

Institutions



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

High Commissioner on National Minorities

Representative on Freedom of the Media

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is the main institution in the OSCE's human dimension: a broad concept that includes the protection of human rights; the development of democratic societies, with emphasis on elections, institution-building, and governance; strengthening the rule of law; and promoting genuine respect and mutual understanding among individuals as well as nations.

Ambassador Christian Strohal, an Austrian diplomat, has headed the ODIHR since March 2003. The Office has some 125 employees from 27 of the 55 OSCE participating States.

Based in Warsaw, Poland, the ODIHR works throughout the OSCE region, conducting activities aimed at fostering democracy and the rule of law, promoting and protecting human rights, addressing pertinent shortcomings and assisting participating States in the implementation of their commitments. The Office has also developed its role in providing information to the Chairman-in-Office about developments in these fields, including serious human rights violations, thus contributing to the OSCE's early-warning role.

As the region's lead agency in the field of election observation, the ODIHR has, in recent years, observed elections across the OSCE area, from the United States in the West to the far east of Russia, and many places in between. In 2005, the ODIHR conducted a total of 10 observation or assessment missions in both new and long-standing democracies. It made efforts to increase the diversity of election observers from across the OSCE region, as well as to help build the capacity of both governmental and non-governmental observers.

Through its new *Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Programme*, the Office has launched efforts to support participating States in strengthening their capacity to combat racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination throughout the region. Projects have been initiated to compile data on the frequency and types of hate crimes committed, to promote best practices in fighting hate crime and to provide targeted training to law enforcement officers as the first line of defence against all forms of hate and discrimination.

Elections

Recognizing that a democratic election process provides the foundation for democratic governance, the ODIHR works to improve the integrity of election processes, as well as the legislative and administrative framework for elections.

More than 3,000 observers were deployed to eight election observation missions and two assessment missions in 2005. In addition,

113 short-term and 19 long-term observers were financed through the ODIHR's voluntary Fund for the Diversification of Observation Missions, which was established to ensure more participation of nationals from 19 eligible participating States that may not regularly second individuals for ODIHR observation missions.

ODIHR Election Observation and Assessment Mission Schedule 2005

Country	Type of election	Date
Kyrgyzstan	Parliamentary	27 February/13 March
Tajikistan	Parliamentary	27 February/13 March
Moldova	Parliamentary	6 March
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Municipal	13 March/27 March/10 April
United Kingdom	General	5 May
Bulgaria	Parliamentary	25 June
Albania	Parliamentary	3 July/21 August
Kyrgyzstan	Early presidential	10 July
Azerbaijan	Parliamentary	6 November
Kazakhstan	Presidential	4 December

The ODIHR also fielded small teams of experts to support the assessment of elections by OSCE field missions in two cases where an observation mission was not deployed: parliamentary by-elections in Georgia and municipal elections in Moldova.



A member of the election committee at a polling station in Bishkek explains part of the Electoral Code to two voters during parliamentary elections in Kyrgyzstan on 27 February.

The ODIHR and the OSCE Secretariat jointly conducted two out-of-region activities in 2005: the deployment of a Training Needs Assessment Team to the Palestinian Territories during the January presidential election; and the deployment of an Election Support Team to the September parliamentary elections in Afghanistan. (For more on this topic, please see page 23.)

Election law reform and reviews. A legal framework that does not sufficiently reflect OSCE commitments is not conducive to the conduct of genuine and meaningful democratic elections. To address legislative gaps in many countries, the ODIHR uses a voluntary fund to provide expert advice on the reform of election-related legislation. In 2005, it issued a number of recommendations jointly with the Council of Europe's Venice Commission, including on: amendments to Azerbaijan's Electoral Code; Moldova's amended Election Code; Ukraine's amended law on the election of members of parliament; the bill on the state election commission of Croatia; and amendments to Armenia's Election Code. The ODIHR also issued an independent review of Uzbekistan's parliamentary election law.

Follow-up and implementation of recommendations. The ODIHR has been developing its capacity to follow up on the recommendations contained in its observation reports, offering its assistance in meeting those recommendations, where needed. In 2005, the Office conducted specific follow-up visits to Albania, Ukraine, the United States, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Emerging challenges and new commitments. The ODIHR's observation activities continue to identify emerging challenges to the holding of democratic elections, including those related to the introduction of new election technologies and procedures. This subject was one of the main points of discussion at the *Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Challenges of Election Technologies and Procedures*, held in April. Participating States were called on to ensure that there is broad public confidence whenever new election technologies are introduced.

States have now entered into a discussion on additional commitments to deal with these emerging challenges. The ODIHR convened an expert meeting in September to consider the need for additional commitments, which resulted in the drafting of an *Explanatory Note on Possible Additional Commitments for Democratic Elections* that was distributed among OSCE participating States. In the opinion of the ODIHR, three basic principles that are integral to democratic elections – transparency, accountability and public confidence – could serve as the basis for additional commitments.

Methodology. While the ODIHR's core methodology has not been fundamentally altered since the publication of the first *Election Observation Handbook* in 1996, it is periodically updated to take into account new challenges, as well as experiences gained over more than a decade of observation. In recent years, for example, the ODIHR has paid ever more attention to monitoring the participation of women and of national minorities in the electoral process.

In 2005, the Office updated and published a fifth edition of the *Handbook*. Available in English, French, Russian and Ukrainian it will soon be issued in a number of other languages. In addition to making the ODIHR's methodology available to a broader range of people with an interest in election observation, the handbook translations assist ODIHR efforts to support the role of domestic election observation as a distinct but complementary activity.

Domestic observation. The ODIHR has been instrumental in bringing together domestic observer organizations for exchanges of experience and best practices. In September, the Office convened a meeting dedicated to 15 years of domestic observation in the OSCE region. Participants recognized the significant role that domestic observer groups can play in ensuring the integrity of election processes in their own countries.

Democratization

The aim of the ODIHR's democratization work is to consolidate democratic culture. It creates a context for concerted action, bringing governments and civil society closer, and addresses issues that are often potentially divisive in a working context.

When developing a programme on any particular issue, two factors are critical for success: local ownership and the use of expertise from other OSCE participating States that have faced comparable situations. This is reflected in a methodological commitment to using consultants from the relevant regions and to developing lessons-learned mechanisms, as well as for sharing the experiences of south-eastern Europe with the wider OSCE.

The methodology of the Office's democratization programme continued to evolve in 2005, following the rationalization of project activities the previous year. For example, a measure was introduced to maximize the Organization's resources: structured assessment missions as a prerequisite to undertaking any democratization-related activities.

The five main human dimension meetings in 2005 saw increased participation by NGOs in comparison with previous years, including a record number of 433 representatives of 315 NGOs that took part in the *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting*.

Rule of law and legislative support

Criminal justice reform. The ODIHR contributes to efforts in the area of criminal justice reform in a number of countries, particularly with respect to preventing torture and monitoring places of detention.

Torture is a real and prevalent problem in the OSCE region. In all too many countries, torture and other forms of degrading and inhuman treatment are an everyday part of law enforcement. In some states, a case is considered solved only once there is a confession, which encourages a culture of taking statements under torture. Judges and prosecutors often contribute to this by not stopping the use of such statements as evidence in court.

The ODIHR has addressed the issue of prosecutorial power to sanction arrest, encouraging the transfer of that power to the judiciary. In Kazakhstan, the ODIHR, in co-operation with the Prosecutor-General's Office, the Supreme Court and the OSCE Centre in Almaty, organized a roundtable to initiate dialogue on this issue.



Young members of the Almaty City Collegium of Advocates at a legal-skills training course in April.

The ODIHR encourages the public monitoring of places of detention. The Office organized or supported roundtables on monitoring places of detention in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, which contributed to the creation of a public monitoring board in Kazakhstan. Such monitoring boards are an invaluable aid in the prevention of torture and in the improvement of prison conditions, as they open up prisons to the outside world, preventing the isolation and abuse that can happen behind closed doors.

Fair trials. Lawyers are one of the ODIHR's priorities in its efforts to ensure fair trials: both in terms of making systemic reforms of the defence bar and by improving the skills of individuals through training.

The international community has largely overlooked the importance of the defence bar, which is an integral part of any functioning legal system. To bring more attention to the topic, one of the OSCE's Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings in 2005 focused on the role of defence lawyers in guaranteeing a fair trial. The meeting brought together legal professionals from the entire OSCE region to address the challenges facing defence lawyers and to recommend ways in which the OSCE can provide useful assistance.

Legislative support. Responding to requests from participating States, the ODIHR provides expertise and assistance in the development of legislation that is in compliance with OSCE commitments. In 2005, the ODIHR commented on constitutional amendments in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, as well as on a number of legislative acts in the areas of human trafficking, anti-terrorism, fair trials, police reform, gender issues, freedom of assembly and elections in various participating States.

The ODIHR's approach focuses on local ownership and follow-up activities that are aimed at fostering inclusive and transparent legislative processes. In Armenia, for example, the ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission supported a locally driven process for drafting amendments to the 2004 law on assemblies. These amendments significantly improved the legal framework governing freedom of assembly.

The ODIHR also maintains a legislative database (www.legislationline.org) for lawmakers and ODIHR experts, who gain a vantage point from which to observe patterns in legislative activity across the OSCE region and to help identify good practices. The database is being expanded to include materials on legislative processes and lawmaking.

Democratic governance

Legislative processes. As follow-up to the 2004 *Human Dimension Seminar on Democratic Governance*, the ODIHR developed a new methodology in 2005 that focuses on the legislative process as a whole. The need emerged to supplement activities aimed at improving the quality of individual pieces of legislation with work on the procedures and practices whereby legislation is prepared, drafted, adopted, published, communicated and evaluated. The starting point for this is a review of the legislative framework, including issues of transparency and inclusiveness. On this basis, options for remedying the risks and gaps identified are analysed and proposed.

In Georgia, ODIHR experts conducted a survey among members of Government and Parliament, as well as other relevant individuals, which resulted in a comprehensive analysis of the legislative procedure in that country. This analysis will serve as the basis for supporting domestic efforts to improve the quality and effectiveness of legislation through workshops involving national and international experts.

Supporting political parties. To ensure that the political reforms made in transitional democracies are sustainable, there is a need, in some countries, for changes in the relationship between those who govern and those who are governed. The goal is government that is transparent, accessible and accountable. With this aim in mind, the ODIHR developed and piloted, in 2005, a methodology for critical self-assessment with respect to political party development and parliamentary reform.

The pilot country was Georgia, where the ODIHR engaged all six mainstream political parties; a leading think tank, the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Development and Democracy; and the Netherlands Institute for Multi-party Democracy in a joint assessment project. The parties answered questions about their *raison d'être* and their place in society, as well as about input into their party platform and the relations between members and party structures.

The parties will help draft a report by January 2006, which will serve as an action plan for the further development of political parties in Georgia.

In a further effort to ensure the sustainability of democratic reforms in Georgia, the ODIHR is helping the parliament strengthen its capacity to deal effectively with its own reform process through the creation of a Centre for Parliamentary Reform.

Participation of women in democratic processes. The ODIHR conducts country-specific programmes in the southern Caucasus and Central Asia, aimed at increasing women's participation in democratic processes. In 2005, the Office's priorities included promoting co-operation between government and civil society at the national and local levels, capacity- and expertise-building for civil society and government structures, developing women's leadership, integrating gender-equality aspects into policy-making, and preventing and combating domestic violence.

As a result of past efforts, women's networks created with ODIHR support lobbied successfully, in 2005, for a number of positive changes. Kyrgyzstan, for example, established the post of presidential representative to Parliament on gender equality. This new post resulted from lobbying efforts by a women's network following the 2005 parliamentary elections, in which not a single female candidate was elected.

In Georgia, the Women's NGO Coalition was instrumental in lobbying for the establishment of a State Committee on Gender Equality, which has been tasked with developing a comprehensive national policy and implementation plan on gender equality.

Migration and freedom of movement. The Slovenian Chairmanship set the pace for the ODIHR's work in the area of freedom of movement by placing greater emphasis on migration-related issues.

In May, the *Human Dimension Seminar on Migration and Integration* acknowledged the importance of migration management and the development of integration processes, calling for greater co-operation from participating States in this field. It was also stressed that both sending and receiving countries stand to benefit from migration.

The ODIHR's migration work has always reflected the Democratization Department's priority of exchanges of expertise and experience in a regional context, such as the regional conference the ODIHR organized for representatives of CIS countries and the Baltic States on reform of population registration.

Human rights

The ODIHR assists participating States in fulfilling their obligations to protect and promote human rights as they are set out in OSCE commitments and other relevant international standards. It monitors compliance with OSCE commitments on human rights and fundamental freedoms and provides advice and assistance. In practice, this involves monitoring of a broad spectrum of issues, from the fundamental freedoms of assembly, association and speech to sensitive and topical issues like capital punishment and the treatment of human rights in the fight against terrorism.

In broader terms, monitoring provides indicators for the ODIHR's institution-building activities by revealing areas where improvements to legislation or the functioning of state bodies could result in better protection of human rights for everyone. To take this one step further, the ODIHR's activities contribute to early warning and conflict prevention as an integral part of the Organization's comprehensive approach to security.

Death penalty. The ODIHR monitors the use of the death penalty in all 55 participating States in order to increase transparency and compliance with international safeguards, while facilitating the exchange of information about the abolition of the death pen-

alty. The Office's annual review, *The Death Penalty in the OSCE Area*, was released at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in September.

A regional conference on alternatives to the death penalty in Central Asia was held in Almaty in November. The conference brought together governments, non-governmental organizations and other interested parties to exchange ideas and information on alternatives to capital punishment and to learn about the experiences of other states that have already introduced alternatives to capital punishment.

Trial monitoring. Trial monitoring is used to assess the fairness of court proceedings and whether they comply with OSCE commitments and other international standards. Trial monitoring is concerned only with the fairness of a trial, not with the guilt or innocence of the accused. The information gathered through trial monitoring can form the basis for reform efforts, as well as feed into institution-building projects conducted by the ODIHR and other international organizations.

Last year, the ODIHR launched a trial-monitoring project in co-operation with the OSCE Centre in Almaty, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek and the Supreme Courts of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. A group of monitors from several NGOs, who were trained by the ODIHR in 2004, observed criminal trials in a number of regions of both countries in 2005. The findings of the trial monitors, which will be issued in March 2006, will form the basis for dialogue with the relevant state authorities on potential reform.

In February, the ODIHR published a report from a trial-monitoring project in Azerbaijan during 2003 and 2004. The report contained a set of recommendations of general character for immediate action and specific recommendations pertaining to particular fair-trial guarantees.

At the invitation of the Uzbek Government, ODIHR experts monitored the trial of 15 men accused of crimes allegedly committed in Andijan in May. The ODIHR will report on its trial monitoring to the OSCE Chairman-in-Office.

Human rights and the fight against terrorism. The global fight against terrorism has put the protection of a number of fundamental rights and freedoms in jeopardy. It is important to ensure that security considerations do not undermine the very rights they seek to protect. With this in mind, the OSCE dedicated one of its Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings in 2005 to this issue, thereby stimulating debate on three key concerns related to human rights and counter-terrorism: freedom of religion; the prohibition of torture; and the role of NGOs in the fight against terrorism.

The Office also piloted a training course for senior officials and policy makers working in the field of counter-terrorism. A national course in Kyrgyzstan and a regional course held in Austria taught officials ways to ensure that their policies complied with international human rights standards.

Human rights training and education. Evidence indicates that, in some parts of the OSCE region, places of detention are rife with human rights abuses. Of particular concern are places of pre-trial detention, where force may sometimes be used to extract a confession and thus secure a conviction. Monitoring the situation in such institutions can both deter certain abuses and also allow interested organizations, such as the ODIHR and domestic NGOs, to develop strategies for change.



ODIHR human rights officers speak to Uzbek refugees in Kyrgyzstan following the 13 May events in Andijan.

In four Central Asian states – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan – the ODIHR trained civil society representatives to monitor the human rights situation in prisons and pre-trial detention centres. In Armenia and Tajikistan, the ODIHR helped train NGOs to monitor the general rights situation.

Human rights, women and security. The ODIHR developed a new programme on human rights, women and security in 2005. The programme's first year focused on monitoring the situation of women's rights in Uzbekistan, while also conducting gender-awareness training for the OSCE's Central Asian Youth Network in Kyrgyzstan. A roundtable in Moldova brought together governmental and non-governmental representatives to discuss the reduction of violence against women as an effective means of preventing trafficking in women. The meeting focused on Moldova's draft law on preventing and combating domestic violence and resulted in a joint set of recommended amendments. In an effort to strengthen the security aspects of work in the field of women's rights, the ODIHR organized an international consultative meeting on the topic of early-warning indicators to conflict and women's rights. The meeting involved actors such as UNIFEM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as the NGOs, *Kvinna till Kvinna* and *International Alert*, among others.

Fighting trafficking in human beings. With the appointment of the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in 2004, the Organization created a focal point for all of its anti-trafficking activities, in a cross-dimensional perspective. The ODIHR has thus tailored its own activities in this area to ensure co-ordination with the Special Representative,

which has included the development of a set of common priorities, the provision of substantive input and expertise for conferences organized by the Special Representative, and ensuring that its project work benefits from the high political profile brought to anti-trafficking work by the Special Representative's country visits.

Tolerance and non-discrimination

Tolerance and non-discrimination, which was previously one of the many thematic areas covered by the Human Rights Department, was expanded into a programme in its own right in 2005. With new resources and an extensive mandate deriving from major OSCE conferences on combating anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination, its first year saw a range of activities aimed at promoting genuine respect and understanding, as well as ensuring protection of the fundamental freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief.

Combating hate crime. In many states, one major obstacle to combating hate crime is the absence of accurate statistics. Because most countries have not established mechanisms to identify perpetrators or victims of hate crime, it is difficult to know how extensive the problem is or where to target resources to combat it. The ODIHR began, in 2004, to collect legislation, statistics and good practices from OSCE States, which it used to prepare a comprehensive report on *Combating Hate Crimes in the OSCE Region: An Overview of Statistics, Legislation and National Initiatives*. Using this information, the ODIHR identified gaps in the collection of data and developed tools, including working definitions and a police reporting form, to support States in their efforts to improve data collection and legislation.

The Office developed a programme to increase the capacity of law enforcement officials to identify and respond effectively to hate crime and engage with affected communities, which was piloted in Spain and Hungary in May. One immediate result was an increased awareness by both countries of the need to address hate crime and to work closely with affected communities. This was evident in the evaluation of the training by the participants, as well as in the follow-up actions taken by authorities in both countries to incorporate elements of the hate crime training curriculum into their existing law enforcement training programmes. Plans are now under way to conduct the programme in Croatia and Ukraine.

Education to teach about the Holocaust, combat anti-Semitism and promote tolerance. In response to anti-Semitism in the OSCE region, which often finds expression in neo-Nazi activities, Holocaust denial and violent attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions, OSCE participating States committed themselves to promote educational programmes to combat anti-Semitism, as well as to promote remembrance and education about the Holocaust.

In order to assess existing programmes, highlight good practices among OSCE States, and identify gaps in the area of Holocaust

education, the ODIHR produced a study in 2005 called *Education on the Holocaust and on Anti-Semitism: An Overview and Analysis of Educational Approaches*.

To follow up on the findings of the study, the ODIHR, in co-operation with a number of partners, including the Task Force for International Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research; Yad Vashem in Israel; and the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, as well as with experts from throughout the OSCE region, has been developing guidelines and teaching tools for educators to support their efforts to improve teaching about the Holocaust and address contemporary anti-Semitism.

The Office also held, in Poland, the first of a series of expert roundtables with educational authorities and representatives of non-governmental organizations to discuss initiatives to assist and encourage national authorities in their efforts to implement educational programmes on the Holocaust and anti-Semitism.

Within the wider context of tolerance education, a programme on education to promote respect and diversity was developed during the second half of 2005. The programme, which will be implemented in 2006, will result in an assessment and evaluation of existing educational strategies and initiatives currently in place throughout the OSCE region.

Promoting freedom of religion or belief. The ODIHR's 57-member Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief, which serves as an advisory and consultative body to OSCE States to advance religious freedom, provides legislative assistance and comments on specific cases. Using the newly developed *Guidelines for Review of Legislation Pertaining to Freedom of Religion or Belief* as a basis, the Panel reviewed a number of laws in response to requests from participating States. The guidelines were also translated into Russian in order to facilitate their increased use throughout the OSCE region.

Building the capacity of civil society. The Office initiated activities to support the efforts of non-governmental organizations to monitor and report on hate crime and violent manifestations of intolerance. In June, a training session for NGOs on monitoring hate-motivated crime and incidents was piloted. The ODIHR also supported the International Network Against Cyber Hate in organizing a seminar on monitoring hate speech on the Internet. An assessment of these pilot training sessions was used to design a comprehensive training programme that will be implemented in 2006.

In co-operation with the Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office, the ODIHR also organized three meetings with representatives of NGOs in order to support increased co-operation among NGOs, as well as the exchange of good practices and the development of recommendations regarding thematic issues.

Contact point for Roma and Sinti issues

Roma, Sinti and related populations face a variety of forms of racism and discrimination in nearly all aspects of life, which impedes their ability to integrate fully into the societies in which they live.

The OSCE has recognized this fact in numerous commitments and especially in the 2003 Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area, which calls on participating States to take steps to rid their societies of all forms of anti-Roma bias.

A number of states have taken measures in this direction, first by adopting necessary legislation to combat discrimination, as well as by establishing institutions to enforce such legislation. Some countries have also developed national strategies to improve the situation of Roma and related populations.

One of the ODIHR's most important tasks in this regard is to call for constant review and assessment of the implementation of the Action Plan. The Office's Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues has been particularly active in this area, using major OSCE conferences and other events to promote debates on Roma-related issues, distribute documentation related to the situation of Roma throughout the OSCE region and facilitate the participation of Roma and related groups in these events.

The *Human Dimension Implementation Meeting* was particularly fruitful in this regard, as the ODIHR organized a number of side events that focused on various Roma-related issues, including the participation of Roma and Sinti in electoral processes; the situation of Roma from Kosovo, who are a minority in Kosovo itself and many of whom are internally displaced persons in other areas; monitoring national policies on Roma, especially in the areas of reducing poverty and improving gender equality; and calling for equal access of Roma to housing, residential security and access to quality education.

Revised budget: €11,963,700
www.osce.org/odihr

High Commissioner on National Minorities

Tensions and frictions between different groups within States – based on ethnicity, religion, and language – have caused most of the recent conflicts in the OSCE region. To respond to this challenge, the OSCE established the post of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) in 1992.

The High Commissioner's function is to identify – and seek early resolution of – ethnic tensions that might endanger peace, stability or friendly relations between the OSCE participating States. His mandate describes him as “an instrument of conflict prevention at the earliest possible stage.”

The incumbent OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities is Rolf Ekeus of Sweden. He took up his duties on 1 July 2001.

In accordance with his mandate, the High Commissioner continued to monitor and take action to prevent inter-ethnic tensions from developing into confrontation and to stabilize situations of potential conflict. He supported specific projects to address locally relevant roots of conflict and to contain and de-escalate tensions involving national minority issues.

As part of his work on thematic issues, he gave special attention to policing in multi-ethnic environments, because policing practices have a major influence on inter-ethnic relations. In close co-operation with the Strategic Police Matters Unit in the OSCE Secretariat, international organizations directly responsible for such issues and other experts, the High Commissioner initiated an analysis of the relevant international standards and practices in the area of policing with a view to elaborating practical guidelines on policing in societies that are home to a plurality of ethnic groups.

In 2005, the High Commissioner paid particular attention to developing the basic principles of a policy of integration respecting diversity, particularly in the context of the Chairmanship's focus on migration and integration.

Commenting on recent tensions and in some instances social unrest in participating States, the High Commissioner emphasized the complexity and potential impact on society of the emergence of new minorities and the need to address those situations early on in order to prevent them from developing into serious societal confrontation. He also drew attention to the relevance of the methods and practices employed by the High Commissioner on National Minorities to these new minority situations.

Country reports

Belarus. In 2005, the High Commissioner paid particular attention to the situation of the Union of Poles in Belarus, the largest organization of the Polish minority community.

Croatia. During a visit to Croatia in February, the High Commissioner discussed different aspects of refugee return such as repossession of property rights and reconstruction assistance as well as reform of the judiciary with representatives of the Government and minorities. This included a discussion of the country's Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities, in particular the provisions regarding education and proportional representation of minorities in administration and the judiciary. Although he was encouraged by improvements in the area of refugee returns, the HCNM stressed to the authorities the importance of promoting integration in the area of education as well as implementing the Law's provisions in the area of minority representation in the judiciary and administration.

Estonia. During a visit to Estonia from 24 to 26 October, the High Commissioner noted improvement in the inter-ethnic relations, a fact also confirmed by the local elections held on 16 October. The economic programmes of the competing parties rather than their policies on ethnic and minority issues appeared primarily to determine the voting behaviour of non-citizens and Russian-speaking citizens who took part.

The HCNM noted significant improvement in the socio-economic situation in the Narva region. He also found an improved attitude on the part of students, parents and teachers in Russian schools towards the start of education reform. While he welcomed the debate in society on the start of the reform and its implementation, he also stressed the need for more teacher training, including courses in the Estonian language and in teaching methodologies.

The HCNM welcomed the legislative and administrative steps taken by the Estonian Government to facilitate naturalization. However, he indicated that further positive measures are needed to speed up the process, particularly for elderly citizenship applicants.

Georgia. In Georgia, the High Commissioner focused his work on the *Conflict Prevention and Integration Programme for Samtskhe-Javakheti*. Launched in 2003, this Programme aims at fostering the integration of the Armenian minority into Georgia's political, social and cultural life. It helps increase the knowledge of the Georgian language among civil servants in the region; improving the effectiveness of Georgian language teaching to minority students; furthering the information flow from minority regions to the centre and vice versa; and increasing the access to national television news. One of the initiatives included in the Programme, the *Language Training Project for Civil Servants*, instructed more than 500 civil servants in the Georgian language.

In Abkhazia, the HCNM continued to work with the *de facto* authorities in Sukhumi to ensure the right of Georgian students in the Gali district to be educated in their mother tongue. In

2005, the High Commissioner's office held six teacher-training seminars, which formed part of the *Teachers for Understanding* project, aimed at enhancing the skills of Georgian and Abkhaz language teachers in the districts of Gali, Tkvarcheli and Ochamchira. This project, which has been implemented since August 2004, should also help build confidence between the two communities.

Hungary. The High Commissioner closely followed Hungary's initiatives to support Hungarian minorities in neighbouring States. After the failure of the 2004 referendum on dual citizenship, the Hungarian Government developed new initiatives. In May, the High Commissioner visited Budapest to familiarize himself with these initiatives and to discuss their controversial aspects. He urged the Hungarian Government to engage in direct consultations with neighbouring States on which these initiatives have an effect, in order to avoid straining bilateral relations. For its part, the Hungarian Government brought to the HCNM's attention the situation of Hungarian minorities in the Serbian province of Vojvodina. The HCNM pointed out that he continued to follow developments in Vojvodina and noted that the changing ethnic composition of the region as well as difficult social and economic conditions could hurt the harmonious inter-ethnic relations that characterized Vojvodina in the past.

Kazakhstan. In his discussions with officials and representatives of national minorities in Kazakhstan, the High Commissioner paid particular attention to the issue of language. He encouraged the country's Government to adopt a balanced and gradual approach to the strengthening of the role of the State language, to put special emphasis on education and to more intensely promote the official language and languages of national minorities.

The HCNM continued his support for a pilot project promoting multi-lingual education in the southern Kazakhstan region. The project, developed together with the regional Department of Education, helps final-year students in Uzbek-language schools enhance their skills in either the State language, Kazakh, or in the official language, Russian, in order to improve their performance in the State entrance examination for admission to institutions of higher education in Kazakhstan. After two years of project implementation in two schools, the rate of successful university applications and the results achieved in State entrance examinations have improved considerably. Owing to this success, the High Commissioner discussed with authorities the possibility of extending the initiative to other schools and offered his expertise and support.

Kyrgyzstan. The economic, social and political pressures unleashed by the developments in Kyrgyzstan in spring 2005 have affected inter-ethnic relations. Many members of Kyrgyzstan's national minority communities have expressed anxiety about their future and their personal safety and decided to leave the country.

The High Commissioner paid three visits to Kyrgyzstan in 2005. On two occasions, he travelled to the southern regions of Osh and Jalalabat for discussions with local officials and representatives

of national minorities. Although the presidential election and the formation of the new Cabinet promoted some sense of stability among national minorities, the High Commissioner called on the new leadership of the country to take steps to strengthen social integration and to focus attention on inter-ethnic issues by developing a consistent policy of national integration and social cohesion in the country.



HCNM trainers in Osh, South Kyrgyzstan, help police officers acquire the skills required for operation in a multi-ethnic society.

Latvia. The High Commissioner visited Latvia at the beginning of June, a few days after the Latvian Parliament ratified the *Framework Convention on National Minorities*. His discussions with Latvian authorities focused on the ratification and the wording of the Declaration of Parliament that accompanied the ratification.

The HCNM stressed to the Latvian authorities the importance of ensuring that the implementation of the Convention was inclusive, in accordance with its object and purpose, and that there was no discrimination between different groups of citizens.

Since the number of non-citizens remains high, the HCNM urged the Latvian Government to accelerate the naturalization process. He stressed the need for the Government to provide additional resources and funds to strengthen the ability of the Naturalization Board to handle the growing number of applications in an orderly and timely manner. He also recommended as an immediate concrete step the granting of automatic citizenship to all children born in Latvia after 1991. This would also demonstrate the Government's intent to speed up the process of naturalization in the country.

The HCNM urged the Latvian authorities to show flexibility with regard to the implementation of the school reform, which stipulates that at least 60 per cent of lecture time should be carried out in Latvian. He stressed that the Government needed to consider the specific situation of each school to ensure that the quality of education was not compromised. All necessary material and training should be made available and regular quality checks needed to be made in the schools, the High Commissioner said.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The High Commissioner focused strongly on developments at the South East Europe University, set up to provide Albanian students with high-quality academic education. Enrolment in 2005 exceeded 5,000 students, of which 25 per cent were non-Albanians. Within a short period, the university significantly improved ethnic under-representation in higher education in the country. It also won praise for its academic standards and its role as a model for inter-ethnic integration and co-operation.

The HCNM also extended one of his largest undertakings, the *Transition Year Project*. In its eighth year, the Project continued to work towards increasing the number of ethnic Albanian students admitted to State universities in Skopje and Bitola. To do so, it provided intensive preparation courses for examinations in several subjects in the Macedonian language for Albanian-speaking students in the fourth year of secondary school. Seven Albanian secondary schools located throughout the country took part in the project. In 2004, 1,066 students enrolled in the project and, in some schools, up to 88 per cent of the student body participated.

The Minister for Education invited an HCNM expert to sit on the founding committee of the new university in Tetovo, the third State University founded by Parliament. The ultimate goal of this project is to establish a university that meets modern international standards, delivers multi-ethnic and multi-lingual teaching and works with and complements the South East Europe University.

The High Commissioner also focused on equitable representation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as it is considered a prerequisite for NATO membership and the EU also regards this as a key element of the 1993 Copenhagen criteria regarding admission to the Union.

Having acquired substantial expertise on the subject over past years, the HCNM advised the authorities on the bill on the use of flags of communities. Such a regulation is essential to minimize the risk that flags contribute to inter-ethnic tensions. The HCNM proposed a proper balance for the use of flags in the public sphere and recommended that the use of flags by private persons be treated as a matter of freedom of expression, which should be enjoyed within reasonable limitations. The Parliament officially amended legislation on the use of flags on 15 July, thus contributing to the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the accord that ended the violent conflict of 2001.

Moldova. The High Commissioner continued to promote the right to education in Latin script in schools in Transdnistria. Considering that a good knowledge of the State language is the key to a successful policy of integration, he explored opportunities for various educational projects in Moldova, particularly in the field of teaching the State language (Moldovan/Romanian) to civil servants of Gagauz and Bulgarian origin in southern Moldova. The Gagauz population in general, and Gagauzian civil servants in particular, lack a working knowledge of the State language, seriously hampering the relationship between the Gagauz authorities and the central Government. This impedes adequate representa-

tion of the interests of the Gagauz population and isolates the Gagauz community within Moldova.

Romania. At the request of the Romanian Foreign Minister, the High Commissioner visited Bucharest in September to discuss the bill on the statute of national minorities prepared by the Romanian Government. Prior to his visit, the HCNM sent a detailed commentary on the bill's strengths and weaknesses to the Government. This comprehensive piece of legislation introduces a concept of cultural autonomy. In Bucharest, the HCNM pointed out that while the bill suffers from some political and legal shortfalls, it also establishes a generous framework of minority protection that reinforces Romania's standing as a democratic State.

Serbia and Montenegro. In February, the High Commissioner visited Serbia and Montenegro, including Vojvodina and southern Serbia. The main topics on his agenda were the security situation in these regions and the impact of Kosovo on the situation in the Western Balkans. The HCNM also discussed the implementation of the *State Union Law on National Minorities*, which was drafted with the assistance of his office. Political leaders in Belgrade encouraged the involvement of the High Commissioner in Kosovo.

The HCNM stepped up his engagement to explore how he can encourage and provide support to reconciliation among the communities in Kosovo. During a stay in Kosovo in May, which included visits to Pristina, Mitrovica and a Serbian "enclave", the High Commissioner examined possibilities how he could be of assistance in light of the status talks scheduled to take place in early 2006.

In Montenegro, the HCNM continued his engagement in drafting the *State Union Law on National Minorities*. The ultimate aim of this bill is to harmonize Montenegrin legislation with the State Union's legislation, in particular the Constitutional Charter, and with international and national standards regarding minority rights protection. The opinions and recommendations on the bill were largely elaborated in co-operation with the Council of Europe.

Together with representatives of the Serbian Ministry of Education and the local Albanian community, the High Commissioner initiated an education project for the Albanian national minority, which aims to develop a history book in the Albanian language for sixth-grade primary school children in the region. The commission completed the draft history curriculum in summer 2005 and textbook publication is expected in early 2006.

Tajikistan. In March, the High Commissioner visited Tajikistan to learn more about the current issues facing the country and affecting inter-ethnic relations. Through discussions with officials, representatives of national minorities and NGOs, he identified the urgent need to improve and modernize educational legislation in the country. All parties viewed education as a priority that would help bring the country together following the civil strife in past years.

The High Commissioner and the Ministry of Education organized a conference on education as a means of integration in Tajikistan. The conference explored how new approaches to curriculum design, teacher training and language teaching could strengthen the role of education in fostering more harmonious relations between different ethnic communities. It also considered how co-operation amongst neighbouring States on issues of minority education could help promote national integration and enhance regional stability.

As a result of the conference, the High Commissioner intensified his co-operation with Tajikistan's authorities, providing an opportunity to help organize teacher training and encourage textbook development that is appropriate for a multi-ethnic society.

Turkey. Following up on his first visit of January 2003, which aimed at creating a dialogue with the Turkish authorities within his mandate, the High Commissioner travelled again to Ankara in February 2005.

Turkmenistan. Over the last years, the High Commissioner's dialogue with Turkmenistan's authorities focused on finding an adequate balance between legitimate educational and linguistic concerns of the majority and the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. In May, he visited Turkmenistan for meetings with the President and other officials. During this visit, he travelled to the region of Dashoguz, where he spoke with local officials. He committed himself to broadening his engagement in Turkmenistan.

Ukraine. As part of his efforts to facilitate the integration of people formerly deported from Ukraine – particularly those residing in Crimea – the High Commissioner visited Kyiv and Simferopol in June, resuming a dialogue with the new Ukrainian and Crimean leadership and with representatives of minority communities. With regard to the integration of Crimean Tatars, the discussions focused particularly on a controversial land issue as well as on the bill on the restitution of rights of formerly deported people. As a result of this visit, the HCNM is studying the possibility of a programme that promotes mutual understanding between the communities on the Crimean peninsula.

He also raised the important issue of minority-related legislation with the Ukrainian Government. He welcomed progress on the key bills on language and on minorities and discussed how he could contribute to the Government's efforts to bring such legislation into line with European standards.

Revised budget: €2,697,600

www.osce.org/hcnm

Representative on Freedom of the Media

The youngest of the three specialized OSCE Institutions, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM) was formally established in 1997 following a decision taken at the 1996 Lisbon Summit. Recognizing freedom of expression as a basic human right, the Representative's mandate is to ensure free, independent and pluralistic media in the participating States.

His primary tasks are:

- observation of relevant media developments in OSCE participating States to provide early warning on violations of freedom of expression; and
- in close co-operation with the Chairman-in-Office, assisting participating States by advocating and promoting full compliance with OSCE principles and commitments regarding freedom of expression and free media.

The second OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Miklos Haraszti, took up his position in March 2004. A writer and former dissident, Mr. Haraszti was one of the founders of the Hungarian Democratic Opposition Movement.

The Representative's office in Vienna consists of 13 international staff.

In 2005, the Representative on Freedom of the Media actively pursued the two main fields of his mandate: monitoring the media situation in all 55 OSCE participating States, and assisting governments to fulfil OSCE principles and commitments regarding freedom of the media.

Interventions. The Representative intervened in a number of cases throughout the OSCE region, West and East of Vienna, where these commitments were endangered or violated. Such interventions took place in more than 20 OSCE participating States. In addition, the Representative continued his country visits.

Country reports

Belarus. In February, at the invitation of the Belarus Foreign Ministry, the Representative visited Minsk for the first time. He had meetings with government officials, parliamentarians, journalists and the NGO community, and published a report on this visit.

The report shows that over the past years the media situation in Belarus has deteriorated. Against this background, the Representative on Freedom of the Media offered short- and long-term assistance to the Government in identifying desirable improvements. Apart from the necessary legal reforms to liberalize the overall media situation, he also stressed that the Government should immediately rescind several restrictive practices that are authorized, but not required, under current regulations.

The Transnistrian region of Moldova. In January, one of the Representative's Senior Advisers visited the Transnistrian region of Moldova. The Representative personally had tried to visit that region during his assessment trip to Moldova the previous year but was discouraged by the regional authorities in Tiraspol.

The situation of the independent media is very difficult. Different methods of pressure are applied on those few journalists who do not follow the official line. However, the regional leadership seemed to be open to a dialogue with the OSCE, which is essential to ease the constrained environment in which the independent media work.

Italy: the Gasparri Media Law. During a visit to Italy in March/April, the Representative targeted a two-fold agenda. First, he assessed the situation in the television broadcasting sector, one year after the adoption in 2004 of the Gasparri Law. This law, the country's first comprehensive regulation of all broadcast media, was enacted after repeated calls by Italy's Constitutional Court and by European political bodies for an overhaul of the highly concentrated television ownership in Italy. A report with concrete recommendations pointed out that Italy's new comprehensive digital-era media law needs a careful legislative review to address the present "duopoly" of RAI and Mediaset.

Second, Mr. Haraszti evaluated the Frattini Law, concluding that the Law did not yet fully resolve the conflict between the private interests of public officials and their political influence in Italian television.

Azerbaijan. The murder of prominent editor and journalist Elmar Huseynov shortly before an April assessment visit to Azerbaijan by the Representative unavoidably became one of the focal points of his stay. The case received worldwide attention and placed media issues in this country under international scrutiny.



OSCE/Cliff Volpe

Elmar Huseynov, founder and editor of the independent weekly news magazine *Monitor*, was murdered on 2 March 2005. He is pictured attending the First OSCE South Caucasus Media Conference in October 2004.

The multitude of views expressed in the printed press – and the high degree of politicization – indicated that pluralism had taken hold. However, diversity does not extend much beyond the print media, which has a very low circulation. It is also financially and professionally weak. The Representative's report contains a wide range of recommendations to the authorities on how to rectify the situation.

In consultation with Azerbaijani Government officials, the Representative launched a pilot assistance-training project on government-media relations, originally proposed by the Foreign Minister. The first workshop, with participation of governmental press and communication officers as well as journalists, was held on 18 and 20 July in Baku.

The handling of the media during the Andijan crisis in Uzbekistan. The Representative also issued a report on the coverage of the events and the restrictive governmental handling of the press during the Andijan crisis in Uzbekistan in May. This is the Representative's third report on the press coverage of events related to crisis situations. The earlier reports focused on the Kosovo events in March 2004 and the Beslan tragedy in October 2004.

The report contained detailed recommendations. It stressed that working with the press in times of crisis is a learning process. The press, however, also provides an important contribution to the peaceful solution of crises, as it delivers information to which the society has a right.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Representative visited the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in October to assess the current state of media freedom in the country, especially in the context of a new broadcast law the Parliament was discussing at the time of the visit.

Overall, there is a high degree of media pluralism in the country, both in terms of the quantity of media outlets and the representation of different views. The legal framework for free media is generally in line with OSCE commitments and the Government, together with other stakeholders, is working on the remaining provisions. The Representative gave the Government credit for respecting the laws, but noted that there was still occasional pressure applied on individual journalists or commercial constraints hindering journalists from freely exercising their profession.

He welcomed the introduction of a new broadcast law by the Ministry of Communications and Transport and its approval by Parliament. The law brings the country further in line with European standards.

In November, two journalists were sentenced to prison terms for libel. Such sentences contradict the case law of the European Court of Human Rights with respect to freedom of expression.

The media situation in Kosovo. Following his report on the role of the media during and after the tragic events of March 2004,

the Representative followed up by appointing a temporary Special Representative for Kosovo for a six-month period. The main task of the Special Representative was to assist in the implementation of the recommendations of the report.

The progress made in Kosovo over the period mentioned is solid and promising. The Representative noted that these achievements were not the result of pressure by the international community on the Kosovo media, but that, at every step, the respective media associations and the media themselves were involved and consulted.

The Temporary Media Commissioner in Kosovo, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, and the Representative on Freedom of the Media initiated, helped and advised this process. Similarly, an ethnically mixed group of Kosovo journalists drafted the Code of Ethics, a process facilitated by the international community.

Legal reviews. The Representative continued reviewing media legislation in participating States.

He reviewed the draft media law and the regulations on the allocation of domain space in Kazakhstan.

In Kyrgyzstan, he reviewed the media law, the law on the professional activity of journalists, civil and criminal libel, the law on the protection of state secrets and the new draft law on the freedom and guarantees of access to information.

He dealt with the draft broadcasting and public service broadcasting legislation of Latvia. He advised the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on a broadcasting law; it has now been adopted.

In Moldova, counsel was given regarding the draft laws on information and on state and official secrets.

In May, the Representative issued a comprehensive review of the draft Turkish Penal Code. He identified a number of provisions that could hinder free discussion of public issues and pose a threat to the freedom of the press. While some of these have been corrected accordingly in the final version of the Code, other provisions have since been used to prosecute individuals for their opinions.

Projects

The Matrix – trends go against criminal libel laws. Following up on a project started in 2004, the Representative published the first version of a unique database on criminal and civil defamation laws and court practices in the OSCE area. The database, *Libel and Insult Laws: a Matrix on Where We Stand and What We Would Like to Achieve*, is a useful tool for legislatures, researchers, media NGOs and journalists who wish to promote decriminalization of defamation in their countries. So far, seven OSCE participating States have decriminalized libel and insult.

Guaranteeing media freedom on the Internet. The project, *Guaranteeing Media Freedom on the Internet*, continued in 2005. The *Media Freedom Internet Cookbook* was translated into Russian and media freedom on the Internet was a prominent topic in several conferences organized by the office of the Representative. The office has also been very active in the preparation of a number of OSCE expert workshops and conferences, such as on the use or misuse of the Internet for terrorist purposes.

Assisting participating States through training. This year, the Representative started a long-term assistance project dealing with government-media relations and access to information.

He held two training courses for government press officers and media professionals, in Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan. The topics included journalists' rights to access information, the proper functioning of press offices and professionalism on both sides of government-media relations. The Representative plans to have similar training exercises next year in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, several regions in Ukraine and again in Kyrgyzstan, this time for regional journalists. He has offered this assistance to the Governments of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan and expects their agreement soon.

Next year the Representative plans to explore possibilities for new training projects in the field of media democratization and professionalization.

In Georgia, together with the OSCE Mission, the Representative organized a training course for media law professionals.

International conferences

Third Amsterdam Internet Conference. The *Third Amsterdam Internet Conference* took place in the City Hall of Amsterdam on 17 and 18 June. The conference brought together leading international experts on human rights and the Internet from Western and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and North America.

The Representative and the Paris-based NGO, *Reporters sans frontières*, issued a joint declaration on *Guaranteeing Media Freedom on the Internet*. The declaration lists six main principles for protecting online media freedom. It stresses that in a democratic and open society citizens should decide what they wish to access and view on the Internet. Any filtering or rating of online content by governments is unacceptable and websites should not be required to register with governmental authorities.

Conference results were shared with media conferences held later in the year in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Central Asian Media Conference in Almaty. On 13 and 14 October, the annual *Central Asian Media Conference* was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, organized under the auspices of the Representative and the OSCE Centre in Almaty.

For the seventh successive year, 150 participants from all five Central Asian countries – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – gathered to discuss developments in the media field in the region. The participants included journalists and representatives of media NGOs, as well as officials, experts and foreign guests. As in previous years, the conference provided a unique opportunity for an exchange of views among the participants and a forging of new bonds.

The two main topics this year were Pluralism in the Media and the Internet. During discussions on each, it became clear that the two are closely linked. During the last few years in Central Asia, the Internet has become the last resort of pluralism and an alternative source of pluralistic information to television and the print press.

The participants adopted the *Almaty Declaration on Pluralism in the Media and the Internet*, which recommends that international organizations like the OSCE put more emphasis on protecting the freedom of the Internet and reiterated that regulation of the Internet must be limited to instances where it is absolutely unavoidable.

Caucasus Media Conference in Tbilisi. The annual *South Caucasus Media Conference* took place in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 17 and 18 November. The office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the OSCE Mission to Georgia organized the Conference.

For the second time, 70 participants from all three South Caucasus countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia – discussed recent developments concerning the media within the region. Participants included journalists, representatives of media organizations, state officials, experts and foreign guests. As a follow-up to the first South Caucasus Media Conference in 2004, the event provided a unique platform for the mutual exchange of views on important media topics relevant for all three countries in the region.



OSCE/Zakhar Sviridenko

Delegate at the Second OSCE South Caucasus Media Conference examining the RFOM's publications.

Discussions in Tbilisi centred on the quality of public service broadcasting and the freedom of the Internet. The Conference adopted a declaration on these subjects, urging governments in South Caucasus to reaffirm their commitment to maintain a strong and vibrant independent public broadcasting service and to refrain from interference with the editorial independence and institutional autonomy of public service broadcasters.

The participants also noted that the subjects dealt with at last year's conference, libel and freedom of information, remained topical and the recommendations adopted in October 2004 were still valid.

OSCE roundtable on TV and radio licensing in Azerbaijan.

Further development needed for the regulatory framework in TV and radio licensing, the authority of regulating bodies and a guarantee of equal treatment of operators were discussed at a roundtable in April organized by the OSCE Office in Baku.

The Representative said private broadcasters needed clear-cut and non-discriminatory rules for the division of frequencies and to obtain licences.

The event was designed to provide an opportunity for an in-depth discussion and exchange of opinions between experts and all actors involved in the process of granting licences and frequencies for Azerbaijani TV and radio broadcasting companies.

It was the first in a series of activities designed by the Office in Baku with the aim to address the most pressing issues in the media field in Azerbaijan.

More than 60 experts, representatives from national institutions of Azerbaijan, including the presidential administration, government ministries, NGOs and international experts attended the event.

Miscellaneous

Media at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation

Meeting. The Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw in September focused on the media. The Media Representative helped with the preparations of the event and hosted a side event on *State Secrets and Freedom of Journalism: From the US to the CIS*.

A panel of international experts discussed the jailing in the United States of New York Times reporter Judith Miller, as well as the repercussions of publishing state secrets in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Joint statement by special rapporteurs on freedom of expression on Press Freedom Day. On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, 3 May, the international community's four special rapporteurs on freedom of expression issued a joint statement, paying tribute to the courage and professionalism of the numer-

ous journalists and other media professionals either killed or wounded because of their professional activities.

They also addressed such issues as decriminalization of libel, the importance of access to information and of media diversity in society.

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Miklos Haraszi, the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Ambeyi Ligabo, and the Special Rapporteur for freedom of expression of the Organization of American States, Eduardo Bertoni, were joined for the first time by the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Andrew Chigovera.