

ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE (06 July to 12 July)

OSCE Chairman-in-Office welcomed large compliance of Skopje vote with international standards but regrets isolated irregularities

BRUSSELS, 6 July 2006 - The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Minister Karel De Gucht, welcomed the fact that the parliamentary elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia largely met international election norms but regretted reported isolated irregularities.

OSCE Chairman-in-Office expressed condolences following crash of Sibir Airlines flight

BRUSSELS, 10 July 2006 - The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Minister Karel De Gucht, extended his sincere condolences to the Russian Government and to the families of the passengers who died in a plane crash in Irkutsk.

OSCE Chairman-in-Office called for calm and restraint in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict

BRUSSELS, 11 July 2006 - The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Minister Karel De Gucht, expressed concern about increased tensions in recent days in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

Minister De Gucht urged all sides in the conflict zone to exercise calm and not to take any measures which would add to the difficulties as well as to refrain from any use of violence.

OSCE Chairman-in-Office alarmed at detention of Mission Officers in Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone

BRUSSELS, 12 July 2006 - The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Minister Karel De Gucht, expressed great concern at the actions of South Ossetian officers who detained at gunpoint unarmed military monitors from the OSCE Mission to Georgia on 11 July. Minister De Gucht has demanded an explanation from the South Ossetian authorities and a clear commitment there will be no repetition of such actions.

On behalf of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office Ambassador Pierre Champenois opened the conference “Building Democracy through OSCE Electoral Assistance and Observation”

EGMONT PALACE - BRUSSELS, 12 July 2006 – On behalf of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office Ambassador Pierre Champenois opened the conference “Building Democracy through OSCE Electoral Assistance and Observation”.

The event gathered senior experts from the OSCE and other international organizations that carry out election observations, as well as academia, non-governmental organizations and election observers.

The objectives of the conference were to present the OSCE/ODIHR activities of electoral assistance and to raise awareness of the public to the importance of electoral assistance in the more global process of building democracy.