



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Dutch Chairmanship sets brisk pace at helm of OSCE

By Richard Murphy



First meeting of the Ministerial Troika of the Netherlands OSCE Chairmanship, Vienna, 14 January: Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy (2004), CiO Jaap de Hoop Scheffer (2003) and Portuguese Foreign Minister Antonio Martins da Cruz (2002)

VIENNA – The OSCE's new Dutch Chairmanship has set a brisk pace since taking over the helm of the Organization from Portugal on 1 January 2003.

Dutch Foreign Minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer marked the formal start of the Chairmanship with an eventful three-day visit to Vienna which began with a ballet event, "Dance Against Violence", in the *Staatsoper* (State Opera), on 12 January.

In the following two days, the Chairman-in-Office (CiO) made his first address to the OSCE's Permanent Council,

chaired his first meeting of the Troika – the current, previous and next Chairmanships – and met all OSCE Heads of Mission.

He also held a news conference, gave interviews to CNN, the BBC and other news organizations, attended the opening of the new Vienna Liaison Office of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and met his Austrian counterpart, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, who was CiO in 2000.

By the end of January, the Chairmanship had announced three key appointments.

Ambassador Christian Strohal of Austria was appointed Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, while new Heads were named to the OSCE Mission to Moldova (Ambassador William Hill of the United States) and the OSCE Office in Minsk (Ambassador Eberhard Heyken of Germany).

Minister de Hoop Scheffer also announced a visit to Moscow and to Central Asia – the first trips on what looks set to be a demanding travel schedule for the year.

In Vienna, the new Dutch Chairman of the Permanent Council, Ambassador Justus de Visser, brought a similarly businesslike approach to meetings of the 55 OSCE ambassadors.

Meetings of the Permanent Council on Thursday mornings start at 10:00 a.m. sharp, speakers are politely but firmly encouraged not to exceed their allotted time and the agenda is kept strictly on track. Ambassador de Visser hopes that afternoon sessions of the Permanent Council will become a thing of the past.

Realities on the ground

So what about the political agenda for the year ahead?

In his address to the Permanent Council, Minister de Hoop Scheffer said human security in all its facets would be at the heart of the Dutch Chairmanship.

"Security is more than arms control and smoothing over political differences," he said.

"Without due regard for human rights and economic and ecological development, no sustainable security, no lasting peace can ever be achieved. However, the struggle to strike the right balance between the dimensions should never blind us to the realities on the ground."

The OSCE had always been in the vanguard of those working for the improvement of human rights, he said. "This is not about to change under the Netherlands Chairmanship. Security, after all, is about people and giving them the protection they need to live their lives in dignity. The Netherlands Chairmanship is particularly attached to providing security to individuals, minorities and other socially vulnerable groups."

The new CiO said the Netherlands would pay particular attention to the problem of trafficking – in human beings, arms and drugs – which represented a clear threat to stability and security both inside and outside the OSCE region.

"Trafficking not only causes human misery, it is devastating national economies and putting undue pressure on political systems," the CiO said.

Trafficking in human beings affected all OSCE participating States, either as countries of origin, transit or destination.

It needed to be tackled in the capital cities of western Europe and North America, as well as in the countries in the south and east of the region, where women and girls were lured into this modern form of slavery, the CiO said.

In responding to threats to stability and security, OSCE countries had to maintain strict adherence to the principles of good governance and democracy. "The rule of law and the full participation of all citizens in political life are essential in the fight against these dangers, including the threat of terrorism," he said. "The only societies that have the strength to challenge extremists in their midst are those where the right to question is beyond dispute."

Other delegations welcomed the programme outlined by the Dutch Chairmanship and pledged their support.

Common values

Ambassador Alexander Alekseyev of the Russian Federation said his country was convinced that anti-terrorist activities must remain among the OSCE's main priorities. He also underlined the need to give equal weight to the three dimensions of security – politico-military, economic and environmental and the human dimension.

"There is a need to continue ensuring equal attention to the three security dimensions as an integral concept of the OSCE, on the one hand, while expanding the geographical format of the Organization's work on the other," Ambassador Alekseyev said.

Ambassador Stephan M. Minikes of the United States welcomed the Chairmanship's focus on fighting trafficking. He also called for a serious co-operative approach by all participating States in tackling the whole range of problems across the OSCE region.

"Our responsibility to our peoples requires that we seek to rise above our sometimes differing views and find constructive approaches to dealing with admittedly difficult problems," Ambassador Minikes added.

Greek Ambassador Aristidis Sandis, speaking on behalf of the European Union, welcomed the Chairmanship's commitment to maintaining a strong

focus on improving human rights. "We strongly believe that our common values in this field must be put into practice throughout the whole OSCE area," he told the Permanent Council.

Richard Murphy is Head of Press and Public Information.

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Ambassador Christian Strohal is named as new Director of ODIHR

The Permanent Council has approved the appointment of Ambassador Christian Strohal as Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Before assuming his post on 1 February, the Austrian diplomat was his country's Ambassador to Luxembourg. He succeeds Swiss diplomat Gerard Stoudmann, who led the Warsaw-based OSCE institution for almost six years.

Ambassador Strohal, 52, served as Austrian Representative to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, as a delegate to the UN General Assembly and as representative to the European Union working group on human rights. From 1994 to 2000, he was Director for Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law, and Minority and Gender Issues at the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Upon learning of his appointment, Ambassador Strohal said: "I have always considered ODIHR to be a unique pillar for realizing the OSCE's comprehensive security concept. Under the excellent leadership of Ambassador Stoudmann, the Office has demonstrated that it contributes very effectively to the protection and promotion of democracy and human rights throughout the OSCE region. I look forward to continuing this work."

He spoke of the tremendous change he had witnessed during his long

involvement in the human rights issue: "The protection of human rights has been brought from conference rooms to the field. It is there, on the ground, where we have to live up to people's expectations and where we have to make a difference. Everybody talks about human rights – we all have to do human rights! There are still way too many victims of human rights violations throughout the OSCE region. This is a daily challenge."

Given the broad range of ODIHR's activities as well as its current priorities, he considers the challenge considerable. "I look forward to working with ODIHR's highly professional and motivated staff, as well as to co-operating closely with all partners – governments, civil society and non-governmental organizations, as well as those within OSCE and in other international organizations," he said.

"The ODIHR should be a centre of expertise for the whole organization, including its field missions. It is a unique and very exciting institution, which must remain credible, fair, effective, and strong."

Members of the Permanent Council welcomed Ambassador Strohal's appointment and pledged their continued support for ODIHR.

"We hope that under the able leadership of Ambassador Strohal, the ODIHR will continue to develop the practical, target-oriented and inclusive approach in



Ambassador Christian Strohal

tackling complex issues that OSCE participating States are confronting," Azerbaijan's Ambassador, Vaqif Sadiqov, said on behalf of the GUUAM Group – Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

"Ambassador Strohal has a number of difficult problems ahead to deal with, including possible future activities in Chechnya," said Douglas Davidson, Deputy Chief of the U.S. Mission to the OSCE. "But we are sure that he will be up to this challenging task. His background and previous leadership, his human rights experience and his knowledge of the OSCE will serve him well in his endeavours."

Visit the website of the
Netherlands Chairmanship 2003 at:

www.osce.org/cio/netherlands



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Forum for Security Co-operation: Standing the test of tradition and relevance

Within the politico-military dimension of the OSCE, the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) occupies a special place. As the repository and negotiating body for arms control and confidence- and security-building measures, it maintains a regular stream of contacts with all participating States. And in the context of the OSCE's counter-terrorism measures, it has been playing a co-ordinating role on key aspects of the Bucharest Action Plan. On the occasion of the handover of the FSC Chairmanship from Yugoslavia to Albania, Ambassador Branislav Milinkovic took stock of the work achieved and the way ahead.

Leading the FSC is a major responsibility. What do you consider to be the most important accomplishments of Yugoslavia's chairmanship?

Our Chairmanship covered the period 23 August 2002 to 9 January 2003. We normally expect the second part of the year to be very busy because of the Ministerial Council and 2002 was no exception. The FSC had to prepare its own contributions to several documents adopted at the Porto Ministerial in December: the OSCE Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism and decisions on the comprehensive OSCE Strategy, on the Annual Security Review Conference, which will be launched this year, and on the review of the OSCE's role in peacekeeping operations.

But we were able to get all these done thanks to enhanced co-operation with the Permanent Council (PC). For example, we held a joint meeting of the two bodies on 13 November; this was the first FSC-PC meeting of its kind that was able to address several substantive issues of mutual concern.

The most important event organized under the FSC during our chairmanship was the Third Follow-Up Conference on the Code of Conduct on Political Mil-

itary Aspects of Security. The event, on 23 and 24 September, confirmed beyond any doubt the lasting validity of the Code, which had been agreed almost ten years ago at the CSCE Budapest Summit. At the same time, we discussed ways to improve its implementation. [See *OSCE Newsletter*, October/November 2002, "Politico-Military Code of Conduct remains relevant".]

In terms of decisions, the most important achievement was definitely the adoption of our first Expert Advice, a possibility envisaged at the Bucharest Ministerial Council in 2001. This Advice elaborates ways of implementing the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) within the context of conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation.

However, judged from the broader and institutional perspective, I would say that the most relevant accomplishment of our chairmanship is reflected in the overall impression among the FSC community and participating States that the new arrangements – which have extended the duration of the FSC chairmanship from one month to four months – are showing good results.

Perhaps the over-arching issue on the OSCE agenda has been its role in preventing and combating terrorism. How has the FSC contributed to this work?

I believe that the FSC's road map for implementing the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating terrorism, adopted in March 2002, has been accomplished. This was duly acknowledged by our ministers in Porto. A very useful Expert meeting on combating terrorism within the politico-military dimension of the OSCE was held during the Turkish Chairmanship in May. The possible relevance of all FSC documents to the fight against terrorism was carefully examined.

We have decided to broaden our information exchange concerning national efforts to combat terrorism by expanding the Code of Conduct Questionnaire. And almost all FSC activities in the area of SALW, including future implementation of the Expert Advice, and the best practice guidelines on certain aspects related to the control of SALW – such as those dealing with national procedures for export and import control – could contribute to this end.

How much has the role of the FSC – and the FSC Chair – changed in 2002 and do its traditional tasks vis-à-vis arms control and confidence- and security-building measures remain relevant in the 21st century?

Turkey's Delegation was the first to hold the FSC Chair under the new arrangements introduced during 2002. And their period of office, before the summer, established extremely high professional standards. Germany will assume the Chair after Albania. The extended chairmanship certainly creates considerable workload for the delegation involved, but it ensures continuity better than before. I believe that it also contributes to raising the visibility of the Forum, which means increased relevance for the political-military dimension.

The traditional tasks of the FSC in the area of arms control and confidence- and security-building measures – which were designed to prevent conflict between States – are still relevant. Furthermore, they serve as a solid basis on which we should build our response to the new security risks.

How has the FSC's Security Dialogue contributed to improving security and stability in the OSCE region?

Broadening the scope of the Security Dialogue, with its emphasis on trans-

parency, was one of the main priorities of the Yugoslav chairmanship. I believe that it has contributed to improving stability in the OSCE region in at least two ways. The first positive sign is the increased number of participating States that make voluntary presentations on their national defence planning. Since these are also usually followed by a frank and lively discussion, they represent an excellent example of enhanced transparency, which is at the heart of the politico-military dimension of the OSCE.

Secondly, the Security Dialogue has also been enriched by an exchange of information with other international organizations dealing with issues similar to those in the FSC. During our term, representatives of the NATO/Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Regional Clearing House for SALW in South Eastern Europe briefed the FSC on their activities.

As you mentioned, the FSC has tendered Expert Advice to the PC for the first time, focusing on implementing the SALW Document. How can the PC and FSC make this happen and how much can the OSCE's unique network of field missions contribute?

This Advice deals with making operational the OSCE's list of measures against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, within the context of the Organization's conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation activities.

I think that in order to make Section V of the SALW Document fully operational, it will be necessary to follow the



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Ambassador Branislav Milinkovic

plan contained in the FSC's Expert Advice, which calls for further close interaction between the PC and FSC. In turn, this Advice should be endorsed by the PC. To transform the plan into reality, a specific request for assistance by a participating State is needed. Well coordinated efforts by the two bodies should make this both useful and attractive to all participating States.

The OSCE field presences certainly have a role to play in the politico-military area provided they operate on the basis of their mandates and co-operate very closely with the host government. For example, they could assist in the implementation of the politico-military commitments and more specifically,

they could help in identifying possible projects related to SALW. Even more ambitiously, they could also promote regional co-operation.

The chair of the FSC has just been passed to Albania. What are the main issues you see looming on the Forum's agenda in 2003?

Apart from its traditional areas of arms control and CSBMs, as I have noted, the FSC will continue its work on SALW, whose importance is recognized beyond the OSCE. The Forum will also focus strongly on the post-Porto tasks, such as preparation of the Annual Security Review Conference and the discussion on the OSCE role in peacekeeping. However, I believe that development of an OSCE Strategy to address threats to security and stability in the 21st century is what will mark 2003.

Looking ahead, I would say that the key to success in all the FSC's undertakings will be the ability of the Chairman-in-Office and the FSC Chair – and the members of the Troika of the FSC and the Troika of the PC – to co-operate closely. With careful preparation, the joint PC-FSC meetings also have significant potential. Different modalities of co-operation on a working level should be explored. The open attitude of the CiO is definitely essential, which is why I am very encouraged that the Netherlands has taken this approach right from the start.

Ambassador Branislav Milinkovic has been Head of the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the OSCE since May 2001.

Asia-Plus on the air: Dushanbe's dynamic new radio takes flight

By Ayhan Evrensel

"La Isla Bonita, na Asia-Plus, Sto-Sem FM!" shouts the young disc jockey in Russian, announcing the radio fre-

quency, 107.0 FM. He raises the volume and takes off his headphones. You can't help but feel Sherali Djurabaev's energy

and enthusiasm. He is proud to be the first DJ of the first private radio station in Dushanbe.

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Radio Asia-Plus went on the air on 9 September 2002, the 11th anniversary of Tajikistan's independence. It plays music from all over the world. A Russian chanson follows Madonna, a Tajik folk song pipes up after the Turkish pop idol Tarkan. News bulletins in Tajik and Russian are broadcast alternately on the hour. Ten journalists work for the radio station, which was the recipient of initial grants from UNESCO and the Soros Foundation.

For Umed Babakhanov, General Director of Asia-Plus, the media group's launch is a milestone on the road towards independence of the media in the Tajik capital.

"We've waited four years for this day," he says. "The authorities have been granting licences in the countryside. But they were worried about doing so in the capital because they were not sure what an independent broadcaster would say on the air – they would not have control over it. They were simply afraid of the power of radio and television. The turning point came when they understood that it was not a revolution, that it was not dangerous to have private radio and television stations here as well."

As in many countries, Tajikistan issues radio and television licences through a state committee. "However," Umed notes, "a lot depends on the President, not on the committee."

Final push

The Asia-Plus group started as a news agency six years ago and later launched a daily newspaper in Tajikistan, also called *Asia-Plus*. It applied four years ago for an FM radio frequency. "We got a letter from the state committee, saying there was no need for another radio station in the capital. This was strange, since we did not have any pri-

vate radio station here! Soon, many journalists and non-governmental organizations started criticizing the authorities."

The final push came from Freimut Duvé, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. "His letter to the Foreign Minister came like heavy artillery fire on the authorities. The President's advisers realized that it was not good for Tajikistan to block this application just when the country was trying to change its image. Now they are happy with the

National Association of Independent Mass Media in Tajikistan say that another small station, Djahon TV, applied for a licence more than two years ago and that it is still waiting.

A newcomer to broadcasting but an old hand in journalism, Umed reflects on the sensitive issue of media freedom: "We do not have official censorship in Tajikistan, but we censor ourselves. This is not only my problem, it's a general problem here. We are often afraid to touch delicate topics; a government tax inspector may find a tiny little thing to close us down."

He believes that a step-by-step approach towards openness is the only solution. "First," he says, "Tajik journalists should overcome censorship within their own minds. And of course, officials should understand the role of media better. They should realize that we are also trying to develop our country, that criticizing does not mean we are enemies of Tajik society or the state."

He thinks the situation is improving. "When we started six years ago, there were gunmen around and no freedom. Now that things are more stable, the government has less reason to be afraid."

Umed Babakhanov points out that the OSCE has a mandate in the area of press freedom. "I cannot ask for this kind of help from any other international organization on the ground."

He believes that the OSCE should be much more active in developing media and civil society, and in promoting political reforms. "And whether it wants to or not, the Tajik Government has to listen carefully to the recommendations of the OSCE," he says. "Only in this way can the OSCE really make a difference."

Ayhan Evrensel is a Press Officer in the OSCE Secretariat.



Pioneering DJ Sherali Djurabaev, left, has already started grooming other talents like Artyom Pashinko

positive reactions from all over the world," Umed says. "Had we not received this help, we probably would have had to wait a few more years."

He is sure this had a spin-off effect: "The day we received our licence, two other private stations in Dushanbe also got theirs." So now there are three radio stations in Dushanbe – at least on paper. Getting the licence is one thing, going on the air is another. The other two are still preparing for take-off.

Television licences have to go through a similar process. Tajik authorities have granted permits to private stations in the provinces, but so far not in the capital. Asia-Plus, which also runs a production company and provides international agencies with edited news pieces, hopes to receive a television frequency in Dushanbe. Officials of the

Central Asia and the OSCE: Intensifying the spirit of partnership

by Herbert Salber

Since the OSCE seriously engaged itself in Central Asia, with the launching of offices in the region, successive Chairmanships have been urging closer relations between the OSCE and the region's five countries.

The Portuguese Chairmanship sought to build on earlier initiatives by promoting project-based co-operation – alongside intense political dialogue – through the OSCE Centres in Almaty, Kazakhstan; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; Dushanbe, Tajikistan; Ashgabad, Turkmenistan; and Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Portugal encouraged the Organization's partners in the region to express their views, interests and visions. The emphasis was placed on genuine co-operation.

On his official visits to the Central Asian capitals, the Chairman-in-Office took an active part in an exchange of views with the political leadership and representatives of civil society. The feedback he received from all quarters was highly positive. In general, the OSCE was asked to take a more balanced approach to its three dimensions, without neglecting its traditional strength in promoting human rights, democratization and freedom of expression.

The participating States in Central Asia made it clear that they expected more from the OSCE in terms of the first and second "baskets" – politico-military and economic and environmental affairs – which, they believed, had not been given sufficient attention. The Portuguese Chairmanship felt that most of the five countries had achieved a great deal in all the dimensions since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and that the request to move beyond the third "basket" – the human dimension – was legitimate.

The adapted mandate of the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan – now known as the

OSCE Centre in Dushanbe – was designed to make possible the practical implementation of activities in the economic and environmental sphere. The decision of the Permanent Council on 31 October 2002 to support this move took into account "the progress made since the cessation of the civil war in the Republic of Tajikistan".



Ambassador Salber addressing guests at the opening of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek

In the politico-military dimension, there are promising movements that appear to be meeting the concrete needs of our Central Asian partners. Activities related to stopping the spread of small arms and light weapons are increasing and could be developed further.

There is also scope for more assistance to law enforcement agencies. In Kyrgyzstan, the work of the Strategic

Police Matters Unit has already started to produce concrete results [see article, page 9]. Ideally, these pilot activities should spread to other countries in the region. Helping law enforcement agencies not only to be more effective and efficient but also to be more aware of behaving towards the public according to democratic norms is a task that goes

beyond human rights considerations. For example, basic measures such as relatively simple but highly effective police practices – whether controlling borders or directing road traffic – can have a major impact on the business and investment climate.

The good news is that in 2003 projects will not, as in the past, depend solely on voluntary contributions; the Organization's unified budget is channelling more money for this purpose. However, making more financial resources available is clearly not sufficient, since implementing more projects translates into a greater workload for the limited number of staff of the OSCE Centres. Any wider efforts have also to

be carefully planned with partners in the host country, whether government agencies or civil society organizations. This means that the volume of co-operation can only be expanded gradually, taking full account of the needs of participating States.

The OSCE is well advised to avoid giving the impression that it is imposing models or solutions that are not accept-

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able to the receiving party, otherwise it risks spending participating States' contributions unwisely. Based on my experience as Head of the OSCE Centre in Almaty, Kazakhstan, there are, fortunately, enough areas in which fruitful co-operation is possible.

Together with the Government of Kyrgyzstan, the Portuguese Chairmanship initiated a completely new type of OSCE engagement in Central Asia. The founding of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek in December 2002 ushered in a long-term project dealing with security policy at its most comprehensive. [See following article.]

Whichever country leads the OSCE under its rotating chairmanship, the goal of the Organization in Central Asia remains constant: to help our partners in this important part of the world overcome the legacy of totalitarianism through the creation of solid state structures and institutions based on the rule of law, democratic principles, open markets and free media. If the resources needed are increased steadily, they will go a long way towards ensuring that these States live up to their commitment to OSCE standards and principles – thus easing their full integration into the international community.

Herbert Salber, a German career diplomat, was Special Adviser to the Portuguese OSCE Chairmanship on Central Asia from February to December 2002. In this capacity, he visited all five countries several times, exchanging views with Heads of States, government officials and community leaders on OSCE programmes and projects. Ambassador Salber is now Minister-Counsellor for External Co-operation with the European Union, in his country's Foreign Ministry.

Kyrgyzstan launches its OSCE Academy

By Rainer Hermann

In any country, when the President, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister honour an occasion with their presence, it is an indication of the event's significance. This was the case in Kyrgyzstan, on 17 and 18 December 2002, when the OSCE Academy was officially opened by the Government and the OSCE Centre in Bishkek.

The Academy aims to develop into a regional centre for learning and research on preventing and resolving conflict. In his address, Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev said that he personally attached great importance to the project, noting its emphasis on the role of young people in building security and democracy in Central Asia.

"This is a unique institution of a new type that will facilitate the development of democratic processes in Kyrgyzstan," the President said.

Although the Academy's philosophy will be guided by the OSCE's concept of comprehensive and co-operative security and its facilities are within the premises of the Kyrgyz National University in Bishkek, it will be independent of the University and the OSCE.

Ambassador Herbert Salber, Special



A Kyrgyz student reading all about the OSCE

Adviser to the Portuguese Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia, described the OSCE Academy as "the expression of the political will of the Chairmanship and delegations in Vienna to be engaged in Central Asia".

The idea for the Academy had been

proposed by the Kyrgyz Government in early 2002. The Portuguese Chairmanship made it a priority project, and the Netherlands Chairmanship has also given assurances of the OSCE's continuing support.

Under a work plan agreed between

the Kyrgyz Government and the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, and funded by the Governments of Switzerland and Germany, an initial six months are being devoted to the design of a more detailed concept for the Academy's academic, training and research programmes. This start-up phase is being directed by Anara Nasyrova, who has been appointed Co-ordinator of the Academy by the Government of Kyrgyzstan.

By February, a series of lectures on security-related issues in Central Asia was ready for launching, with the participation of Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Kazakh and American scholars. In addition, senior OSCE officials and experts travelling to Bishkek will be invited to give lectures and hold discussions with students.

The Academy plans to promote itself as a regional centre and to develop strong international ties. At the opening, guests included experts from Central Asian states, the Russian Federation, western European countries and the United States. They had an exchange of views on the potential contribution of the Academy and forms of co-operation with international partners.

Among the participants were representatives of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, headed by the former Director of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Gerard Stoudmann, the Centre for OSCE Research in Hamburg, the Netherlands Institute of International Relations *Clingendael*, the Austrian

Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution, and the UN University for Peace in Budapest.

"It was a very successful beginning although we know that a lot of homework still needs to be done," said Ambassador Aydin Idil, Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek. "Our Kyrgyz partners have been offered many interesting opportunities to develop an institution, which can prove relevant not only to Central Asia but to the entire OSCE region."

For more information on the OSCE Academy, please access www.osce-academy.net.kg.

Rainer Hermann is Adviser to the OSCE Secretary General.

In Cleveland or Kyrgyzstan, police work is police work

By Tim Del Vecchio

Our plane landed in Bishkek at 2:30 a.m. The sleepy airport had to grudgingly wake up for a few minutes to handle the late arrival of our Turkish Airlines flight. We were five time zones from Vienna and six more from my hometown of Cleveland, Ohio. My jet lag was reminding me that I had come half-way around the world. Two years earlier, I had never heard of the place. I doubt if I could have even spelled its name, much less located it on a map. That was before September 11.

It's when you step off the plane that you immediately recognize how much the world has changed. Fighter planes and other military aircraft line the runway, guarded by foreign soldiers, dressed in desert uniforms. It was an example of how quickly countries can jump out of obscurity and land at the centre of world attention. I had seen it before, in Kosovo, where I served a year as a police officer.

It was only two Novembers ago that

I was in a remote Balkan village investigating the deaths of four boys who had been mowed down by Kalashnikov fire. Now, I was in this Central Asian republic, conducting an assessment of the national police.

Again, strangely enough, it had been Kalashnikov fire that brought me there. A few months earlier, several demonstrators had been shot by police. At the request of the Government, the OSCE Senior Police Adviser, Richard Monk, sent me and several other police experts from France, Germany, Norway, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom to Kyrgyzstan to see what we could do to improve things.

My visit followed that of two French *gendarmes* who had spent 15 days assessing public order issues. I had been asked to look into investigative operations, while my Russian colleague, Alexei Kouvcinnikov, would examine information systems.

The country's strategic location in Central Asia, which had given it such a

sudden and high international profile, also contributed to its law enforcement problems. The tourist books tell you that the old Silk Road passed through much of Kyrgyzstan. Back in the time of Marco Polo, merchants hauled silk and spices over its winding trails. Today, the cargo can be terrorists, drugs, weapons, counterfeit currency and even slaves.

As in the time of Marco Polo, the destination is frequently Europe. It's a fact I kept at the back of my mind for future fund-raising efforts: the Kyrgyz police not only have to be modernized and made more effective for the sake of Kyrgyzstan but also for Europe.

Money – or the lack of it – is the primary problem. Since becoming independent from the Soviet Union in 1991, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan has been trying to get its economy rolling. It only has 5 million people, and 51 per cent live below the poverty line. The entire police budget for the southern city of Osh (population: 500,000) is less than what my former boss was paid back in the USA.

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OSCE Senior Police Adviser Richard Monk (centre) and (behind him, centre) Police Adviser Hans Jarvestam visited the Police Academy in Bishkek in May 2002 to lay the groundwork for the OSCE-Kyrgyzstan police co-operation programme. They were received by the head of the Police Academy, Lieutenant-General Bek-sultan Ishimov and his staff. The Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, Ambassador Aydin Idil (behind Mr. Monk, to his right), was part of the OSCE team

Despite the financial hardships that I saw, I was often impressed by the dedication and work ethic of my Kyrgyz colleagues. Most worked 14-hour days and were lucky to get one day off a month. I found it unfortunate that people who were putting in those kinds of hours were only paid \$25 to \$35 a month.

It was interesting to learn that officers basically keep the police department running out of their own pockets. They use their personal cars to respond to crime alerts because they don't have patrol cars. They buy their own cell phones because the police department can't provide them with radios. They write their reports using their own personal computers. I must

admit that I have often wondered if my colleagues back home would go to such lengths.

We found a lot of problems during our assessment but we also found a lot of dedicated and professional police officers who wanted to bring about positive change and improvement. In my many conversations with "street cops", the topic of money rarely came up. Like cops everywhere, our conversations mostly revolved around the best ways to catch bad guys, what new equipment and updated training could do and which restaurants served the best coffee. It reinforced a lesson I had learned in Kosovo: police work is police work no matter

where you go in the world.

The OSCE's Strategic Police Matters Unit will initiate an operational programme soon to tackle the many problems we identified during the two-month assessment process. Police experts will be recruited from OSCE participating States to implement the recommendations that should, hopefully, develop the Kyrgyz police into a model agency for the rest of Central Asia.

Judging from the officers I met in Kyrgyzstan, I think we can do it.

Tim Del Vecchio has been serving as the criminal investigation expert in the OSCE's Strategic Police Matters Unit since September 2002. He is one of four Police Affairs Officers recruited for the Unit, which is headed by Senior Police Adviser Richard Monk.

Previously, Mr. Del Vecchio served as a CIVPOL officer with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) for a year, first as Chief of Investigations in Yucitrn/ Yushtrri and later, as Chief of Forensics for the Mitrovica/Mitrovice region. He also served as the Mitrovica Region Press Information Officer.

Mr. Del Vecchio has had a 30-year career in the Ohio State Patrol, retiring as Commander of the State Patrol's Cleveland Office. He was responsible for the operation of a major crimes investigation unit, an urban highway patrol, a specialized auto theft squad, security for state government buildings, co-operative agency crime task forces, and close protection for several state governors and U.S. Presidents.

Border monitoring in the Caucasus

“Heli insertions” make work less than humdrum

By Alexander Nitzsche

It was around 8 o'clock on a cool late October morning last year when I stepped off the overnight train from Baku, Azerbaijan, into the busy streets outside the central train station of Tbilisi, the Georgian capital. Volker Jacoby, spokesperson of the OSCE Mission to Georgia who was there to pick me up, gave me a generous five minutes to drop off my luggage at my lodgings. Then we were off to the airport to hitch a ride with a Ukrainian helicopter to one of the OSCE Mission's Border Monitor Patrol Bases in Shatili, in the Caucasus mountains.

We have two helicopters – one Ukrainian and the other Georgian – and they are generally quite reliable,” Volker tells me encouragingly. “The pilots are real pros.” As we cross the airfield of Tbilisi's military airport, a Georgian army helicopter takes off, leaving behind a cloud of dust. “The mountainous area in the border zone is extremely difficult to fly,” Volker continues. “The passes up there are nearly 3,500 metres high – that's about the maximum height the helis can get up to.” Good news, I thought. At least the weather is gorgeous – sunny and no clouds in sight.

I meet Henry Chamberlain, an OSCE officer from the United Kingdom who is about to end 18 months' service in Georgia. He first worked as a border monitor, then as Deputy Operations Officer, and later as Planning Officer for the OSCE Border Monitoring head office. Now he is on his way back to the border as Deputy Team Leader of a group of monitors.

“We will now go up to Shatili which should take about 45 minutes,” Henry announces. “There, we'll pick up the monitoring team and then we're going to an OP for a heli insertion. The monitors

will stay there for four, five hours. After that they'll walk back to the Shatili team base.”

Military jargon

OP? Heli insertion? The military jargon puzzles me, until I learn that 75 per cent of the monitors are either former or current military officers. An OP is an Operations Point – a location high up in the mountains that the monitors define before their trips and from where the observation of border routes and tracks is easiest. To get there, you need a helicopter, which is why a trip to the OP is called a heli insertion.

We board the helicopter, accompanied by five Georgian security officers who are, according to the OSCE's Mission mandate, responsible for protecting the OSCE officers while at work. I ask Henry how life is in winter up in the mountain bases: I imagine heaps of snow, monitors on skis sliding back to base camp where their colleagues are watching *Langlauf*-competitions on the communal satellite-powered TV set over hot drinks.

“In the winter months we only have about 20 per cent of the usual manpower,” Henry replies. “At this time of year we limit monitoring to one short patrol a day but then we get to use the helicopters for drop-offs. “To be honest though, winter-monitoring is just as

good and enjoyable as in the summer.” Enjoyable?

I see that we are crossing the gorges of the Caucasus. We are flying so low that the shadow of the helicopter can be clearly distinguished on the ground, propellers and all. Amazing.

A few minutes later, the helicopter poises itself carefully on the hill above the old town of Shatili, declared a world cultural heritage site by UNESCO. Volker gives me a quick run-down of the main attractions.

“It's time for the heli insertion,” Zoltan Nemeth, a border monitor from Hungary, tells me.



Monitors are taken by helicopter to a pre-identified “Operations Point” along the border

"Today we are going on a long patrol; that means a minimum of eight hours out there. We do the long trips every day, except on days when the monitors rotate." Usually, the monitors stay two to three weeks up in the team bases, but they have a one-week break in Tbilisi.

Back in the helicopter, the roaring sound of the propellers forces me to yell my questions at Zoltan. "Have you been to other OSCE team bases in Georgia?" Zoltan nods and shouts back: "The monitoring areas are very different from each

other. I cannot tell you which is the most difficult one. Shatili has the biggest area of responsibility, Girevi means a lot of climbing, in Omalo they start every patrol by climbing down and then up again and continue this for the entire trip. And Sno requires a lot of car patrols as the area covered is quite large."

It is time for the patrols to be dropped off. The pilot makes a neat, tight left curve – which moves my stomach to the area under my armpits – and then goes down to hover some two metres above

ground. There is a flurry of movement in the helicopter, about a dozen patrol members get up from their seats, make their way to the door and casually jump out.

Promptly we take off again, the monitors rapidly turning into the size of dots stuck to the hill, and we are off again on our way to Tbilisi, with half our passengers gone.

Alexander Nitzsche is a Press and Public Information Officer in the OSCE Secretariat.

Georgia's Border Monitoring Operation needs you!

Do you like mountain-hiking by day and by night? Are you a good skier and in excellent physical condition? And how is your eyesight – excellent? If you can answer all these questions with a yes, then you just might be the ideal monitor to fill one of more than 100 posts with the OSCE Mission to Georgia. Your assignment: to be part of a round-the-clock team observing the Chechen, Ingush and Dagestani

segments of the border between Georgia and the Russian Federation.

The decision of OSCE participating States in December 2002 to further expand the Border Monitoring Operation in Georgia means almost a tripling of the number of international personnel in the border region, requiring up to 144 monitors during the summer and up to 111 monitors in the winter months. Previously, 54 interna-

tional border monitors were deployed to the four patrol bases in the Chechen and Ingush segments; in the winter, this was reduced to 42.

The aim is to complete the staffing in June, Ambassador Jean-Michel Lacombe, Head of the OSCE Mission to Georgia, told the Permanent Council on 6 February. He urged qualified women to apply.

A. Nitzsche

Chronology

15 December 1999: At the request of the Georgian Government, the OSCE Permanent Council decides to send a first group of border monitors "to observe and report on movement across the border between Georgia and the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation, both by vehicle and on foot". Some parts of the area are almost inaccessible in the winter, which is where the skis come in.

February 2000: The first observation posts are up and running in the Chechen border segment. In accordance with their mandate, the observers are unarmed and have no enforcement responsibilities.

December 2001: The Permanent Council expands the mandate of the Border Monitoring Operation (BMO), to cover the Ingush section of the border.

19 December 2002: The Permanent Council decides to again expand the BMO, as of 1 January 2003, including "observa-



The helicopter makes its descent on the hill above Shatili, one km. away from the Chechen border

tion and reporting on movement across the border between Georgia and the Dagestan Republic of the Russian Federation".

28 January 2003: The OSCE Mission starts training the first group of soldiers of the Georgian security detachment, who, according to the Mission mandate, are responsible for the monitors' security during their trips to the border areas.

February 2003: As an initial step towards implementing the extension, the BMO occupies its first permanent Patrol Base on the Dagestani portion of the Georgian-Russian border, in Kvareli. The first task is to equip the base and prepare for the arrival of the new border monitors. In the meantime, locations for the remaining three Patrol Bases are being identified. Negotiations with the Georgian authorities on the use of an additional airport as a helicopter base for the monitors are expected to conclude by the onset of spring.

16.5 million euros: Total cost of Border Monitoring Operation in Georgia in 2003

A. Nitzsche

Interweaving lives: The making of “Kosovo, Kosova”

A reconciliation film project elicits mixed emotions

By Jody Barrett

Ignorance breeds the myths that lead to stereotyping, demonization and even to violence. This is the assumption that underpins Kosovo/a, a 60-minute documentary that was partly funded by the OSCE and had its premiere showing in Pristina in June 2002. Set in the towns of Mitrovica and Gracanica, it seeks to encourage people to recognize the inherent humanity of individuals on “the other side” by taking them on a film voyage into the lives of two Kosovo Albanians and two Kosovo Serbs.

The OSCE Newsletter invited Jody Barrett, who designed the project and was the film’s co-producer and co-director, to write down her reflections on the peace-building initiative. The film’s four protagonists were also asked to write brief essays.



Jody Barrett at the border of Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania, during a break from filming

Kosovo/a: Interweaving Lives grew out of my experiences while working in Kosovo for six months in 2000, soon after the conflict. Since I worked exclusively with Kosovo Albanians, I initially understood the situation solely from their perspective.

Towards the end of my assignment, I finally started meeting young Kosovo Serbs who were living difficult, confined lives in an enclave in Rahovec/Orahovac.

As I got to know them and was warmly welcomed into their homes, I realized how easily I, too, had accepted stereotypes as fact.

I knew it would be almost impossible for both my Serbian and Albanian friends, given the physical and emotional barriers between them, to undertake the same journey into each other’s world as I did. It was then that the idea of a film came to mind as the only practical means of transporting them safely into the other community, allowing them to get a glimpse of each other’s lives.

In Adnan, Pop, Linda and Saska, I found four young people whose present circumstances and experiences in the recent past varied greatly, but who led parallel lives in many ways: they attached great importance to relationships with family and friends, they were uncertain about what the future held, and there was nothing they desired more than to be happy.

I admire their courage in agreeing to be public faces – perhaps even targets – in the struggle for tolerance. For me, they were more than film subjects; they became my friends and were proof that a peaceful future for Kosovo was possible.

In particular, I noticed dramatic changes in Saska. During the project, she was in frequent contact with a number of Albanians and it seemed to me that she was shedding her negative and isolationist attitude on inter-ethnic relations.

My expectations for the success of

the film were quite high when I returned from post-production work in Amsterdam in May 2002 to screen the film publicly. I was convinced that through Adnan’s charm, Saska’s spirit, Pop’s sensitivity and Linda’s beauty, the public would immediately relate to and identify with their stories.

Perhaps my expectations were too high. Judging by the discussions held after each screening, few of the 2,000 or so viewers were able to look beyond ethnic demarcation lines with an open mind and see the film as a story of four human beings. Most did not mention the young people’s names, referring to them only as the “Serbian boy” or the “Albanian girl”.

The most common reaction was dissatisfaction that the filmmakers had not sufficiently demonstrated that “my people” had suffered more than “the others”. Many read either Machiavellian machinations and stratagems into the senti-

ments expressed, or coercion on our part. Most disturbing to me was a tendency among viewers to echo each other's statements and to limit comments within a narrow range of ethnically-acceptable formulae.

I had to remind myself, however, that there were reasons for this reticence, including the strong pressure on people to conform to societal norms, especially at open forums. Furthermore, the film had sought to have an impact primarily on the internal process of individual perception, which is not easy to detect through public debate.

The negative feedback should be tempered with an example illustrating that public and private reactions are not necessarily consistent with one another. In one all-Albanian screening, a woman expressed a complete lack of identification with the film's subjects, viewing Mitrovica as if it were another planet. Yet she confided in a friend how the film had made her long to contact a good Serbian girlfriend, now lost in exile; she also told me privately that Saska, who is Serbian, was her favorite character.

In a few cases, the audience did manage to get a good exchange going and seemed to have grasped the idea that the film was not meant to glorify victimhood. These satisfying discussions usu-

ally were in the presence of youth groups, sponsored by non-governmental organizations, or were in areas that had suffered minor physical destruction from the conflict or had a longer history of inter-ethnic integration, especially in the Gji-lan/Gniljane and Dragash/Dragas regions.

Summing up my feelings about the project, I regret that I left Kosovo less hopeful about a conflict-free future than when I had arrived. Partly, this feeling comes from the many – too many – intractable, nationalist views I heard at the screenings. The absolutism of views and principles and the absence of any alternative discourse left little room, I felt, for political dialogue.

Partly, my dampened hopes stemmed from a disappointment on a human, rather than political, level. Towards the end of the film's tour, in the Serbian-dominated northern areas, I saw how Saska, despite having befriended Adnan and Linda, agreed with negative remarks in the audience about Albanians. Her comments revealed that what I had thought was a fundamental change in her views was merely illusory, or at best, still too fragile in the face of public opprobrium.

Despite the predominance of negative reactions, we received many positive ones, especially from young people who

were involved in programmes with local and international non-governmental organizations. This tells us that awareness and tolerance can be learned and developed, and that projects such as *Kosovo/a*, which serve as conduits for individual contact, can chip away at the anger and wariness between two sides.

Jody Barrett, 40, from the United States, has been living in and working from Amsterdam on Kosovo/a for more than two years. Her 12 years as an actress and art curator led her into using the arts for post-conflict reconciliation after completing a masters degree in international relations at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Kosovo/a, shot in Serbian and Albanian and featuring subtitles, was screened and discussed at 50 locations throughout Kosovo between June and August 2002. It was aired on Radio Television Kosovo in September. The producers, Springbok Film (Netherlands), are currently promoting it among television broadcasters in south-eastern Europe and in other countries and plan to show the version with English subtitles at international film festivals and enter it in competitions. To find out more about the film, please see www.kosovo-a.net or contact: jodybarrett@yahoo.com.

Pop

I met Jody at an actors' seminar in the summer of 2001, where I told her about my life with my family in the enclave in Gracanica, in central Kosovo, after we had to leave Pristina. I told her how my freedom of movement was restricted, how I could not talk in my native language in my own hometown and how I had to travel regularly to Serbia for my education. My story affected her, and she decided to include my experience in the film.

Politics is like a house: it has foundations, floors, walls and a roof. But we should ask ourselves, where do we fit in all this? We are in this big house and we have to find ways to manage and survive in this

house and to protect it. At the same time though, we should not forget the essential value of our lives independent of the house.

My sense is that, through this film, we have done something new to make us think about the questions: "How do we move forward? What will happen next? Can we live together?"

Pop, 23, is a student in art history at the University of Pristina in Blace, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. He worked with the OSCE on election activities, travelling daily in an armoured car between home and office.



Little boy Pop

Adnan

I agreed to take part in the project by convincing myself that we were doing a film about us, the young citizens of Kosovo. Had I focused my thoughts on the fact that we were filming with Serbs, perhaps I would not have been in it at all, after what happened between us. During the filming, I thought a lot about whether or not what I was doing was a good thing at this point in time, but the support of my family and friends helped me get rid of this doubt.

I think that the film was a little bit difficult to understand since it deals with issues that are only beginning to be discussed in Kosovo. Some people came

up to me to ask, "What did this documentary want to say actually?"

But it also encouraged many people to see "the other side" as human beings, not Serbs or Albanians. As for the sensitive issue of co-existence, there are a lot of words said about it, but action has to be taken sooner or later – by the youth, if by nobody else.

Adnan, 22, who is from the town of Vushtrri/Vučitrn, is a medical student at the University of Pristina. He counts his high-school days in Mitrovica as among his happiest.



Adnan is the youngest one. His two older brothers had to move to Germany in their teens to support the family



Saska: days of innocence

Saska

It is a good idea to have films like *Kosovo*, but I am not sure how much they can positively influence the mass reconciliation process. Still, without projects such as this one, people would not get a chance to see "the other side", nor get a chance to meet, which is difficult to do on our own in Mitrovica.

The contacts I established with Adnan, Linda and other young Albanians during the making of the documentary were a big step for me. I still keep in touch with some of them, usually by e-mail. A few months after the screening of the documentary, I did not miss the opportunity to meet and work with Adnan and Linda again for five weeks at the multi-ethnic workshops offered by the Mobile Culture Container [the travel-

ling project of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media] for the young people of Mitrovica.

There is a strong will to overcome ethnic divisions within myself and some of my friends, but I don't think it is strong enough yet, and although I still am not fully confident in the power and potential impact of the voice of the youth, I am glad that there is at least interest in the various reconciliation projects.

Saska, 16, is in high school in northern Mitrovica, where she lives with her parents and two brothers. "I don't know if I will live here for a day, a year or the rest of my life... freedom is a relative thing," she says in the film.

Linda

Some people who saw the film did not interpret it favourably. This is because hatred still exists, especially among those who went through bitter experiences during the conflict. I understand how difficult it is for these people to accept the idea of co-existence, but we Albanians must accept the reality that we should live with Serbs as well as with others. This acceptance will take time, however.

My family thought that the film was a positive step in the breaking of existing barriers. Although my father was a casualty of the conflict, I have not refused to accept

the idea of living side by side Serbs. This does not mean I have forgotten what happened to him; it simply means I want a better life for everybody in Kosovo. I believe strongly that this is possible.

Linda, 17, who had grown up comfortably in northern Mitrovica, from where Kosovo Albanians had been displaced, experienced the brutalities of the conflict perhaps more than the others, having lost her father and her home. She works part-time for Radio Mitrovica and is the only one in her family able to continue her education.



Linda could not come up with a picture of herself as a little girl. When her family's home was burned down, Linda lost all traces of her childhood



FROM THE FIELD

Ambassador William Hill and Ambassador Adriaan Jacobovits to push for solutions in Moldova

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office (CiO), Netherlands Foreign Minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, has appointed distinguished diplomat and academic, Ambassador William H. Hill of the United States, as Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova. Ambassador Hill served in the same capacity from June 1999 to November 2001.

The Mission to Moldova seeks to facilitate the achievement of a lasting political settlement in the country and to encourage implementation of an agreement on the complete withdrawal of foreign troops.

To help negotiate a political solution to the conflict, the CiO has also extended the mandate of Ambassador Adriaan Jacobovits as his Personal Representative. He is a former Dutch diplomat with extensive experience in international organizations and multilateral negotiations.

At his first meeting with the press in Moldova after assuming his post on 23 January, Ambassador Hill remarked on the progress achieved in the negotiations process in 2002 and the special role played by the Mission in formulating the Kiev document put forward by the mediators.

"This project was a great step forward," he said. "For the first time there is a document backed by all the mediators and general consensus on some key issues among the two sides to the dispute. They have continued to work on the basis of this document, and it is my objective to help move this project forward to resolution."

Ambassador Hill joined his country's Foreign Service in 1979 as a Desk Officer in the Office of Soviet Union Affairs. Foreign postings included Moscow, Belgrade and Dhaka. From 1986 to 1987, he was Executive Assistant with the U.S. CSCE Delegation in Vienna.

From 1991 to 1992, he served as the CSCE Co-ordinator in the U.S. Department of State, mainly to oversee U.S. participation in the CSCE.

In the 1990s, Ambassador Hill held high-level posts in the U.S. Department of State dealing with Eastern Europe, arms control and international security. From 1997 to 1998, he was Senior Adviser and Country Director of the Office for Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia at the Department of Defense, later also responsible for programmes in Moldova and Belarus.

In Washington, D.C., Ambassador Hill also worked as Deputy Chief of the USSR Division and as Chief of the European Division for Voice of America, directing U.S. broadcasts in several languages.

A graduate of Harvard University and the University of California, Ambassador Hill spent a year as a graduate student at the Moscow State University and a year as a post-doctoral research fellow at Harvard's Russian research centre. In 1999, he worked as a research scholar on "European Security Institutions after the Cold War: The Changing Roles of NATO and the OSCE", for the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C.



Ambassador William H. Hill

OSCE/CIH/00000000

Tetovo: Multi-ethnic school paper hits the streets



POINT, a school newspaper edited and produced by Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish youngsters, came out with its first edition on 20 January. Some 40 boys and girls from all six high schools in the Tetovo region worked in teams to write articles, take photos, draw cartoons, design graphics and distribute the eight-page paper. *POINT* will come out every two weeks with a print run of 10,500, of which 2,500 are in Macedonian and 8,000 in Albanian. A

Turkish edition is also planned. The contents focus on the interests of young people everywhere – from skateboarding to qualities of a good teacher. The paper also carries interviews with local sports and entertainment personalities. The project is funded by the Media Development Unit of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje and by the Confidence Building Initiative of the International Organization for Migration.

Tajikistan: Social Partnership Club to broaden perspectives

A new discussion forum in Dushanbe, the Social Partnership Club, held its first roundtable on 21 January focusing on national minorities policy. "This unique forum will explore ways in which Tajikistan can enter the new millennium and further secure national unity," said Ibragim Usmanov, State Adviser to the President, in welcoming the 40 Tajik leaders and decision-makers from the country's various sectors. The event was organized on the initiative of the Presidential Executive Office, with the support of the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe.

The Social Partnership Club will hold 19 roundtables this year on issues ranging from the death penalty and the practice of torture, to the election process and private entrepreneurship.

Azerbaijan: Entrepreneurs tour development schemes in Vienna

Representatives from the Azeri Ministry of Economic Development, the Council of Ministers, and several small-business groups took part in a study tour of industrial parks and development schemes for small and medium-size enterprises in the Danube Basin.

The trip, from 27 to 29 January, was organized by the OSCE Office in Baku in co-operation with the Government of

Azerbaijan and the United Nations Development Programme. Participants obtained first-hand knowledge of the basic features of successful business incubators including operational and management strategies, government relations, services and incentives, and special legislation. Participants had meetings at the UN Industrial Development Organization in Vienna, the Eco Plus Business Park in Wiener Neustadt, and the Gyor Business Park in Hungary.

Albania: Impact of anti-trafficking project is examined



Ambassador Osmo Lipponen (centre), Head of OSCE Presence in Albania

The results of an OSCE project on Women's Rights and Anti-Trafficking Education (WRATE) were discussed at a meeting in Tirana from 23 to 25 January. The project, initiated by the OSCE Presence in Albania in November, has trained

18 people specializing in women's rights and anti-trafficking issues and has reached more than 1,600 participants through more than 100 workshops throughout the country. During the first two days of the meeting, staff from the Albanian National Training and Technical Assistance Resource Centre taught advocacy and lobbying skills to WRATE trainers. On the last day, the participants evaluated the earlier regional workshops. The OSCE Presence plans to extend activities to Albania's north-eastern regions, addressing Roma, women in rural areas, students, teachers, health care providers, the police, judges and prosecutors.

The OSCE currently has missions or other field activities in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo (Yugoslavia), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

IN BRIEF

Chairman-in-Office regrets end of OSCE mandate in Chechnya

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office (CiO), Netherlands Foreign Minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, has expressed regret that the mandate of the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya could not be extended. The Russian Federation had proposed serious changes to the Group's mandate, which led to the disagreement over its extension. The mission ceased its activities at the beginning of 2003 and must be closed by 21 March.

"It is important for the OSCE to have a presence in Chechnya, with a broad mandate," the CiO said on 3 January, adding that he intended to discuss this and other matters at a meeting with his Russian counterpart, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. "In recent years, the mission has done useful work, often under difficult conditions. If the OSCE can continue its work in Chechnya in a way that is acceptable to all parties, this can contribute to reducing instability, insecurity and lawlessness."

CiO welcomes surrender of ex-Serbian President Milutinovic to ICTY

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer has welcomed the voluntary surrender of former Serbian President Milan Milutinovic to the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague. In a statement on 20 January, the CiO said he hoped that the transfer of Mr. Milutinovic would mark another step towards full co-operation with the Tribunal by the authorities

of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. "Full co-operation with the ICTY of countries in the region will serve as further proof of their commitment to internationally established principles of rule of law," he said.

Austrian Foreign Minister promotes Human Security Network

Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner of Austria addressed the Permanent Council on 16 January, focusing on the work of the Human Security Network, which she chairs. The Network comprises 13 countries from all over the world which have come together at the level of foreign ministers to promote the concept of taking responsibility for protecting the life and freedom of human beings. Formally launched at a ministerial meeting in Norway in 1999, the group grew out of the campaign against landmines and the Rome Statute creating the International Criminal Court "A new gen-



Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner

eration of threats related to human security such as terrorism, the unchecked proliferation of small arms, the trafficking in human beings and the forced recruitment of children by armed groups pose a challenge to the international system and to humanity," she said. "There are significant parallels between the aims and objectives of the Network and the OSCE."

Bulgaria prepares for 2004 Chairmanship

A seminar in Sofia on 29 January was the first public event initiated by the Foreign Ministry of Bulgaria to get ready for the country's Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2004. Journalists, academics, representatives of non-governmental organizations, diplomats and military experts discussed where the Organization stands today and how to make it better known to the public. Solomon Passy, Bulgaria's Foreign Minister, told participants that his country looked forward to chairing "the largest security organization covering one billion people". Bulgaria, which occupies one of the rotating seats in the United Nations Security Council until the end of this year, will take over the OSCE Chair from the Netherlands on 1 January 2004. The country also expects to join NATO as a full member the same year.



PRESS PROFILE

Excerpts from a recent selection of articles on the OSCE and its activities

CHAIRMANSHIP

Associated Press, 13 January

Europe's largest security organization will "shift from policymaking to action" in its fight against terrorism, human trafficking and other crimes, the Netherlands pledged as it took over the group's presidency. Dutch Foreign Minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Chairman of the OSCE for 2003, said the Vienna-based OSCE would sharpen its efforts to improve border security and police co-operation and cut off the flow of cash to terrorist groups. Since the September 11 attacks, the 55-nation agency has adopted two charters on preventing and combating terrorism. Last month, it also laid down guidelines for regular reviews of security policy as new dangers emerge.

Austrian Press Agency, 7 January

"Citizens must feel safe in Europe and the OSCE states," said Jaap de Hoop Scheffer whose country took over the OSCE Chair for 2003 from Portugal on January 1. They must be protected not only from "the danger of terrorism and organized crime, but also from persecution by governments and their excessive interference."

MISSION AREAS

BelaPAN News Service, 30 December

A memorandum of understanding was signed between the OSCE and the Government of Belarus on 30 December 2002. The parties agreed to open an OSCE office in Minsk on 1 January 2003 ... Belarusian presidential aide Ihar Lyashchenya said that "the scope of

responsibility of the new OSCE office has been widened considerably to include assistance in the development of the country's economy and environmental protection".

Reuters, 30 December

Belarus, isolated by the West over allegations of stifling democratic freedoms, has reached an agreement that will allow European human rights monitors back into the country, the OSCE said. [It] said the OSCE Permanent Council welcomed Belarus' decision allowing a new office for Europe's human rights watchdog and monitoring organization to open in Minsk.

Radio Free Europe, 2 January

"The new office will assist the Belarusian Government in further pro-

moting institution-building, in further consolidating the rule of law, and in developing relations with civil society in accordance with OSCE principles and commitments. That's the first part. Secondly, it will assist the Belarusian Government in its efforts in developing economic and environmental activities. And thirdly, it will monitor and report accurately on the above-mentioned objectives," said OSCE spokesman Richard Murphy.

Agence France Presse, 6 January

Six pilot schools in Republika Srpska are participating in a project to use interactive teaching methods. These are the beginnings of what is now a comprehensive effort to reform education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The country's problems with education – which range from a fragmented system with 13 different education ministries to using outdated teaching methods to lack of access for returnee children – are now being tackled by more than 200 organizations under the umbrella of the OSCE.

OSCE and local education officials presented a broad education reform agenda to the Peace Implementation Council in Brussels in November. "This is a very exciting development, to have one strategy for BiH that's endorsed by all the ministries and stakeholders in education," said OSCE education adviser on non-discrimination and access, Jo-Anne Bishop.

Prime-News (Georgia), 13 January

In compliance with the decision adopted by the Permanent Council of the OSCE Mission to Georgia in December, the Border Monitoring Operation of the [Mission] would further expand and include observation and reporting on movement across the border between Georgia and the Dagestan Republic of the Russian Federation, both by vehicle and on foot ... Four border monitoring points would be opened on the Dagestan portion of the border,

with a total length of 152 km. The OSCE has been monitoring the Chechen portion (81 km) since 1999, and the Ingush portion (62 km) of the Georgian-Russian border since 2002.

Agence France Presse, 13 January

The new OSCE chief, Dutch Foreign Minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, said that he hoped to get Moscow to allow the pan-European security body's mission back into Chechnya ... Russia closed the OSCE mission in Chechnya on December 31 after demanding that the OSCE give up any political role in the Russian republic, where it has been working for a peaceful solution to the conflict between Russian forces and separatist rebels that has claimed tens of thousands of lives.

Reuters, 13 January

Russia has cut off further talks with the West on keeping human rights monitors from the pan-European OSCE security watchdog in its rebel Chechnya province, Russian diplomats said. Monitors from the OSCE are due to leave Chechnya after Moscow refused to renew the mission's mandate at the end of last year. "At this stage, we do not think that we will go on with any talks about a new mandate for a new mission in Chechnya," one Russian diplomat said. "I do not see any chance to go back for any kind of talks."

Voice of America, 23 January

The OSCE has criticized the United States for using new anti-terrorism laws to monitor the private lives of citizens – charges U.S. officials deny. The group's freedom of media representative, Freimut Duve, accused U.S. security services of tracking individuals' library records, newspaper subscriptions and bookstore receipts.

Novosti, 17 January

The OSCE has strongly denounced the Turkmen television's "Stalinist meth-

ods" of work. The statement of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve ... says that by authority of the government, Turkmen television disgraces people and engages in moral humiliation those who were allegedly involved in the attempt on Turkmen President Saparmurat Niyazov's life.

COMMENTARY

Wall Street Journal, 20 December

[From an article entitled "Soviet Ghosts vs. the OSCE – Who's Winning?" by Vladimir Socor, senior fellow of the Washington-based Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies] The OSCE seems increasingly ineffective, due not in the least to clashes within the organization between Western and Soviet-bequeathed values. At its year-end meeting, just held in Portugal, the OSCE quietly retreated before Europe's remaining Soviet ghosts. Armed and defiant, the most pernicious among these ghosts are: Europe's last dictatorship in Belarus; Russian troops and proxies still holding parts of Moldova and Georgia, tearing those countries apart; and, hovering protectively over occupation troops and allied despots, the Kremlin's sense of entitlement to exercising control over former Soviet territories. More effectively and resolutely than his predecessor Boris Yeltsin, Russian President Vladimir Putin is exploiting the OSCE's veto system, thwarting the organization's mission to promote security and democracy in those unfree enclaves in Europe. These issues are the main reason why the OSCE has been unable to hold any summit since Istanbul 1999, contenting itself with ministerial year-end meetings. The 2002 year-ender in Portugal, at the foreign affairs ministers' level, was ultimately skipped by quite a few ministers, who merely sent their deputies ... This meeting marked even a step back from some of the 1999 Istanbul summit's limited achievements.

Visit the OSCE website: www.osce.org

OSCE

NEWSLETTER



ELECTIONS

Republic of Serbia/FRY: repeat presidential election, 8 December



The ODIHR observed Serbia's repeat presidential election held on 8 December, which failed again due to insufficient voter turnout. In their post-election statement, the international observers expressed concern about the deepening political impasse in the Republic and the negative consequences this could have for Serbia's reform process.

The observers noted that the election was conducted largely in line with international commitments and standards for democratic elections. Amendments to the election legislation had improved the legal framework since the previous presidential election, especially with the removal of the 50 per cent turnout requirement in the second round of voting.

However, the election legislation still contained a number of significant shortcomings, including rules disenfranchising voters living abroad, who were temporarily absent from their permanent

residence, or who were homebound. The election administration structure had been strengthened, the observers noted, particularly through the incorporation of Municipal Election Commissions as intermediate election administration bodies. The media, in general, were unbiased although the coverage of candidates and the campaign had been much less than in the previous election.

While the underlying cause for the failure of the third attempt was the absence of some political interests from the election, the 50 per cent turnout requirement in a first-round election was a deciding factor, especially when combined with uncertainties in the voter registers and the strict provision of the law requiring citizens to vote only in the precinct polling station where they were permanently registered.

The international observers urged that before another repeat election was scheduled, these factors must be addressed. Particular consideration could be given to removing the 50 per cent turnout requirement from the first round.

The ODIHR long-term observation mission comprised 22 observers based in Belgrade and three regional centres in the Republic and in Kosovo. For election day observation, the ODIHR was joined by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. On election day, some 121 short-term observers from 31 participating States monitored the polls.

Republic of Montenegro/FRY: presidential election, 22 December

The ODIHR observed the presidential election in Montenegro held on 22 December, which failed due to insuffi-

cient voter turnout. In their post-election statement, the international observers from the ODIHR and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe called for the removal of provisions in the Republic's legislation allowing for an infinite repetition of unsuccessful elections.

The observers concluded that the election was administered largely in line with international commitments and standards for democratic elections. Overall, the election framework was adequate and conditions for holding democratic elections existed. However, the presidential election law was outdated and contained shortcomings which the previous parliament had failed to address before the election was announced.

The election process had some positive elements, including the representation of political parties on election commissions at all levels, the effective administration of electoral process, the largely accurate voter registers, and the broad access of non-partisan domestic observers to poll monitoring and counting.

The observation mission criticized the decision by major opposition parties to boycott the elections, depriving voters of a genuine choice and undermining the democratic process. In order to avoid further repetitions of failed elections, the mission recommended considering removal of provisions allowing for repeat elections or abolishing the 50 per cent turnout requirement.

The ODIHR long-term observation mission comprised 18 observers based in Podgorica and four regional centres throughout the Republic. For election day observation, the ODIHR was joined by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. On election day, some 103 short-term observers from 29 participating States monitored the polls.

Azerbaijan: roundtable on election legislation

A roundtable on the draft Election Code took place on 16 and 17 December in the Parliament of Azerbaijan. It was part of a process that was publicly launched in early July by the ODIHR, the Council of Europe's Venice Commission and the Azerbaijani authorities to engage key actors in a dialogue on improving election legislation. Despite the intensive negotiations conducted by the ODIHR and the OSCE Office in Baku with the support of the international community, the main opposition parties had decided not to participate in the roundtable discussions. Their absence was regrettable and showed a certain lack of trust and confidence in Azerbaijan's electoral reforms.

Albania: third roundtable on elections

A roundtable on civil and voter registration was held in Tirana on 3 December, the third in a series of four to assist



OSCE and Albanian representatives discuss voter registration

the bi-partisan parliamentary committee. Agreement was reached on the main issue: that civil registers should be the source for voter lists at the parliamentary elections in 2005. The event was jointly organized by ODIHR and the OSCE Presence in Albania.

Now on the ODIHR website at www.osce.org/odihr/documents/reports/electionreports

ODIHR final election observation reports

- ◆ General elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 5 October 2002
- ◆ Parliamentary election in Turkey on 3 November 2002

- ◆ General elections in the United States of America on 5 November 2002

Law reviews on election legislation

- ◆ Review of draft law on political parties of Romania
- ◆ Joint revised preliminary assessment of the revised draft Election Code of Azerbaijan of 28 November 2002 (ODIHR and Council of Europe Venice Commission)



DEMOCRATIZATION

Chechnya: training for defence lawyers

A second training seminar for the Chechen Lawyers Associations was organized by the ODIHR together with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and *Memorial*, the Russian non-governmental organization (NGO). The seminar, which took place in Moscow from 18 to 21 December, brought together 17 Chechen lawyers and Russian experts in international human rights mechanisms and key legislation in the Russian Federation. The training covered advocacy skills, network-building with NGOs and complaint mechanisms for human rights violations.

Armenia: public monitoring of prisons and detention centres

An ODIHR expert mission was in Armenia from 8 to 16 December to assist authorities with the establishment of a public monitoring scheme for prisons and detention centres. The delegation held a series of talks on the subject with high-ranking officials from the relevant ministries and visited several prisons, pre-trial detention centres and a police arrest station in Yerevan. At a roundtable in the capital, comprising representatives of the Government, NGOs and key international organizations, ODIHR expertise served as the basis for discussions on

possible developments.

The mission built on previous successful co-operation between the ODIHR, the Armenian Ministry for Justice and civil society. The ODIHR had provided comments on a draft decree on the establishment of a public monitoring board, which are expected to be integrated in the final version.

Ukraine: parliamentarians briefed on ODIHR work

Parliamentarians in Ukraine were briefed on 16 December about the work that has been carried out by the ODIHR in the past two years with the Presidential Administration and the Ministry of Justice on legislation concerning freedom of movement, including choosing a place of residence and civil registration. The briefing was organized together with the Parliament's Human Rights Committee and the Office of the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine. The aim was to support the ongoing legislative work in Parliament aimed at replacing the *propiska* (residence permit) system, which was declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court in a milestone ruling in 2001.

While there was broad support for putting an end to the Soviet-period legacy of the State dictating to its citizens where to reside within their country and hampering internal migration, it was pointed out that more work was needed, particularly by developing new civil registers. Participants also discussed the potential political and economic effects linked to the reform of the registration system, as well as OSCE commitments related to freedom of movement and choice of place of residence.

South-eastern Europe: roundtable on long-term prisoners

In co-operation with the OSCE Office in Montenegro and the Council of Europe, the ODIHR held a roundtable in Podgorica on 12 and 13 December on the treatment of long-term prisoners in the countries of south-eastern Europe.

The meeting, held at the invitation of Montenegro's Ministry of Justice, addressed issues relating to the treatment of long-term prisoners, including

national legislation providing for long-term sentences, physical arrangements for receiving and keeping these prisoners, and social rehabilitation and treatment programmes.

A proposal to create a regional prison management network was discussed, and participants agreed that regional meetings on the issue should be held annually to improve co-operation and co-ordination.



Legislationline.org charts new territory

Legislationline.org, the ODIHR-run database, has begun to expand its focus beyond south-eastern Europe to include all OSCE participating States. In addition to this geographic expansion, the website team is now in the process of drafting a comparative analysis of legislation concerning the independence of the judiciary, Roma and Sinti, the right to a fair trial, and prison service. The database, with daily updates of legal developments in the OSCE region, is available at www.legislationline.org.



ROMA & SINTI

South-eastern Europe: discussions on Romani mahalas (neighbourhoods)

Conflict related to Roma housing was the focus of a second roundtable in

Skopje, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on 13 and 14 December. The meeting, organized by the Project on Ethnic Relations (PER) in co-operation with the ODIHR, brought together local and national authorities from all over south-eastern Europe with Romani political leaders and representatives of civil society.

Discussions reflected a shared concern over the growing estrangement between inhabitants of Romani enclaves and majority populations, as well as the collapse of public services provided to Roma by municipalities. The roundtable also highlighted the positive experiences in some municipalities.

FYROM: meeting on Roma refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs)

The Roma Community Centre DROM, an NGO, organized a regional meeting on 27 and 28 December for Roma refugees and IDPs in Skopje, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with the support of ODIHR. The aim was to set up a network of self-organized refugee committees. Discussions focused on a common position on lasting alternative solutions for refugees and IDPs in the region, including integration into the host country or repatriation. An agreed draft platform was scheduled for review at a regional roundtable at the end of January.

Slovakia: pre-electoral training and monitoring of local elections

Supported by ODIHR, the Slovakian Romani NGO, ZOR Kezmarok, conducted a series of training workshops for Romani election observers. The newly trained observers assisted in Slovakia's local elections in early December 2002. Monitoring took place in 11 municipalities in eastern Slovakia, where the majority of the country's Roma populations reside. Out of 82 Roma candidates who ran for office on the lists of different parties, 48 were elected, among them a new mayor.

This year, the ODIHR is continuing its support for post-electoral activities

in Slovakia in co-operation with the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities and the *RraAJE* (Roma Rights and Access to Justice in Europe). The goal is to improve the capabilities of newly elected Roma, and to boost co-operation and confidence-building between Roma communities, authorities and majority populations.

Albania: first OSCE-supported Roma roundtable

National policy-making on Roma issues was the focus of a roundtable on 9 and 10 January. The first of its kind in the country, the roundtable was organized under a joint ODIHR-Council of Europe-European Commission programme on Roma and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

Discussions focused on the education and protection of children's rights in a multicultural society. Albanian government officials and representatives of local and international organizations exchanged views on current issues related to Albania's Roma communities and policies to improve their situation. The Government and the Roma NGOs agreed to work together to design a common platform aimed at improving the plight of the country's Roma community.

In a first follow-up measure, an existing government working group in charge of drafting a policy on Roma will now include representatives and experts to be provided by the network of Roma NGOs.

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UPDATE

HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES

Minority issues discussed with new Latvian Government

The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Rolf Ekeus, visited Riga, Latvia, from 3 to 5 December 2002. His main purpose was to meet members of the new Government – including Prime Minister Einars Repse and Foreign Minister Sandra Kalniete – to find out about its envisaged views on minority policy.

The High Commissioner was encouraged to learn about the Government's commitment to implement the Social Integration Programme, which is designed to improve inter-ethnic understanding. Ambassador Ekeus was also interested to hear about the Government's views on Latvian as the main language of instruction in minority schools. Other minority-related issues that were discussed included ratification of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities, as well as the naturalization process.

Ekeus welcomes adoption of Minority Law in Croatia

In a statement issued on 16 December, the High Commissioner welcomed the adoption of the Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities by the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia. "I hope that this long-awaited law will make a positive contribution to the improvement of inter-ethnic relations in Croatia and in the region," said Mr. Ekeus. "The adoption of this law constitutes a positive endeavour to ensure comprehensive protection of national minorities in Croatia."

He called on the Croatian authorities to ensure full implementation of the law in order to guarantee protection of the rights enshrined in it, adding that he was willing to assist the Croatian authorities in this process.

The adoption of the new Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities was one of Croatia's international obligations upon entry to the Council of Europe and also served as an

important benchmark for the implementation of the European Union association and stabilization process.

The High Commissioner's office has long been involved in the drafting and redrafting process to assist the Croatian Government to meet international standards in minority protection.

High Commissioner holds discussions in Turkey

The first-ever visit by an OSCE High Commissioner to Turkey, on 21 and 22 January, served as an opportunity for Ambassador Ekeus to have discussions with the Turkish Government on issues related to the country's reform process. Other topics of discussion in Ankara included regional matters of importance to both the High Commissioner and Turkey, and to Turkic minorities in the OSCE area. The High Commissioner hopes to follow up his visit with further dialogue and support in the area of legislative reform.

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UPDATE

OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

PA President expresses support for OSCE work in the field

The President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Bruce George, addressing the meeting of OSCE Heads of Mission in Vienna on 13 and 14 January, expressed the Assembly's strong support for the OSCE's work in the field. He also briefed the Mission Heads on the forthcoming meetings of the OSCE PA and its field-related activities.

In the regional group discussions, the PA President and representatives of the PA's International Secretariat discussed co-operation and future projects including field visits, activities of Ad Hoc Committees and election-monitoring projects. The Heads of Mission expressed strong interest in deepening co-operation with the OSCE PA and indicated that they placed high value on the PA's visits and activities in the field.

PA participates in OSCE Troika Meeting

PA President Bruce George took part in the OSCE Troika Meeting on 14 January in Vienna, which was led by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Dutch Foreign Minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.

The agenda focused on efforts to re-balance the three OSCE dimensions, trafficking in human beings, and co-ordination within the OSCE and with other

international institutions. Participants also discussed regional issues including the situation in Belarus, Chechnya, Georgia, Moldova and Turkmenistan. Mr. George informed participants about the OSCE PA's initiatives in these areas.

PA President addresses Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe



OSCE PA President Bruce George (left) and Secretary General Walter Schwimmer of the Council of Europe

OSCE PA President Bruce George visited the Council of Europe (CoE) in Strasbourg on 28 January and held meetings with the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Peter Schieder, and the Secretary

General of the CoE, Walter Schwimmer.

Addressing PACE, Mr. George emphasized the importance of the close co-operation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe. "Building European security in a comprehensive way and preventing conflict is a challenge both for the OSCE and for the Council of Europe – and it is a challenge that can

best be faced by both organizations working together and maximizing our respective areas of competence and comparative advantage," he said. "Likewise at the parliamentary level – and I am pleased that our two Assemblies have established a close relationship and an effective and mutually reinforcing dimension of labour."

He highlighted election monitoring and activities within the parliamentary dimension of the Stability Pact as particularly successful examples of co-operation between the two institutions.

European Parliament assumes Presidency of Parliamentary Troika

Rita Süsmuth (Germany), Vice-President of the OSCE PA, took part in the meeting of the Parliamentary Troika on the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe in Strasbourg on 14 January. The event marked the European Parliament's turn to head the Troika's rotating Presidency, succeeding the Council of Europe PA.

Elmar Brok, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, led the meeting. Other participants were Peter Schieder, President of the Council of Europe PA, and Erhard Busek, Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact.

The Troika also agreed with the proposal of OSCE PA President Bruce George that the rotating presidency of the Troika – the OSCE PA, the Council of Europe PA and the European Parliament – would last a full calendar year, instead of the previous practice of six months. The OSCE PA will assume the Presidency in 2004 and the Council of Europe PA in 2005.

The Third Parliamentary Conference on the Stability Pact will take place in Brussels on 21 and 22 May.

Parliamentary Assembly Liaison Office Opens in Vienna

The Chairman-in-Office and the Foreign Minister of Austria were the guests of honour at the formal opening of the new OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Liaison Office in Vienna. The reception, on 13 January, was hosted by OSCE PA President Bruce George and Secretary General Spencer Oliver.

Creating the Office was an excellent step, said the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Dutch Foreign Minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. "We have to realize that the Organization – as important as it is – needs marketing. Members of Parliament

are all ambassadors for the OSCE and its values, advocating and promoting our ideals."

Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner of Austria, who was Chairperson of the OSCE in 2000, said this permanent presence would enhance the relationship between the OSCE PA and the OSCE's Institutions in Vienna.

More than a hundred senior officials took part in the celebrations, including OSCE PA Vice President Rita Süsmuth, former speaker of the German Bundestag; OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis; and

Freimut Duve, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and a former member of the OSCE PA.

Andreas Nothelle from Germany, Special Representative of the OSCE PA, has been designated Head of the Liaison Office. He is a constitutional lawyer and a career civil servant who has served in the German Bundestag for more than 18 years. Previous to his OSCE appointment, he was head of the Interparliamentary Affairs Division and Deputy Director of the Bureau of Parliamentary Affairs in the Bundestag.

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OSCE

NEWSLETTER



UPDATE

REPRESENTATIVE ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA

Armenia: murder of journalist is "disturbing sign"

Journalist Tigran Nagdalyan, head of Armenia's Public Television and Radio, was murdered in Yerevan on 28 December 2002. He was shot in the head with a high-calibre TT pistol as he was leaving his parents' home. "I consider it significant that a number of high-ranking Armenian officials, including President Kocharyan, have

alleged murder attempt against the country's President. Speaking at the OSCE Permanent Council on 16 January, Mr. Duve stressed: "The practice of utilizing propaganda methods from the Stalin years is continuing. Live shows are staged on television that broadcast the confessions of the accused, numerous condemnations are reported, all of them demanding the death penalty for the accused as had happened during the show trials in the 1930s in the Soviet Union."

The OSCE media watchdog said the rhetoric used was often obscene, racist and would be unprintable in most countries. Mr. Duve quoted the President of Turkmenistan – an OSCE participating State – as saying, with reference to opposition leader Boris Shikhmuradov: "His blood is

diluted with the blood of a different nationality. Previously, to make Turkmen weaker their blood was diluted. Where the true blood of our ancestors is mixed with other blood, their national spirit is low."

Kazakhstan: OSCE calls for urgent review of trial of Kazakh journalist

The two OSCE institutions dealing with human rights and media freedom have expressed their concern about the trial of Kazakh journalist and human rights defender, Sergei Duvanov, and have called for an immediate review by the Appeals Court. Mr. Duvanov has been convicted and sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison for raping a girl.

"The numerous procedural irregularities and the apparent lack of evidence in this case raise the concern that this trial may have been politically motivated,"

said Freimut Duve, speaking from Vienna on 28 January, the day the conviction was issued.

From Warsaw, Steven Wagenseil, Acting Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), said: "The trial was seriously flawed and we call on the Appeals Court to review carefully the accusations against Mr. Duvanov as well as all allegations of procedural violations during the pre-trial investigation and the trial."

Earlier, on 16 January, Mr. Duve had told the OSCE Permanent Council: "I will follow this case very closely and expect that the rule of law will be upheld and that the trial will be fair." The Media Representative had intervened on behalf of Mr. Duvanov on previous occasions. He was one of the journalists who participated in the OSCE's fourth Central Asian Media Conference in Tashkent in September.

Kyrgyzstan: Government urged to ease pressure on media

Mr. Duve once again raised the situation of *Moya Stolitsta*, a leading independent newspaper, which had been accused by several senior officials of "presenting a distorted picture of the political situation in the country" and of "an anti-Kyrgyz bias". Similar views had been expressed in the pro-government newspaper, *Vecherniy Bishkek*.

In addition, more than a dozen lawsuits had been filed against *Moya Stolitsta* in 2002, many of them by State officials. In a letter addressed to Foreign Minister Askar Aitmatov, Mr. Duve wrote: "Your country, as an OSCE participating State, is a signatory to OSCE commitments in the field of freedom of the media. As a State that has publicly proclaimed its pledge to democratic values, I expect your Government to ensure that the media is allowed to freely function in Kyrgyzstan without undue pressure and harassment."



Freimut Duve

expressed their dismay about this tragic death and have promised a thorough and professional investigation," noted the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve, in his letter to Armenian Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanyan.

Mr. Duve added that he was aware of the importance the Government and the people of Armenia placed on freedom of expression and that violence against journalists was relatively rare in the country. "However, this murder and the 22 October attack on free-lance journalist Mark Grigorian are disturbing signs of a possibly deteriorating situation," he wrote.

Turkmenistan: methods compared to Stalinist propaganda

Freimut Duve has raised the issue of Turkmenistan television's abusive practice of humiliating and destroying individuals accused of taking part in an

United States: Patriot Act criticized

Speaking at the Permanent Council of the OSCE on 23 January, Freimut Duve criticized the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) of the United States for monitoring book-buyers and readers by investigating their library records, newspaper subscriptions and bookstore receipts under the Patriot Act.

"Governmental prerogatives are being used in a way that might intimidate citizens from exercising their right to

freedom of expression," he told the Council. He is looking into apparently similar situations in some countries in western Europe. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media has asked for clarification from U.S. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell.

Mr. Duve said that it might well be that the FBI and the INS had not recognized the significance of these measures for the freedom of ideas. "I trust that the freedom of expression will not be allowed to be jeopardized in the country we consider the cradle of that freedom," he said.

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UPDATE

SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE SECRETARIAT

SG holds bilateral discussions at Porto Ministerial Council

Secretary General Jan Kubis held separate discussions with Foreign Ministers and other high-ranking officials at the Tenth Meeting of the Ministerial Council in Porto, Portugal, on 6 and 7 December.

With Foreign Minister Nicolae Dudau of Moldova, he discussed the OSCE Mission in the country and the various aspects of Moldova-OSCE activities, including the OSCE team assigned to assess the level of co-operation in border and customs controls along the Moldovan-Ukrainian land border.

His meeting with Foreign Minister Mikhail Khvostov of Belarus focused on the future presence and activities of the OSCE in the country.

At the meeting with Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis of Lithuania, sub-regional and cross-border co-operation with Lithuania's neighbours were discussed. The Government also actively supports these same issues at the Council of Europe, which might well lead to enhanced co-operation with the OSCE.

Foreign Affairs Minister Talbak Nazarov of Tajikistan briefed the Secretary General on his country's foreign policy and underlined the need for the



Secretary General Jan Kubis with Ambassador Zef Mazi, who assumed his post as Head of the Permanent Mission of Albania to the OSCE on 19 December

OSCE to consider co-operation with Afghanistan.

Foreign Affairs Minister Ilika Mitrevat of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Secretary General

explored the OSCE's potential contribution to a conference in Ohrid on border issues, to take place possibly in May.

Secretary General Kubis and the First Vice Minister of Kyrgyzstan, Omar

George Bartsiotas is new Director of Internal Oversight

George Bartsiotas, a former senior Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Department of State, has been appointed the OSCE's Director of Internal Oversight. Prior to assuming his post at the end of January, he was Director for Resource Management at the U.S. Mission to the OSCE in Vienna.

Mr. Bartsiotas told the *OSCE Newsletter* that he was committed to strengthening the Organization's ability to pursue its policy objectives, free from the impediments arising from lack of internal controls, mismanagement, waste and fraud. "The office of Internal Oversight is relatively new to the OSCE, but thanks to my predecessor, Ambassador Victor Vislykh, the basic elements for the development of a modern internal oversight programme have been put into place," he said.

Before 2001, Mr. Bartsiotas held various senior diplomatic posts at the U.S. Embassies in Prague and Vienna. Assignments in Central Europe and the Balkans included a period as Deputy High Representative at the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo. During his tenure at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., he served as Director for Policy and Programme Analysis in the Bureau of Administration and as Area Branch Chief for programmes in the Middle East and South East Asia.

"One of my first steps will be to improve the risk assessment process on an OSCE-wide basis and to address material weaknesses accompanied by corrective action plans," he said. "I would like to see managers throughout OSCE taking systematic and pro-active measures to develop internal controls associ-



George Bartsiotas

ated with their programmes, and to continue improving the effectiveness of these controls."

He said he would be discussing with the Secretary General the establishment of an annual certification process whereby individual statements by Heads of Institutions and Missions as well as Directors of the Secretariat, will serve as the primary basis for determining the adequacy of internal controls throughout the Organization.

"These statements, along with reviews, audits, inspections and investigations performed by the office of Internal Oversight, will provide reasonable assurance to the Secretary General that management practices and internal controls are adequate and work well."

Mr. Bartsiotas believes that in addition to audits, compliance re-

views and investigations, his office has much to offer in such areas as programme and project evaluation, efficiency studies and management advice.

"The general trend of the internal oversight profession is to devote more resources to such areas as value-for-money work and evaluations, and leave the auditing and compliance work to external auditors," he said. "We are currently recruiting the diversified expertise needed for this work to supplement the excellent staff presently on board."

Mr. Bartsiotas holds advanced degrees in administration and management. He is a member of the Institute of Internal Auditors, the International Federation of Accountants, and the American Society of Public Administration.

OSCE/Alan Everett

Netherlands Chairmanship 2003

Cultural Programme

On the occasion of its Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2003, the Netherlands is inviting the general public to a series of art and cultural events focusing on human security in all its facets.

Freedom of expression for art critics and commentators

Some 25 journalists and media representatives from OSCE participating States discuss the tensions between national art policies and freedom of expression.

Museumsquartier, Vienna
14-16 February 2003

Partners: Felix Meritis, KulturKontakt, City of Vienna and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

"The Hague, International Centre of Justice and Peace"

An exhibit of pictures and objects presents the city of The Hague as a centre of international law and host to a range of organizations aimed at the peaceful resolution of disputes. The history of the Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907 is highlighted.

Hofburg, Vienna, 14-27 March 2003
Vienna International Centre,
9-23 April 2003
Sofia, June-July 2003
The Hague, 2004

Partners: Carnegie Foundation, Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands and city of The Hague

"Conflict /resolution"

Twelve young artists from Austria and the Netherlands explore the themes of violence, terror and war and suggest solutions.

Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
12-26 June 2003

Partner: Art Position

"Crossing the Line: Human Trafficking"

Internationally renowned photographers confront the subject of human trafficking through their art.

Prague, 20-23 May 2003
Project Space, Vienna,
27 May-6 July 2003
Sofia, September-October 2003
Photo Institute, Rotterdam,
October 2003
Institut Néerlandais, Paris,
November 2003

Partners: Netherlands Photo Institute, Kunsthalles Vienna and Institut Néerlandais Paris

The Bridge of Mostar

A multi-media exhibition features the original construction, destruction and rebuilding of the famous Mostar bridge and its multicultural surroundings.

Theseus Temple of the Vienna Art History Museum
17 July-31 August 2003

Partners: Vienna Art History Museum, French Foreign Ministry, Bosnian Ministry of Culture, Austrian Foreign Ministry and Austrian Federal Office for the Care of Monuments

International Theatre Festival for children and the youth

Ten international theatre groups explore themes dealing with trafficking in children, children and violence, and children in ethnic conflict situations.

Vienna, September-October 2003

Partner: Szene Bunte Wähne

Central Asian Republics: Film Festival

Films from the past four years feature a cinematically fascinating region.

De Balie Amsterdam, September 2003
Filmcasino, Vienna, October 2003

Partners: De Balie and Filmcasino

Music from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan

Traditional music provides insights into the culture, traditions and way of life of the region's communities

Tropentheater, Amsterdam
November 2003

Partner: Tropentheater Amsterdam



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"Dance against violence: a Netherlands-Austrian dance event for security in Europe", launched the Netherlands' OSCE Chairmanship 2003 on 12 January at the Vienna State Opera in the presence of some 1,000 guests. The Dutch National Ballet and the Vienna State Opera Ballet performed dances choreographed by Rudi van Dantzig, Hans van Manen and Renato Zanella. Above: the Dutch National Ballet in Richard Strauss' "Four Last Songs".

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