunity to report in front of a video camera about their voting concerns. Taking a more conventional approach, a voters guide is currently being prepared, which will describe in great detail to Kosovo citizens how to cast their ballot and how to use the open list voting system.

In addition, the Mission – with the US Agency for International Development and the Mother Theresa Society – has also been conducting the so-called “Voters Voices” project since July, encouraging political candidates and entities to focus on concrete and specific issues of direct concern to the Kosovar voters.

The Mission’s Public Information and Education Campaign for the October municipal elections started at the beginning of September. The campaign is designed as an integrated communications programme that uses print and electronic media as well as specific outreach and promotional events as their vehicle to inform Kosovo’s voting population.

One of the focal messages transported by the campaign, which specifically targets women, youth, disabled and illiterate citizens, is to reinforce the local nature of these municipal elections and to underline the fact that they are not about the future constitutional status of the province. This message is also reflected in the slogan for the municipal elections, which was chosen by three local focus groups: “My Municipality, My Decision”.

A very imaginative way to get across these messages is the Radio Roadshow, which had its premiere in Glllogovc/Glogovac on 16 September. With more than 3,000 people participating, the debut was a major success for the organizers of this initiative, including Monique de Groot, OSCE Elections Information Officer.

“The Radio Roadshow provides voter education in a very entertaining and accessible way: music and dance provide the initial ambience, which – as the evening progresses – make way for theatre and discussion”, she explains. “A troupe of actors portrays a typical Kosovar family discussion, in a humorous way, their frustrations about local issues such



OSCE’s Radio Roadshow performance with local Kosovar actors

as the lack of clean water and electricity, and an inadequate education system.”

The message is clear – go out and vote, so that democratically elected municipal governments can represent your interests



Logo of OSCE Mission in Kosovo’s Radio Road Show campaign

and help rectify these problems. But it is not only the actors that are engaged in the roadshow – through interactive discussion with the audience, the regular Kosovar voters can also get involved and speak up about topics relevant to them.

Meanwhile, members of the audience are invited to sit in the video box van, which joined the Roadshow’s travels through the province on 23 September. Danielle Bremer, who is running the video van, says: “In accordance

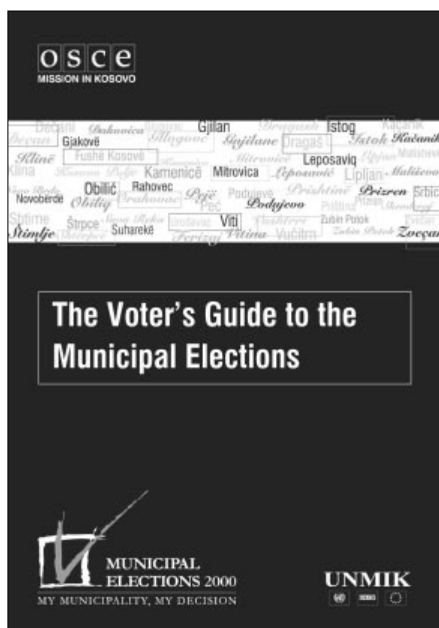
with its motto, ‘It’s about you’, the video box van allows Kosovars to speak privately and candidly into a video camera and raise in this way their voting concerns.”

All these statements are then compiled, edited and subsequently aired as a weekly TV programme, which serves as background for a televised discussion with invited guests about the elections and the issues at stake on 28 October. Over a dozen individual Kosovars participated in the van’s inaugural appearance in this initiative.

Voter’s Guide

When Kosovo’s voters do go to the polls on election day, they will be confronted by a wide array of political parties, coalitions, citizen’s initiatives, and independent candidates. To help them make an educated choice and to understand their options, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo has been preparing a voter’s guide, which will be delivered to every household in Kosovo.

According to its author, Election Information Officer, Andrew Murphy, “The aim of the voter’s guide is to explain to the voter, simply and clearly,



The Voter's Guide aims to inform Kosovars about the forthcoming elections

how to cast a valid vote on election day.”

The technical explanation of the voting process is being complemented by posters and leaflets, which carry the motivating message that voters can improve their daily life through the work of their municipal governments.

Last but not least, the OSCE Mission

has also conducted more than 70 community meetings throughout Kosovo over the last three months, in which over a 1,000 people were asked to prioritize the 15 areas of responsibility which the elected municipal leaders after the October elections are to assume.

This project, entitled “Voters Voices”, is aimed at encouraging political candidates and parties to focus on local issues of concern to voters, which are often lacking in political party programmes. Top priorities on this list of prioritized issues were given to very down-to-earth concerns such as healthcare, education, economic development and revitalization, drinking water supplies, social services, electricity and housing.

It is interesting to see that minority protection ranks relatively low on the agenda of those polled – in 12th position. Overall, the results of this survey, which was published in a report at the end of September, confirms the Mission’s message in its electoral public information campaign. The report has been distributed to political party representatives at local and central levels, and will be discussed

in the coming weeks with local politicians at town hall meetings and radio debates.

A series of surveys conducted by the Mission have helped to focus all these different public information tools and have demonstrated that the Kosovar voters in general understand the messages. Nearly 1,500 people participated in these sur-



The slogan of OSCE’s Video van initiative is “It’s for you!”

veys in past weeks, answering questions on their understanding of the electoral process and the role of municipal governance. A final tracking poll will conclude these surveys in the week before 28 October, helping the Mission to make a final push toward election day.

Robert Schupp and Alexander Nitzsche are both Public Information Officers for the OSCE

OSCE/ODIHR meeting addresses challenges of migration and internal displacement

As a further step to enhance OSCE activities in the area of migration and internal displacement, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), co-organized a special OSCE meeting on this topic in Vienna with the Austrian Chairmanship of the OSCE, on 25 September.

Participants at the meeting – representatives of governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – discussed the human rights aspects of

migration, such as the right to freedom of movement, as well as the economic and security aspects. Discussions also focused on the similarly multi-faceted phenomenon of internal displacement.

A wide range of issues, including some not exclusively within the Human Dimension, was addressed. These ranged from matters relating to international standards and mechanisms, as well as specific issues such as the fate of displaced children and women, the need to better address health issues and the paramount importance of local dia-

logue between civil society and authorities.

The interplay between various economic factors and migration was also exposed. Such subjects as visa policies, family reunification, asylum and resettlement were touched upon. A number of participants also informed the meeting about the situation in their respective countries/regions and the challenges facing them.

It became evident during the discussions that the OSCE, with its comprehensive approach to security, its

early warning functions, and its capacity to assist governments in defining national and regional policies has great potential to deal with these issues.

The meeting served to evaluate the state of implementation of relevant OSCE commitments, to encourage co-

operation between governments and relevant organizations and institutions, and to raise awareness of new developments regarding internal displacement, in particular of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, developed by the Representative of the United

Nations Secretary General on Internally Displaced Persons, and their practical application. There was general agreement on the need to address migration and internal displacement in a comprehensive way addressing the root causes of the problems.

OSCE Situation Room keeps a 24-hour watch

By Sandra Gerding

Walking down the mostly quiet corridors of the OSCE Secretariat, one would hardly expect that only a few rooms away lies the Organization's nerve centre for the contact to its field operations and missions, especially after duty hours – the Situation Room, more colloquially called the "SitRoom". Whoever enters this area is confronted with a quite different scenery than in the usual Secretariat offices – the air is filled with the constant ringing of telephones, oversized maps of Kosovo, Kazakhstan, Georgia and other OSCE operational areas are hanging everywhere, and the walls are covered with Situation Reports from Albania to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

A permanent part of the Conflict Prevention Centre since June 1999, the Situation Room acts mainly as a flexible emergency management cell, in order to provide operational support for the OSCE Secretary General and the field operations and missions. Seven duty officers work around the clock in three eight-hour shifts to guarantee that the SitRoom is always reachable for any field operation or mission.

"One of our main tasks is to be able to react very quickly when it comes to an emergency situation", says Jochen Frede, Chief of the Situation Room. So far, this has involved mainly medical

evacuations from the OSCE Missions to Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo. "On average, we deal with one evacuation per month", Frede explains, adding: "In such situations, whoever is on duty in the SitRoom needs to know exactly what to do".

Strengthened capacity

It was the increasing need for strengthened operational capacity that led in early 1997 to the activation of an "Operation Room" within the OSCE. This was rather an ad-hoc arrangement, activated and staffed only when needed. An example of an occasion when this activation occurred include the elections period in Chechnya, during which the Operation Room provided an information link for Delegations and logistic assistance to election monitors. Another was the period of deteriorating security situation in Tajikistan, and another the different intervals of public disorder and the elections period in Albania.

This *ad hoc* arrangement however proved to be insufficient when the OSCE suddenly had to face the tremendous operational requirements of the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM). The Operation Room was last activated for the 1998 municipal elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in November 1998 it was turned into the permanent Situation Centre, as a part of the KVM Support

Unit.

After the withdrawal of the KVM, and in the light of this experience, it was decided to maintain the Situation Centre in some form, and at the same time to enhance its capabilities. In June 1999, the Centre was transformed into the Situation Room and integrated into the Conflict Prevention Centre.

The SitRoom's responsibilities, however, encompass more than pure emergency management capabilities: "We are also observing on a daily basis the situation in the areas where OSCE's missions and field operations operate, and are collecting data on relevant developments there", Jochen Frede says. "For this kind of work, we have different tools at our disposal, not the least information available on the Internet."

The collected data are constantly



Jochen Frede, Chief of the Situation Room

OSCE

updated and prioritized, and combined with relevant address information and regional maps. It is this day-to-day work that represents the backbone of the Situation Room's responsibilities, enabling it to deliver to the OSCE regularly updated information about the current

events in its operational area. This information is provided especially for the Mission Programme Section through a daily morning briefing, but the Situation Room also offers general or more specialized briefings for visitors, delegations and VIPs, for example recently the

United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Balkans, Carl Bildt.

Sandra Gerding works in the OSCE Secretariat Press and Public Information Section

RFOM brings out daily bulletin on media situation during FRY election

On 6 September, Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, began publishing a daily bulletin, *Serbia: Journalism and Elections*, that provided detailed information on the media situation and reported on all cases of harassment of media and opposition supporters, throughout the Serbian election campaign. The bulletin, which also focused on the discontent among the public and many politicians with the coverage of the election campaign in state-controlled media, was targeted at the delegations of the OSCE participating States and at non-governmental organizations.

The Bulletin followed the plight of Miroslav Filipovic, a Serbian journalist, who was arrested in Nis on 22 May this year and was sentenced on 27 July to seven years prison for espionage. His only crime: writing the truth about the war in Kosovo.

Information flow

All the information was collected by the Office staff members from open sources and through direct contacts with journalists. Among those who provided the bulk of news for the daily

bulletin were reporters from the *Beta* news agency, the radio station *B2-92* and the Institute for War and Peace Reporting.

Electronic Media and Editor-in-Chief of *B2-92*. Mr. Matic stressed that, "During the election campaign in Serbia the independent media helped the civil sector and, to a certain degree, the democratic opposition to persuade as many citizens as possible to vote. The number of reports and live broadcasts from the rallies of the democratic opposition is more than impressive. I believe that without the support of the independent media it would not have been possible to mobilize and motivate so many of our citizens to vote for change."

The special bulletin was a unique experiment by the Representative on Freedom of the Media that he may choose to repeat during an election campaign in another country.

Following the dramatic changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Miroslav Filipovic was released on 10 October after an appeal court overturned his conviction for espionage and spreading false information.





News from the field

The OSCE currently has Missions or other field activities in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), Latvia, Skopje (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The following brief reports reflect some of the recent work which these field operations have undertaken.

OSCE assists with improving election legislation in Kazakhstan

On 2 September in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan, the first “Round Table on Elections” took place under the auspices of the OSCE/ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and the Centre in Almaty (*details of this event can be found in the Update from ODHIR section*).

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Human rights in criminal justice seminar held in Kazakhstan

On 11 and 12 September the OSCE Centre in Almaty held a seminar on the theme: ‘Observance of human rights guarantees in criminal judicial procedure and respect of rights of accused and defendants during investigation and interrogation’. It was co-organized with the German Embassy in the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Kazakhstani International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law. Its aim was threefold: first, to highlight the role of the judiciary, the Procurator’s Office and NGOs in preventing the use of illegal methods of interrogation and investigation, second, to inform about alternative methods

which are used by police in the OSCE participating States and, third, to elaborate recommendations on how to improve existing legislation and to ensure its proper implementation. Among the participants were the chairmen of the District Courts and the Supreme Court *kollegia*, judges, procurators, the Parliamentarians, representatives of the Presidential Administration and the Ministry of Interior. On the non-governmental side, lawyers and NGO members contributed to the discussion. The openness with which representatives from the Ministry of Interior discussed illegal methods of interrogation and investigation used by police officers in Kazakhstan was seen as a sign of trust and readiness to conduct reforms.

Gender task force meeting held in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) held the second meeting of the Gender Task Force BiH Advisory Board on 7 September. The meeting gathered over 70 female Members of Parliament, NGO leaders and independent activists from throughout BiH to inform about recent political developments in the region and to define strategic issues for the upcoming year. The advisory board defined priority issues and called for immediate action regarding the lack of female representatives in the public sphere and the media. It also demanded the inclusion of gender topics into school curricula, active involvement of women in the pri-

vatization process, and that all women be granted the right to maternity leave.

OSCE opens Political Resource Centres in Prijedor and Visegrad

With the beginning of the election campaign in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the OSCE Mission there has increased its support for political parties by opening two additional Political Resource Centres (PRC) in Visegrad on 13 September and in Prijedor on 18 September. The OSCE now runs 16 PRCs throughout BiH. Smaller parties, which often lack the means to campaign effectively, benefit in particular from the services of PRCs: they provide office facilities and neutral meeting space, organize press conferences, and facilitate outreach activities. PRCs further offer access to newspapers from the other entity, e-mail and Internet services, as well as information on political candidates and election rules and regulations.

Anti-corruption training offered to journalists in BiH

As a part of its anti-corruption public information campaign, the OSCE Mission to BiH prepared a two-week anti-corruption training for journalists. From 10 to 16 September it organized two three-day seminars in Banja Luka, including a course for basic investigative journalism. Nearly 40 journalists from 14 media outlets from throughout Republika Srpska participated in the event. The trainers were both international and local experts in the field.

Seminar on teacher training and integration held in Estonia

On 24 August, the OSCE Mission to Estonia co-organized, with the Tartu University Narva Teachers' College, a seminar in the north-eastern city of Narva entitled 'Teacher training and integration.' The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoep, and Jaak Aaviksoo, Rector of the Tartu University delivered the opening speeches. Over 100 participants and other speakers attended the event, including Members of Parliament, representatives of the municipal government and the Ministry of Education, school teachers and headmasters, education specialists, minorities' representatives and NGOs.

One of the principal aims of the seminar was to review the education and other training possibilities for school and kindergarten teachers for Russian-medium school and kindergartens. Teacher training and the requirements for qualifications are currently undergoing major changes in Estonia, but no state programme for teacher training exists, so far. The participants concluded that a general programme would be necessary in order to co-ordinate and plan the training of teachers better.

Official start for Institute for Civil Administration in Kosovo

On 20 September, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK) formally inaugurated the new Institute for Civil Administration (ICA) in Urosevac, which will provide training to the public sector of Kosovo. At the opening, the Head of Mission, Mr. Daan Everts, presented diplomas to the first group of 30 graduates from a four-week training programme. They had been trained on subjects such as law, economy, public finance, human resources management and conflict resolution. It was one of two 20-day pilot courses, the other taking place in Zvecan with 18 candi-

dates. Since December 1999, the ICA has held training for 900 municipal staff with the objective of strengthening local government structures in Kosovo.

Female candidates trained for elections in Kosovo

On 4 September, OMIK conducted a training workshop for women candidates in the upcoming municipal elections with trainers from Canada and Panama. Pursuant to an UNMIK regulation requiring the inclusion of at least five women within the first fifteen candidates on the list, there is a large number of women contesting the elections: 1,363 out of a total of 5,543 candidates are female. The OMIK training, which more than 500 women attended, focused on effective election campaigns and also on strengthening their understanding of democratic municipal governance. Further topics were the status of women in Kosovo, the role of women in politics, electoral rules and regulations, and security matters.

Seminar held in Kosovo on international humanitarian law

From 5 to 6 September, the OMIK-run Kosovo Judicial Institute (KJI), in cooperation with the Joint Interim Administration's Department of Judicial Affairs organized a seminar on international humanitarian law. The goal was to introduce the judiciary in Kosovo to international humanitarian law, also known as the "law of war" at a time when important cases pertaining to humanitarian law are coming before the judiciary. The seminar brought together 44 participants, five experts and twenty observers, including local judges, public prosecutors and defence counsel as well as representatives of OMIK and the Department of Judicial Affairs. Also present were representatives of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the American Bar Association/Central

and Eastern Europe Law Initiative. Among the topics discussed were the legal concepts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and individual criminal responsibility.

Seminars bring together political parties from regions of Tajikistan

The OSCE Mission to Tajikistan organized two seminars for regional and district representatives of political parties aimed at promoting dialogue among different regions of the country. They took place in Hissor from 23 to 25 August and Tursunzoda from 28 to 30 August, respectively. Participants were the heads of local branches of political parties and movements operating in the region. While having different approaches and views on specific issues, they shared the opinion that political, economic and social problems should be addressed in an action-oriented way to meet the expectations of society. They also stressed the need for a larger participation of women and youth in the parties' activities and agreed that more such seminars as well as round tables and other forms of dialogue should take place in the coming period.

The Khujand Field Office also held a seminar for political parties from 22 to 24 August for the heads of the Leninobod regional branches of several parties. Their representatives discussed a wide range of topics such as the role of political parties in the democratization of a post-conflict society, multi-party system in Tajikistan, the Law on Political Parties, the structure of the Tajik Parliament and the political parties' parliamentary activities.

Training seminars held for local authorities in Tajikistan

In the framework of its Civic Education Programme, the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan conducted two seminars for

upgrading political and professional skills of local authorities in the districts of Shahrituz from 15 to 17 August and Kurghon-Teppa from 17 to 19 August. Among the 40 participants were representatives of local legislative and executive powers, deputies of local assemblies, members of electoral boards and local prosecutors. They were especially interested to learn more about the legislation on local administration and the election system, the mandates of the heads of local governments, so-called *hukumats* and *jamoats*, budgetary issues and co-operation between local authorities and NGOs. Representatives

of the regional administration welcomed the Mission training activity in this field and pleaded for its continuation.

OSCE promotes human rights and democratic values among Tajik students

From 12 to 19 August and 27 August to 3 September, the Khujand Field Office organized two summer camps for 100 university students in co-operation with the United Nations Development Programme, the International Foundation for Election Systems, the Khujand University and local

authorities. The main topics – presented by five NGOs from Khujand and Dushanbe – were democracy, state and civil society, gender issues, environmental situation and drug-related problems. Divided in groups, the participants went through five different one-day training sessions, each covering one topic. During the last day of the camps, they were asked to provide suggestions for a series of concrete proposals for projects that they would like to implement during the next year with the OSCE Mission's support. The Field Office plans to incorporate these ideas in its forthcoming projects.



On 24 August, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office (CiO), Austria's Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner,

condemned the violent attack on a building in central Pristina, Kosovo, which housed the OSCE Political Party Service Centre, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) Office for Co-operation with UNMIK and the Independent Trade Union of Kosovo. The CiO also condemned another violent attack which had occurred on the same day, August 18, injuring several Kosovo Serb children. She called on all Kosovo leaders to support the efforts of the international community to end violence in the province and to create a peaceful and stable environment in which all ethnic groups can live safely. With regard to the election campaign for the local elections due on 28 October, the CiO called on all political leaders in Kosovo to refrain from inciting hatred and violence and to promote calm conditions for the conduct of these elections.

On 11 and 12 September, the **Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Robert Barry**, together with the Organization's Secretary General, Jan Kubis, hosted a meeting in Sarajevo of Heads of Missions (HoM) and other OSCE offices in South-eastern Europe. Among the other attendees were the HoM to Croatia, Bernard Poncet, the HoM in Kosovo, Daan Everts, the Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania, Geert-Hinrich Ahrens, and the Head of the Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, Carlo Ungaro, as well as the head of the Montenegro office of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Julian Peel Yates and representatives of the Secretariat. Austria as current Chairperson-in-Office, and Norway and Romania as members of the Troika, were also represented.

The participants discussed the technical aspects of election preparations in the region including the different levels of co-ordination of the OSCE's various regional election efforts. They also discussed the political interaction between the elections, with special emphasis on

the effect of the FRY elections on the region.

The CiO issued a statement on 12 September, welcoming the holding of municipal elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, two days earlier. She expressed regret that several persons were injured due to violent incidents on polling day and added her hope that such incidents would be avoided during the second round of the voting. Mrs. Ferrero-Waldner referred to the preliminary findings of the ODIHR, which observed the elections and reported some shortcomings, and called on all political forces in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to respect the outcome of the vote.

On 25 September, the CiO opened a special OSCE meeting on migration and internal displacement in Vienna. The main issues under discussion at the meeting were the human rights aspects as well as the economic and security aspects of migration and internal displacement. The meeting also discussed proposals for comprehensive migration

management and the implementation of principles for the protection of internally displaced people.

On 30 September, **Mrs. Ferrero-Waldner**, issued another statement expressing her dismay that the FRY authorities had once more extended the detention of two British police trainers from the OSCE Mission to Kosovo and their two Canadian friends. The men had already been held for two months, and were facing a further 30 days in prison. The **OSCE Permanent Council** also made clear its view that the previous pro-

longation of the detention was motivated by political purposes. In her statement, the CiO underlined the fact that there was no legitimate reason for the men to be detained. She reiterated her call for the authorities of the FRY to accelerate legal proceedings and to release the men as quickly as possible. She reminded the authorities in Belgrade that the two British policemen, Adrian Prangnell and John Yore, were seconded to the OSCE as part of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, helping to build a peaceful and multi-ethnic Kosovo. Their detention was thus of concern to the whole of the OSCE

(Editor's note: the men have been freed since the change of power in Yugoslavia).

Permanent Council

The Government of Turkmenistan has appointed Ambassador Vladimir Kadyrov as Head of its Delegation to the OSCE. He took up his duties on 5 September.

On completing his term of office as Head of the Turkish Delegation to the OSCE, Ambassador Tefvik Yalim Eralp, left Vienna on 16 September and has been succeeded by Ambassador Omur Orhun.

New on the OSCE website Events Calendar

- OSCE events for all regions
- 12-month calendar
- Customize your calendar interests
- Select events by OSCE area
- Search by month, type of event, organizing institution at

www.osce.org/events

For further information on this or other aspects of the website, contact the Press and Public Information Section of the OSCE Secretariat, tel.: +43 1 514 36 180 or e-mail: info@osce.org

PRESS PROFILE



Excerpts from international media coverage of the OSCE and its activities over the preceding weeks.

ALBANIA

Reuters, 25 September

'Albania's local elections on October 1 will be the first big test of its stability since the impoverished Balkan nation plunged into anarchy in 1997... The OSCE, the 54-nation security and human rights body which has played a key role

in maintaining stability in Albania since 1997, plans to bring in 170 observers for the election. "What is very important to see for the first time in Albania is whether the defeated party will accept defeat," said Geert-Hinrich Ahrens, head of the OSCE mission to Albania. "This would be a very large step forward in this country."

BELARUS

Die Presse, 1 September

'The OSCE will send a group of three to four experts to the parliamentary elections in Belarus planned for 15 October. They will collect information on the election campaign and the human rights situation in the eastern European country...

The expert group is not an official OSCE election observation mission. According to OSCE sources, it will therefore not monitor the voting process and will not assess the freedom and fairness of the elections. In the beginning of August, the OSCE declined the invitation from Belarus to send official election observers, citing deficient press freedom and violations of human rights in the country.'

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

BBC News, 1 September

'Three weeks before the country goes to the polls, the OSCE said there were no

provisions for effective monitoring and no clear rules about publishing the results... The OSCE report criticised the election legislation for allowing the party in power to maintain control of electoral commissions, and said the laws governing the presidential elections were open to arbitrary application. "The Yugoslav election legislation provides considerable scope for abuse," said Gerard Stoudmann, the head of the OSCE office responsible for monitoring elections.'

Reuters, 14 September

'The government of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, who will be seeking a second term in the polls, has already barred Europe's leading monitoring body, the OSCE, from overseeing the elections. It has invited monitors from Russia, China and India instead... "We do not need people from the OSCE and from the European Commission... to come here in this country to say that the polls are rigged, that the elections are not fair and square."'

Reuters, 20 September

'Normally countries themselves invite the OSCE – the continent's main security and human rights forum – to monitor their polls. When Belgrade failed to issue an invitation, the OSCE took the unusual step of applying to monitor the presidential and parliamentary elections in Yugoslavia and a municipal poll in its dominant republic which are all due on September 24. But it was turned down by the government of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, which accuses all Western organisations of being set on destroying the country.'

Reuters, 25 September

'The OSCE said on Monday unofficial results from the Yugoslav presidential elections showed a strong desire for

change. "These elections were far from democratic, but despite reports of widespread fraud and intimidation, the will of the people for change has been overwhelming", OSCE Chief and Austrian Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner told reporters.'

'The OSCE said all available information pointed to a clear lead for Kostunica. "Claims of victory by pro-Milosevic forces are not credible," OSCE Chairman Benita Ferrero-Waldner said in a statement.'

Die Presse, 26 September

'One of the first reactions came from the Vienna-based OSCE. "All available information points to a clear lead by the opposition in the first round of the elections," said the Chairperson-in-Office, Austria's Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner on Monday morning in Vienna. The trend is showing a 'strong will of the Yugoslav population "for a change in the direction of democracy and Europe."'

Reuters, 26 September

'A source familiar with the EU strategy said the 15-nation bloc, in close liaison with the United States and the OSCE, was pursuing a strategy co-ordinated with the opposition to try to prevent Milosevic using fraud or violence to negate the election results... The West's first aim was to discredit any attempt by Milosevic to claim victory after Sunday's presidential and parliamentary elections. Diplomats say they believe that was achieved on Monday with rapid and firm EU and OSCE statements, based on independent monitoring of polling stations.'

Reuters, 28 September

'The OSCE said on Wednesday provisional results for the Yugoslav presidential election issued by the Federal

Election Commission did not reflect political reality... "I urge the government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and especially the Federal Election Commission to finally respect the results of Sunday's elections," OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Austrian Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner said in a statement. The results presented so far did not correspond to the political reality that "the Serb people have voted for a future in peace and security and have elected Vojislav Kostunica for President," she said.'

(For more information and further statements of the Chairperson-in-Office on the recent developments in FRY, see the title story in this Newsletter)

KOSOVO

Reuters, 7 September

'Europe's main security and human rights forum said on Thursday the Yugoslav government had pressured Kosovo's ethnic Serb population to boycott next month's UN-backed elections in the province. "The Serbs have been given every opportunity to participate. It has been their own decision to abstain. It's a self-imposed isolation," said Daan Everts, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. "Unfortunately we have evidence that this is not a voluntary act but that this abstention is induced by Belgrade and hardliners." The municipal elections are scheduled for October 28.'

Le Monde, 16 September

The campaign for municipal elections in Kosovo is marked by the settling of scores between Albanians

'The OSCE, charged with democratization in Kosovo under the umbrella of the UN, has condemned "what seems to be an intensification of attacks against journalists." However, according to an

observer, the OSCE Mission is, in reality, reduced to "counting the scores and to appealing, in vain, to the population to break the vendetta that starts when a murder is committed by an Albanian."

FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Reuters, 11 September

'Macedonia's reformist government coalition and the Socialist opposition both claimed an early lead in Sunday's local elections which OSCE observers said on Monday were marred by violence and intimidation. "Election day was marked by serious security incidents committed by individuals and groups of supporters of political parties in some western municipalities, as well as by irregularities and intimidation," said the observer mission of the OSCE... The mission had over 100 monitors at Sunday's polls. "OSCE simply deplors this kind of violence

and it is against everything that the OSCE stands for," mission head Charles Magee told a news conference.'

BBC, 12 September

'The European security organization, the OSCE, has said that the municipal elections held in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on Sunday fell short of democratic standards in a number of respects. The OSCE's preliminary report was published as the governing and opposition parties gave conflicting reports about the results, which have yet to be issued by the election authorities. The OSCE observers have raised concern at the level of violence and intimidation, particularly in the western part of Macedonia – home to a substantial ethnic Albanian community – where four people were injured in shooting incidents. They have also found fault with a lack of clarity in some provisions of the electoral law.'

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 12 September

'In a preliminary report, the OSCE, which had been observing the elections with 150 observers, cited a generally calm election process, but expressed regret about grave incidents above all in the western parts of the country.'

Die Presse, 12 September

'Election observers of the OSCE criticised the violence that overshadowed the elections. In shooting incidents between rival Albanian parties, four people were injured.'

Der Standard, 13 September

'The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Austria's Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner, appealed to the parties to respect the election results "despite the shortcomings." OSCE observers who had been monitoring the elections have reached the conclusion that "they did not completely conform to international standards.'

UPDATE from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

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



ODIHR issues preliminary findings and conclusions after FRY elections

The OSCE/ODIHR was denied entry to conduct a technical assessment and subsequently deploy an election observation mission to monitor the 24 September federal and municipal elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). Consequently, in accordance with its mandate, the ODIHR published a report of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions without the bene-

fit of an in-country observation mission. The report was based on information compiled from other reliable sources.

The report concluded that the 24 September elections in the FRY fell far short of the minimum standards for transparent, accountable, secret, fair and free elections. Under such circumstances, initial reports that the opposition presidential candidate, Vojislav Kostunica, was in the lead indicated a strong will for change.

The months leading to election day were characterized by severe restrictions on fundamental freedoms, harassment of

and attempts to suppress the independent media, persecution and intimidation of non-governmental organizations, and the disappearance of a former President of Serbia. Election day was marked by reports of opposition representatives on election commissions, including the Federal Election Commission, expelled and the secrecy of the ballot seriously compromised. Other violations were also reported, including an atmosphere of fear and intimidation. Moreover, the elections in Montenegro and Kosovo were conducted in an environment fraught with possibilities for manipulation.

Previously on 30 August, the ODIHR released a critical assessment of the Yugoslav election legislation concluding that the laws governing the 24 September elections in the FRY would not be in line with international standards and failed to guarantee a transparent election process. According to the ODIHR, there was no adequate provision to ensure effective monitoring by election observers and the mass media. Also, the legislation did not contain any requirements to publish voting results immediately at each level of the tabulation process, thus opening the way for serious malpractice.

The two reports are available on the OSCE/ODIHR website at

www.osce.org/odihr

Municipal elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

In a preliminary post-election statement issued on 11 September, the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission (EOM) concluded that the 10 September municipal elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia fell short on a number of OSCE commitments for democratic elections. The EOM noted that, while voting took place in a calm and orderly manner in the majority of municipalities, the overall election atmosphere was tense and the election day was marred by serious security incidents committed by individuals and groups of supporters of political parties in some western municipalities, as well as by irregularities and intimidation. The ODIHR expressed its concern over the incidents of violence and called on the Government to investigate vigorously and immediately all breaches of law.

A second ODIHR statement concluded that the 24 September second-round municipal elections showed improvements in some areas, but still fell

short on a number of international standards for democratic elections formulated in the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen document. While voting took place in a calm and orderly manner in most municipalities, election day was marked by tension, major irregularities, and acts of intimidation and violence in some areas. Unlike during the first round, such cases were not limited to a particular region but appear to have been most severe and widespread in municipalities where the mayoral races were particularly close.

Technical assessment mission deployed to Belarus

Following the recommendations of the Third Technical Conference on Belarus reported to the OSCE Permanent Council on 30 August, the OSCE/ODIHR deployed a technical assessment mission to Belarus, consisting of a small team of experts, to evaluate the conduct of the 15 October parliamentary elections in light of international standards. According to the ODIHR, the Belarusian authorities have not made enough progress in the preparation of democratic elections to justify a full observation mission. Concentrating on the pre-election period, the technical assessment team will evaluate the election administration, the election campaign, the media situation and other aspects of the election. The ODIHR Mission will work in close co-operation with the OSCE Assistance and Monitoring Group in Belarus, as well as with the Parliamentary Troika, consisting of representatives of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assemblies of the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

ODIHR to observe 1 October municipal elections in Albania

The OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission, which opened its headquarters in Tirana on 25 August, has

started operations with 11 long-term observers and 7 core-team members. They are working in close contact, but independently, from the OSCE Presence in Albania. During the pre-election period, the mission focused on the campaign and election administration (election commissions and voter lists in particular). Over 170 international short-term observers are expected to be deployed by the EOM throughout the country, shortly before polling day. In case of second rounds, the ODIHR Mission will remain in country until after mid-October.

ODIHR to observe forthcoming presidential election in Kyrgyzstan

The OSCE/ODIHR has established an election observation mission in Kyrgyzstan to monitor the presidential election scheduled for 29 October. However, the ODIHR has already identified a number of serious concerns, in particular the implementation of the language test that candidates have to pass as a precondition for registration. Several candidates have already been disqualified on the basis of the test. The ODIHR will reassess the situation after the completion of the candidate registration procedures.

ODIHR concerned over party registration process in Azerbaijan

The OSCE/ODIHR is extremely concerned that seven political parties were denied registration by the Central Election Commission for the parliamentary elections scheduled for 5 November. These include the Musavat Party, which was also barred from running in the 1995 parliamentary elections. The ODIHR, which deployed an election observation mission on 27 September, regrets that political parties are excluded from the election based only on a suspicion of forged signatures. The mission will con-

tinue to closely monitor the registration process and will follow the appeals lodged by the political parties denied registration.

Needs assessment team for Romania

In connection with the upcoming presidential/parliamentary elections in Romania scheduled for 26 November, the OSCE/ODIHR, sent a needs assessment mission to visit Bucharest from 19 to 22 September.

Round table on elections held in Kazakhstan

The first Round Table on Elections was held in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan, on 2 September, under the auspices of the OSCE (ODIHR, Parliamentary Assembly, Centre in Almaty). The event was conducted in close collaboration with the Government of Kazakhstan and the Central Election Commission, and brought together representatives of the Parliament, various government ministries and agencies, and civil society, including those political parties not represented in the Parliament. In a constructive atmosphere, participants discussed ways and means to improve the election legislation in view of the recommendations contained in the ODIHR Final Report on the October 1999 parliamentary elections. There was broad consensus on the pressing need to amend the current election legislation and was agreed to hold three more election round tables in January, May and September next year.

Workshop held on 'Guidelines for election legislation review'

On 14 and 15 September, the ODIHR co-organized a workshop in Stockholm with International IDEA on 'Guidelines for the review of election legislation'. The main objective of the workshop was to finalize guidelines on election legislation, including the electoral system, composi-

tion of election commissions, transparency of the election process, voter registration, finance, voter information, counting and tabulation of votes, political parties and candidates and mass media issues. A group of leading experts from Canada, Denmark, Norway, the United Kingdom, the USA and Australia reviewed a discussion paper and participated in the workshop together, with ODIHR and the International IDEA staff.

DEMOCRATIZATION



Inaugural meeting of Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking

The newly established Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, chaired for the ODIHR by Minister Helga Konrad, met for the first time in Vienna on 18 September. At the meeting, Dr. Konrad presented a proposed Action Plan for initial activities, including a data collection project and a joint ODIHR-Council of Europe legislative review project. The meeting identified a number of key areas of concern on which the task force should concentrate its initial efforts. The 100 participants, including representatives of the governments of the region, the Stability Pact Secretariat, OSCE structures and Institutions, and international organizations and NGOs, also discussed the structure and schedule of the Task Force activities for the months to come.

Participants underlined the need for enhanced regional co-operation and concrete action on the issue of trafficking. They stressed the importance of involving the governments of South-Eastern Europe in all efforts to combat trafficking. In this context, participants welcomed the proposal made by the Chair of the Task Force that governments nominate co-ordinators on trafficking at high

level in order to co-ordinate national activities and to assure regional and international co-operation. It was pointed out that these co-ordinators should also be provided with the necessary political authority and support. Participants also emphasized that training for the judiciary, police, civil servants and NGOs is crucial to combating trafficking, as is improving anti-trafficking legislation.

Public awareness radio shows on human rights in Azerbaijan

In September, the ODIHR completed the production and broadcast of a series of public awareness radio programmes in Azerbaijan. The programmes, produced in co-operation with the BBC World Service, explained basic human rights according to national legislation and international standards. The project was part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the ODIHR and the Government of Azerbaijan.

A total of 16 programmes, each lasting 20 minutes, have been broadcast since the beginning of the project in May. They covered a broad range of human rights issues such as the right to food and shelter, the right to health care, the right to a fair trial, prevention of torture, and freedom of expression. The series was concluded with a session during which the audience had the opportunity to comment and to ask questions to the producers.

Human rights monitoring and reporting training in Uzbekistan

The ODIHR, together with the OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia, has successfully completed its Human Rights Monitoring and Reporting Training Programme in Uzbekistan during September. The goal of the programme was to develop practical skills in monitoring and reporting, as well as to increase contacts and networking among local human rights activists.

The training consisted of three sessions each lasting for four days. Twenty-five participants from various NGOs and government institutions were selected to attend all three sessions. In between each session, participants were requested to fulfil specific tasks to better apply “lessons learned”. The last session, held from 8 to 12 September in Samarkand, involved a variety of techniques including working in groups, brainstorming sessions, experience sharing/case studies, simulation and role-playing. Two trainers from the Polish Helsinki Foundation and one from the International League for Human Rights led all three sessions of the training.

ROMA AND SINTI ISSUES

Roma and Stability Pact hold meetings in Skopje

Working with the Council of Europe and UNHCR, the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues co-organized

two meetings last month in Skopje, capital of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM). The meetings focused on ‘Roma refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Balkans (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, BiH and fYROM). During the first meeting close co-operation at working level of the institutions was reaffirmed, while the beneficiaries also discussed their needs and recommendations for further actions.

At the second meeting, the participants focussed on drawing up an action plan based on the beneficiaries’ recommendations. In the context of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, participation of Roma women has been secured in the Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings and the Gender Task Force.

Electoral education training launched for Roma in the Balkans

With elections in several Balkan countries, the ODIHR Contact Point for

Roma and Sinti Issues has launched an elections training program to provide assistance to the active participation of Roma in the polls. In fYROM, a voters leaflet was distributed and a videoclip in Romanes was shown on TV, explaining to Roma at grassroots level both how to vote and the possible impact of elections on their lives. During the elections, a team of Roma went to different locations to assess the participation of Roma in the elections. This assessment team from fYROM will also measure the participation of Roma in the elections in Albania. Preparations are underway to assist with a training programme and assessment in the elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In close co-operation with the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, a young Roma from fYROM, Ramadan Berat has been hired to implement the activities of the joint Action Plan for Roma in Kosovo.

ELECTIONS AND REPRESENTATION

The aim of this degree course is to give an overall view on the different aspects of elections: the way that democracies have been dealing with elections for well over a century, their successes and their failures, the lessons learnt. Coursework includes election observation and technical assistance, election law in Europe as well as elections in evolving democracies, which have been a living laboratory for the last ten years, as witnessed by international organizations and non-governmental organizations through their involvement. The course begins at the end of October and finishes in June. Participants have to have some knowledge of French. More details are available from:

Centre d’Etudes Comparatives des Elections (CECE),
14 avenue Jeanne, 95600 Eaubonne, France
Fax : (33 1) 39 59 89 96
E-mail: owen.ceac@wanadoo.fr

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

Language and education issues discussed in Moldova

From 4 to 6 September the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoel, visited Moldova to follow-up on a number of issues that were raised during his visit of May 2000. The main issues he discussed were the harmonization of legislation with international standards and ways to promote use of the State language. The High Commissioner discussed a project on improving Moldovan language teacher training, particularly in schools where there are pupils from minority communities. Education was also on the agenda when he visited schools in Dubossary and Tiraspol in eastern Moldova.

The High Commissioner remains concerned about the difficulties that schools teaching Moldovan in the Latin script are facing from the Transdnestrian authorities (who argue that

Moldovan should be written in Cyrillic). Mr. van der Stoel voiced his concerns with "President" Smirnov during a meeting in Tiraspol.

The High Commissioner has stressed to the Moldovan authorities that efforts to strengthen use of the Moldovan language should not come at the expense of minority languages. He has recently made recommendations concerning amendments to the Law on Advertising and the Law on Audio-Visual Broadcasting.

High Commissioner studies Ukrainian minority in Russia

The High Commissioner visited Moscow from 12 to 15 September. His main aim was to study the educational opportunities for the 4.3 million citizens of the Russian Federation, who, according to the census of 1989, are of Ukrainian descent. This is part of an ongoing process through which the High Commissioner is studying the education rights and opportunities of Russian minorities in Ukraine and Ukrainian minorities in Russia. The High Commissioner, with the co-operation of international experts, anticipates presenting a report on this issue by the end of the year.

HCNM outlines international protection standards

On 20 September, Mr. van der Stoel gave a speech to a meeting of the International Bar Association in Amsterdam. The speech, entitled "The Relevance of International Standards for the Protection of Minorities", is available on the

HCNM section of the OSCE website at www.osce.org/hcnm

Business plan finalized for education institution in FYROM

On 23 and 24 September the High Commissioner met in Zurich with international experts to finalize the business plan for the new private institution of higher education in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). The institution is designed to provide the possibility for the country's Albanian population to study in their mother tongue. The business plan will soon be presented to potential donors.

Returnees still face difficulties in Croatia

During a visit to Croatia from 26 to 29 September, the High Commissioner visited a number of municipalities close to the Bosnian border where he saw evidence of continuing problems for Serbs trying to return to Croatia. Serbs trying to return have often found their houses damaged or occupied. Efforts by the central Government to assist the Serbs to repossess their properties are being hampered by the refusal of local officials and housing commissions to co-operate. The High Commissioner discussed this problem with the Ministers of Justice and Reconstruction and received assurances that efforts would be made to overcome this problem.

During his visit, the High Commissioner also had extensive discussions with the Minister of Justice concerning the draft law on the constitutional law on national minorities.



High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoel

REPORT from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

The Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is located at Rådhusstræde 1, DK-1466 Copenhagen K, Denmark, tel.: (+45-33) 37 80 40, fax: (+45-33) 37 80 30, e-mail: osce@oscepa.dk



PA President Adrian Severin and OSCE Head of Mission to Croatia, Bernard Poncet

Belarus elections are focus of new OSCE PA President's activities

From 29 August to 1 September, the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Adrian Severin, held a series of meetings and talks in Vienna. On 30 August, Mr. Severin participated in the 3rd Technical Conference on International Election Observation in Belarus. The conference was preceded by a working dinner on 29 August, which was chaired by Mr. Severin, and included the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament, the other two members of the Parliamentary Troika on Belarus.

The Technical Conference concluded that conditions are not sufficient for full scale international monitoring of the parliamentary elections on 15 Octo-

ber. However, it was agreed that the ODIHR would deploy a technical assessment mission and that the Parliamentary Troika would be present in Belarus during the elections.

President makes first address to OSCE Permanent Council

Mr. Severin delivered his first statement as President of the Assembly to the Permanent Council on 31 August. The President introduced his plans to expand the activities of the Parliamentary Assembly and strengthen its role in the OSCE decision-making process. Among the plans for the near future, Mr. Severin mentioned the organization of a winter session of the Assembly in conjunction with the usual winter meeting in Vienna of the Standing Committee.

While in Vienna, he met on 1 September with the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Austria's Foreign Minister, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. He informed her about the current and future activities of the Assembly and discussed the co-operation between the two Institutions. Mr. Severin met with Jutta Stefan-Bastl, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, and Jan Kubis, Secretary General of the OSCE. As part of his programme in Vienna, Mr. Severin also had a meeting with the Austrian Federal Chancellor, Wolfgang Schüssel.

Severin speaks at seminar on OSCE role in Eastern Europe

On 9 September, Mr. Severin addressed a Seminar in Pordenone, Italy on 'The Role of the OSCE in democratization and investment in Eastern Europe'. In his address to the seminar, organized by the authorities and business representatives of the Friuli-Venezia-Giulia Region, Mr. Severin emphasized the importance of co-operative security as a general framework for democratic development throughout the OSCE area, pleading for more co-ordinated international efforts to foster investments that would ensure stable economic development.

The Seminar was also addressed by Edouard Ballaman, Member of the Italian Delegation to the OSCE PA.

Prior to the Seminar, President Severin visited the air base in Aviano where he was briefed by Italian and NATO commanders. Mr. Severin stressed that his visit to Aviano had a dual symbolism: it shows that a complementary relationship should be developed between

OSCE and NATO and that Europeans can no longer live in a divided world.

Keynote address delivered at summit on SE Europe

On 12 September, President Severin delivered a keynote address at the Parliamentary Summit on the Stability Pact in Zagreb. The two-day Summit focussed on the role of parliamentarians in the implementation of the Stability Pact on South-eastern Europe. Speakers and Deputy Speakers from parliaments of nearly forty countries participated in the Summit, which adopted the “Zagreb Declaration” on its final day. In his address, President Severin suggested that representatives of each of the three general committees of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly be accredited as fully-fledged participants in the three Stability Pact Working Tables on Democratization and Human Rights, Economic Reconstruction and Security Issues.

During the Summit, Bodo Hombach,

Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact welcomed Mr. Severin’s suggestion. While in Zagreb, Mr. Severin paid a visit to the OSCE Mission to Croatia where he was briefed by Bernard Poncet, Head of the Mission, and members of the senior staff.

Severin addresses Council of Europe PA in Strasbourg

Focussing on the co-operation between the two institutions, Mr. Severin addressed the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 25 September. While in Strasbourg, President Severin issued a statement on the elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In his statement Mr. Severin emphasized that these far from democratic elections prove that the democratic opposition must unite. “That is the only way towards democracy, stability and out of isolation”. President Severin also stressed that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will be open to constructive dialogue with

the new parliament, or parliamentarians who demonstrate their own willingness to enter such a dialogue.

Vice-President chairs elections Round Table in Kazakhstan

On 2 September, Ihor Ostash, OSCE PA Vice-President moderated the ‘Round Table on Elections’ held in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan, under the auspices of the OSCE (the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the ODIHR and the OSCE Centre in Almaty). The event, conducted in collaboration with the Government of Kazakhstan and the Central Election Commission, brought together representatives of the Parliament, various government ministries and agencies, and civil society, including those political parties not represented in the Parliament. Mr. Baigeldi, Deputy Speaker of the Senate and Head of the Delegation of Kazakhstan to the OSCE PA, headed the official Kazakh delegation to the event.

REPORT from the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

The Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media is located at Kärtner Ring 5-7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria. Tel.: (+43-1) 512 21 45-0, fax: (+43-1) 512 21 45-9, e-mail: pm-fom@osce.org

Serbia: Journalism and Elections

Throughout the Serbian election campaign, Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, issued a daily bulletin Serbia: Journalism and Elections that provided detailed information on all cases of harassment of media and opposition supporters (see earlier feature article).

The Kursk submarine tragedy and the media in Russia

On 7 September, Freimut Duve

addressed the OSCE Permanent Council drawing its attention to the current media situation in Russia in light of the Kursk tragedy. The death of so many marine soldiers has opened a very serious and challenging debate on the role of the media in OSCE’s largest participating State. During August, Russian media, in an invigorated and combative mood, tried to provide the people with information on this tragedy in real time, underlined Mr. Duve. The OSCE Representative noted that, according to an opinion poll conducted by

the All-Russian Centre for Public Opinion Research, 53 percent of the population thought that the media “played a positive role” during the Kursk crisis.

Confiscation of edition of Belarus newspaper

On 15 September, Freimut Duve intervened with the Belarus Foreign Minister, Ural Latypov, to voice his concern regarding the confiscation on 13 September of 100,000 copies of a special edition of the Belarusian Free Trade

Union's newspaper Rabochy as well as the arrest of its Editor, Victor Ivashkevich. The apparent reason for this action was the newspaper's call for a boycott of the parliamentary elections. The OSCE Representative underlined that any hindering of the independent journalistic media from expressing its opinion was not acceptable.

RFOM concerned about missing journalist in Ukraine

A prominent Ukrainian journalist, Heorhy Gongadze, editor of the online

magazine *Ukrainska Pravda*, went missing in Kyiv on 16 September 2000. Prior to his disappearance, Mr. Gongadze had earlier published an open letter to the prosecutor on the Internet complaining about certain forms of harassment against him. On 19 September, Freimut Duve wrote a letter to Ukrainian Foreign Minister, Boris Tarasyuk, voicing his concern regarding the fate of Mr. Gongadze. He asked the Minister to inform his Office "of all the steps taken and all the information available on the case as soon as possible."

A copy of this letter was sent to Ivan

Drach, Chairman of the State Committee for Information Policy, Television and Radio. Over the past weeks Mr. Duve received several requests from Ukrainian as well as international non-governmental organizations and journalists asking him to intervene in this case. Without prejudicing the results of the investigation initiated by the local police, the OSCE Representative would like to reiterate that the disappearance of a journalist is of major concern to his Office and expects the Government to do its utmost in locating Mr. Gongadze.

REPORT from the OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat

*The OSCE Secretariat is located at Kärntner Ring 5-7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria.
Telephone: (+43-1) 514 36-0, Fax: (+43-1) 514 36-96, e-mail: pm@osce.org*

Secretary General addresses diploma ceremony in Venice

On 18 September, the Secretary General of the OSCE, Jan Kubis, spoke on the occasion of the awarding of diplomas at the final ceremony of the European Master's Degree in Venice, Italy. In his speech the Secretary General underlined the special relationship between the Organization and the Master's Degree programme, and focussed in particular on the human dimension engagement of the Organization. He referred to the commitments made by the OSCE participating States to ensure the full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to abide by the rule of law, to promote the principles of democracy and to strengthen democratic institutions and good governance, as well as to promote tolerance and to fight against ethnic hatred, racism, extremism and intolerance throughout the whole OSCE area.

Mr. Kubis emphasized that behind all these tasks, and all the Institutions to fulfil these tasks, it was important to recog-

nize that the people that actually do the job. "I can assure you that this is a crucial task: without consistent and professional efforts to promote, build and support healthy civil societies in all our countries, there would no peace, stability or prosperity", he said.

OSCE attends workshop on co-operation with Thailand

Responding to an invitation by the Government of Thailand, the Secretary General attended a workshop in Bangkok on 28 September entitled: 'Thailand and OSCE: the way towards a future co-operation'. In his address to the attending dignitaries, he explained the role of the OSCE as a regional security, co-operation and conflict prevention organization, its concept of a common and comprehensive security framework, and the different dimensions that represent the background of the OSCE approach. Stressing the linkage between security in the OSCE and in other areas, and the importance of co-operation with the Mediterranean Part-

ners for Co-operation and Japan and Korea, the Secretary General expressed his hope that the workshop would bring the OSCE and Thailand close to future co-operative partnership relations.

"In view of globalization and its effect on the interdependence of the regions, new non-traditional challenges and transnational security risks, such as drug trafficking, massive and illegal migration, organized crime and terrorism, it becomes apparent that co-operation and dialogue between regions is also increasing in importance", he said.

Secretary General speaks at Conference on Balkan Reconstruction in Prague

On 21 September, OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis attended the Conference on Balkan Reconstruction in Prague, Czech Republic, which was organized by the George C. Marshall Foundation, the East-West Institute and the World Bank. In his address to the conference participants, he used the opportunity to reinforce

OSCE commitments with respect to the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. “The Stability Pact is a major, long-term and truly comprehensive initiative to strengthen stability and enhance regional co-operation as well as to promote prospects of larger integration of the South-eastern Europe region with the rest of Europe”, he said.

Jan Kubis also stressed OSCE’s role in Stability Pact matters such as the Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, refugee return, the consolidation of independent media in the region, as well as OSCE’s initiatives relevant to the Stability Pact such as the Ninth OSCE Economic Forum of 2001 and its work on a document of principles and practical measures on small arms and light weapons. The Secretary General reaffirmed that the OSCE will continue to support the goals of the Stability Pact by fostering co-operation and co-ordination in order to contribute to improving the overall security climate in South-Eastern Europe.

First Caucasus regional HoM meeting held in Armenia

The Head of the Conflict Prevention Centre, Marton Krasznai, attended the first regional meeting of Heads of Mission (HoM) in the Caucasus, held on 25 September in Yerevan, Armenia. In addition to the Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, Roy Reeve, the meeting involved the heads of three other OSCE field presences: the Mission in Georgia, Jean-Michel Lacombe; the Office in Baku, Alexander Johannes Cornelissen; and the Assistance Group to Chechnya, Alfred Missonig; in addition it was attended by the Personal Representative of the Chairperson in Office on the Conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, Andrzej Kasprzyk.

This meeting, which represented the first opportunity to bring together the OSCE’s two latest field activities, those

in Armenia and Azerbaijan, discussed regional issues and regional co-operation between field presences. It was followed by bilateral consultations among the HoMs. On 27 September, some of the participants took part in a seminar on conflict resolution and regional co-operation, co-organised by the OSCE and the Foreign Ministry.

Economic workshop takes place in Tashkent

The 11th in a series of workshops organized by the Co-ordinator for OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities since November 1999 was held from 4 to 8 September in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Under the title ‘Promoting domestic cooperation for sustainable economic and environmental development in Uzbekistan’ the event brought together government officials, private businesses, NGOs and community activists in a comprehensive session. The workshop covered a wide range of topics, including global environmental concerns, the privatization process and the legal aspects of small and medium size businesses in Uzbekistan.

One of the 60 participants, Alice Thomas, noted, “It appears that the workshops provided a much-needed forum for open, frank discussion among the participants. The trainers were able to assist the parties in identifying some of the obstacles to sustainable development and to facilitate dialogue between the government, business interests and the NGO community as to how to solve these issues.”

Regional seminar follows up Eighth Economic Forum

As a follow-up to the recommendations of the Eighth Economic Forum, held earlier this year in Prague, a regional seminar took place from 13 to 15 September in Almaty, Kazakhstan. It addressed the legislative and practical aspects of eco-

logical issues under the theme: ‘Global environmental law: interpretation, integration and implementation.’ Representatives from each of the Central Asian nations, including delegates from foreign ministries, ecology ministries, parliaments, regional institutes, universities and NGOs took an active role and contributed to its success.

The Seminar ensured that Central Asian States received a thorough grounding in global environmental law, both its theory and practice. Participants also discussed the latest developments in multi-lateral agreements, explanations of negotiating strategies and the history of the political arguments. In addition to offering background information, two international experts analyzed international conventions on transboundary water, climate change and trade and the environment.

Upcoming events listing now featured on OSCE website

Journalists, researchers and other interested web surfers now have access to an important new feature on the OSCE website – the Events Calendar. Upcoming events from all OSCE regions and all Institutions and field activities are available on this page, which can be accessed at www.osce.org/events. The information available can be filtered through drop-down menus according to date, type of event, body organizing the event and relevant topics that the event addresses. All events include links to further background information and the organizing bodies’ web pages. Web users can also save their preferred settings for later use through a button located on top right of the page.

For further information on this or other aspects of the website, contact the Press and Public Information Section of the OSCE Secretariat, tel.: +43 1 514 36 180 or e-mail: info@osce.org.

SOME PUBLIC INFORMATION MATERIALS

available upon request at the Vienna or Prague Offices of the OSCE Secretariat*
and via the OSCE website (www.osce.org/publications)

* Rytirska 31, CZ-110 00 Prague 1, Czech Republic

Publications	Publisher/ Editor	Language(s)
<p>OSCE Newsletter (monthly) Volume VII (2000), Volume VI (1999), Volume V (1998), Volume IV (1997), Volume III (1996), Volume II (1995), Volume I (1994)</p>	OSCE Secretariat	Since January 1998 in all six OSCE official languages (English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish) 1994-97 in English and Russian
<p>Fact Sheet (revised October 1999)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What is the OSCE? ¹ ■ The OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat ■ Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights² ■ Representative on Freedom of the Media ■ High Commissioner on National Minorities ■ OSCE Parliamentary Assembly² ■ Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina³ ■ Mission to Croatia³ ■ Mission in Kosovo³ 	OSCE Secretariat	<p>¹ 'What is OSCE?' is available in all six OSCE official languages.</p> <p>² Also available in Russian.</p> <p>³ Also available in local languages.</p>
<p>OSCE Handbook general information on OSCE, Third Edition (March 1999) - updated June 2000</p>	OSCE Secretariat	English Also available on-line at: www.osce.org/publications
<p>Survey of OSCE Long-Term Missions and other OSCE Field Activities (January 2000)</p>	OSCE Secretariat/ Conflict Prevention Centre	English
<p>The Secretary General's Annual Report on OSCE Activities (1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999)</p>	OSCE Secretariat	In all six OSCE official languages
<p>OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Semi-annual Reports</p>	ODIHR	English and Russian

Publications	Publisher/ Editor	Language(s)
<p>Other publications on democratization and human rights are available at the ODIHR website: (www.osce.org/odihr/publications.htm)</p>	ODIHR	English
<p>Bibliography on the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities: Documents, Speeches, Related Publications. Third Edition, March 1997</p>	The Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations, The Hague	English
<p>The Role of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in OSCE Conflict Prevention – An Introduction June 1997</p>	ibid.	English Russian
<p>Chronological Review from 1973 to 1998 of CSCE/OSCE official publications <i>List of bound versions of documents issued at the conclusion of a review, follow-up and other major CSCE/OSCE events including the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures</i></p>	Prague Office	English
<p>Reference Manual – Decisions Compilation 1993-94, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, and 1999</p>	Prague Office	English



The OSCE **NEWSLETTER** is published monthly by the Secretariat of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Kärntner Ring 5-7
A-1010 Vienna, Austria
Tel.: (+43-1) 514 36-180
Fax: (+43-1) 514 36-105
E-mail: info@osce.org

Keith Jinks, Editor
Alexander Nitzsche, Deputy Editor

For more information on the OSCE see the OSCE Website:
<http://www.osce.org>