

NEWSLETTER

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Kjell Dragnes/Aftenposten, Oslo



The CiO talks with three released Azeri POWs on the plane en route to Baku.

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CiO's Trans-Caucasia visit builds confidence and strengthens the OSCE presence in the region

The OSCE's Chairman in Office, Foreign Minister Knut Vollebaek of Norway, paid a visit in September to the Organization's participating States in the Trans-Caucasian region, which resulted in a number of significant advances on several issues. These included breaking the logjam on the release of the remaining prisoners of war (POWs) from the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, and extending the OSCE's presence in the area in both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The CiO's visit also included a stop in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi. In each of the three Trans-Caucasian states, he held talks with the respective political leaderships covering outstanding issues. Agreements were signed with both Armenia and Azerbaijan that should lead soon to the opening of new OSCE Offices in the capitals of those countries, while the reciprocated exchange of POWs has already improved the atmosphere for expected discussions over the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute.

Others travelling in the CiO's delegation, in addition to senior Norwegian diplomats, included two representatives of the OSCE Troika, Ms. Jutta Stefan-Bastl, Head of the Permanent Mission of Austria to the OSCE, and Mr. Andrzej Jaroszynski, Director of the European Security Policy Department of the Polish NPA Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The CiO was also accompanied by several senior OSCE officials, and representatives of two cooperating institutions, the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

Mr. Vollebaek's visit began in Armenia on 15 September with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on the opening of an OSCE Office in Yerevan. Following ratification by the Armenian Parliament, the work to establish the Office should begin in earnest during November. The designated Head of the new Office, Ambassador Roy Reeve, who was among the group of officials accompanying the CiO, was introduced to the President of Armenia, Robert Kocharian (*see second story on this page*).

On the occasion of the visit of the CiO, President Kocharian announced an immediate decision to allow the unconditional release into the hands of the OSCE of three Azeri POWs, who had been held in captivity for two years. The prisoners returned to Azerbaijan onboard Mr. Vollebaek's flight to Baku.

This gesture proved to have been an important confidence building measure when the release was reciprocated by the Azerbaijan one week later. Four Armenian POWs were released by the author-

ities in Baku on 23 September, and were returned to Yerevan on a plane specially chartered by the OSCE.

Discussions with President Kocharian went on to cover the prospects for reaching a durable settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Minister Vollebaek made clear the availability of both the Chair and the OSCE Minsk Group, whenever the parties deemed it necessary to request assistance in the ongoing process.

Summit Meeting

With the OSCE's Summit Meeting in Istanbul only a few weeks away, the CiO stated clearly that he wished real progress on resolving the issue to take place in the interim. As this issue of the Newsletter was going to press, a meeting was due to be held between the Foreign Ministers of both countries at the end of the month in New York, on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

On 16 September, Mr. Vollebaek's visit to the Azerbaijani capital began

with the handing over of the three prisoners. Following some discussions on the opening of an OSCE Office in Baku between the CiO and President Heydar Aliyev, a Letter of Intent was signed with the Government to start negotiations on the matter.

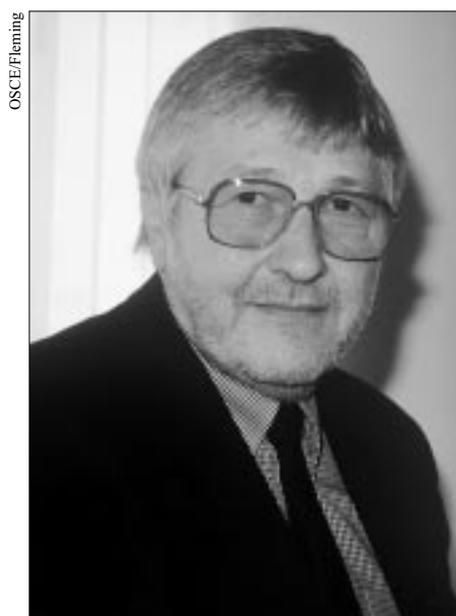
The CiO's talks in the Georgian capital with President Shevardnaze, on 17 September, centred on the settlement of the outstanding conflicts with the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. On the first issues, little real progress could be reported, with the Head of State regretfully feeling that the root causes of these conflicts had lost the attention of the international community.

President Shevardnaze expressed strong concern to the CiO that the region's various conflicts were being "frozen" because of the tendency of the international community to focus on the problems affecting the Balkans, a point he underlined in an address which he delivered to the United Nations General Assembly in New York, a few days later.

OSCE Armenia office to open this year in Yerevan

Ambassador Roy Reeve, the designated Head of the new OSCE Office in Armenia, is a British Foreign Office diplomat who most recently served in Ukraine. Last month, he visited the OSCE's Secretariat in Vienna and he had this to say about his new post:

"I went through Yerevan recently with the Chairman-in-Office when the Memorandum of Understanding on the new Office was being signed. This has still to receive parliamentary ratification, but the present aim is that I should go back there on 15 November. I expect the rest of the team also to be there around that time. When we are at full strength we shall be six international staff, who



Ambassador Roy Reeve, Head of the OSCE Office in Armenia

will be backed up by locally-recruited support staff.

"Our first priority must be finding a suitable site for the Office and getting ourselves settled in. Then we have to start establishing our full range of contacts and making our presence known. By December, I would hope that we can have a brainstorming session to work out how we can most effectively go about fulfilling our mandate and set out a programme of objectives and potential projects for the first full operational year."

OSCE Review Conference convenes in Vienna

From 20 September to 1 October, representatives of OSCE participating States gathered together at the Hofburg Congress Centre in Vienna for the 1999 OSCE Review Conference.

The main purpose of the meeting was to review the entire range of OSCE activities, in preparation for the OSCE Istanbul Summit (18 - 19 November). For two weeks, representatives of the OSCE participating States, as well as international and non-governmental organizations discussed the implementation OSCE commitments, and examined possible ways of strengthening the Organization.

The last such comprehensive review of OSCE activities took place in 1996, before the Lisbon Summit.

The main aim of the discussions was to obtain a picture of how the participating States were implementing their OSCE commitments, and how the Organization's activities and structures have evolved over the past years.

Altogether more than 460 participants attended the meeting, including representatives of international and non-governmental organizations and of the OSCE's Partners for Co-operation (Japan and the Republic of Korea), as well as the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia). More than 160 of the participants were representatives of NGOs.

The meeting was opened by the Norwegian Secretary of State, Dr. Janne Haaland Matlary, who spoke on behalf of the Chairman-in-Office: "The growth of this Organization since the last Review Conference three years ago has been remarkable. In a relatively short space of time, the OSCE has, in practical terms, developed into a fully-fledged international organization with a significant field pres-

ence. This has stretched its flexibility and operational capacity to the limit, but at the same time it has enabled us to build on the OSCE's comparative advantages and strengths, while gradually correcting its deficiencies and weaknesses.

"The Review Conference provides us with an opportunity to further improve the measures that are available to us and to learn from past experience. It is also a chance to explore the extent to which the participating States have managed to fulfil the political commitments they have undertaken," Dr. Matlary said.

"The Review Conference provides.. a chance to explore the extent to which the participating States have managed to fulfil the political commitments they have undertaken."

The Conference was also addressed by the Secretary General and the Heads of the other OSCE Institutions.

The discussions took place in four working groups, each dedicated to specific aspects of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security (*see box*). Summaries and reports from each of the working groups are available upon request from the OSCE Secretariat.

The 1999 Review Conference is a two-part meeting. It will resume again in Istanbul, Turkey, from 8 to 10 November, where the conclusions and recommendations put forward in Vienna will be further discussed.

Working groups at the 1999 OSCE Review Conference:

Human Dimension – Issues of human rights, rule of law and the promotion of democracy and democratic institutions throughout the OSCE area were reviewed. Specific topics included freedom of thought, expression and association; prevention of torture; equality of opportunity for men and women; migration, refugees and displaced persons; culture and education; the role of non-governmental organizations; and national minorities.

Economic Dimension – The main issues covered related to economies in transition, regional economic co-operation, and environmental and economic aspects of security.

Politico-military aspects of security – The implementation of the 1994 Vienna Document, one of the latest measures that expanded the OSCE's confidence- and security-building measures, was the main topic addressed. Openness and transparency in military activities of participating States, regional security problems and security dialogue were also discussed.

OSCE activities, institutions, structures and instruments – General aspects of the OSCE, such as administrative, technical and financial aspects, were the topics of the working group meetings. More specifically, issues such as co-operation with partners and international organizations and the effectiveness of OSCE institutions, structures and field activities were also reviewed.

UPDATE from the Kosovo Mission

Several major events involving the OSCE Mission in Kosovo occurred in September, reflecting the developments and improvements that result from the Mission's work across a wide range of fields. The Judicial Training Unit held its inaugural training symposium for judges and prosecutors from Kosovo, while classes started at the Kosovo Police Service School, following weeks of preparation. Also, OSCE Human Rights Teams compiled the results of their extensive field work in a report on the situation of ethnic minorities in Kosovo, which was released to the public. Finally, Radio Television Kosovo began broadcasting its television programme for the first time.

Judicial Training Symposium

The OSCE held its first training symposium for the judiciary in Pristina, on 24 and 25 September. This has inaugurated a series of two-day courses for 27 newly-appointed judges, prosecutors and defence counsel. The symposium focused on international standards of human rights, judicial practice, pre-trial detention proceedings and standards for the prosecution of war crimes. This will be the first of several symposia for the judiciary working in the current Emergency Judicial System.

The symposium also represents the first step towards the establishment of a new Kosovo Judicial Institute. This body will, in the future, provide an opportunity for members of the judiciary to develop their professional skills and access information on international human rights standards. The OSCE is working on this initiative in close cooperation with representatives of the local legal community and international partners.

Report on the situation of ethnic minorities

In the field of human rights, the OSCE and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights released a joint report examining the situation of ethnic minorities in Kosovo. OSCE Human Rights teams had been assessing the situation by travelling the region and conducting interviews. The report focused attention on some areas of concern, such as the lack of access to humanitarian assistance and medical facilities. These factors also contributed to the internal displacement of minorities in Kosovo. The report includes estimates of the size of each of the ethnic minorities represented in Kosovo.

The report was released to the public on 10 September, and is available on the OSCE website at

www.osce.org/kosovo.

Classes under way at Kosovo Police Service School

The first 200 students to enter the Kosovo Police Service School in Vucitrn, operated by the OSCE, began classes on 7 September. Following the opening ceremonies, students embarked on the initial five-week training programme. During the first days, uniforms were distributed, and a daily routine was established. Classes on democratic policing, legal affairs and other subjects are accompanied by active training. Firearm instruction is held at the nearby firing range. The school canteen serves students with meals.

After completing six weeks of classroom training, the new Kosovo police officers will be placed into a structured 19-week field training programme. Each Kosovo police officer will be deployed on a one-to-one basis with an international police officer from the United Nations International Police. While



OSCE human rights teams interviewing Roma children in Obilić.

OSCE/Lubomir Koček



Tore Peterson, OSCE Police Trainer, during a lecture at the Kosovo Police School

undergoing field training, the Kosovo police officers will be closely supervised and evaluated, but they will not have executive authority. After completion of the classroom and field training components, successful officers will be certified by the UN Police Commissioner and given executive authority.

Radio Television Kosovo goes on air

Radio Television Kosovo (RTK) is now broadcasting local and international news in Albanian and Serbian to homes in Kosovo as an emergency public service broadcaster. The first transmission was sent out via satellite on 19 September. RTK is mandated to offer

an objective, unbiased and community-minded source of news and information. The OSCE and UNMIK subcontracted the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) to produce the television programme.

Currently transmissions in Albanian and Serbian are on the air initially for two hours, focusing on international and local news. The station's present structure is the core for the future, when it will be adapted to represent the needs of the population with more hours of production time. Programmes will be expanded and the resumption of terrestrial transmission and the rehabilitation of transmitters will be addressed.

Eric Lehman, Chairman of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, arrived in Pristina to assume his position of Director General of Radio Television Kosovo on 26 September. He will be responsible for the training of competent local staff in international standards of journalism and modern broadcasting technology.

Article V negotiations resume in Vienna

Under the auspices of the OSCE, negotiations on regional stability on South Eastern Europe resumed on 6 September in the Hofburg, under Article V of Annex I-B of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Article V is aimed at establishing a broad security dialogue among the participating States. Its aim is to enhance transparency, openness and predictability in the field of military security, complementing the existing and mutually reinforcing measures for arms control and confidence and security-building measures as well as promoting co-operation and good neighbourly relations in South-Eastern Europe. This should facilitate the ongoing process of integration

of all states of this region into the evolving European security architecture.

The 20 participating States (Albania, Germany, the United States of America, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Netherlands, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Turkey and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) began the Article V negotiations in January 1999. Due to the Kosovo situation, the negotiations were suspended in March.

The negotiations have resumed with a discussion on potential confidence and security-building measures, which might be included in the future Article V agree-

ment. Also discussed was the programme of work to be undertaken after the Istanbul OSCE Summit.

At a later stage, the negotiations will consider measures to advance the goals of peace and stability in the region by focusing on levels of conventional armed forces, conventional equipment and armament, different types of military activity and any other forms of military.

Despite the long interruption in the negotiations, a strong interest has been sustained in the Article V process. Lasting regional stability is an important objective of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and Article V can be expected to play an important role in the process.



A group of Serbian Roma near Kosovo Polje after being expelled from Serbia in June 1999

OSCE focuses on Roma and Sinti issues

The OSCE is increasingly concerned with Roma and Sinti issues. Most recently, the last in a series of three Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings organized by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in 1999 was devoted to issues confronting Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area. On 6 September 1999, representatives of OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, and Roma and Sinti participants met in Vienna to discuss current and future policy-making on Roma and Sinti and the effectiveness of the policy measures enacted by OSCE participating States.

The meeting marked another important step forward in the context of the

work of the OSCE on Roma and Sinti issues, which in its beginnings dates back to the 1990 Copenhagen Document where the “particular problems” of Roma were first recognized within the OSCE framework. Since then, the Organization has constantly increased its efforts to address the issue. The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities has contributed to these efforts through studies on the situation of the Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area, while the ODIHR was tasked by the 1994 Budapest Summit to serve as a Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues. With the appointment of an Adviser on Roma and Sinti Issues in May 1999, the Contact Point was further strengthened. Mr. Nicolae Gheo-

rghe, the new Roma and Sinti Adviser, is presently developing a programme of projects to promote the rights of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area.

At the recent meeting in Vienna, Mr. Gheorghe presented a description of the phases of OSCE work on Roma and Sinti since 1990 and made recommendations on how to enter a new phase of action with emphasis on the effectiveness of policy measures adopted by participating States and OSCE institutions.

The High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr. Max van der Stoep, gave the keynote speech. He outlined the main findings and conclusions of his recent study on Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area (a summary of the study is available from the OSCE Secretariat).

The High Commissioner emphasized that, due to the rich diversity of the Roma community it is difficult to make generalisations, even though discrimination and exclusion constituted fundamental features of the common Roma experience. Despite notable steps by a few institutions in the period since his last report, he reported a sustained deterioration of the situation of Romani communities in Europe, marked by a lack of attention and resources devoted by the OSCE and its participating States to the issues in hand.

Another among the High Commissioner's recommendations was the strengthening of the ODIHR Contact Point on Roma and Sinti Issues. He suggested that particular attention should be paid to the effective participation of Roma at all levels of government, the development and refinement of mechanisms to alleviate tensions and conflict between Roma and non-Roma communities, and to combating racism and discrimination within public administrations.

In this context, the High Commissioner encouraged the Contact Point to undertake on-site inquiries. A precedent for such an inquiry was set by the 1999 Joint OSCE/ODIHR-Council of Europe Field Mission on the Situation of the

Roma in Kosovo (copies of the report are available from the OSCE Secretariat).

The discussions in the working groups focused on two main topics: putting "best practices" into operation, and building and implementing a platform of action to approach new problems in emergency situations.

In the course of the discussions in the working groups, the participating States and the OSCE Institutions and Missions were urged to give higher political pro-

file, stronger "moral leadership" and solid resources to policy-making on Roma. It was recommended that Roma and Sinti issues should be addressed at the Istanbul Summit and in the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

In addition, it was suggested that the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues be instructed to work in that direction and to take a more pro-active approach, complementary to its present clearinghouse role. Mr. Gheorghe was also requested to update on a regular basis the report on the situation of Roma in Kosovo produced by the joint mission of the ODIHR and the Council of Europe in August 1999.

The meeting was generally considered a significant success. The participants expressed the hope that renewed, reinforced and effective OSCE activities would "take off" following this meeting. The meeting was attended by a total of 249 participants, including 98 representatives of Roma and Sinti NGOs, and the discussions were conducted in both English and Romani languages with simultaneous interpretation. The summary report, including a full list of recommendations, is available at the ODIHR website:

www.osce.odih.org.

OSCE/Lubomir Korek



Roma children in Kosovo

PRESS PROFILE



*Neue Zürcher
Zeitung,
4 September*

Promoting justice is one of the tasks of institutions belonging to the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). These organizations – like the UN worldwide – had already long before 1989 established and dis-

seminated internationally recognized standards for human rights and democracy. The communist states participated in the formulation of these standards in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 as well, unaware of their hidden explosive charge.

Die Presse, 7 September

At a one-day OSCE-seminar in Vienna on Monday on the situation of Roma in Europe, the main priority was seen to be an intensification of dialogue

between Roma and the states they live in... The foremost task of the OSCE should be to create a problem awareness, out of which political plans of action could emerge. In any case, there are no short-term solutions.

Reuters, 7 September

The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which is running the police school (in Kosovo), aims to create a multi-ethnic force where respects for human rights is paramount.

The great majority of the new recruits are Albanian, but Serbs and Serbian-speaking Moslems are also among them.

Le Monde, 9 September

The supervision of media in Kosovo is a copy of the model developed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the OSCE claims that it has learnt its lessons from that one. But all this is far from being conclusive.

The Economist, 11 September

The OSCE, until 1995 the CSCE (C for Conference instead of O for Organisation), is a rambling, 55-strong bunch of countries with little institutional coherence that emerged from a series of Cold-War, East-West detente sessions that culminated in the signing of a grand charter. Belittled at the time by power-brokers such as Henry Kissinger for pointlessly enshrining in its human rights basket a string of obligations that the Soviet Union looked certain never to meet, it nonetheless became a vitally useful bit of paper for Soviet and East European dissidents to brandish before their governments. After communism collapsed, and NATO and the EU went into

the ascendant, the OSCE became the Russians' favourite club – because it was just about the only one that embraced themselves, the ex-Soviet countries, West Europeans and North Americans on seemingly equal terms. Recently, over Kosovo, it has been the forum where the Russians have most liked to talk. When Chechnya was in flames, it was the only body they would let draw near.

Reuters, 17 September

International monitors accused authorities in Kazakhstan of violating election rules in voting on Friday for the Senate, the upper house of parliament. The criticism is a blow to Kazakhstan, which, keen to present a democratic image, had welcomed a decision by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to monitor parliamentary elections in the vast Central Asian state. Parliament's lower chamber will be elected next month under new rules intended to make the polls more open. One of the new measures gives political parties and local officials the right to observe the elections. But the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)

said the procedures, tried out for the first time in Friday's Senate elections, had in several cases fallen short of international standards.

Neue Zürcher Zeitung 20 September

Only one and a half months before the presidential elections in the Ukraine, reports are mounting of state intervention against independent media... The OSCE expresses concern about the restriction of press freedom... A report from the beginning of September by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve, states that cases of intervention against independent media has been increasing as the election campaign has gained momentum.

Le Monde 27 September

The OSCE has never raised its voice to denounce the Russian refusal to enter the negotiations that were stipulated in the Russian-Chechen peace accord, the excuse for this disinterest being that this is an "internal affair" of Russia. The price to be paid for this refusal to interfere may soon become far too high, as Chechen civilians will no longer be the only ones who are paying.



News from the field

The OSCE currently has Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kosovo (FRY), Latvia, Skopje (fYROM), Moldova, and Tajikistan, as well as an Assistance Group to Chechnya, a Presence in Albania, an Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus, and a Project Co-ordinator for the Ukraine. The following are highlights from the work of some of the field operations during the past month.

Joint arbitration award removes senior Bosnian officials

A binding arbitration award issued jointly on 16 September, by the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Wolfgang Petritsch, and the Head of the OSCE BiH Mission, Ambassador Robert Barry, has removed the mayor of the town

of Drvar. Observing that the municipal executive in Drvar was still not functioning, the High Representative and HOM decided with regret to replace Mile Marceta (Bosnian Serb), while commending his courageous efforts to facilitate the process of returns to Drvar and encouraging his continued involvement in these issues. His

replacement is Momcilo Baji from Marceta's party, Coalition for Drvar.

The arbitration award also included the removal of the head of Drvar's municipal council, the Bosnian Croat, Borivoje Malbaai, for refusing to convene regular sessions of the council. Underscoring the Cantonal Government's involvement in

the overall unsatisfactory situation in Drvar, the High Representative also removed the Bosnian Croat, Stipo Babi, from his post as Justice Minister of the Croat-controlled Canton 10 for failure to effectively implement the General Framework Agreement for Peace and for gross failures in its justice system. An example of the justice systems' deficiencies has been the lack of serious investigation into the murder of a Serb couple in Drvar in April 1998.

OSCE helps launch BiH independent radio network

Assisted by the OSCE's Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the state's first independent radio network – BORAM – has been officially launched in Sarajevo and Banja Luka. Conceived as a self-sustaining co-operative of independent radio stations, the network creates a shared agreement, laying the groundwork for the emergence of BORAM as a marketing and programming powerhouse for independent radio throughout BiH. The network comprises 24 local stations from both the Federation and Republika Srpska, along with Radio Fern, the independent, BiH-wide station. BORAM is set not only to provide sponsors and advertisers with a single point of contact, but will also allow an unprecedented opportunity to share professional and high quality broadcasts. Radio FERN will play a key programming role at BORAM by providing news, sports and speciality broadcasts to local audiences served by member stations.

OSCE Mission reports that more progress is needed in Croatia

The OSCE Mission to Croatia has issued its fifth Progress Report on 29 September. The reports, issued every four months, assess the progress of the Government of Croatia in fulfilling its international obligations and commitments. The report covers a four-month

period and does not aim to assess the current state of affairs in the Republic of Croatia, but to assess the progress the Croatian Government had made in fulfilling its international obligations. It identified piecemeal progress in some areas covered by the mission mandate, but noted that no substantial progress has been made in the most important areas. With parliamentary elections planned in the near future, the continued lack of progress in the areas of electoral and media reform is of particular concern. Through these reports and regular contacts with Government officials, the mission informs the Government of its appraisal of the extent of progress.

Croatian Mission assists NGO network

Within the context of the Mission's activities in the field of democratisation, the Mission Co-ordination Centre in Sisak organized a meeting on 15 September to explore the possibilities of building a stronger network of local non-governmental organizations. Over 20 NGOs from across the six counties of Croatia attended the meeting, which included a presentation by the Mission on the topic of "Funds for Institution Building". The Mission also gave a presentation on conflict resolution training. The Sisak Centre puts strong emphasis on civil society capacity building and supports the needs of local NGOs through its activities.

Skopje Mission assists stranded Roma refugees

Mediation by the OSCE Spillover Mission to Skopje resulted in humanitarian help getting through to a group of Kosovo Roma who were stuck in no-man's land at the Blace border crossing. Members of the Macedonian Roma organization, Drom, had originally not been allowed through when they tried to pass the Blace crossing in September. How-

ever, after some OSCE mediation, Drom obtained permission to help the stranded refugees. The Mission later received a formal letter of appreciation from the Roma organization.

Liaison Office in Central Asia visits Fergana Valley

OSCE's Central Asian Liaison Office (CALO) paid a three-day visit in September to the Uzbek part of the Fergana Valley to assess the security situation and follow up human rights issues, particularly related to the trials of people accused of participating in a bombing in February this year. CALO members held meetings with the Andijan Governor's Office, the Chairman of the regional court, the City Prosecutor, human rights activists, and individual complainants. In the towns of Namanagan and Fergana, CALO met representatives of the governor's and mayor's offices. CALO was also active in following up allegations that religious Muslims were being imprisoned in large numbers on little evidence.

BBC training for Tajik journalists

Working with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan and the BBC World Service organized a five-day training course for local journalists. International trainers made presentations and organized practical exercises on journalism techniques and on mirroring electoral issues. The course was attended by over 40 journalists from private and state media from all the regions of the country. From 13 to 17 September, journalists followed a series of lectures and participated in exercises on different topics. They also met representatives of the Tajik political class, lawyers, and experts in Tajik media legislation. They were addressed by I. Usmonov, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on International Relations and Mass Media.

from the High Commissioner on National Minorities

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Slovak Republic

The High Commissioner visited the Slovak Republic twice in September. On 2 and 3 September, he was in Bratislava in order to evaluate inter-ethnic relations after the adoption of the Minority Language Law in July. During his two-day visit Mr. Max van der Stoel met with President Schuster, Prime Minister Dzurinda, a number of Ministers and Members of Parliament including the Head of the Hungarian Coalition Party (SMK), Bela Bugar, and the former Prime Minister, Vladimir Meciar, who is the Chairman of the Slovak Nationalist Party (HZDS). In his discussions the High Commissioner tried to assess the positions of the parties in relation to the implementation of the law (which came into effect on 1 September) and to seek clarification on points which remained contentious. He was also interested to learn more about the Government's programme relating to the Roma minority group.

Mr. van der Stoel paid his second visit to the Slovak Republic on 23 and 24 September to take part in an international seminar on the subject of "The Hague Recommendations regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities" which was held in Casta Papiernicka. The seminar, co-organized by the Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations and the Foundation Citizen and Democracy, Minority Rights Group-Slovakia, brought together representatives of the Slovak Government and Parliament, minorities and non-governmental organizations to discuss and examine the implementation of minority education in the Slovak context.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Between 8 and 10 September, the High Commissioner visited the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) together with an educational expert from the Netherlands. The main purpose of the visit was to have further discussions on the question of an Albanian language university. The High Commissioner also apprised himself of the latest political developments in the country (particularly as regards inter-ethnic relations) in the run-up to the presidential elections, due to take place on 31 October. He met President Gligorov, Prime Minister Georgievski, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dimitrov, government ministers and representatives of the Albanian political parties.

Ukraine

From 12 to 16 September, the High Commissioner visited Ukraine. The main purpose of his trip was to chair a seminar (organized by the Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations) in Odessa on the linguistic and education rights of national minorities.

In the margins of the seminar, the High Commissioner had meetings with representatives of the Crimean Tartars. Issues discussed included the representation of Crimean Tartars in a consultative body especially created to discuss their problems, a law currently before the Ukrainian Parliament on the status of the Crimean Tartars in Ukraine, and the urgent need for more international funds to finance resettlement of the Tartars. He also trav-

elled to Kiev where he had meetings with President Kuchma and Foreign Minister Tarasyuk. During his meetings, he was requested by the Ukrainian Government to organize a conference on Ukrainians in Russia and Russians in Ukraine.

Roma and Sinti

The High Commissioner made two interventions on the Roma during September. On 6 September, he gave an address to the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Roma and Sinti Issues in Vienna. Describing the plight of the Roma as something that "affects us all as Europeans", he outlined many of the problems that Roma currently face in Europe. He stressed the need for better communication and dialogue, the importance of proper and effective mechanisms for Roma participation, and the need for fundamental improvements in education, housing and health care for Roma. He noted that "discrimination is a defining feature of the Roma experience" and called for political leadership and effective legislation to stamp it out. The full text of the speech is available on the HCNM section of the OSCE website: www.osce.org/inst/hcnm

Review Conference

Many of these themes were repeated in the High Commissioner's address to the Human Dimension Section of the Review Conference in Vienna. There, he submitted a report on Roma and Sinti issues that included a number of specific recommendations. This was a precursor to a more detailed report on the Roma to

be issued before the OSCE Istanbul Summit in November.

In his speech to the Review Conference on 20 September, Mr. van der Stoep highlighted the need to guarantee respect for the linguistic and educational rights of national minorities. He also stressed

the need to integrate diversity and to allow for the effective participation of national minorities in public life. He warned against the malign affects of excessive nationalism and said, “it should not take a Kosovo or Bosnia to convince us of the need for continuing to

seek ways of fostering inter-ethnic harmony and to create societies that protect and promote the needs and identities of all citizens.” The full text of the speech is available on the HCNM section of the OSCE website:

www.osce.org/inst/hcnm

REPORT of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

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

Duve criticises “structural censorship”

Addressing the Plenary Session at the OSCE Review Conference, on 20 September, Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, spoke about the elements of “structural censorship.” He defined this as a set of unexpected forms of indirect pressure on media freedom related to the economic and political structures of the past. “These indirect structural pressures can be as nefarious and harmful to free journalism as direct repression,” he noted.

“Besides these instruments of structural censorship, we face another serious problem which cannot be called ‘censorship’ It is, however, a main source of concern: government officials who, again and again, avail themselves of ill-conceived judicial statutes regarding libel and defamation.”

Mr Duve spoke also of the economic aspects which affect the independence of the media: a high rate of value added tax, and the presence of business monopolies which control the media. Finally, he called upon the international community to provide carefully directed economic assistance to redress some of the structural imbalances which threaten freedom of expression and weaken democracy.

The OSCE Representative also chaired a side event in the margins of the Review Conference, on 24 September, with a special focus on media self-regulation. This informal meeting was attended by a number of non-governmental organisations and provided an opportunity for an extended exchange of views on current issues.

Roundtable discusses protection of journalists in conflict areas

On 22 September, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve, together with The Freedom Forum, held a roundtable in London on Protecting Journalists in Conflict Areas. The meeting was organised as a follow-up to the suggestion made by Mr Duve on 14 June, that one way to protect journalists in conflict areas would be by clearly identifying them as media professionals. This proposal was made after the murder of two journalists in Kosovo.

The roundtable was attended by TV and radio journalists, magazine editors, NGOs, journalism professors and by the British MP, Martin Bell, a former BBC reporter. The debate ended by focusing on the more broader aspects of protecting journalists.

The participants agreed that one of the ways to protect journalists was by

ensuring that the alleged killers would be brought to justice, either through national courts or through an international one, along the lines of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague. One of the experts noted that suspending membership in international organisations of countries that harbour those known to have deliberately killed journalists could also act as a deterrent.

Most participants referred frequently to training and awareness, stressing the importance of doing more in those fields and that some degree of protection through similar means should be provided to freelancers. One leitmotif throughout the roundtable: editors need to take a legal and moral responsibility for freelancers working in war zones, providing adequate training and insurance. One of the ways of doing this could be through establishing a relevant convention.

A number of concrete proposals were also made, including urging media outlets to lower the number of correspondents sent to war zones and to encourage the establishment of pools along the lines of the Sarajevo Agency Pool. The participants agreed that more co-operation between different media,

including pooling, could help in lowering the risks for journalists.

The participants agreed that this debate should continue, possibly with senior military officers and that editors should be

encouraged to improve training and insurance coverage, especially for freelancers.

Conference in Bratislava

On 23 September, the OSCE Repre-

sentative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve addressed a conference in Bratislava on the potential of closer co-operation in Europe, and chaired one of the working groups on media issues.

UPDATE from the ODIHR

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

ODIHR Director discusses project implementation in Azerbaijan

The Director of the ODIHR, Ambassador Gérard Stoudmann, visited Azerbaijan from 1-3 September, to discuss the implementation of current projects under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) agreed between the ODIHR and the Government of Azerbaijan, and also to identify projects for the year 2000.

A series of meetings with President Heydar Aliyev, as well as with Mr. Ramiz Mekhdiyev, the Head of the President's Office and focal point for MoU projects, and several other government representatives centered on advancing the implementation of ODIHR democratization projects in Azerbaijan. Elections assistance was also discussed, in the context of ODIHR recommendations for improvements in Azerbaijani election legislation and practice, as set out following the 1998 elections.

It was agreed that an intern from the Office of the President would work with the ODIHR in Warsaw during October. His task would be to assist the implementation of the 1999 MoU projects and to begin the planning of projects for next year.

During the visit, a constructive meeting was held with the Director and the staff of the Human Rights Research Institute, Baku. The Institute deals with issues such as minority rights, refugee

rights, religious freedom and human rights complaints. It may become a partner for the ODIHR in the development and implementation of human rights activities.

Round table on the role of the media in the FRY during the Kosovo Crisis

A round table meeting on the role of the media in Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo during 1999 was organized on 10-12 September 1999 in Montenegro by the ODIHR in co-operation with the Humanitarian Law Center, a Belgrade-based NGO. The ODIHR office in Montenegro played a key role in organizing the two-day discussions. Participants included some 20 journalists and editors from Serbia representing the alternative media, together with nine from Montenegro and three from Kosovo. Four international journalists with many years of experience in the region moderated the discussions and ten representatives of various OSCE institutions and offices participated as observers.

Against the backdrop of fundamental changes in the media sector in Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo during 1999, the meeting focused on analysing the reasons for the conduct of the media and the content of media reporting in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in 1999. Participants exchanged views about the role and responsibilities of the media

during a crisis, and on possible conclusions for future media conduct and reporting.

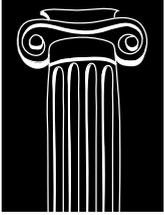
It was noted that while the media in Serbia was severely restricted by censorship and repression during the period under discussion, the far more liberal political conditions in Montenegro allowed a broader coverage of developments, although censorship rules were also applied and enforced there. In Serbia, most editors and journalists abided by the censorship rules. Those few who violated the rules faced severe consequences.

However, most of those journalists who violated the censorship requirements did not do so to cover developments in Kosovo. The majority of journalists believed they had only two choices, to abide by the censorship rules and publish what was permissible or close down. A third option – to challenge the regime – was chosen by a few, whereas a fourth option – to resort to underground publication – was never chosen.

The question of whether the Serb media also shared responsibility for the crimes committed by the regime was a controversial issue of discussion.

The participants agreed that the discussions were useful, though very difficult, and requested the ODIHR to convene additional round tables to focus on specific issues.

DEMOCRATIZATION



NGO – Government Meeting on Ombudsman in Kyrgyzstan

The third NGO-Government meeting under the Memorandum of Understanding between the ODIHR and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic took place in Bishkek on 6 September 1999. The meeting was devoted to human rights advocacy, civil society and ombudsman in the Kyrgyz Republic, and was organized together with the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, the Kyrgyz Committee for Human Rights, and the European Union.

A major purpose of the meeting was to explain the role and responsibilities of Ombudsman institutions, how such an institution could be created in a Kyrgyz context and how it would work with the existing Human Rights Commission under the President. Experts from the OSCE and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights also outlined the requirements for an Ombudsman institution to meet international standards.

The meeting prompted a lively discussion between NGO representatives and State officials about the need to create such an institution in Kyrgyzstan, how its independence could be guaranteed, and the nature of its mandate. As a result of the meeting, the Kyrgyz authorities invited NGOs to participate in a consulting group to the official working group tasked with drafting the new law on Ombudsman for Kyrgyzstan.

Seminar on establishment of Ombudsman office in Kazakhstan

In the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Kazakhstan and the ODIHR, a two-day seminar dedicated to the

development of an Ombudsman office in Kazakhstan was organized by the ODIHR in co-operation with the OSCE Centre in Almaty, the UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The seminar clarified the role and function of an Ombudsman institution in a democratic State, based on the rule of law. It was attended by some 80 participants from the Government, NGOs and international organizations.

It was commonly acknowledged that Kazakhstan would benefit from the creation of such an institution, which can deal with human rights-related complaints on an informal and flexible basis and is cost-free and accessible to everyone. The key question of whether the independence of an Ombudsman institution could be guaranteed in law and in practice, was discussed intensively. The seminar concluded with a joint declaration, which calls for the creation of an Ombudsman office and outlines necessary steps to achieve this goal. The ODIHR and the other organizations involved stand ready to assist Kazakhstan with the next step, the elaboration and public discussion of a draft law. The assistance in the establishment of an Ombudsman office is part of the ODIHR/European Commission Joint Programme for Advancing Human Rights and Democratization in Central Asia.

Launching of a new ODIHR publication: Preventing Torture – A Handbook for OSCE Field Staff

The ODIHR has prepared a handbook for field mission personnel on the prevention of torture. The new ODIHR publication was presented at a side meeting of the OSCE Review Conference in Vienna on 27 September 1999. The handbook should enable field mission members to identify torture as a central issue of their mandate. It explains international standards and mechanisms and gives

guidance on monitoring and reporting on this issue. The handbook is now being distributed to the OSCE field missions.

Participants of the side meeting welcomed the preparation of the handbook and emphasized the importance of training of field personnel and raising awareness in the field of torture prevention. It was also pointed out that networking between individuals, NGOs and intergovernment organizations in the field is vital to strengthen efforts to combat torture.

Needs assessment mission to Ukraine

An ODIHR-led delegation including the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Council of Europe visited Ukraine on 8-10 September 1999 in order to support the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. In a series of meetings with Government officials and representatives of the Constitutional and Supreme Courts, the Ombudsman office, international organizations and NGOs, the delegation discussed current and planned projects such as a comprehensive review of the Ukrainian human rights legislation, the establishment of a national council against trafficking, technical assistance to the Ombudswoman, assistance to the Constitutional Court as well as training for the Supreme Court. The mission was undertaken in the context of the agreement recently concluded between the OSCE and the Government of Ukraine.

ODIHR Border Guards Handbook to be released

The ODIHR is planning to release a handbook entitled “Human Rights in Daily Border Guards Practices – Example of Poland” in October 1999. The handbook was prepared jointly by the ODIHR and an expert of the Polish Border Guards Academy in Ketrzyn. It illustrates how international human rights are

applied in Polish internal legislation, as guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. In a very comprehensive and representative manner, the publication explains how human rights pertain to daily border guards' duties. A presentation of the handbook in Russian language is planned for 18-19 October 1999 in Tashkent at the premises of the Border Guards Academy of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Review Conference side meeting on combating trafficking in women in post-conflict areas

In conjunction with the Review Conference, the ODIHR organized a side meeting on 29 September 1999 to discuss "Combating Trafficking in Women in Post-Conflict Areas". The meeting was opened by the Director of the ODIHR, Ambassador Gérard Stoudmann, and included presentations by Madeleine Rees, head of the Sarajevo office of the UNHCHR, Brankica Grupkovic, a women's rights activist from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and Jill Thompson, the ODIHR Adviser on Trafficking Issues. Participants in the side meeting discussed the emergence of trafficking in women in Bosnia in the post-conflict period, and its recent appearance in Kosovo; lessons learned from the Bosnia experience and actions taken by the UNHCHR and United Nation's Mission in Bosnia to address trafficking in Bosnia; the need for concerted and coordinated action to combat trafficking in Kosovo and throughout the Balkans region, including as part of the OSCE contribution to the Stability Pact; and recommendations for addressing the problem of trafficking within the OSCE framework. Participants included government delegations, representatives of the International Organization for Migration, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, and several NGOs.

Research project on trafficking in migrants in Kyrgyzstan

The ODIHR and the OSCE Centre in Bishkek have initiated a joint project with the IOM to study the problem of trafficking in migrants in Kyrgyzstan, with particular emphasis on trafficking in women and children. The primary goal of the project is to assess the approximate incidence and potential for trafficking in migrants to, through, and from Kyrgyzstan and to evaluate the existing policy, legislation and other mechanisms in place to prevent and combat trafficking. The research and evaluation will then be used to formulate recommendations for national policies, regional co-operation, and future programming initiatives.

Public awareness television programme in Armenia

The fifth in a series of six television programmes on human rights was prepared in September 1999. The programme on the rights of prisoners was produced in the Armenian language for the ODIHR by a local television crew in co-operation with local NGOs. It will soon be shown on Armenian TV Channel One. The programmes are part of a human rights awareness project being implemented by the ODIHR under the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Armenia and the ODIHR.



Election Observation

For the election section, September was a particularly busy month, with four observation missions in four different countries.

In **Kazakhstan**, the observation mission for the 10 October 1999 parliamentary elections continued to monitor the preparations of the elections, the cam-

paign and the political environment. The election is the first under a new election system introducing a proportional element by having 10 seats out of 77 elected on party lists. On 17 September 1999, the ODIHR issued a press statement expressing concern regarding the arrest of former Prime Minister Kazhegeldin and the fact that observers had been denied access to the count during the Senate election in the Almaty oblast.

In the **former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, the ODIHR started an observation mission at the end of September. Presidential elections will take place on 31 October 1999 with a possible second round on 14 November 1999. Whilst monitoring the entire electoral process, the mission will focus on some of the problems identified during the observation of last year's parliamentary elections.

In **Georgia**, on 27 September 1999, the ODIHR established an election observation mission for the parliamentary election scheduled on 31 October 1999. The Election Observation Mission will deploy observers to all regions of Georgia where parliamentary elections will be held to assess compliance of the election process with relevant Georgian legislation and OSCE standards.

In **Ukraine**, the ODIHR established an election observation mission on 15 September 1999. Presidential elections are scheduled for 31 October 1999 with a possible second round on 14 November 1999. The observation mission will assess compliance of the election process with relevant Ukrainian legislation and OSCE commitments. Whilst following the entire electoral process, the Observation Mission will pay particular attention to whether the concerns identified during the observation of the 1998 parliamentary elections have been addressed. Given the problems experienced in the 1998 post-election period,

the election observation mission will closely monitor the complaints and appeals procedures, thus implementing the third phase of the ODIHR follow-up project on election dispute resolution.

Technical Assistance

In **Georgia**, the ODIHR is conducting two technical assistance projects in preparation for the 31 October 1999 parliamentary elections. The ODIHR technical assistance team is preparing a training manual focusing on the summarization procedures, to assist the Central Election Commission to train the District Election Commission members in election day activities. The Technical Assis-

tance Team is also preparing a training course for law enforcement agency officers focusing on the role of security forces on election day.

In **Azerbaijan**, in preparation for the 12 December 1999 municipal election, the ODIHR presented to the Central Election Commission its recommendations on the issuance of instructions to improve the transparency and efficiency of the process. The Central Election Commission expressed its commitment to fully incorporate all the recommendations. The ODIHR will closely follow the activities of the Central Election Commission of Azerbaijan and stands ready to provide further assistance upon request of the Azeri authorities.

Change of staff

The ODIHR is pleased to welcome the new Adviser on Gender Issues, Ms. Lara Griffith, and Ms. Tiina Ilsen, Assistant on Gender Issues. Ms. Hannah Bright who joined the office as Public Affairs Officer in 1998 left the ODIHR in September. Mr. Jens-Hagen Eschenbächer was subsequently appointed as new Public Affairs Officer. Mr. Nelson Nip, Head of Finance Section, and Mr. Henry Hedman, Assistant on Roma and Sinti Issues, also joined the Office recently. Mr. Chingiz Asgerov from the Office of the President of Azerbaijan will work as an intern with the ODIHR for one month.

REPORT from the Parliamentary Assembly

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Assembly President addresses OSCE Review Conference

On 20 September, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) President Helle Degn addressed the Opening Session of the OSCE Review Conference in Vienna. Ms. Degn reviewed some of the activities of the Assembly in promoting the implementation of OSCE commitments and emphasized that, in this process, parliaments and parliamentarians have a special responsibility.

“Since the OSCE PA is composed of elected representatives of the peoples of the participating States, it is only natural that we are particularly concerned with the promotion of democratic electoral legislation and practices in new democracies. Parliamentary democracy is based on free and fair elections. Therefore, we consider election monitoring to be one of our main responsibilities”, said Ms. Degn.

The President praised the good cooperation in election monitoring with ODIHR in accordance with the Agreement signed in 1997 by the Chairman-in-Office and the President of the OSCE PA. She also recalled that the Assembly had established an ad hoc Committee to create an effective follow-up mechanism. “We have suggested that after each election monitoring mission, discussions should take place between the OSCE and the Government of the country concerned on the election monitoring report and, in particular, on its recommendations. The Government would be asked to respond to the report”, said the President. She asked for the support of all participating States for this idea.

In her address, the President also stressed the activities of the so-called “democracy teams”, established by the Assembly to support the OSCE’s aims and policies in specific OSCE States or

regions. After elaborating on the activities of the “democracy teams” in Albania and Belarus, she mentioned the plan of the Assembly to establish a democracy team for Kosovo.

Finally, Ms. Degn advocated the early adoption of a Gender Action Plan, as proposed by the Chairman-in-Office and called for an open discussion in the OSCE on the Assembly’s Resolution on correcting the democratic deficit in the OSCE. “The Parliamentary Assembly needs to become part of the OSCE decision-making mechanism, as is the case in such organizations as the Council of Europe and the European Union”, concluded Ms. Degn.

Secretary General of PA addresses Permanent Council

Mr. R. Spencer Oliver, Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, addressed the Permanent

Council in Vienna on 16 September on the results of the Eighth Annual Session of the OSCE PA, held in July in St. Petersburg which was attended by more than 300 parliamentarians and senior OSCE officials.

The theme of the Annual Session, reported Mr. Oliver, was "Common Security and Democracy in the Twenty-First Century". Reports and resolutions prepared by the elected Rapporteurs of the three General Committees dealt with different but interrelated aspects of this theme. The Assembly also adopted eight Supplementary Resolutions on: the situation in Kosovo; on correcting the democratic deficit in the OSCE; on the situation in Belarus, on regional infrastructure in South-Eastern Europe; on the role of the OSCE in crisis prevention and conflict settlement; on the trafficking of women and children; on the assassination of Galina Starovoitova; and on the development of rule of law and human rights in the Russian Federation.

Of these supplementary items, the Secretary General drew particular attention to the resolution relating to the "democratic deficit" of the OSCE. This resolution derives from the original provisions envisaged for the establishment of the OSCE PA, as contained in the Charter of Paris, also taking into account the powers of the European Parliament and of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Its aim is to give a more formal role to the parliamentary branch of the OSCE. After discussion and debate, the resolution was adopted virtually unanimously. Mr. Oliver again reiterated the PA's call for a change in the consensus decision-making requirements of the OSCE, advocating that "approximate consensus" be adopted in the OSCE decision-making process.

The Secretary General also spoke about the role of parliamentarians in election monitoring missions and the

PA's constructive co-operation with ODIHR and other international parliamentary institutions. The Assembly, he asserted, had also provided support and visibility to the work of OSCE Missions and Offices and has responded to requests and initiatives to utilize OSCE parliamentarians in those field efforts. He mentioned the Tri-Parliamentary delegation to Albania and the Working Group on Belarus as examples. He also expressed the readiness of the PA to play a major role in making a positive contribution to the broad range of OSCE activities that are presently under way or contemplated in the foreseeable future.

In conclusion, Mr. Oliver expressed his expectation that the resolutions and recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly would be given serious attention and positive consideration in the development of the Charter for European Security and other documents being prepared for the Istanbul Summit.

Parliamentary Working Group on Belarus hosts international meeting

On 13 September, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Ad hoc Working Group on Belarus hosted a co-ordination and strategy meeting on Belarus for international organizations and governments at the Assembly's International Secretariat in Copenhagen. The purpose of the meeting was to gather representatives from international organizations and governments with interests in Belarus to discuss ways of increasing co-operation between international actors, and to discuss ways of developing better co-ordination between internationally sponsored programmes and activities. A specific goal of the meeting was to establish better communication between international actors in an effort to improve the efficient use of scarce development resources.

The meeting was chaired by the Head of the Working Group, Mr. Adrian Sev-

erin (MP, Romania), and was attended by representatives from a number of organizations, including the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the NATO Assembly. Also in attendance was Ambassador Hans-Georg Wiecek, Head of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Minsk (AMG), who described the recent developments in Belarus resulting from the combined efforts of the Assembly's Working Group and the AMG.

The Parliamentary and Governmental branches of OSCE have been working together to develop a national roundtable meeting with a representative balance of social and political sectors to work out details for holding free, fair and recognizable Belarusian elections in the year 2000.

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to monitor elections in Kazakhstan and Georgia

Mr. Igor Ostash of Ukraine, Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly, will lead the short-term observation mission to the parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan, scheduled for 10 October. The PA will monitor these elections in conjunction with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), in accordance with the Co-operation Agreement of 1997 between the Assembly and the ODIHR. More than twenty parliamentarians from ten OSCE countries are expected to be deployed across Kazakhstan.

The Parliamentary Assembly will also send a team of observers to the Georgian parliamentary elections, scheduled for 31 October.

President Helle Degn visits Finland, Estonia and Latvia

President Helle Degn was due to visit Finland on 18 to 19 October at the invitation of Mrs. Riitta Uosukainen,

Speaker of the Finnish parliament. During her visit, President Degn met Finnish parliamentarians and representatives of the Government of Finland, which currently holds the presidency of the European Union. Discussions will include such items as the forthcoming OSCE Summit in Istanbul and the OSCE's role and activities in South-Eastern Europe.

President Degn will also visit Estonia (19-20 October) and Latvia (21-23 October) as part of her efforts to familiarize the PA with and to support their

work of OSCE Missions. She will meet OSCE officials in the field as well as high-ranking government and parliamentary officials to draw their attention to the activities of the OSCE. Since her election in July 1998, President Degn has already visited ten other OSCE field missions.

Chair of PA Belarus democracy team to address Permanent Council

Mr. Adrian Severin (MP, Romania), Chairman of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly ad hoc Working Group –

“democracy team” – on Belarus, will address the OSCE Permanent Council on 4 November 1999, on developments related to the establishment of round-table talks between the opposition and Government of Belarus.

Mr. Severin will inform the Permanent Council about the Assembly's involvement in seeking a resolution to the political impasse in Belarus. He will also describe the working partnership that has been forged between the governmental and parliamentary sides of the OSCE in this regard.

NEWS from the OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat

On 11 and 12 September, Ambassador Jan Kubis, OSCE Secretary General, attended the High-Level International Conference held in the Ukrainian city of Yalta on ‘Baltic-Black Seas Co-operation: to the Integrated Europe of the 21st Century without Dividing Lines.’ He also visited the OSCE premises in Kiev.

On 14 September, he participated in the Ministerial Meeting of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), which adopted a Declaration on the principles guiding relations among the CICA member States. During his stay in Almaty, he was received by H.E. President Nazarbaev, had a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, Mr. Tokaev, as well with other Foreign Ministers.

The Secretariat contributed to the OSCE Review Conference. The Secretary General, in addition to his opening address, made a presentation on the lessons learned from field activities. The Director of Resources, the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Envi-

ronmental Activities, the Co-ordinator of Capacity Building and Training, the Head of the External Co-operation Section, and the Gender Adviser, also made introductory presentations in their respective fields of competence.

Delegations were also provided with background papers from the Secretariat. The Department for Conference Services extended organizational support to the OSCE Review Conference (*see article on page 3*).

On 9 September, the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, participated in Budapest at a meeting of the Task Force on the Future of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – an initiative promoted by the East-West Institute and Open Society Fund – involving a number of Serbian opposition parties and a cross-representation of Serbian society. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media sent a participant. The meeting, which focused on the media, political development and democratization, and the humanitarian crisis, stressed the need to create a community for change. It also initiated a discussion on

what main issues are to be advanced on a priority basis.

During September, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities was involved in preparing the first of the regional seminars leading up to the 2000 Economic Forum. The preparatory seminar on ‘Economic Rehabilitation and Next Steps in the Transition’, which is due to take place in Tashkent from 19 to 20 October, will focus on Institution Building, Rule of Law and the Role of Civil Society. He also presented a draft Work Programme in the Economic and Environmental Dimension of the OSCE, serving as a basis of lively consultations among delegations of the participating States.

On 23 September, the OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues, drawn up by the Secretariat at the request of the Chairmanship, was distributed to delegations. It is intended as a follow-up to recommendations made by participants in the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Gender Issues, held 14-15 June, 1999.

LIST OF PUBLIC INFORMATION MATERIALS

available upon request at the Prague or Vienna Office of the OSCE Secretariat

(as of October 1999)

Publications	Publisher/ Editor	Language(s)
<p>CD-ROM Compilation of documents 1973-1997 Includes documents from Summit Meetings, Follow-up and Review Conferences, Ministerial Councils, Senior and Permanent Council, Forum for Security Co-operation, Expert Meetings, OSCE Newsletters, Secretary General Annual Reports, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and ODIHR publications, Seminars, public releases and speeches from the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and much more <i>First Edition</i></p>	OSCE Secretariat, Prague Office	contains the documents in all 6 OSCE working languages */
<p>OSCE Newsletter (monthly) -Volume VI (1999), Volume V (1998), - Volume IV (1997), Volume III (1996), Volume II (1995), Volume I (1994)</p>	OSCE Secretariat	since 1. 1.1998 in all six OSCE working languages */ 1994-97 in English and Russian
<p>Fact Sheet (General) Includes the organigram with OSCE structure and Institutions</p>	OSCE Secretariat	in all 6 official OSCE languages */
<p>Image Brochure Colourful overview of the OSCE</p>	OSCE Secretariat	English Russian German
<p>OSCE Handbook general information on OSCE, Third Edition</p>	OSCE Secretariat	English
<p>Survey of OSCE Long-Term Missions and other OSCE Field Activities</p>	OSCE Secretariat / Conflict Prevention Centre	English
<p>The Secretary General's Annual Report on OSCE Activities (1993, 94, 95, 96, 97 and 98)</p>	OSCE Secretariat	in all 6 OSCE working languages */

Publications	Publisher/ Editor	Language(s)
ODIHR Semi-annual Reports	ODIHR	English Russian
From CSCE to OSCE Statements and Speeches by Dr. Wilhelm Höynck, Secretary General of the OSCE (1993-1996)	OSCE Secretariat	English
Bibliography on the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities: Documents, Speeches, Related Publications. <i>Third Edition</i>	Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations The Hague March 1997	English English
The Role of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in OSCE Conflict Prevention - An Introduction	Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations The Hague June 1997	English
The Oslo Recommendations Regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities and Explanatory Note	The Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations, The Hague February 1998	English Russian
Fact Sheet of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM)	OSCE Secretariat/HCNM	English Russian
Chronological Review from 1973 to 1998 of CSCE/OSCE official publications <i>List of bound versions of documents issued at the conclusion of a review, follow-up and other major CSCE/OSCE events including the Negotiations on Confidence and Building Measures</i>	OSCE Secretariat Prague Office	English
Reference Manual - Decisions Compilation 1993-94, 1995,1996,1997, 1998	OSCE Secretariat	English
Summary of Meetings, Decisions, Missions and Documents <i>Volume V (1998), Volume IV (1997), Volume III (1996), Volume II (1995), Volume I (1990-1994)</i>	OSCE Secretariat Prague Office	English

*/ The working languages of the OSCE are English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish



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