

The Courier

Newsletter of the  Mission to Croatia

2005 Slovenian Chairmanship



Photo: Tomislav Pavlek

Head of Mission, Ambassador Jorge Fuentes

CSCE/OSCE - most successful products of 20th century diplomacy

Although I have been a part of the large OSCE family for many years now, I have only been a part of the OSCE Mission to Croatia for a few months.

Since my arrival, I have had the opportunity to meet nearly all of you, either in our Headquarters in Zagreb or during my first visits to the field. I would like to take the advantage of this, my first message in our newsletter, to convey my cordial greetings to the more than 200 members of this Mission. Please accept my sincere appreciation and congratulations for the outstanding work that you are all doing.

For more than 30 years of my professional diplomatic life, which have certainly been fascinating, I have never assumed such a noteworthy position as the one of helping a European country, namely Croatia, in healing its war wounds and channelling its future towards Euro-Atlantic integration. In performing my duty, I rely on the support of exceptional professionals coming from Croatia and 22 other countries scattered across Europe, North America and Central Asia.

The year in which I arrived in Zagreb is the year in which we are marking the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act and the 10th anniversary of the transformation of the CSCE into a permanent organization. Naturally, the OSCE Mission to Croatia is going to prepare a grand reception in its Headquarters in Zagreb to celebrate such an event. I encourage our Field Offices to do likewise.

I am privileged to have taken part in the preparatory meeting in Geneva at the very beginning of my career, and I was also present at the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975. As a result, I remained

closely associated with the CSCE process during the Belgrade, Madrid, Stockholm and Vienna meetings. I will tell you about my unforgettable memories from those times on some other occasion.

Here and now, I would simply like to pass on to you my strong belief that the CSCE/OSCE is one of the most successful products of 20th Century diplomacy, comparable only to the establishment of the UN Organization, the European Union and NATO. The role of the CSCE in the struggle to erase the consequences of the two World Wars, prevent the division of Europe, and stop the Cold War was crucial.

Nowadays, at the dawn of the 21st century, with our minds still unable to predict what is going to happen tomorrow, the OSCE, strongly institutionalized with almost 4,000 staff, can truly be proud of its institutions - the Secretariat, ODIHR, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Representative on the Freedom of Media, the Parliamentary Assembly. Likewise, it can also be proud of its Missions in a very unique way. They are perhaps the boldest and the most original realization of the OSCE - the OSCE's vision of the future.

All the currently existing Missions, 20 of them, differ from one another; in the same way one cannot find two countries that have identical profiles or identical problems. The OSCE Mission to Croatia has been established in an open and prosperous country, matchless in its beauty and one which attracts ten million tourists per year. Croatia is the country that has been accepted as an EU candidate and hopefully its accession to both the EU and the North Atlantic Alliance is to follow shortly.

There are still tasks that need to be fulfilled, especially in relation to very important issues such as the return and integration of refugees, electoral and judicial reforms, as well as others. The Mission works very closely with the Croatian Government to implement the Mandate we signed together back in 1996. I dare say that we have developed close relations with key members of the Croatian Government, which is evident from the visits paid to Headquarters by Prime Minister Ivo Sanader, Foreign Affairs and European Integration Minister Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, and member of the OSCE Eminent Persons Dr. Miroslav Zuzul. We intend to continue this practice with the visits of other members of the Government and prominent figures from Croatia's political and social life.

Finally, I would like to ask all members of the Mission to carry on with the implementation of our Mandate with the same enthusiasm and efficiency as you have shown to date, without falling into a routine of business as usual. Quite the contrary, we should constantly hold in our minds a very clear image of our final objective - assisting Croatia in its efforts to complete the process of its full democratization, which would render it possible for the country to face its integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions with its full vigour.

Calendar

6 September (tbc) - Minister of Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development, Bozidar Kalmeta will meet with Mission Head, Ambassador Fuentes, as well as representatives from the UNHCR, EC and US Embassy to discuss the Croatian government's *Road Map*.

9 September - Police Experts meeting in Vienna. The meeting will gather Heads of Police Units from OSCE Missions in the region to discuss current policing issues.

12 - 13 September - Seminar on "Improving the effectiveness of law enforcement in preventing and combating hate crimes" to be held in Vienna.

13 - 14 September - Inter-Mission Meeting on Trial Monitoring to be held in Sarajevo.

19 - 20 September - Regional DHOMs conference to be held in Belgrade.

October (tbc) - Mission to celebrate 30th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act.

6 - 8 October - Conference on the Sava River Basin in Sisak. Representatives from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro will exchange experiences on water management systems.

17 - 18 October (tbc) - Conference on Combating Trafficking to be held in Cavtat.

18 October (tbc) - Conference on the status of national minorities organised at MHQ. Working title: Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities - three years on (2002-2005).

Activities

British Bobbies on a Croatian beat

Within the last three years, there have been three study visits by various Croatian officers to the UK, facilitated by the OSCE Mission and supported by the British Embassy in Zagreb. The most recent visit was to Lincolnshire for one week in March 2005, which included four officers from the Croatian Police.

It was during this visit that the Croatian police officers, so impressed

with some of presentations seen during their stay in Lincolnshire, asked whether it would be possible for these presentations to be given to more Croatian police officers.

A visit to Croatia was therefore organized by the OSCE Mission to Croatia and financed by the British Embassy. Four Lincolnshire Police Officers and one Local Authority employee arrived in Croatia on 27 July. Here, they spent an entire week visiting various police stations and departments as well as attending a two-day seminar during which they gave their presentations.

The visit attracted a lot of press interest, especially due to the fact that one of the visiting "Bobbies" was Police Constable Steve Cummings who was recently awarded by the British Home Secretary for being the best community police officer in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2004.



Photo: Kresimir Cotic

"I plan to copy an initiative instigated by one of the Contact Officers here in Croatia back home on my beat in England," PC Cummings, UK's Bobby of the Year.

Croatia's Assistant Director of the Uniformed Police Directorate, Drazen Mayka, was more than satisfied with the results of the visit. "The visit and the seminar held by our colleagues from England influenced the opinions and beliefs of our own police officers. They were given an overview of existing problems in their daily work, and were shown that with good will, dedication and self-initiative, good results can be achieved. We will try to implement some of the ideas and experiences of our English colleagues into our own system."

PC Cummings was very impressed by the commitment shown by Croatian Contact Officers. I only hope that I was able to give them some ideas and inspiration that they may find of use in their future work. I have also found some of what I saw of use to me, and I plan to copy an initiative instigated by one of the Contact Officers here in Croatia back home on my beat in England".



Photo: Kresimir Cotic

UK's Bobby of the Year gives tips to his younger Croatian colleague.

The leader of the Lincolnshire Police delegation, Chief Inspector Paul Elliott said, "I was very pleased and proud to be invited here to Croatia to present some aspects of community policing and the model we use in England. I sincerely hope the Croatian Police are able to take something from our talks and presentations to help them in improving and refining their own community policing model to the benefit of the citizens of Croatia."

**Phillip Parkinson,
Police Affairs, MHQ**

Field Office in Focus: Karlovac

No regrets on our decision to return, says Lisic family

“...they have other battles they have not even begun to fight - unemployment, convalidation...”

Breeding two goats, providing bed-and-breakfast for two homeless dogs and three kittens, gathering prunes, sharing experiences with the villagers, working to get their house reconnected to electricity and assessed for war-damage.....These are some of the activities successfully undertaken by the “busy” Lusic family since their return to the Krnjak countryside, two months ago.

constructed within the year.

Clearly, challenges remain ahead but that will not prevent the return of their two school-age daughters, along with their grandmother. It was the Lisic family home that Ambassador Fuentes chose to visit two weeks after his appointment to Zagreb. Confronted with the often difficult reality of living in areas close to former front-lines, the Head of Mission gave them strong



Without reconstruction, the Lisic family will face a long, cold winter.



A new beginning for the Lisic family in Croatia.

Mirko and his wife, both around 40-years old, are still prevented from fully enjoying their new life in Croatia as the conditions under which they live can hardly be considered as liveable. They however are optimistic and do not question their decision to leave Serbia.

After filing an application for reconstruction in December 2001, it was rejected fourteen months later on the grounds that the assessment of war-damage was incorrect. Presently, their case is on the fast track since the Commission for War-Damage Assessment (CWDA), with a little push by the FO, has accepted to re-assess their house and has waived the additional one-year wait. The Head of the CWDA even stated that they may get their home re-

family as sustainable? Unfortunately, not really... However, comparing this returnee story to others, significant results were achieved in the last two months, a short period of time, bearing in mind the pace of the return process. The Lisic family is back, relying on their energy and on the further support of local NGOs and institutions. They legitimately want to rebuild their life and put the war behind them.

Arnaud Appriou, Return and Integration, FO Karlovac

support, both political and psychological. But the fact remains, realistically their house will not be reconstructed before the year's end and they have other battles they have not even begun to fight – unemployment, convalidation...



FO Karlovac is building a better society

"Laying a positive foundation in Croatia as it travels along the path towards the EU" - this is the motto at FO Karlovac. By bringing together a diverse spectrum of institutional and civil society partners, FO Karlovac is building a positive and better society. Welcoming returnees, giving the floor to minorities, and hopefully facilitating economic development, FO Karlovac is optimistic that a better future is just around the corner.

Field Office Karlovac has a staff of 10: four international and six local Mission Members. The Head of the Office is Jan Repa of Slovakia.

Visits

Top officials in Mission Headquarters



Photo: Tomislav Pavlek

Left: HOM greets Prime Minister Ivo Sanader, the first ever PM to visit the premises of an OSCE Mission, 7 June 2005.



Photo: OSCE

Left: Croatian member of the OSCE's Board of Eminent Persons, Miomir Zuzul, speaks to MHQ about the future of the OSCE, 30 May 2005.



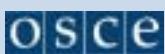
Photo: Tomislav Pavlek

Right: The down-to-earth charm of Foreign and European Integration Minister Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic impressed staff at MHQ during her guest appearance at the morning briefing, 19 July 2005.



Photo: Maja Polic

Above: During his first official visit to Croatia as the OSCE's Chairman-in-Office, Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel visits MHQ, 3 June 2005.



**MISSION TO
CROATIA**

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