

C.A. & T. Newsletter
Central Asia and Transcaucasia Newsletter

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EDITORIAL

Setting up the *Central Asia and Transcaucasia Newsletter* we have promised to report on the work of the OSCE/ODIHR in this area thus people in Central Asia and Transcaucasia regions do not feel cut off from what is happening in the OSCE space. We try to subsequently record Central Asian and Transcaucasia related events e.g., seminars, meetings and conferences, which are of importance to the democratic development of these countries.

To be most comprehensive in presenting these news, the ODIHR and the OSCE Department for Chairman-in-Office Support decided to establish a closer co-operation. From now on, the editorial staff of *Central Asia and Transcaucasia Newsletter* and *OSCE Newsletter* will exchange information about the most recent OSCE/ODIHR initiatives contributing to the democratic process in Central Asia and Transcaucasia region.

The relative isolation of the Central Asian and Transcaucasia region within the OSCE area still can be observed and therefore the flow of information from our potential correspondents remains crucial. The ODIHR makes big efforts to support local projects and initiatives but we would like also so the *Central Asia and Transcaucasia Newsletter* serves as a forum on which different programs can be presented and various NGOs can introduce themselves and their activities. Your contribution to our Newsletter is very much welcomed. We strongly encourage you to write to us and provide us with information which we could then publish.

We hope that you will find this issue of the *Central Asia and Transcaucasia Newsletter* more informative since it not only covers the ODIHR, but also the other OSCE divisions initiatives in the area. Our Publications Review section provides a brief outlook on what is new in the world of Central Asia and Transcaucasia publishing.

We wish you pleasant reading!

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT VISITS CENTRAL ASIA

(reprinted from the OSCE Newsletter, Vol. 3, No. 6)

OSCE PA President Frank Swaelen made official visits to the Central Asia Republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan from May 27-June 1, 1996 upon invitation of the three republican Parliaments.

Mr. Swaelen also visited the OSCE Central Asia Office and was accompanied to all meetings in the three republics by Head of the Office Ambassador Reznik. High regard for Mr. Reznik and his work was expressed by government officials at all levels in the Central Asian republics. OSCE PA Secretary General R. Spencer Oliver, Special Assistant to the President Herman De Fraye, and OSCE PA Director of Programmes Eric Rudenshiold also joined the mission.

Mr. Swaelen met with numerous high-level dignitaries, including Kyrgyzstan's President Askar Akaev, Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov, Prime Ministers of the three republics, Speakers of Parliaments, and Chairmen of Foreign Affairs Committees. Through these meetings, President Swaelen sought directly to engage and deepen dialogue between the Central Asian parliamentarians, other OSCE-member Parliaments and the Assembly. He was particularly interested in meeting new delegation members and in soliciting continued high-level involvement by Central Asian Parliaments in the OSCE PA, especially in light of constitutional restructuring of the legislatures of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and recent elections in the regions. A major aim of the mission was to augment support for the OSCE Central Asia Office.

President Swaelen raised a number of questions relating to regional security, human rights, inter-ethnic relations, and the recently signed regional multi-national agreements. The inquiries and subsequent discussions were related to developing a better understanding of security concerns within Central Asia and the role that OSCE can play through preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention. President Swaelen spoke of the important contributions being made by the various branches of OSCE, the HCNM, the regional office of the OSCE in Tashkent, as well as by the OSCE PA.

A number of Central Asian officials remarked on the importance of OSCE initiatives, especially the recent OSCE Summit held in Tashkent in beginning the process of finding solutions to complex regional problems. The leadership of the Central Asian Parliaments showed a keen interest in parliamentary oriented initiatives. A proposal made by the Austrian Parliament to host a parliamentary development conference in Vienna, involving a seminar and round-table discussion with Central Asian legislators and their Austrian peers, was well received.

ARMENIA ATTENDS OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

"Noyan Tapan" News Agency Digest on 9 July 1996

The OSCE fifth annual Parliamentary Assembly, held July 5-9 in Stockholm, also included an Armenian delegation headed by Armenian Parliament Chairman Babken Ararktsian, who stressed the importance of two papers dealing with models of European security in the 21st century and spheres for political and democratic co-operation.

The Armenian delegation also included Chairman of the Parliament's Foreign Relations Commission Hovhannes Igitian and Chairman of the Commission on Finances, the Budget, and the Economy Armen Yeghiazarian. Accompanying the delegation were Ambassadors of Armenia to Great Britain and Austria Armen Sargsian and Ashot Voskanian.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN ARMENIA

Report by Helene Lloyd, ODIHR, Warsaw

The OSCE/ODIHR Election unit has been invited to observe the Presidential election in Armenia which will be held on September 22. Mr Nikolai Vulchanov, an ODIHR Election Adviser will carry out a needs assessment in Armenia during the first week of August. On the assumption that the Central Election Commission of Armenia has in principle, implemented the recommendations proposed by the OSCE/ODIHR election report for the 1995 Parliamentary elections, the OSCE/ODIHR will set up an Election Observation Mission in Yerevan.

Mr Simon Osborn, will the Co-ordinator for the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission. The main aim of the office will be to monitor the election campaign and the procedures until the official results have been announced. This will include meeting with all of the representatives of the presidential candidates and representatives of the Electoral administration, monitoring the media and the co-ordination of international observers.

The OSCE/ODIHR has already invited the participating States of the OSCE to send observers to Armenia. 7 long-term observers have been requested, with the idea of opening several regional offices outside of Yerevan. However, the majority of the observers will be short-term observers who will arrive up to one week before the day of the elections where they will be briefed and deployed by the OSCE/ODIHR Co-ordinator. After observing the Election on September 22, observers will attend a debriefing, the opinions of the observers will expressed in an OSCE/ODIHR press release. The co-ordinator will present a more thorough report about 10 days after the date of the election.

Observers from governments and NGO's are expected to be self-financing, although ODIHR will provide each regional office with an interpreter and a car with a driver. Further information about the elections in Armenia can be obtained from Ms Helen LLOYD, the ODIHR Elections Assistant: Tel: +48 22- 625 70 40.

Armenia will also be holding local elections on 10 November. A similar procedure is expected to be carried out, starting with a needs assessment in late August.

ODIHR TRAINING PROJECTS FOR NGOS

Note from the Editor: Between May 4 and 9 the ODIHR held a series of workshops fop for non-governmental organisations in Tbilisi, Georgia. Twenty-one participants representing Georgian NGOs concerned with Human Dimension issues participated in a 5-day training program designed to introduce the participants to ways of improving communication, negotiation, organisation and leadership skills. The trainers who lead the seminars, all members of the Partners for Democratic Change international network, were from the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic and Lithuania.

In July ODIHR continued sponsoring "capacity-building" training workshops for NGOs first in Yerevan, Armenia, from July 12 to 17, and then in Baku, Azerbaijan, from July 19 to 24. Both workshops were based upon the model used in May in Tbilisi, Georgia. They involved 30 representatives of human rights oriented NGOs who participated in a five-day training programmes designed to introduce the participants to the same values as the Georgian one. Unlike Georgia, however, the workshops in Yerevan and Baku also featured attendance by representatives from various local embassies who informed participants of the information resources available from their embassy libraries and facilities. An additional workshop on a similar model has been planned for Chisinau, Moldova, in October.

DRUGS AND CRIME: NEW CHALLENGES

Note from the Editor: Between 10 and 12 June delegations of the Central Asian states met in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to discuss ways of addressing the challenge of spreading drug addiction and organised crime. The seminar was jointly organised by the ODIHR, the UN Drug Control Programme and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch at the UN Office in Vienna.

Responding to the increased concern of the five Central Asian Republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) about the effects of organised trans-national crime and drug trafficking, and the interest of these countries in improving their responses to these problems, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the United Nations Office at Vienna (CPCJD/UNOV) and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) organised a joint seminar with the theme "Drugs and Crime: New Challenges." The initiative of the United Nations was by way of follow-up to the Issyk-Kul Declaration, signed by the Presidents of the five Central Asian Republics on 7 June 1995.

The Seminar was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan. It took place in Bishkek from 10 to 12 June 1996. The aim of the seminar was to bring together those Government officials from the five Central Asian Republics, who are responsible for policy-making and implementation, as well as law enforcement related to trans-national crime and drug trafficking. The Seminar was to provide a forum for the exchange of views and experiences on the prevention and control of organised trans-national crime, illicit drug trafficking and other related issues, such as money-laundering and corruption, to strengthen international co-operation at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels and to provide an opportunity for the assessment of the technical co-operation requirements of the five Central Asian Republics in appropriately strengthening the capacity of their criminal justice systems to respond to the challenges posed by organised trans-national crime and illicit drug trafficking.

The Director of ODIHR/OSCE stressed the Organisation's concern about the spread of organised crime and illicit drug trafficking in all States. These forms of criminal activity represented a threat to the rule of law and the practical implementation of human rights. In particular, trans-national organised crime was one of the major threats to security and to further economic development, especially in countries with economies in transition. Traditionally, organised crime had been regarded only as a law and order issue and had not been recognised as the threat to national security which it was. If organised crime was allowed to infiltrate national economies at a very delicate and crucial stage of their development, there was a very real risk that it might be subsequently impossible to disassociate organised crime from economic development as a whole. OSCE considered building of democratic societies and institutions crucial and had been mandated to direct its efforts at facilitating and strengthening that process.

The Regional Director of UNDCP indicated that the Programme had established a permanent presence in the region since August 1993 when its Regional Office had been opened. The Governments of the region were aware of the impact of drugs and had reached a level of coherent and balanced approaches. However, concerted action was still far from adequate. UNDCP had initiated the provision of multi-sectoral assistance to the Central Asian States, creating a basis for regional co-operation. The Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNDCP and the Governments of the five Central Asian Republics on 4 May 1996 had created the political base for co-operation from June 1996 to 1999. UNDCP hoped that the participants of the Seminar would review the legislative basis for action and the modalities required for effective co-operation. The Seminar was significant also because it was a joint activity between relevant international organisations and this initiative would be conducive to further co-operation and co-ordination, leading to future joint action, which would maximise benefits for the countries of the region.

The importance of the Seminar was accentuated by the fact that this was the first joint activity with OSCE which permitted the Division to respond to the requests received from the countries of the region. One of the institutions which were crucial to efforts directed at development and at strengthening democracy was the criminal justice system, which had to function as both an element of the necessary infrastructure and as a safety net to support market economy reforms and privatisation efforts, as well as attraction of foreign investment capital. Organised crime posed a formidable threat to institutions. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which had been established in 1992, had placed organised trans-national crime, as well as the control of the proceeds of crime and corruption at the top of its list of priorities, reflecting the increased concern of the international community.

LEGAL TRAINING PROJECT in Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Report by Robert M. Buergenthal

At the request of Justice Minister Ismailov and in co-ordination with the OSCE Long Duration Mission to Tajikistan, the Programme for Co-ordinated Legal Support implemented the first phase of a national legal training project in Dushanbe, May 28-30.

More than sixty representatives from twenty governmental ministries, bodies and international organisations gathered in Dushanbe for the first national rule of law activity sponsored by the OSCE. The Objective of the programme was to expose participants to the roles, mandates and legal standards of international organisations, to stimulate discussion on the practical implementation of those standards and to examine the ways in which those standards can be applied to guarantee a free trial and combat trans-national crime.

Tajik governmental representatives have requested several follow-up activities including the national distribution of materials produced by the OSCE and other international organisations and additional training activities.

BOOK REVIEWS:

FORCED MIGRATION - Repatriation in Georgia

Copyright © 1995 by the Open Society Institute, ISBN 0-9641568-1-4 Paperback

The Open Society Institute's Forced Migration Projects monitor the area of former Soviet Union and other parts of the world in order to give an early warning of forced movements of people and to identify conditions which may cause dislocations..

The 1995 Special report of the Open Society Institute - the first in an ongoing series of occasional papers on the complex and growing problems of population in the region of the former Soviet Union - is based on a mission inquiry conducted in March 1995 by Kathleen Hunt, a writer and consultant, under the auspices of the Forced Migration Projects of the Open Society Institute. Ms. Hunt, a former Moscow correspondent for National Public Radio, is the principal author of this report.

The report examines the repatriation of the displaced persons in the Republic of Georgia, with particular focus on the return of asylum seekers displaced by armed conflict over Abkhazia. This report specifically discusses arrangements between the contending parties for a formal repatriation program, negotiated with assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. This report assesses the prospects for useful repatriation, analyses the implications of the return program, and offers recommendations for enhancing the protection of the affected populations in this instance as well as similar instances in the future.

PROTECTING EURASIA'S DISPOSSESSED - A Guide for NGOs

Copyright © 1996 by the Open Society Institute
ISBN 0-9641568-2-2 Paperback

This most recent report of the Open Society Institute is also based on the inquiry conducted in March 1996 by Ms Kathleen Hunt, a former Moscow correspondent for National Public Radio

“Protecting Eurasia’s Dispossessed - A Guide for NGOs” is designed to encourage non-governmental organisations to work on migration-related issues in the former Soviet Union. The intended audience includes policy-makers and NGOs, primarily those which headquarters are located outside of the region, which are considering the establishment or expansion of activities in the region. The specific objective of the NGO work in question concerns population displacements.

The lists of NGOs provided in the Appendices of the report were selected from thousands of entries in a number of lists and databases. They reflect a concerted effort to survey the local groups known in the former Soviet Union and may serve as an outstanding source of information for our audience.

For copies please contact: Open Society Institute; 888 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10106, USA
e-mail: ahelton@sorosny.org

UPCOMING - JOURNAL OF TURKIC LANGUAGES

The Publishing House Harrassowitz (Wiesbaden) announces a new scientific journal to be published from 1997 on Turkish Languages edited by Lars Johanson in co-operation with Arpad Berta, Hendrik Boeschoten, Bernt Brendemoen, Eva A. Csato, Emine Gursoy-Naskali, Irina Muravyova, Dmitri M. Nasilov, Sumru A. Ozsoy, with the editorial assistance of Vanessa Locke.

The “Turkish Languages” aims at presenting work of current interest on a variety of subjects and thus welcomes contributions on all aspects of Turkish language studies. Turkish Languages will contain articles, review articles, reviews, discussions, reports, and surveys of publications.

“Turkish Languages” will be published in one volume of two issues per year with approximately 300 pages. It will be devoted to descriptive, comparative, synchronic, diachronic, theoretical and methodological problems of linguistic Turcology including questions of genetic, topological and area relations, linguistic variation and language acquisition.

For further information, please contact: Harrassowitz Verlag, Postfach 2929, D-65019 Wiesbaden, Germany; Fax: 49-611-530570.

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