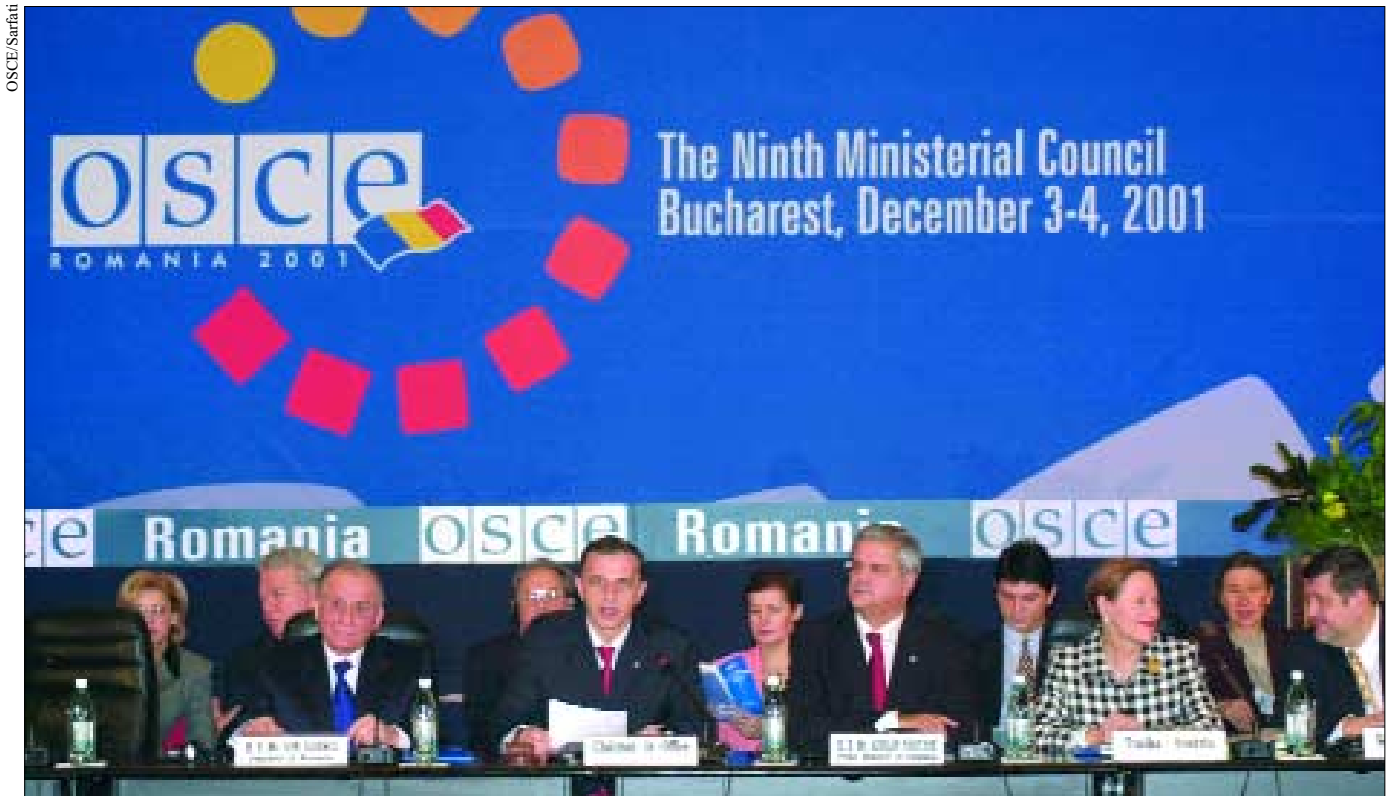


Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe



The Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Mircea Geoana, addresses the opening session of the Ninth Ministerial Council Meeting

Ministerial Council agrees on Action Plan and Declaration against terrorism

The Ninth Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe concluded its two-day meeting on 4 December in Bucharest by agreeing on a joint Declaration and by adopting a broad-ranging Action Plan on counter-terrorism measures. Romania's Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, described the meeting, in the Palace of Parliament, as a demonstration of the Organization's solidarity.

“Only days after the terrorist attacks against the USA on 11 September, I called in Vienna for a plan of action against terrorism to be forged by the OSCE in time for approval by our central decision-making body. That this was possible is an immense credit to the Organization. Through our unique, consensual decision-making process, we have been able to bring on board all the 55 participating States. I am now confident that, having given their approval at

this Council, we shall be seeing its immediate effects.”

The Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism, which includes proposals for practical support to OSCE participating States in Central Asia, has been quickly followed by an international conference in Bishkek, organized by the OSCE and United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention at the invitation of the Government of Kyrgyzstan. The conference was due to

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be held as this issue of the *Newsletter* went to press (see page 5).

Several other significant decisions were taken during the third plenary session of the Council, including confirmation that the Netherlands will succeed to the OSCE Chairmanship in 2003 after Portugal, which assumes the chair on 1 January 2002. The Ministers, who met in Bucharest at the invitation of this year's Chairman-in-Office, also agreed to hold the next meeting of the Council in Porto, in December 2002. In addition, it was decided to extend the term of the Secretary General, Jan Kubis, for three more years.

Comprehensive action

Global terrorism in all its forms is condemned in both the Declaration and the Action Plan, which also provides a framework for comprehensive action by the OSCE States to play their part in combating this modern scourge of civilization. (The full text of both documents is available on the website, www.osce.org/romania2001/documents)

The Declaration states that, in a world profoundly affected by the international terrorists attacks on the United States, the OSCE participating States are determined to strengthen and deepen their co-operation: "Terrorism, whatever its motivation or origin, has no justifica-

tion. No cause can justify the purposeful targeting of innocent people. In the fight against terrorism, there is no neutrality."

Emphasizing that the struggle against terrorism is not a war against religions or peoples, the Declaration reaffirms the OSCE's traditional commitments to protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Ministers also call on the Permanent Council of the OSCE to develop a strategy for the Organization to do its part to counter these "threats to security and stability in the 21st century."

At the same time, they also express the States' determination to safeguard the rule of law, individual liberties, and the right to equal justice under the law.

In their Declaration, the States reaffirm their intention to fulfil "in a timely fashion without exception" all their OSCE commitments, in accordance with

OSCE, the Declaration adds: "We pay special tribute to the women and men serving in the OSCE institutions and field operations and commend their dedication and hard work."

Under the Plan of Action, the OSCE will, *inter alia*, offer participating States assistance in implementing international conventions and protocols on terrorism, increase its activities to promote the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and take action to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist activities, such as training personnel of domestic financial institutions in counter-terrorism work.

Dayton/Paris Peace Accords

Another decision by the Ministerial Council was to welcome the Concluding Document on Article V of Annex 1-B of the Dayton/Paris Peace Accords, to provide for security and stability "in and around the former Yugoslavia". This is the last of three instruments that the Accords mandated the OSCE in 1995 to elaborate and implement.

A series of five decisions advocating a strengthening of the participating States' support of the human



The OSCE Secretary General, Jan Kubis, gives his report to the Ninth Ministerial Council Meeting

such key documents as the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and the Charter for European Security, as well as the United Nations Charter.

However, the Ministers add: "We remain concerned over the persistence of conflicts in various regions in the OSCE area that threaten the observance of the principles of the Helsinki Final Act in several participating States and may, at the same time, threaten peace and stability in the OSCE region."

Tribute to staff

In a specific acknowledgement of the role of some 4,000 local and international staff working in the field on behalf of the

dimension of security was also adopted by the Council. These cover the promotion of racial tolerance, measures to counter trafficking in human beings, support for work on Roma and Sinti issues, and efforts towards gender equality.

The Ministers reached a further decision on OSCE police-related activities, which among other things, features an agreement to explore and build on the role of police training, particularly integrated police training. This has been an activity pursued since 1999 with great success by the OSCE in Kosovo, and more recently on a more limited scale in southern Serbia (see the story on Kosovo on page 12).

Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism

All 55 participating States pledge at Ninth Ministerial Council to co-operate in fight against terrorism

On its second day, the OSCE Ministerial Council adopted a broad-ranging document calling for comprehensive action by the OSCE participating States – the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism. Under the Plan, the 55 States are pledged to expand existing OSCE activities that contribute to the global fight against terrorism, facilitate interaction between States and, where appropriate, identify new instruments for action.

The OSCE will build on its strengths and its comparative advantages, including its comprehensive security concept and its broad membership, as well as its experience in the field and areas of special expertise. It will work in close cooperation with other organizations, benefiting from interaction between global and regional anti-terrorism efforts, in coordination with the United Nations and other international or regional organizations.

Commenting on the OSCE's rapid and robust response to the terrorist challenge, the Chairman-in-Office, Romania's Foreign Minister, Mircea Geoana, said: "The adoption of this Plan of Action by the Ministerial Council of the OSCE underlines the determination of the international community to act together to oppose the threat of terrorism".

"The OSCE is not the lead organization in the fight against terrorism but we can address some of its root causes, the political, social and economic inequalities that provide a fertile breeding ground for exploitation by extremist ideologies."

Working with United Nations

Starting with the declaration that terrorism, whatever its motivation or origin, has no justification, and that terrorist acts are a threat to international and regional peace, security and stability, the Plan first calls on OSCE States to become parties to

all 12 UN conventions and protocols related to terrorism, by 31 December 2002. It also pledges States to play a constructive part in OSCE negotiations under the United Nations for a comprehensive convention against international terrorism and other initiatives.

The Plan identifies and addresses various social, economic, political and other factors that engender conditions in which terrorist organizations are able to recruit and win support. In this context, the OSCE will offer participating States

Code of Conduct (on politico-military aspects of security) and the OSCE document aimed at reducing the flow of small arms and light weapons, endorsed at last year's Ministerial Council.

Other proposals for preventive action against terrorism cover practical measures for institution building and supporting the rule of law – which the OSCE can offer to participating States through its existing institutions. These include strengthening domestic administrative capacity, judicial frameworks and ombuds-



Romanian Foreign Minister, Mircea Geoana (left), outlines the agenda of the Ninth Ministerial Council Meeting, with Adrian Nastase, Prime Minister of Romania

assistance in implementing international anti-terrorist conventions and protocols, and increase its activities to promote the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. It will also consider economic and environmental activities to combat factors that support terrorism and take action to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist activities, such as by training personnel of domestic financial institutions in counter-terrorism work.

The OSCE's politico-military commitments will be enhanced and events will be held in 2002 following up on the

man institutions, as well as developing projects to support democratic institutions, civil society and good governance:

The participating States have also committed themselves to explore other activities aimed at preventing the movement of terrorist individuals or groups, such as effective border patrols and measures for ensuring the security of identity papers/travel documents and preventing their counterfeiting, forgery and fraudulent use.

The full text is available at:
www.osce.org/romania2001/documents

Ministerial Council adopts statement on regional issues

Security and stability in Central Asia, the situation regarding Nagorno-Karabakh and this year's developments in Georgia, Moldova and south-eastern Europe provide the focus of a statement on regional issues, adopted in Bucharest by Foreign Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the 55 OSCE participating States.

"Threats to stability and security emanating from international terrorism, violent extremism, organized crime, [and] drugs and arms trafficking are shared concerns among the OSCE participating States", they stated. "We recognize the specific problems in this context for the Central Asian participating States as neighbouring countries to Afghanistan and hope that the forthcoming Bishkek International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia will make a valuable contribution to addressing these problems."

The OSCE representatives also expressed their deep concern at the failure to achieve a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, despite the intensified dialogue between the parties and active support of the OSCE body tasked with facilitating a settlement, the Minsk Group: "We reiterate the importance of continuing the peace dialogue and call upon the sides to continue their efforts to achieve an early resolution of the conflict based on

norms and principles of international law."

With regard to recent developments in Georgia, the statement welcomed the progress in recent months of the peace process in the Tshkinvali region (South Ossetia). At the same time, they called for a resumption of the dialogue to find a comprehensive settlement on the political status of the breakaway republic of Abkhazia.

"We remain concerned about the human rights situation in Abkhazia, and are convinced of the need to create the conditions for the safe and dignified return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes", they stated.

'Peace, prosperity and stability in SE Europe remain a strategic priority for the OSCE'

They also acknowledged the significant contribution by the OSCE Mission's border monitoring operation in Georgia to stability and confidence in the region, and directed the Organization's Permanent Council in Vienna to examine proposals to extend the operation to the Georgian border with the Ingush Republic of the Russian Federation.

Turning to Eastern Europe, the OSCE representatives noted the efforts under-

taken by the Republic of Moldova and the mediators from the OSCE, the Russian Federation and Ukraine, towards the negotiation of a comprehensive political settlement of the issue of Transdniestria, a region of Moldova. They called upon both sides to promptly resume negotiations on the status of the region.

The Council welcomed the fulfilment by the Russian Federation of commitments undertaken at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999 on the withdrawal and disposal of specific arms and munitions by the end of 2001, ahead of the agreed time, and noted the progress achieved in 2001 in beginning withdrawal of additional *matériel* from the Transdniestrian region of Moldova.

With regard to south-eastern Europe, the officials reaffirmed that peace, prosperity and stability in the region remained one of the strategic priorities for the OSCE, and welcomed the results of the Regional Conference of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, held on 25 and 26 October in Bucharest.

The Foreign Ministers and Heads of Delegation also stressed they expected full compliance by the countries of the region with international obligations, in particular the Dayton/Paris Peace Accords, as well as full co-operation by all with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

Ministers endorse final part of Dayton/Paris Peace Accords

The OSCE Ministerial Council decided to endorse in Bucharest a major negotiating success – reaching consensus on the remaining aspect of the Dayton/Paris Peace Accords that marked the end of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

Signed in 1995, the Accords – officially the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina – mandated the OSCE to elaborate and implement three instruments that would provide for security and stability 'in and around the former Yugoslavia', under Annex 1-B of the treaty.

Deciding to adopt the Concluding Document on Article V, the Council also welcomed the commitment by the 20 States concerned with the document to prevent their respective territories from being used for the preparation, organization or commission of acts of extremist violence, including terrorist activities.

Key provisions of this third instrument are voluntary confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), tailored to suit regional requirements. The first instrument – Article II – relates to agreement on CSBMs in BiH, while

the second – Article IV – covers a sub-regional arms control agreement between BiH, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Negotiations under these two articles were concluded in 1996. Together with the Article V document, they will enhance security and stability throughout south-eastern Europe.

Talks on the third instrument began in early 1999 under Ambassador Henry Jacolin of France, Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for the Article V Negotiations, after a year spent negotiating the mandate.

Conference in Bishkek to sharpen focus on preventing and countering terrorism

Less than ten days after the OSCE's Ninth Ministerial Council meeting in Bucharest adopted a far-reaching Action Plan on combating terrorism, a global conference being co-organized by the OSCE in Bishkek, is providing the first opportunity for expert discussion of practical ways to implement the Action Plan.

As the *OSCE Newsletter* went to press, some 200 participants were converging on the capital of Kyrgyzstan to focus on concrete measures to prevent and counter terrorism. The International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terrorism is being co-organized by the Kyrgyz authorities and the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP), on 13 and 14 December.

Representatives of the 55 OSCE participating States and a wide range of regional and international bodies, including members of the United Nations family, NATO, the Commonwealth of Independent States and several European institutions, were examining how a platform of action for countering terrorism could be made as broad and as comprehensive as possible through intensified global and regional co-operation.

Since 11 September, the international community has increasingly recognized the need to confront the daunting challenges posed by international terrorism, which is linked with transnational organized crime, money laundering and illegal trafficking of arms and drugs. The States in the Central Asian region have a crucial role to play in the international efforts to tackle these threats to peace and security.

The conference in Bishkek is a fol-

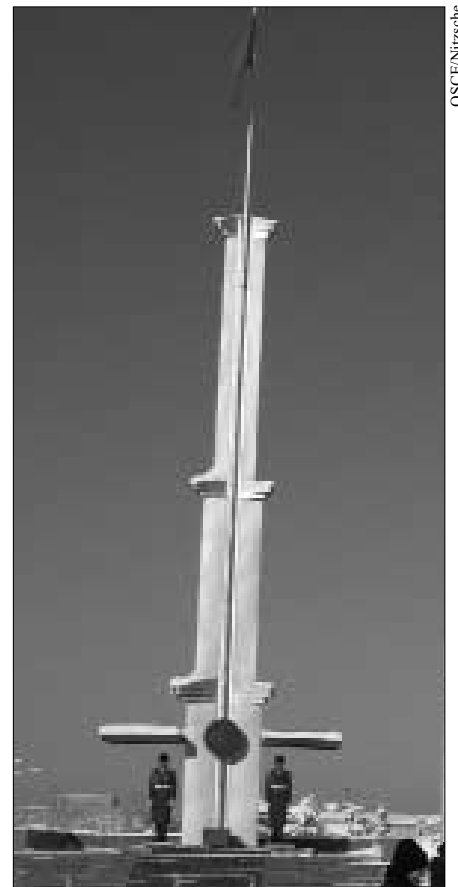
low-up to an ODCCP/OSCE-sponsored security conference held in October 2000 in the Uzbek capital, Tashkent. It represents a significant first step in the implementation of the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism.

Under the Action Plan, the OSCE participating States are pledged to expand the Organization's existing activities that form part of the global fight against terrorism. They also commit themselves to increasing bilateral and multilateral co-operation in the OSCE area and to strengthening ties with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations.

Building on the statement that no circumstance or cause can ever justify acts of terrorism, the Action Plan identifies and addresses social, economic and political factors that engender the conditions in which terrorist organizations are able to recruit sympathizers and win support.

Proposals for preventive action against terrorism include measures of practical support that the OSCE can offer to participating States through its existing institutions. These will include supporting the law enforcement capacity of States, strengthening domestic legal frameworks and institutions that uphold the rule of law, and providing assistance in facilitating, where appropriate, increased border monitoring to participating States, at their request.

Participants were expected to discuss



The Kyrgyz National Monument in Bishkek

a comprehensive list of measures to prevent terrorism: institution-building, fostering the development of States based on the rule of law, promoting sustainable economic development, strengthening the role of civil society and blocking the financing of terrorism.

Visit the Bishkek website

for information on the follow-up to The International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terrorism

www.osce.org/bishkek_conference

Kosovo's Assembly election goes smoothly

When no news is really good news!

Describing a football match or a film as “boring” is a negative word. However, Peter Erben, Director of Elections Operations in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMiK), was extremely pleased when observers used “boring” to describe this year's election day

By David Kahrmann.

On 17 November, the people of Kosovo participated in orderly, uneventful elections. There was no violence; all communities participated; most polling centres opened and closed on schedule; and queues moved quickly. Voters knew where to be and what to do. OMiK, together with its international partners, delivered on its commitment to provide all voters and all communities with safe and convenient access to the electoral process. For its part, Kosovo proved its commitment to democratic norms by adhering to the electoral rules throughout the campaign and on election day. In a word: boring.

But what was happening was nothing short of exciting for Kosovo. More than 800,000 people turned out to cast their ballots for their representatives in the first free Kosovo Assembly. Out of 26 entities contesting the elections, 14 obtained seats in the Assembly. And because of the special terms of the constitutional framework, almost 30 per cent of the seats will be occupied by women. Following last year's municipal elections, this year's Assembly election marked a significant step towards self-government for Kosovo, as prescribed in UN Security Council resolution 1244 and as outlined in the constitutional framework.

The participation of all communities in the second post-conflict elections served as an important indicator of success. As remarkable as last year's municipal elections were, the boycott by Serbs detracted from the overall impact of handing over powers to elected Kosovo representatives at the municipal level. Following improved relations between Belgrade and Kosovo this year, Serbian leaders, both within and outside Kosovo,



Casting a ballot in Banja, a Serbian village in Kosovo, for the Assembly election

encouraged Kosovo Serbs to be part of the political process by participating in the elections. The lateness of the decision to participate meant extra work for the OSCE and the International Organization for Migration, the OSCE's partner in Serbia and Montenegro for out-of-Kosovo voting.

High voter turn-out

Although OMiK does not collect ethnic data about individual voters, estimates based on the location of polling centres in Kosovo indicate that the percentage of total qualified voters who actually cast their votes was 67 per cent in predominantly Albanian areas and 47 per cent in primarily non-Albanian areas. The proportions were 58 per cent in Serbia and 57 per cent in Montenegro. Two days after the polling, the OSCE was able to announce partial results based on about 92 per cent of the vote counted.

To make all this happen, 20,000 OMiK staff, including 9,000 local polling station committee members and 2,000 international polling station supervisors, were in polling centres before dawn on election day. They had been trained before the elections and had carried out trial runs on 16 November. They worked late into the night of the elections to close the centres, count ballots and get them to the central counting centre. A staff of 700 organized themselves in day and night shifts to finish the counting and come up with the results. Their hard work paid off. On 24 November, at the recommendation of the Central Election Committee, the results were certified by Hans Haekkerup, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General.

To make certain that every part of the election process was conducted in a fair and transparent manner, international and local observers were invited to keep

a close eye on all activities, from the campaign through to the counting of ballots. Under the umbrella of the Council of Europe Election Observation Mission, some 200 short-term and 20 long-term international observers monitored the elections. More importantly, 13,286 local observers from political entities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were also on hand to ensure that procedures were respected.

A few complaints were submitted to the Elections Complaints and Appeals Sub-Commission, but most dealt with minor issues. The most serious incidents involved the intimidation of voters in some Kosovo Serb areas. United Nations Police either led away or arrested persons harassing voters in polling centres; more subtle forms of intimidation could not, unfortunately, be prevented.

Overall, however, the local and inter-

national media had only success stories to report. With the election likely to go down in history as a smooth event, journalists can now focus on how the newly-elected representatives will bring about the improvements they promised in their campaigns.

David Kahrman is a Public Information Officer in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Department of Elections.

Kosovo's "e-day": watching democracy in action

Impressions of an international polling station supervisor

By Gerhard Schaumberger

After a preparation period of more than half a year, election day or "e-day", the term commonly used by OSCE staff for the 2001 Kosovo Assembly Election, is finally here. I am one of about 2,000 people who have gone through four days of training in Greece as an international polling station supervisor for the elections.

From there, we have travelled in buses, bringing us directly to one of several OSCE field offices in Kosovo. Some 90 of us are assigned to the municipality of Gjakove/Dakovica.

E-day is starting early. At 5 a.m., it is time for us to pick up all the sensitive election materials, from ballots and ballot stamps to the final list of voters. The polling centre we have to monitor is in the school of a small village called Bishtrazin. Three other international supervisors – Jakub from Warsaw, Michael from Hamburg, Domenico from Naples – and I are responsible for four polling stations and some 2,500 registered voters.

Our convoy, escorted by the Civilian Police (CivPol), arrives at 6 a.m. at the school, where the members of the Election Committee are waiting: the chairperson, the identification officer, the ballot issuer, the ballot box monitor and the queue controller. The chairperson, Dugajin, is an engineer in a metal factory. Our interpreter, Yllka, is a student of pharmacy. All have been trained for their election tasks at OSCE field offices and all are armed with a comprehensive

130-page manual of administrative procedures prepared by the OSCE especially for these elections. The manual, in Albanian, Serbian and English, covers everything down to the tiniest detail.

After we become acquainted, we start installing voting screens, arranging tables and posting voter information on the walls of four classrooms that are to serve as polling stations. Our team is well aware of the importance of ensuring the steady flow of voters: we are expecting some 800 people in our polling station over 12 voting hours. In the presence of ten national observers and two observers from the Council of Europe, the chairman seals the ballot box ceremoniously.

'We realize how eager the community is to take part in these elections.'

At 7 a.m., right on time, we open the polling station. Looking out of the window at the crowds gathering at the main entrance, we realize how eager the community is – on this second day of Ramadan – to take part in these elections.

The first voter to enter our station, an elderly Kosovar, walks directly to the identification officer. Many of the voters present an UNMIK identity card, issued by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo. Others show Yugoslav passports or German driving licences. As long as they have registered earlier, they are eligible to cast a ballot. Illiterate people can appoint

someone to assist them, usually a member of the family or somebody they trust.

From 10 a.m. until the early afternoon, our queue controller has his hands full. Despite this, voting proceeds at a smooth pace. We close the centre only after everybody who is at the polling station by 7 p.m. casts their vote.

The chairperson announces the start of the counting, opens the ballot box, and places all ballots on the table. He takes a ballot, identifies the chosen party and calls out its name. He hands over the ballot to another committee member, who confirms the party name. Naturally, the counting procedure elicits occasional dissatisfaction from one or the other observer representing a political party. However, the transparency of the process and the massive presence of observers discourage cheating and tampering with the ballots.

The chairperson and I enter the results on the final reconciliation form, which the committee members sign and verify. We pack up the polling materials and prepare to transport them back to the OSCE field office in Gjakove/Dakovica. CivPol is standing by to escort our convoy back for the handover of the results and election materials. After 18 hours of transporting, observing and counting, we conclude a great "e-day".

Gerhard Schaumberger is a Temporary Assistant in the Secretariat's Press and Public Information Section.

South East European University opens in former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

By Walter Kemp

The South East European University was officially opened in Tetovo, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on 20 November, at a ceremony attended by past and present OSCE High Commissioners on National Minorities.

Higher education has been one of the points of contention between the Macedonian and Albanian communities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In July 2000, a new education law was introduced to allow for the use of the Albanian language and other languages in private tertiary institutions. Recommendations facilitating this process were proposed by international education experts and by Max van der Stoel, who was OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities at the time (and is now Personal Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office). Soon afterwards, he initiated a project to develop a university that would improve opportunities for higher education in minority languages.

Funds for the project were sought from the international community. So far, 33 million euros have been pledged. The Government donated the piece of land on which the university stands.

Rapid construction

The first sod was turned on 11 February 2001. Construction began in the spring and was completed in less than six months. The fact that building work was completed so quickly is even more remarkable when one considers that the Tetovo region witnessed some of the heaviest inter-ethnic skirmishes between March and August.

Speaking at the opening ceremony,

OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Rolf Ekeus said: "Today is a good day for Macedonia and a good day for Europe. At a time when good news is in short supply, it is heartening to see that progress can be made towards building peace among people."

The university is open to all students regardless of ethnicity. The curriculum will be offered in Albanian, Macedonian, English and in other European languages. The university will include faculties of law, business administration, public administration, teacher training, communications and computer studies. The project is being overseen by international and national advisory boards.

Mr. Ekeus noted that "over the past year, Tetovo has been in the news for all the wrong reasons. I hope that in the future, people will think of Tetovo as the site of a multi-lingual university rather than as the scene of inter-ethnic violence."

Mr. Van der Stoel, Chairman of the university's International Advisory Board, has stressed the university's European orientation. "We know the wish of the population of Macedonia to have increasingly close relations with countries of the European Union and to have education at a standard recognized by European academic institutions", he said. The university will have visiting international professors, as well as local academic staff.

Max van der Stoel has been praised for his vision in launching the project in the late 1990s and his perseverance in seeing it through, even during the turbulent period of the past few months. Asked why he felt it was necessary to stick to the con-

struction timetable during the fighting, he replied: "We were convinced that there was a need for the project for the long-term stability of Macedonia and for addressing an immediate short-term issue, so we wanted to be sure to avoid, as far as possible, any delay in the planned opening of the university."



The South East European University in Tetovo, under construction in June 2001

Mr. Ekeus noted the university's importance within the broader context of inter-ethnic integration in the Republic: "I hope that the event that we are witnessing today can offer inspiration to all citizens of Macedonia that this country can move ahead and take steps towards building a better future – a future that can enrich all people of this country, regardless of ethnicity."

He said he would continue to follow up on the university project: "I will be committed to working within my mandate to assist in the process of normalization here in Macedonia."

Walter Kemp is Adviser to the High Commissioner on National Minorities.

Quiet Diplomacy in Action

The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

Ed: Walter Kemp ■ Foreword by Michael Ignatieff

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NEWSLETTER

Treaty permitting unarmed observation flights comes into effect

The Open Skies Consultative Commission (OSCC) announced at its meeting on 2 November that the Treaty on Open Skies will enter into force on 1 January 2002, 60 days after the latest deposits of instruments.

By Gerhard Schaumberger

Within its area of application from Vancouver to Vladivostok, the Open Skies Treaty constitutes a unique tool of transparency”, OSCC Chairman Jean-Luc Fauré-Tournaire announced. Depositary nations Canada and Hungary confirmed

at the meeting that the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus had deposited their instruments of ratification.

Following the signing of the Treaty in Helsinki on 24 March 1992, a long provisional implementation period was

used to good effect. More than 350 trial missions took place from 1996 to 2001. During the first half of 2001 alone, 29 flights were carried out. This intense activity has demonstrated the great interest of the States Parties in the Treaty on Open Skies and has paved the

The Treaty on Open Skies

The Open Skies Treaty establishes a regime of unarmed observation flights over the territories of the States Parties. Although not negotiated within the OSCE framework in the formal sense, the Treaty is closely linked to the OSCE for two main reasons. Firstly, its basic philosophy of openness and transparency in military matters coincides with that of the confidence- and security-building measures (CSBM) developed by the OSCE. Secondly, in a special declaration adopted at the meeting of the Ministerial Council in Helsinki on 24 March 1992, the OSCE participating States welcomed the signing of the Treaty on Open Skies and acknowledged its importance for the enhancement of security and confidence in Europe.

The Treaty contains provisions for the conduct of unarmed observation flights over the territories of the States Parties. It specifies quotas for observation flights (based on reciprocity between individual States or groups of States) and the notification of points of entry for observation flights for each State. Technical details for sensors to be used for observation flights and for the inspection of these sensors are included. Under the Treaty, an Open Skies Consultative Commission (OSCC) was also set up in Vienna, serviced by the OSCE Secretariat.

The Treaty's basic elements are:

Territory

The Treaty specifies that the territories of all the States Parties are open to observation. An observed State Party may not restrict observation flights for national security reasons, but only for legitimate reasons of flight safety or because of the inability of its airfields to support the mission.

Aircraft

The observation aircraft may be provided by either the observing State Party or the observed State Party at the latter's option. All aircraft and sensors used for Open Skies observation must undergo specific certification and pre-flight inspection procedures to ensure that they meet Treaty standards and that only sensors permitted under the Treaty are installed.

Sensors

The aircraft used in Open Skies observations may have video, optical panoramic and framing cameras for daylight photography, infra-red line scanners for day and night capability, and synthetic aperture radar for all-day, all-night and all-weather capability. Photographic image quality will permit recognition of major types of military equipment (e.g., ability to distinguish a tank from a truck) sufficient for ensuring meaningful transparency of military forces

and activities. Sensor categories may be added and capabilities improved if there is unanimous agreement by the States Parties. All the sensor equipment used in Open Skies observations must be commercially available to all participants.

Quotas

Each State Party has an annual quota of observation flights it is willing to receive over its own territory, known as its passive quota of observation flights. Each State Party may also conduct up to the same number of observation flights over the territories of other signatory countries as its passive quota. This is known as its active quota. For example, the full passive quota for the Russia/Belarus group of States Parties, and also for the United States, is 42 flights each.

Data Availability

The Treaty provides that the observing State Party will provide to the observed State Party a copy of the sensor data it collects during a mission over the observed State. In addition, all States Parties have the right to purchase a copy of the data collected by any State. As a result, the data available to all States Parties is much greater than that which a single one can collect.

For the full Treaty on Open Skies, please see: www.osce.org/docs

way for its full implementation. A Working Group on Certification, chaired by Colonel Dieter Dammjacob of the German Delegation to the OSCE, will further elaborate on the standards needed for the certification of different aircraft and sensors.

Proposed almost 50 years ago by President Dwight Eisenhower in 1955, the Open Skies concept was reactivated by President George Bush on 12 May 1989. It started to materialize following a Canadian-Hungarian initiative at a meeting in Ottawa on 12 February 1990

between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization (Warsaw Pact). With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the Open Skies Treaty became the first multilateral arms control agreement of the post-Cold War era that was not characterized by a 'bloc-to-bloc' approach.

The Treaty was initially signed by 25 States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), the forerunner of the OSCE. The establishment of the Czech Republic and the

Slovak Republic in early 1993 and the accession of the Kyrgyz Republic in December 1992 raised the number of States Parties to a total of 27.

During the six months following the Treaty's entry into force, other OSCE participating States may apply for accession by submitting a written request to one of the depositary States. Finland and Sweden have already announced their intention to do so. Subsequently, the OSCE will consider the application of any State interested in becoming a party to the Treaty.

Seminar in Belgrade highlights role of water resources in OSCE's security activities

Yugoslav Foreign Minister welcomes development of regional environmental co-operation to enhance stability in the Balkans

The protection of water quality and sustainable use of waterways might seem an unusual topic to be debated by an international organization that is mainly known for its work on human rights, preventive diplomacy and democratic institution-building.

However, looking at the agenda of the first Preparatory Seminar for the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum, it quickly becomes clear how important this issue is in the context of OSCE's comprehensive approach to security, in particular its economic and environmental activities.

"The development of regional co-operation at the level of environmental protection and the creation of a formal framework to establish the security implications of water pollution in border rivers and water reservoirs can enhance stability in the Balkans", said Goran Svilanovic, Yugoslav Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his



Ambassador Stefano Sannino, Head of the OSCE Mission to the FRY, opens the first Preparatory Seminar for the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum. The seminar was held in Belgrade on 5 and 6 November

opening address to the seminar participants.

The seminar, which took place on 5 and 6 November in Belgrade, was organized by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, in co-operation with the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the Yugoslav Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The

goals of the seminar were the exchange of information and the stimulation of discussions at the operational level among local and international experts on water-related issues, in order to promote regional co-operation and to encourage greater local ownership of water resources. It was the first in a series of three seminars in preparation for the next OSCE Economic Forum in May 2002 in Prague.

Two working groups on the protection and use of water courses and international lakes analyzed and discussed environmen-

tal issues related to water resource management. They also assessed existing mechanisms, achievements and shortcomings in implementing the protection of water resources.

Stefano Sannino, Head of the OSCE Mission to FRY, stressed that "international waters are among the most sensitive issues of regional co-operation, a fact which is illustrated by the number of con-

licts associated with the use of water.”

Marc Baltes, Acting Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, underscored the relevance of protection of water resources to the OSCE when he said it was “of utmost importance for an Organization aiming at promoting comprehensive security ... to tackle issues related to co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of water quality.”

During the opening session, a ceremony was held marking the accession of the FRY to the international programme for the protection of the Sava River. This project is a Quick Start Project under the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, with which Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have already been associated. Under the auspices of the

OSCE, the representatives of the FRY, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (both the Federation and the Republika Srpska) signed a letter of intent to strengthen their co-operation in the implementation of the Sava River project.

In one of the working groups, a case study which included the use of satellite images and high-tech analysis, prepared for the OSCE by the Italian Environmental Crime Prevention Programme, was presented to participants. The high-tech, low-cost pilot project permitted the elaboration of a new technique for advanced monitoring and assessment of pollution and simulation of the effects of accidental pollution, taking the Sava River on the outskirts of Belgrade as an example.

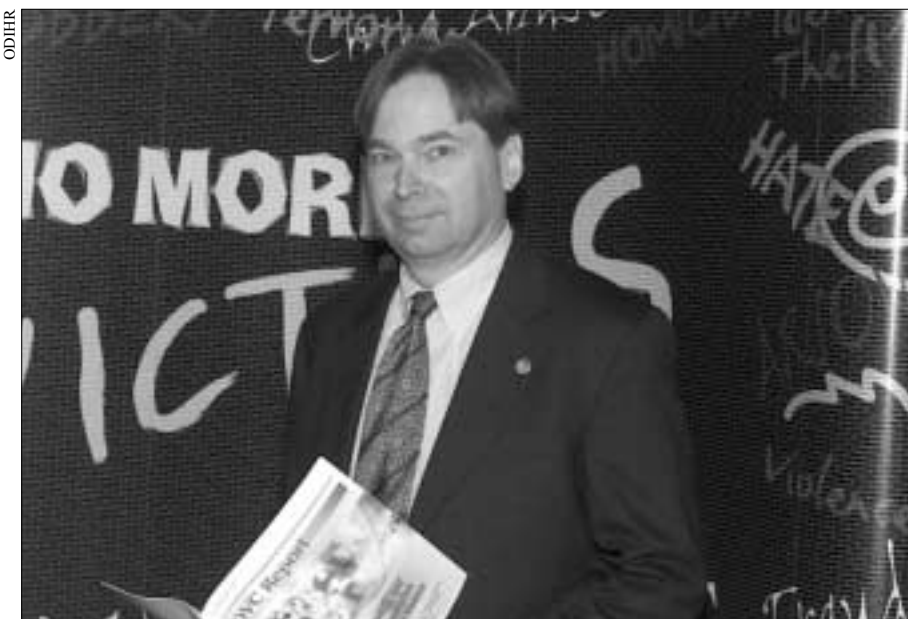
The main goal of the project is to reduce water pollution and improve the

protection of the water quality of the Sava River through an assessment of existing water management strategies and policies. This includes the comparison and harmonization of the three countries’ water-resource protection legislation with existing European Union legislation.

Following the assessment, a master plan will be prepared for the Sava River. Under the plan, the Sava’s present physical and socio-economic state will be evaluated; studies related to wastewater collection and treatment and disposal systems will be reviewed; and expected changes in quality and quantity of wastewater through the year 2015 will be forecast. The plan will include measures and investments needed for the implementation of its objectives.

Torture – still a major human rights concern

OSCE contributes to international effort to eradicate torture



Douglas Johnson, member of the ODIHR Advisory Panel for the Prevention of Torture, says ill-treatment is used to silence dissent

Torture remains one of the most serious human rights concerns within the OSCE area. Recent reports suggest that torture and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment occur persistently

and frequently across the whole OSCE region. Beating, electric shocks and rape are among the most common forms of torture, often used to extract confessions from detainees. Groups such as Roma and Sinti, illegal immigrants and asy-

lum-seekers are particularly at risk of falling victim to ill-treatment.

Every year on 26 June, the UN International Day in Support for the Victims of Torture brings this grave human rights violation into the spotlight. Like other national, international and non-governmental organizations, the OSCE contributes to the worldwide effort to support torture victims and end torture practices by organizing a variety of awareness-raising activities.

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), together with OSCE field operations and the Organization’s international partners, assists governments in developing effective strategies and action plans to fight torture. Advised by a panel of prominent experts, the ODIHR carries out numerous anti-torture activities in the OSCE area, including legislative review and prison reform projects.

The OSCE participating States have committed themselves unequivocally to eradicating torture. They have also agreed on a comprehensive set of standards and safeguards against torture. “OSCE commitments and other interna-

tional standards prohibit torture at any time and under any circumstances, including during war and under the threat of terrorism”, says Gerard Stoudmann, Director of the ODIHR.

Although international law requires remedial action on behalf of torture victims and the punishment of perpetrators, this happens rarely. This creates a culture of impunity that leads to further instances of torture and ill-treatment. “As long as there is no political will to address this issue, torture will continue to occur”, adds Mr. Stoudmann.

The occurrence of torture often indicates broader, structural deficiencies within a society, such as the lack of checks and balances and separation of power between the executive and the judiciary branches. The lack of accountability further undermines the rule of law.

“Every allegation of torture is a litmus test for the state of democracy and rule of law in a given country”, says Gerald Staberock, the ODIHR’s Rule of Law Officer. “As long as torture is tolerated, democracy and rule of law will not be able to flourish.”

Positive trends

Among the positive developments is the fact that there is today an international legal framework prohibiting torture, as well as increasingly effective international procedures for monitoring compliance with international standards. There is also heightened awareness about the fact that torturers can be brought to justice in all States Parties to the UN Convention against Torture.

At the same time, moving from standard-setting to actual implementation in the respective countries is becoming

important, and citizens are starting to feel the impact of international documents in practice. The key is recognizing the problem at the highest political levels, which should lead to a thorough review of the system of legal safeguards and procedures. Another important element is the transparency of State institutions, such as penitentiaries and police stations.

Ultimately, preventing torture is an issue for society as a whole. It should involve lawyers, prosecutors and judges as much as human rights groups, journalists and even the medical community. “The International Anti-Torture Day provides a good opportunity for all relevant groups of civil society to discuss and review their country’s compliance with international anti-torture standards”, says Mr. Staberock.

KPSS – continuing to build a democratic police service in Kosovo

Since August 1999, the Kosovo Police Service School has been run in Vushtrri/Vucitrn by the OSCE. Recently, the school celebrated the graduation of its 4,400th recruit for the democratic police force in the province.

By Robert Schupp

The trainers and training facilities at the OSCE-run Kosovo Police Service School in Vushtrri/Vucitrn meet the highest international standards, and most of its students have turned into excellent police officers. Efforts to promote a diverse service are proving equally fruitful: 84 per cent of successful candidates are Albanian, 9 per cent are Serbian, and 7 per cent come from Roma, Turkish, Ashkali, Egyptian and Bosniac communities. Women account for almost 20 per cent of cadets.

Through its emphasis on teaching democratic policing, the school has become a model of inter-ethnic co-operation and harmony. All the cadets are treated as equals and are expected to foster this egalitarian spirit among them-



Graduation of police trainers in the Kosovo Police Service School at Vucitrn

selves as well. Their eight-week programme begins with guidance on the fine points of keeping a proper notebook while on duty, and continues on to specialized courses in controlling traffic, investigative techniques and weapons use.

Making the transition from a classroom-taught police cadet into a street-smart police officer can be one of the more difficult challenges students face after leaving the school. According to an Albanian cadet, "We are excited to get out on the streets, but we are also a little anxious."

Another challenge can come from the community itself. According to a

female Albanian cadet, "People found it strange to see a woman as a police officer, and I do not think they accepted me at first. But now, they see that I am competent and can do the job just like anyone else." In contrast, according to an Egyptian cadet, "Everyone in my community is proud that I am among the first generation of Egyptian police officers."

Clearly the cadets' most formidable challenge lies in carrying over the feelings of inter-ethnic harmony and cooperation fostered in the school into wider Kosovo communities. An Albanian cadet remarked that everyone in the school felt part of one family. "Here, we

don't care if someone is Albanian, Serbian, Turkish or Roma. When we leave, we should continue to feel the same way."

Others are more realistic. "I am from the Prizren area and I will go back there to work", said one Albanian cadet. "I have made friends with people from all communities in the school, but I know that it will be difficult to meet them outside." A Roma cadet echoes his colleague's sentiments: "I have met people from all over Kosovo. I hope I can keep my friends from the school. I will try."

Robert Schupp is a Political Officer in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo

Young people design a shared future using the mobile.culture.container

The Representative on Freedom of the Media launched an unusual project earlier in 2001

Since the spring of 2001, when the *mobile.culture.container: In Defence of our Future* officially opened in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the travelling community tent has been drawing hundreds of young people along its route. Staying five weeks in every town, it has been through Osijek, Croatia, and Cacak in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). It has now reached Gorazde, also in BiH, where it will spend the winter. It is scheduled to visit another set of towns in BiH and the FRY starting in March 2002.

The culture container, a two-year project initiated by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, addresses young people in post-conflict situations in BiH, Croatia and Yugoslavia. With contributions from governments of participating States, it strives to abolish and prevent hate speech, helping 14- to 18-year-old citizens to turn away from the past and share in the responsibility of bringing about a more stable and peaceful future. Activities are designed to change participants' old ways of thinking, encour-

aging them to cross the boundaries that separate them and enter into a new era of enlightened dialogue.

In this spirit, young people who took part in the activities of the culture container have sustained many of the innovative initiatives.

In Osijek, a youth parliament was formed based on the European Youth Declaration. In Cacak, an editorial office for a school newspaper was founded. An 'Info-Club' was set up with an Internet café, a library and a reading room with magazines and newspapers. The technical secondary school in Cacak finally has a computer room, enabling students to tap into new technologies and technical vocational training. In Gorazde, a newspaper for the youth was launched with the help of the local cultural centre.

The attacks in the United States on 11 September have underscored the rel-



The mobile.culture.container project is travelling to towns in south-eastern Europe

evance of the project: Instead of allowing themselves to be overcome by ethnic hatred, participants came together to discuss the events and their consequences, rationally and responsibly.

The travelling project has 16 containers featuring housing, a peace library, an Internet café and a video laboratory. The containers are assembled under a circular tent. Every town starts with a group brainstorming session on a post-conflict vision for the future. Discussion themes range from the role of tradition and the impact of European integration and democratization, to countering ethnic hatred, chauvinism and racism.

Topics are developed in workshops that venture into improvised plays, comedy, literature and radio and newspaper production. In a small video laboratory, young people create a script about the future and produce and edit short films. The production team blends the videos into a film documentary about its work. In a photo workshop called 'Mine is the

City', participants shoot profiles of various town citizens and combine them into a depiction of their town's face.

Musical events in the *mobile.culture.container* are geared towards overcoming the ethnic divide. Osijek in Croatia organized successful performances by bands from Vukovar. In

Cacak, Serbia, a band played for an enthusiastic audience from Tuzla, Bosnia. Gorazde saw a first-time visit by a band from nearby Srpsko Gorazde. During its 2002 tour, the *mobile.culture.container*, with the support of private sponsors, will set up editorial offices for another ten school newspapers, including their own network.

Crossing CIS borders: Tackling new, bewildering migration issues

A meeting in Almaty examines models of co-operation in managing population movements

By Vladimir Shkolnikov

When the Soviet Union broke up in the early 1990s, a dozen new States appeared on the map literally overnight. Suddenly, administrative demarcations became State borders. In what used to be a highly integrated region, the unexpected emergence of new borders triggered serious problems in many areas. One of the most difficult challenges has been the question of how to deal with the increasing, mostly uncontrolled, population movements that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union.

What should the laws and regulations look like for people entering and leaving a country? How should people returning from neighbouring States be reintegrated? What can be done about people who entered the country illegally, yet seem to have found jobs? And what about those seeking refuge from civil war and other conflicts? What is to be done about families and communities that have become separated by new borders? How can respect for migrants' human rights be ensured and tolerance towards migrants fostered?

This is an array of questions and problems that would bewilder officials even in countries with a longer experience in migration management. In the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), with its heritage of the Soviet population-movement control system – known as *propiska* – the dearth of institutions and individuals knowledgeable about, or even

interested in, modern migration management was dire at the outset.

Nevertheless, a great deal of work has been done to remedy the situation. Most of the credit goes to the governments of countries in the region. The international community helped build institutions and capacities. New legislation was developed and passed. Structures were created and strengthened steadily.

One matter that continues to call for special attention is cross-border co-operation on migration issues. International co-ordination is crucial for modern management of human migration and is a key factor in global efforts to combat terrorism. So far, concerted efforts and good models of co-operation have been few and far between.

To fill this gap, the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) organized a high-level meeting on cross-border co-operation on migration from 29 to 31 October in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Top officials and key figures in migration management from ten CIS countries explored with international experts ways of improving regional co-operation on dealing with population movements according to international standards.

For possible models, participants looked to the experiences of the Czech and Slovak Republics following the break-up of Czechoslovakia, the Baltic States and

other OSCE countries, and the evolution of the Schengen area migration regulations.

Over three days, participants discussed co-operative efforts that had been tried in the region and elsewhere, and analyzed both success stories and failures. They identified specific areas where countries could move ahead individually and others where concerted steps were preferable.

Participants agreed that migration was generally a positive phenomenon: Both the receiving country and the home country can benefit from population movements. However, if not managed properly, migration *can* pose a threat to countries' security and democratic progress and to migrants' human rights. This brings out the need for cross-border co-operation and regular consultations to exchange information and discuss harmonizing legislation and creating visa-free areas.

Several country representatives shared their pioneering experiences in various areas. Belarus, for example, has taken legislative measures to manage migration of labour. The border services of three Central Asian states – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan – hold regular meetings. The ODIHR and the IOM will soon submit plans for concrete follow-up steps to the Almaty meeting.

Vladimir Shkolnikov is ODIHR Freedom of Movement/Migration Adviser.



News from the field

The OSCE currently has Missions or other field activities in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo (Yugoslavia), Latvia, Skopje (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Yugoslavia. The following brief reports reflect some of the recent work that these field operations have undertaken.

Campaign promotes transparency, accountability in Bosnia's military spending

An initiative to increase public awareness of the excessive military expenditures in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has been launched by the OSCE Mission in BiH in co-operation with SFOR, the NATO-led Stabilization Force. The country's defence budget amounts to six per cent of its gross domestic product, four times the average share in other European countries. Through interviews, newspaper and radio announcements, television shows, posters, leaflets and the Internet, the campaign encourages citizens to demand transparency in the budget process and to remind political leaders of their accountability to taxpayers. Seen in a broader context, the efforts are also intended to draw attention to "the possibilities the citizens in a democratic society have to influence the authorities and thereby shape their own future", according to Head of Mission Robert Beecroft.

First multi-ethnic group of police officers graduates in Serbia

The first multi-ethnic group of police officers to undergo OSCE training in Mitrovo Polje, Serbia, graduated recently in the presence of OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis and Serbian Minister of the Interior Dusan Mihajlovic. Having completed 12 weeks of training, 34 Serbs and 63 ethnic Albanians will now go on duty together in the three municipalities of southern Serbia. Addressing the graduates, Mr. Kubis stressed the role of police training in restoring trust and confidence between the different minorities in southern Serbia. The police training centre in Mitrovo Polje will give courses until May 2002. By then, 400 new police

officers, half of them ethnic Albanians, will have been trained.

First human rights film festival in Tajikistan

The first human rights film festival in Tajikistan, held in the capital city, Dushanbe, from 23 to 27 October, attracted an audience of more than 5,000. It was organized by the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan in co-operation with the International Human Rights Film Festival 'Stalker' and the Russian Federation Guild of Cinematographers, and supported by the Ministry of Culture. As part of the festival, the OSCE Mission co-organized a two-day seminar on the films' themes: women's and children's rights, refugees and deportees, the death penalty and drugs. The Tajik press wel-

come to destroy more than 50,000 small arms and light weapons that were either stock surplus or had been seized from illegal users. Ambassador Stefano Sannino, Head of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and Foreign Affairs Minister Goran Svilanovic were present at the demonstration.

Ukraine to improve witness and victim protection in trafficking cases

Protecting witnesses and victims of trafficking in human beings and organized crime in Ukraine is the aim of a project launched recently by the OSCE. A group has been established to work on recommendations for a witness- and victim-protection programme. The members of the working group were chosen for their experience in handling trafficking cases and their ability to influence future policies. They are from the Public Prosecutors' Office, Ukrainian Ministry of the Interior, State Security Service and NGOs.



Destruction of small arms and light weapons in Cacak, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, October 2001

ZOOM PRESS

Tajik law clinic opens doors

The first Tajik legal clinic opened its doors at the Law Faculty of the Slavonic University in Dushanbe on 1 October. The Street Law Clinic represents a first step towards the creation of a legal support centre for the public, focusing on women's rights. As part of the project, 20 third-year students from

the Law Faculty hold weekly classes on human rights at six high schools. The project is being implemented under the guidance of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

Yugoslavia destroys surplus small arms and light weapons

Small arms and light weapons were destroyed at a public demonstration at the technical overhaul and repairs establishment in Cacak. The event was part of a

move to destroy more than 50,000 small arms and light weapons that were either stock surplus or had been seized from illegal users. Ambassador Stefano Sannino, Head of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and Foreign Affairs Minister Goran Svilanovic were present at the demonstration.

Uzbek university opens OSCE resource centre

The OSCE Centre in Tashkent has opened a resource centre at the National University of Uzbekistan, Faculty of

Social and Political Sciences. Funded by the United States Mission to the OSCE, the centre offers computer and Internet facilities and a conference room, which will also serve as a library of faculty material.

Kosovo's justice system functioning, but concerns remain

"A functioning judicial system has been established and any emergency-type situation is over", says an OSCE report presented in Pristina in early November by the Head of the OSCE

Mission in Kosovo, Ambassador Daan Everts. However, the report calls for assurances that Kosovo will meet international standards in human rights by addressing several shortcomings in the justice system: inadequate legal representation, extra-judicial detention and lack of implementation of anti-trafficking regulations.

Albania launches civil society development centres

An Albania-wide network of five civil society development centres has

been established by the OSCE Presence in Albania and the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV). The centres will provide technical assistance and develop grass-roots programmes to support Albanian NGOs and community-based groups. They aim to help strengthen the capacity of local government and facilitate a dialogue among members and leaders of civil society. Each centre has a well-furnished resource library, a computer with e-mail access and meeting space. Services are free of charge.

IN BRIEF



Bodo Hombach, Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, has welcomed the intensified co-operation between the OSCE and the Stability Pact in 2001.

On 12 October, he said to the Permanent Council: "I am grateful for the leading part that the OSCE has played in several Stability Pact initiatives – for example, with regard to the combating of trafficking in human beings, gender questions and implementing Annex 1-B of the Dayton Agreement."

OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis congratulated **the United Nations and its Secretary-General, Kofi Annan**, on being awarded the 2001 Nobel Peace Prize by the Norwegian Nobel Committee. "This award underscores the exceptional work the United Nations is doing, and in particular the achievements under the tenure of Kofi Annan", said Mr. Kubis on 12 October. "The OSCE has a longstanding and very special relationship with the UN, especially in the field, where our staffs work closely together."

An 18-nation delegation of the OSCE met with **President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia**, at the end of a four-day visit to the country on 16 October. The crisis in Abkhazia dominated much of the two-hour meeting. Mr. Shevardnadze stressed that "without a stable south-eastern Europe, the rest of the continent would hardly be in a position to

enjoy peaceful development." He stressed the key role of the Russian Federation in helping to solve the crisis.

Also expressing concern about the situation in Abkhazia, **OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana**, said on 17 October that the escalation of hostilities could lead to the destabilization of Georgia. Reaffirming OSCE support for Georgian sovereignty and territorial integrity, he urged all sides to refrain from military action, to respect the cease-fire agreement and to engage in meaningful negotiations.

Addressing the Permanent Council on 18 October, **Ruud Lubbers, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, spoke with appreciation of the strengthening of the partnership between the UNHCR and the OSCE. He greeted the OSCE's reaffirmation of the relevance of the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, which marks its fiftieth anniversary this year.

Addressing the Permanent Council on 18 October, the **High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Wolfgang Petritsch, and the Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH, Robert M. Beecroft**, welcomed the progress made on the country's political and economic reconstruction. At the same time, they called for more political efforts by the authorities to drive the reform process ahead. "Peace implementation in Bosnia

and Herzegovina has come a long way in the last six years, but there remains a great deal still to do – and time is running out", said Mr. Petritsch.

"United, we will be invincible to defeat terrorism", **Foreign Minister Talbak Nazarov of Tajikistan** told the Permanent Council on 19 October. "The Government and political leadership of Tajikistan have expressed solidarity with the American people and a willingness to closely co-operate with the international community to form a global front aimed at combating international terrorism", he added. He expressed his conviction that the most serious threat to security and peaceful development in the Central Asian region emanated from the territory of Afghanistan. "It is of vital interest to the Republic of Tajikistan that, in the future, Afghanistan becomes a stable, independent and flourishing State, peacefully coexisting with other countries of the region", he said.

The Chairman-in-Office, Mircea Geoana, on 22 October, welcomed the redeployment of police officers of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the five pilot villages of Opaje, Lopate, Grusino, Tearce and Lesok in the north-west. The mixed police patrols were accompanied by police advisers from the OSCE. "The OSCE stands ready to assist in finding a peaceful resolution of the crisis, and we have started to implement our responsibilities outlined in the 13 August framework agreement. ... We strongly encourage the

authorities in Skopje to finalize the parliamentary process in accordance with the framework agreement”, he said.

The meeting in Moscow on 23 October between **CiO Mirceo Geoana and Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov of the Russian Federation** was dominated by security issues. “The OSCE is entering a new phase of its existence after 11 September. The OSCE should play a far more prominent role in the security architecture of Europe and find adequate answers to the current security threats, mainly terrorism and organized crime”, said Mr. Ivanov. He noted that the OSCE was well placed to deal with these issues,

which would come up for discussion at the Ministerial Council on 3 and 4 December in Bucharest.

Jakob Kellenberger, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, underscored before the Permanent Council on 25 October his organization’s strong partnership with the OSCE, especially in field operations. “If some of our challenges can be met more easily in the OSCE area than in other parts of the world, it has quite something to do with the existence of the OSCE and its activities”, he said. “Your organization takes the concept of interacting institutions really seriously, and you are

convinced of the mutually reinforcing nature of interaction between organizations and institutions.”

Four new Permanent Mission Heads began their duties during the final quarter of the year: **Ambassador Aristidis Sandis** of Greece took up his position on 12 October; the new Head of Delegation for Cyprus since 29 October has been **Ambassador Stavros A. Epaminondas**; Bosnia and Herzegovina appointed **Ambassador Emina Keco-Isakovic** as its Head of Delegation on 1 November; and **Ambassador Taous Feroukhi** of Algeria officially started her duties on 2 November.



fight against human trafficking. Mr. Fischer said the OSCE was an appropriate institution to debate actions against human trafficking, since it included countries of origin, of transit and of destination. The Chairperson of the OSCE, Mircea Geoana, stated that trafficking in human beings affected security and stability in all the participating States of the Organization.’

lighted the fact that the voting was able to take place without disturbance. This could not be taken for granted in a country in which, four years ago, the State had virtually collapsed.’

BOSNIA

Reuters, 18 October

“There remains a great deal still to do and time is running out”, Petritsch, the top international peace overseer in Bosnia added. “This is perhaps the most important point to be made – the need for urgency.” The head of the OSCE mission to the region, Robert Beecroft, agreed, adding that international aid to the country had slowed considerably and it had yet to tackle the problems of economic reform, military spending and mass emigration. “While there is progress, there should be more and it has to be quicker.”’

CHECHNYA

AFP, 9 November

“The Russian State news agency RIA Novosti, citing diplomatic sources in Moscow, on Friday accused the OSCE office in Chechnya of “heating passions” in the separatist republic rather than doing useful humanitarian work. It is the first time since the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe returned to Chechnya in June that the pan-European body has come under Russian criticism.’

COUNTER-TERRORISM

Reuters, 12 October

‘In a statement adopted unanimously late on Thursday, the OSCE’s Permanent Council declared support “for the United States’ and other States’ rights of individual and collective self-defence following armed attacks. The OSCE participating States stated their support for actions designed to prevent and deter further terrorist attacks on innocent people throughout the world, whilst welcoming efforts to minimize civilian casualties and damage to civilian property”, the statement said.’

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Frankfurter Allgemeine, 16 October

‘Foreign Minister Fischer, acting as host to an OSCE conference on trafficking in human beings, said on Monday, the OSCE, which had created “a unique human rights standard” for its participating States, should also be a pioneer in the

Reuters, 12 November

‘Stung into action by outside pressure, in part from the European Union it is desperate to join, Romania has followed neighbouring Moldova and Ukraine in admitting it is a supplier of forced labour and passed an anti-trafficking law in response... “This is a great breakthrough and extremely encouraging ,” said Gabriele Reiter, an expert on anti-trafficking issues at the OSCE. But this modern-day slave trade could be tougher to stamp out than the smuggling of drugs and immigrants, often run by the same criminal networks, even if border controls are tightened.’

ALBANIA

Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 20 October

‘The OSCE report underscores that the parliamentary elections last summer, the fourth since the change, have again been a step forward in the democratization of the country. The report high-



ESTONIA

AFP, 23 October

‘Prime Minister Mart Laar said dropping the requirements for candidates to local government bodies and the parliament (that they speak Estonian) was needed to ensure that a mission of the Organization for Security and Co-operation leave the Baltic country... The OSCE mission, present in Estonia since 1993, said the changes were a positive development but it was up to the 55 OSCE participating States to decide whether to close the mission. “The mission, however, would recommend such a decision,” OSCE Ambassador to Estonia Doris Hertrampf told AFP.’

THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

AFP, 1 October

‘The OSCE will begin deploying 159 extra staff in Macedonia “within days” to monitor a peace accord and help train local police, a spokesman said on Monday. The OSCE’s Permanent Council agreed on Saturday to boost its current force of 51 more than four-fold, to 210 international staff, as the next stage of restoring peace in the fragile Balkan country gets under way.’

Die Presse, 10 October

‘The peace process in Macedonia has stalled... Both the EU and the OSCE have drawn consequences. The EU has cancelled its donor conference scheduled for 15 October, and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Mircea Geoana, does not want to deploy OSCE monitors to Macedonia as long as the Slavic-Macedonian side does not fulfil its commitments.’

Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 20 October

‘The massive expansion of the OSCE mission in Skopje, which is to observe the implementation of reforms, is still under way and is by no means proceeding without problems. The newly structured mission will pass its first crucial test next week, when it will accompany mixed Macedonian-Albanian police

patrols returning to villages formerly occupied by the KLA.’

Reuters, 14 November

‘Emergency mediation by the European Union, NATO and OSCE sponsors of the peace pact persuaded Boskovski (the Macedonian Interior Minister) to withdraw most of his forces on Monday, and Albanians to free 39 Macedonians they had seized as bargaining chips for the seven detainees.’

KOSOVO

AFP, 29 October

‘Daan Everts, head of the Kosovo mission of the pan-regional OSCE, warned that Belgrade’s failure to endorse the vote threatens the elections themselves. “The elections have to be of international standard”, he said. “My great concern is that there is so much delay in political endorsement of the elections that we cannot organize them anymore.”’

Frankfurter Allgemeine, 5 November

‘Yugoslav President Kostunica and the Serbian government under Prime Minister Djindic have encouraged the Serbs in Kosovo to participate in parliamentary elections in the southern province on 17 November... The OSCE, which is responsible for the preparation and a lawful administration of the elections, was content with the endorsement.’

Reuters, 16 November

‘Fifty per cent (voter turnout among Kosovo Serbs) would be very good in fact”, Daan Everts, head of the Kosovo mission of the OSCE, told Reuters. “We feel that they would only hurt their own interest by boycott, by abstention, because that would lead to continued or aggravated isolationism.”’

Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 19 November

‘Voter turnout reached 63 per cent, according to the OSCE. Prior to the elections the organizers had expected even greater participation. Nonetheless, the local OSCE head, Everts, on Saturday evening spoke of a great success and a glorious day in the history of Kosovo.’

MOLDOVA

AFP, 4 October

‘Islamic terrorists and other insurgents could get their hands on Soviet-era arms left in dumps awaiting disposal under an accord with the West, with “explosive” consequences, the OSCE warned Thursday. The OSCE is helping Russia to destroy over 40,000 tonnes of munitions and heavy arms left in the ex-Soviet Republic of Moldova after the 1992 collapse of the Soviet Union. OSCE diplomats said they needed more money to complete the task by a deadline next year, and that meanwhile the arms posed a serious risk, one made more pressing since the September 11 terror attacks in the United States.’

AFP, 9 November

‘Moscow promised to remove the weapons (from Moldova’s breakaway Transdnistrian region) under a 1999 agreement brokered with the supervision of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in Istanbul... The pull-out is being watched by international military observers under OSCE supervision, Itar-Tass reported.’

NAGORNO-KARABAKH

Reuters, 24 October

‘The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe is mediating the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the region. Nagorno-Karabakh, mainly populated by ethnic Armenians, broke away from Azerbaijan and the ex-Soviet republics fought a war over its control from 1992 to 1994. “Either the OSCE Minsk group takes a position of principle on this matter or we will free our land by military means,” Aliyev (the Azeri President) told Adrian Severin, head of the OSCE’s Parliamentary Assembly. “We and the OSCE both think, however, that the problem should be solved peacefully.” ...Severin agreed that the OSCE had failed to achieve a breakthrough in the stand-off between the two member countries and promised to give a “new impulse” to the talks.’

The OSCE 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

Joint ODIHR/German MFA event tackles trafficking in persons

Responses to trafficking in countries of destination were examined at an international conference, Europe against Trafficking in Persons, organized by the ODIHR and the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin on 15 and 16 October. In six working groups, experts discussed victims' rights and the responsibilities of State authorities. They identified current referral mechanisms designed to respond to the many urgent needs of trafficked persons.

Participants recommended measures to enhance the bilateral and international efforts of countries of destination to address the root causes of trafficking; to investigate and prosecute cases; and to facilitate safe, voluntary repatriation and rehabilitation programmes. They expressed their determination to work together against trafficking, giving special priority to the rights and needs of victims.

For more information, see: www.osce.org/europe-against-trafficking

Meeting urges greater support for human rights advocates

An OSCE meeting in Vienna on the formidable challenges faced by human rights advocates and defenders in their own countries drew a participation of more than 160. Some 60 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), several from Central Asia and the Caucasus, were represented. Also taking part in the Third Supplementary Human Dimension meeting on 22 and 23 October were delegations from all 55 OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions and field operations, international organizations and human rights defenders.

"While human rights defenders receive more and more words of praise by international institutions... governments continue to thwart their activities", said Aaron Rhodes, Executive Director



German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer (left) and OSCE Chairman-in-Office Mircea Geoana (centre) listen to ODIHR Director Gerard Stoudmann (right) at the opening of the Anti-Trafficking Conference in Berlin

of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, in his keynote speech. "Some of our colleagues have even been murdered at the hands of State institutions; their organizations have been threatened, denied official registration and obstructed from receiving support."

Three sets of challenges were discussed: relations of NGOs with government institutions and intergovernmental organizations; defence and advocacy work of NGOs and government institutions in the context of armed conflict or internal tensions; and human rights training for officials and human rights advocates.

ODIHR-UNHCHR explore stronger joint human rights efforts

The Director of the ODIHR, Ambassador Gerard Stoudmann, and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, explored future co-operation between their two organizations at a meeting in Geneva on 2 November. They

identified action to combat terrorism and trafficking in human beings, and the UN human rights machinery, as areas where interaction could be intensified, focusing on the Balkans and Central Asia. The two organizations agreed to exchange information regularly and to plan joint follow-up activities to the Conference on Human Rights and Democratization in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, which took place in Dubrovnik in October 2001.

Both agreed that co-operation should be strengthened at the political level, between desk officers and on the ground. They stressed that joint initiatives by the main international human rights organizations, especially the Council of Europe, UNHCHR and the ODIHR, would help to ensure that States assign importance to human rights considerations. They also called for an urgent, reinforced message on the need to uphold internationally accepted human rights standards in measures to combat terrorism.

ELECTIONS



Electoral officials to be trained in conflict management

A workshop organized by the ODIHR in Warsaw on 9 and 10 October examined how training in conflict management by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) can be made consistent with OSCE requirements. The consensus was that the course should aim at improving the conflict-management skills of senior electoral officials in interacting with colleagues, members of political parties and the electorate. A pilot project will be launched in 2002 in two OSCE participating States that have made considerable progress in developing their democratic institutions but where the political culture is still lagging behind.

Ukraine election needs for March 2002 assessed by delegation

An ODIHR delegation visited the Ukraine from 7 to 9 November to assess the pre-election situation, review the legislative framework and advise on the level of ODIHR involvement in monitoring the elections. During the visit, the ODIHR received an official invitation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to monitor the parliamentary elections. Both parliamentary and local elections are scheduled for 31 March 2002.

Led by the Director of the ODIHR, the delegation met with Ukrainian authorities and members of parliament, political parties, domestic and international NGOs, the media, and the Kyiv-based international community. The ODIHR has issued a report with findings and recommendations, as well as a legal review of the new Election Law adopted on 30 October.

Election reports and legal assessments issued

The ODIHR has issued final election reports on the presidential election in Belarus (9 September) and the parliamentary elections in Albania (24 June to 19 August). It has also published analyses of the draft Law on the Referendum on the Status of the Republic of Mon-

tenegro/FRY and the Parliamentary Election Law of Ukraine.

DEMOCRATIZATION



Anti-torture report discussed in Kazakhstan

The first State party report by Kazakhstan to the UN Committee against Torture, issued earlier in 2001, was the subject of a round-table discussion in Astana among high-level officials from key ministries, the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Council and the Public Prosecutor's Office, and NGO representatives. Participants considered the concerns of the UN Committee and measures to implement the report's recommendations. They identified concrete steps to be taken by government agencies.

The round table was jointly organized on 22 October by the Human Rights Commission under the President of Kazakhstan, the OSCE Centre in Almaty and the ODIHR as a follow-up to a 1999 project on the compliance of domestic law with the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

ODIHR trains Kazakh prosecutors

Staff of the Prosecutor's Office in Almaty took part in a training seminar from 19 to 21 October held by the ODIHR with the OSCE Centre in Almaty, the International Organization for Migration and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Topics covered the concept of human rights in criminal justice, requirements of the UN Convention against Torture and the interplay between international standards and the domestic system in criminal investigations. Practical examples were taken from the United Kingdom and Germany. Role-playing was used to simulate a case before the UN Human Rights Committee.

Montenegrin gender action plan is launched

The process of developing a gender action plan for Montenegro, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, was launched at

a conference in Cetinje, from 26 to 28 October, organized by the ODIHR and the NGO, Women's Forum of Montenegro. In working groups, more than 80 participants from all over Montenegro discussed issues ranging from culture, tradition and violence to the labour market, legislation and politics. A network of women in political parties, NGOs and trade unions will develop the action plan further. The conference prepared the report on Montenegro to the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). It also evaluated a training programme on women in politics held in all 21 municipalities of Montenegro that had been completed by some 600 participants.

Serbia's prison reforms assessed

Prison reform and human rights in Serbia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, was the theme of a seminar organized by the ODIHR in Belgrade on 4 October in partnership with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Serbia, the Council of Europe and the OSCE Mission to the FRY. Prison statutes, administrative structures, co-ordination between the courts and prisons, professional training of prison officers, and internal and external inspections were some of the areas that were discussed.

The seminar followed the needs-assessment visit to Serbian prisons in May and June by the ODIHR, Council of Europe and the OSCE Mission to the FRY. Among the participants were governors of all the Serbian prisons, the President of the Serbian Judges' Association, and representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and NGOs.



Roma communities are focus of Bucharest workshops

Concrete proposals for income-generating projects in Romania's Roma communities were drawn up at a workshop in Bucharest on 19 October. Special emphasis was placed on social security and the economic aspects of the Government's strategy to improve the sit-

uation of Roma, adopted in April. Representatives of Roma NGOs and the Government stressed the need to change the legal and institutional framework to provide all unemployed people with equal access to vocational training, including those of Roma ethnic background. Since many Roma do not receive unemployment benefits, they are not eligible to take part in the free training courses organized by the National Agency for the Occupation of the Labour Force (ANOFM). New legislation is due to be debated in the parliament at the end of 2001.

Another workshop, held on 19 and 20 October in Bucharest, initiated a general methodology for evaluating implementation of Roma-related projects at the grassroots level. It was organized by the ODIHR, the Pakiv European Roma Fund and Romani CRISS.

Roma NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina agree on joint platform

To pave the way for the development of a Government strategy on Roma, expected to be adopted next year, a joint national

platform was drawn up by representatives of 22 Roma NGOs from Bosnia and Herzegovina at a conference in Vogosca. The conference, which took place from 9 to 12 November, was organized by the ODIHR Contact Point, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council of Europe and the Open Society Institute.

Participants elected a representative body to be the Government's partner in developing and implementing the strategy and to co-ordinate activities of Roma NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Promoting 'Roma-to-Roma' transfer of expertise, the ODIHR facilitated the participation of Roma activists and experts from Bulgaria, Finland and Romania, who shared their experiences in helping to develop policies on Romani affairs.

A follow-up meeting with Government officials on 12 November discussed the establishment of a National Advisory Board on Roma Issues. The OSCE Mission and the ODIHR will continue to provide support and expertise.

At the conference, the OSCE Mission, with ODIHR, the Council of Europe and the Open Society Institute, launched the

'Opening Doors' project to strengthen Roma capacity and to ease their access to government. The project is part of the 'Roma under the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe' programme that is being implemented by the ODIHR and the Council of Europe.

Under the programme, a Roma officer is now working with the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and two local Roma have been hired in Sarajevo and Tuzla by the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues. The ODIHR plans to establish between 15 to 20 similar Roma contact points throughout south-eastern Europe. Their role is to mediate between Roma communities and local authorities, national agencies and NGOs, and international organizations.

A first regional training course for local mediators took place in Skopje, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, from 2 to 5 November, organized with the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje and the NGOs 'DROM' (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Romani CRISS (Romania) and Contact of the Continents (Netherlands).

NEWS

from the High Commissioner on National Minorities

The Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) is located at Prinsessegracht 22, NL-2514 AP The Hague, The Netherlands, tel.: (+31-70) 312 55 00, fax: (+31-70) 363 59 10, e-mail: hcnm@hcnm.org

High Commissioner in Moscow talks

OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Rolf Ekeus was in Moscow from 3 to 5 October to discuss minority issues in the Russian Federation and in other areas with high-level officials, parliamentarians and academics. A meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov focused on ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking persons who live in neighboring countries of the Russian Federation and the Government's views on inter-ethnic relations in the region.

Ekeus meets US and UN officials

The High Commissioner was in the United States from 8 to 11 October for

high-level talks in Washington, D.C., and New York.

In Washington, D.C., he met with senior State Department officials and members of the National Security Council to discuss issues related to preventing inter-ethnic conflict in the OSCE area, especially in Central Asia and the Baltic States. He also met with officials of the Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe (United States Helsinki Commission).

In New York, he met with United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and senior officials at the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank. He also addressed the International Peace Academy.

HCNM issues statement on sovereignty, responsibility and national minorities

The High Commissioner issued a statement on 26 October on 'Sovereignty, Responsibility, and National Minorities', which outlines principles underpinning the role of States in protecting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

On the controversial issue of the role of so-called 'kin-States', Mr. Ekeus emphasized that "protection of minority rights is the obligation of the State where the minority resides". He warned in his statement: "History shows that when States take unilateral steps on the basis of national kinship to protect national

minorities living outside of the jurisdiction of the State, this sometimes leads to tensions and frictions, even violent conflict. I am therefore obliged to focus special attention on situations where similar steps, without the consent of the State of residence, are contemplated.”

“Bilateral treaties”, he noted, “can serve a useful function in respect of national minorities in the sense that they offer a vehicle through which States can legitimately share information and concerns, pursue interests and ideas, and further protect particular minorities on the basis of the consent of the State in whose jurisdiction the minority falls. However, the bilateral approach should not undercut the fundamental principles laid down in multilateral instruments. In addition, States should be careful not to create such privileges for particular groups which could have disintegrative effects in the States where they live.”

The High Commissioner stressed that the way to avoid inter-ethnic conflict is to protect minority rights, encourage integration, maintain dialogue and good relations between States, and make use of the multilateral norms and mechanisms that have been created to protect persons belonging to national minorities. The High Commissioner has been following situations in the OSCE where States give, or intend to give, certain privileges to

non-citizens who share the same nationality as the titular majority. He is devoting close attention to the Act on Hungarians Living in Neighboring Countries and the report issued on 19 October by the European Commission for Democracy Through Law (Venice Commission) concerning the preferential treatment of national minorities by their kin-States.

The HCNM is updated on the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The High Commissioner was in Skopje on 4 and 5 November to obtain an update on the latest developments in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and to establish personal contacts. He was received by President Boris Trajkovski and met with Foreign Minister Ilinka Mitreva. He held talks with several political leaders including Arben Xhaferi, President of the Democratic Party of Albanians. He also met with representatives of Macedonia's Turkish and Roma communities.

Discussions covered the process of amending the Constitution, minority self-government, the South Eastern European University (officially inaugurated on 20 November, see page 8) and the role of so-called smaller minorities. In his meetings with Government officials, Mr. Ekeus offered his assistance in the process of normalization. On the Framework Agreement, he said that the High Commissioner

could provide expertise in decentralization, education, use of language, the census, participation of minorities in public life and other matters.

Status law discussed in Strasbourg with Hungary and Slovakia

The High Commissioner was in Strasbourg on 7 and 8 November for separate meetings with the Hungarian and Slovak Foreign Ministers. All three noted the good bilateral relations between Hungary and its neighbours and regarded current differences in opinion as challenges that can be tackled rather than as a threat to security.

Hungarian Foreign Minister Janos Martonyi explained his Government's views on the implementation of the Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries against the background of the Venice Commission report of 19 October concerning the preferential treatment of national minorities by their kin-States. The Minister reiterated the principle and modalities of the law and discussed possible next steps. He also referred to some points in the High Commissioner's statement of 26 October statement on national minorities. Slovak Foreign Minister Eduard Kukan underlined some of his Government's reservations about the law and expressed a desire to see continued dialogue on the issue.

REPORT from the OSCE **Parliamentary Assembly**

The Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is located at Rådhusstræde 1, DK-1466 Copenhagen K, Denmark, tel.: (+45-33) 37 80 40, fax: (+45-33) 37 80 30, e-mail: osce@oscepa.dk

U.S. Representative Hoyer appointed Chair of Oversight Committee

Parliamentary Assembly President Adrian Severin has appointed U.S. Congressman Steny Hoyer as Chair of the Assembly's *ad hoc* committee on oversight and accountability in the OSCE. Vice-Presidents Rita Süßmuth, MP (Germany), and Bruce George, MP (United Kingdom), were appointed to serve as the committee's vice-chairs. Other members include Vice-President

Ahmet Tan, MP (Turkey), Vice-President Claude Estier, MP (France), and Urban Ahlin, MP (Sweden). The oversight committee was established by the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations during the 10th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly last July in Paris. It will monitor implementation of the resolution on oversight and accountability in the OSCE, unanimously adopted at the Paris session, as well as a resolution geared towards elim-

inating the democratic deficit in the OSCE, adopted during the Assembly session in St. Petersburg in 1999.

Next Chairman-in-Office pledges close ties with Parliamentary Assembly

The next Chairman-in-Office, Foreign Minister Jaime Gama of Portugal, said on 9 October that he would ensure close co-operation and interaction in 2002 between the Portuguese Chairmanship and the OSCE Parliamentary

Assembly. Addressing the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations in Sintra, Portugal, he noted that since its creation ten years ago at the Madrid Conference, “the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has been playing an irreplaceable role in the promotion of the common values, principles and commitments of this Organization.”

The Foreign Minister said that the Parliamentary Assembly was “a valuable partner in the struggle against the new threats and challenges to security by helping to strengthen and consolidate democratic values and institutions.” He outlined the four main principles of the forthcoming Portuguese Chairmanship: co-operation, a comprehensive approach to security, transparency and visibility. He called for increased collaboration and co-ordination among OSCE bodies and institutions, including the Parliamentary Assembly.

Assuring the delegates that the Portuguese Chairmanship will pay “due attention” to transparency, Mr. Gama said that “we will do our best to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive consultations process in the OSCE”. He referred to the recently established *ad hoc* committee on oversight and accountability.

Assembly issues anti-terrorism declaration

At the same meeting in Sintra, the PA Standing Committee expressed outrage at the criminal and unjustifiable terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September through a Declaration on Security through Solidarity. The Declaration asserts that terrorism, in any of its forms and manifestations, is one of the greatest threats to security and co-operation today in the OSCE area, and that the recent tragic events demonstrate the need for increased co-operation between the international organizations concerned with security.

“As an international organization dealing with security matters, the OSCE



Portuguese Foreign Minister and incoming OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Jaime Gama (centre), with OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Adrian Severin (left) and OSCE PA Secretary General, Spencer Oliver (right), addressing the OSCE PA Conference on Migration in Sintra, Portugal

is ideally placed to develop common strategies addressing the political, economic, social and cultural root causes of terrorism”, PA President Severin stated. “The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly strongly supports efforts undertaken by the OSCE Chairmanship to develop an OSCE-wide plan of action for the fight against terrorism.”

The Committee also adopted a resolution on enhancing the parliamentary dimension of the OSCE, calling on all delegations to initiate debates in their parliaments on strengthening co-operation between the parliamentary and executive branches of government.

Parliamentary conference held on migration

More than a hundred parliamentarians from some 40 participating States gathered at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Conference on Migration, in

Penha Longa, Portugal, on 10 and 11 October. They discussed problems encountered by migrants, migrants’ rights, positive and negative aspects of migration and related issues. The conference was organized in co-operation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at the invitation of the Portuguese parliament.

The President of the *Assembleia da República*, Antonio de Almeida Santos, welcomed the participants. Among the prominent speakers were Antonio Vitorino, EU Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs, and Peter Schatzer, Director of External Relations, IOM. Sessions were chaired by OSCE PA President Adrian Severin, Vice-Presidents Ahmet Tan and Ihor Ostash, Head of the Portuguese Delegation Antonio Reis, Vice-Chair of the Third Committee Elena Mizulina and Treasurer Jerry Grafstein.

President Severin visits Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia

Visiting Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia from 21 to 29 October, President Severin met with their presidents, speakers of parliament and ministers of foreign affairs. He held talks with OSCE PA delegations, representatives of the judiciary, opposition political parties and NGOs, and religious leaders.

President Severin discussed regional security and the consequences of the global war against terrorism. He stressed that security in the Caucasus is an integral part of the security and stability of the OSCE area and that democratic development is an essential element in resolving ongoing conflicts. Expressing support for OSCE work in the region, Mr. Severin discussed ways in which the OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly could play a more instrumental role in supporting democratization. He suggested that new international commitments were needed to ease the deadlock, within the framework of OSCE documents and principles of international law.

In Azerbaijan, the President visited settlements for internally displaced persons (IDPs). He stressed that a continuation of the current situation might foster frustration and violence among the refugees.

In Georgia, Abkhazia was the focus of discussion. President Severin expressed concern over recent incidents in the Kodori Valley involving casualties on all sides and stressed the need to put an end to the illegal armed groups in the conflict zones. He addressed the issue of IDPs in Georgia and urged that finding solutions be given utmost priority. As in Azerbaijan, he noted that without any prospects for a better future, IDPs might give vent to their frustration through violence, creating another security problem.

In Armenia, President Severin learned about the ongoing reform programme including constitutional developments. He discussed strengthening the political party system to enable political stability to take root along with pluralism.

On a brief visit to Nagorno-Karabakh, President Severin emphasized that he was not there to recognize or negotiate its status but to listen to various groups and to evaluate the situation on the spot. He stressed that for the conflict to be solved, a compromise must be found and that the public must be kept informed throughout the process. During his visits to all three countries, the President

underlined the crucial role played by the mass media in forming public opinion. He urged the start of a constructive dialogue and the end of the media's engagement in war rhetoric and deliberate distribution of false information.

OSCE and CoE leaders urge multi-cultural dialogue to combat terrorism

The leadership of the OSCE and the Council of Europe met to discuss and coordinate activities dealing with issues of common concern. In lengthy discussions on the fight against terrorism, both organizations stressed the need for a multi-cultural dialogue and the importance of tackling the root causes of terrorism.

The meeting in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, on 30 October, was hosted by Ernst Walch, Foreign Minister of Liechtenstein and current Chairman of the Council of Europe. The President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Lord Russell-Johnston, and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Walter Schwimmer, also participated. OSCE officials present were PA President Adrian Severin and PA Deputy Secretary General, Pentti Väänänen; Mihnea Motoc, Romanian Secretary of State, who represented the Chairman-in-Office; and OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Jan Kubis.

President Severin reported on his recent visit to the Caucasus and on the

Parliamentary Assembly's plans in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Matters relating to Belarus and Kosovo were also discussed.

Germany's Uta Zapf is new chair of Belarus group

President Severin has appointed Ms. Uta Zapf, MP (Germany), as the new chair of the Assembly's *ad hoc* working group on Belarus. She replaces Mr. Severin as chair of the group. Other members are OSCE PA Vice-President Igor Ostash and Urban Ahlin, MP (Sweden), Antonio Reis, MP (Romania), and Ms. Helena Demakova, MP (Latvia). Their main task is to ensure that the working group plays an active role in promoting democratic developments in Belarus in the post-presidential election period.

Gert Weisskirchen represents PA at conference on trafficking in persons

Gert Weisskirchen, MP (Germany), Chair of the Third General Committee of the OSCE PA, represented the Assembly at a two-day conference on Europe Against Trafficking in Persons, held in Berlin in October. He was accompanied by Pentti Väänänen, PA Deputy Secretary General. Participants underlined the task of parliaments and parliamentarians in enacting legislation to combat trafficking and to facilitate inter-governmental co-operation.

NEWS

from 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

Journalist denied visa for Tajikistan

Christian Neef, a reporter for the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, was denied a visa to enter Tajikistan. From there, he had planned to travel to northern Afghanistan. OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve, urged the Tajik authorities to reconsider the visa application. In a letter of 1 October to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, Mr. Duve wrote: "Numerous

OSCE commitments are encouraging participating States to facilitate visa processes to enable journalists to travel within the OSCE region and to be able to legitimately pursue their professional activity and so to encourage public discussion and pluralism of opinions."

'Censorship by killing' raised with UK

Freimut Duve has raised with British authorities the case of the murder of Mar-

tin O'Hagan, a reporter with the *Sunday World*, who was gunned down near his home in Northern Ireland on 28 September. Mr. O'Hagan had specialized in investigating paramilitary forces and the drugs mafia.

On 2 October, the OSCE Representative added his voice to appeals to the British Government for a thorough investigation so that the perpetrators of the crime could be brought to justice.

Journalists helped to fight corruption

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media took part in the 10th International Anti-Corruption Conference in Prague, organized by Transparency International on 11 October. The theme was strengthening civil society and the role of the media. Mr. Duve briefed participants on the activities of his office aimed at supporting journalists in fighting corruption.

West urged to consider freedom of expression amid security concerns

The OSCE Representative met with senior officials from the US State Department in Washington, D.C., on 21 October. Freimut Duve briefed them on his latest activities in the light of the tragic events of 11 September. He warned that human rights, including freedom of expression, could be affected by national

security concerns. The fragile state of human rights in some of the OSCE participating States, he pointed out, could be undermined if the old democracies in the West and in northern America set precedents, however minor. These measures could be used by certain governments to stifle dissent, he warned.

Editors freed in Azerbaijan

The President of Azerbaijan decided on 17 October to release two journalists from prison: Elmar Huseinov, founder of the independent weekly *Bakinsky Bulvar* and Shabaz Khuduoglu, editor-in-chief of the independent weekly *Milletin Sesi*. The president of the independent publishing house Baku Printing Press was also pardoned. Welcoming the decisions in a letter to the country's Foreign Minister, Freimut Duve wrote that he would support Azerbaijan in its crucial quest to

meet its OSCE and Council of Europe commitment to freedom of the media.

Concern over *Respekt* Magazine

The OSCE Representative has communicated with the Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic, Jan Kavan, on the threat of a joint lawsuit from the Government against the weekly magazine *Respekt* for its reporting on corruption. Damages filed could reach several million euros. Mr. Duve was concerned that, based on information provided to him, the purpose of the lawsuit was to see that "*Respekt* finally ceases to exist". "This line of argumentation would be incompatible with OSCE commitments protecting freedom of expression and freedom of the media", he said on 30 October. The Foreign Minister has responded, pointing out that no decision has yet been made on the lawsuit.

REPORT

from the OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat

The OSCE Secretariat is located at Kärntner Ring 5-7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria. Telephone: (+43-1) 514 36-0, Fax: (+43-1) 514 36-96, e-mail: pm@osce.org

SG meets Chairman of Supreme Council of Abkhazia in Exile

Secretary General Jan Kubis met with the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Abkhazia in Exile, Tamaz Nadareishvili, at his request on 2 October. They discussed the overall situation in Abkhazia, including problems and possible solutions. Issues relating to terrorism were also brought up. The SG was accompanied by Ambassador Levan Mikeladze of Georgia.

Working group on ammunition disposal submits report

Members of the Tripartite (Russia, Transnistria, OSCE) Working Group on Ammunition Disposal met with the Secretary General on 3 October. They were in Vienna to submit their final report and project proposals to Voluntary Fund contributors. They briefed the SG on their conclusions and recommendations.

Kyiv seminar examines OSCE's preventive tasks

The Secretary General participated in an OSCE seminar in Kyiv on preventive functions of the OSCE. Hosted by the Ukrainian Government on 8 and 9 October, it was officially opened by Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko, Paraschiva Badescu, a representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, and the Secretary General.



Secretary General Kubis (left) meets the new Head of the Delegation of Greece, Ambassador Aristidis Sandis

Foreign Minister Zlenko underscored the need to increase the OSCE's analytical potential. He recalled Ukraine's ini-

tiative to establish an Ethnic Research Centre under the auspices of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. Ukraine suggested that seminars on OSCE's preventive functions be continued regularly, with Kyiv as a possible venue.

During his visit to Kyiv, the Secretary General was received by President Leonid Kuchma and had a working lunch with Foreign Minister Anatoly Zlenko. He was accompanied by Ambassador Peter Burkhard, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. Discussions focused on developments in Ukraine, including the planned elections for 2002 and the role of the OSCE.

ODCCP Executive Director in discussions with SG

Meeting on 10 October, the Secretary General and Executive Director Pino Arlacchi of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP) discussed preparations for the International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia (see page 5). The joint OSCE-ODCCP activity is a follow-up to the conference in Tashkent in 2001. The two officials also discussed their organizations' activities and plans to counter terrorism. The SG described the establishment and objectives of the OSCE Working Group on Terrorism, supported by the Task Force in the Secretariat. He agreed with Mr. Arlacchi's proposals for future co-operation and ODCCP support for the Working Group.

SG visits Yugoslavia

The Secretary General was in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on 16 and 17 October at the invitation of the OSCE Mission and the FRY/Serbian authorities. He met with Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic, Deputy Serbian Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic, Presidential Adviser Predrag Simic, President of the Supreme Court of Serbia Lepasava Karamarkovic and Radio Telesivija Serbia (RTS) Editor-in-Chief, Bojana Lekic.

The FRY/Serbian authorities praised the "close and multi-dimensional co-operation" with the OSCE Mission. On 17 October, the Secretary General



OSCE/Sarfat

Human rights activists hold workshop

The OSCE Secretary General, Jan Kubis, met human rights activists from Central Asia and the Caucasus on 19 October at the request of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, which organized a three-day workshop for them. Participants informed the Secretary General about concerns raised at the workshop on Strategies for Human Rights Advocacy in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and submitted recommendations to the OSCE.

Ms. Taous Feroukhi, the new Head of the Delegation of Algeria, pays a courtesy call on the Secretary General

attended the graduation ceremonies for the first participants of the 12-week police training course in Mitrovo Polje, southern Serbia. He noted that the OSCE could be proud of what the police school had achieved (see story on page 12).

OSCE discusses joint activities with UNHCR

The Secretary General had a bilateral meeting on 18 October with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Ruud Lubbers, who addressed the Permanent Council. Co-operation between the two organizations, especially on the ground, was discussed: migration, combating terrorism, trafficking in human beings, and the situation in Afghanistan and its impact on the two organizations' operational activities in that region.

Tajikistan-OSCE talks held

The SG had a bilateral meeting with the Foreign Minister of Tajikistan, Talbak Nazarov, on 18 October. Discussions focused on the implications of the developments in Afghanistan on the Central Asian region, especially Tajikistan. Other issues included the work of the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan, including the opening of a field office in Khorog and strengthening the Mission's activities in the economic area.

UN representative meets with SG

The Secretary General met Joachim Hütter, Director for Europe and Latin America in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, on 22 October. They examined co-operation between the OSCE and the United Nations, with a special focus on south-eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

Meeting with the President of ICRC

Co-operation between the OSCE and the International Committee of the Red Cross was discussed at bilateral talks on 25 October between the Secretary General and Dr. Jakob Kellenberger, ICRC President. Special attention was devoted to the current situation in Afghanistan and its repercussions on the neighbouring countries, which are OSCE participating States. Two areas of co-operation were highlighted: exchange of information on security on the ground and co-operation in training, especially ICRC assistance in field security and humanitarian law, including within the REACT programme. On the issue of trafficking in human beings, Dr. Kellenberger welcomed the development of a joint code of conduct for international field personnel.

OSCE- and Council of Europe hold 11th high-level meeting

The Secretary General attended the eleventh high-level '2+2/3+3' meeting of OSCE and the Council of Europe on 30 October. The meeting, in Vaduz, focused on topical issues of common interest: the fight against terrorism, the current situation in south-east Europe

(notably in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including the Kosovo elections), in Belarus (after the recent presidential elections) and in the Caucasus.

Participants agreed to reinforce their co-operation, to join efforts in countering and preventing terrorism and tackling its

root causes, and to establish appropriate co-ordination mechanisms. They also agreed to explore the possibilities for a multicultural and inter-religious dialogue, engaging the Organization of the Islamic Conference, among others.

The SG also met separately with M. Ahtisaari and J. Mroz from the East-West Institute, who were visiting Vaduz.

New on the OSCE website

New OSCE home page launched to improve access to information

A new, dynamic OSCE homepage was launched in November, aimed at giving visitors an instant and easy overview of all the latest OSCE information that is available online at:

www.osce.org

This includes news releases, feature stories, upcoming events, photos, special websites and new public information products. The new homepage is database-driven, making it simple to access the specific information you need. Key features include news by region – an overview of the latest news releases from OSCE field missions and offices – and a news in focus section highlighting key OSCE issues.

Please help us make the page better by sending your comments and feedback to the OSCE Online Unit at:

help@osce.org

Ninth Ministerial Council online

Visit the special Ninth Ministerial Council website:

www.osce.org/romania2001

to obtain the documents and decisions from the meeting of OSCE foreign ministers in Bucharest. The website also offers an extensive photo archive, news releases issued during the Ministerial Council and background on the issues discussed.

Bishkek Conference website

For background, updates and media information on the International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening Comprehensive Efforts to Combat Terrorism, held on 13 and 14 December in Bishkek, visit:

www.osce.org/events/bishkek2001

Discussion focused on the threats of terrorism, as well as possible preventive

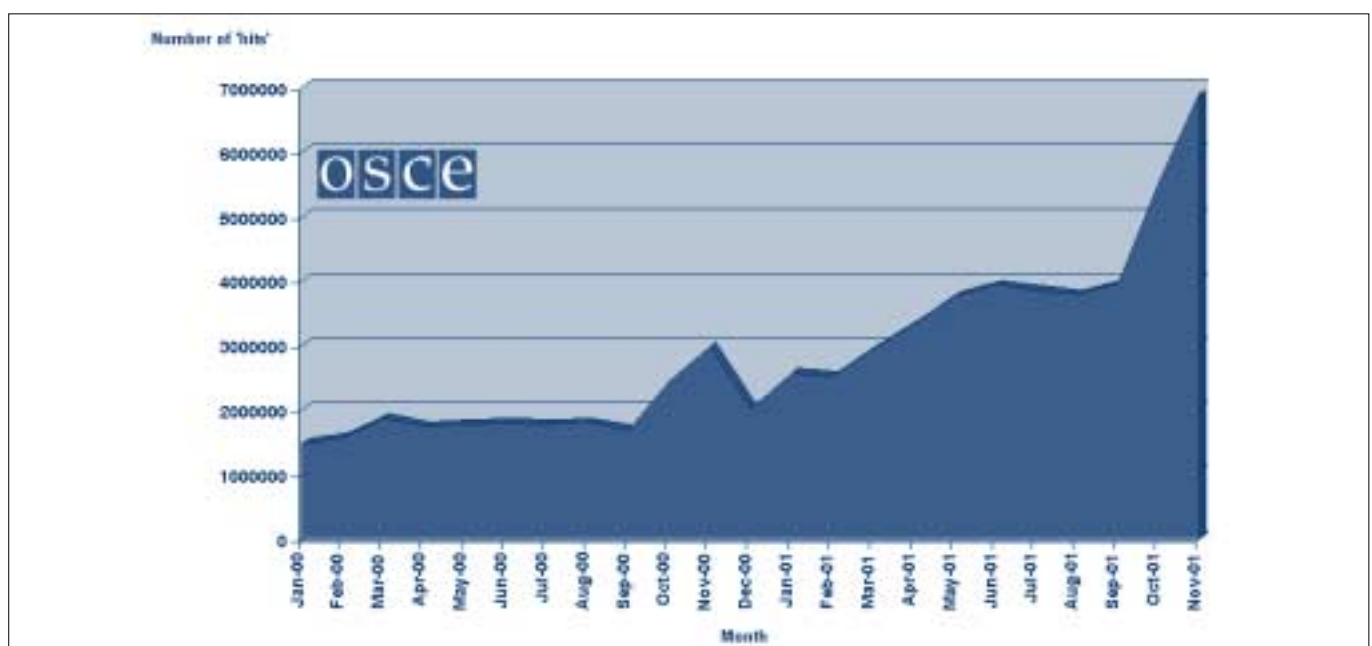
measures and the experience in coping with these challenges. The site has been updated with news releases, documents, speeches, photos and follow-up material from the proceedings.

Record traffic

The OSCE is pleased to announce that in the past several months, its website has seen a record amount of traffic with 6.8 million 'hits' in November, in about 160,000 visitor sessions.

Peaks were reached at the time of the announcement of the Kosovo election results and during the Ninth Ministerial Council in Bucharest, which attracted the single largest number of visitors ever recorded on the OSCE website.

We thank all our visitors and look forward to continuing to make the website your primary source of public information on the OSCE.





(Top) The Heads of Delegations to the Ninth Ministerial Council line up in the Romanian Palace of Parliaments for the traditional “family photo”. (Above left) US Secretary of State Colin Powell, addresses the Ninth Ministerial Council on the second day of the Meeting. (Above right) Russian Federation Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov greets next year’s Chairman-in-Office, Portugal’s Foreign Minister Jaime Matos da Gama, at the Ministerial Council



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Kärntner Ring 5-7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria
Tel.: (+43-1) 514 36-180 ■ Fax: (+43-1) 514 36-105 ■ E-mail: info@osce.org

Keith Jinks, Editor ■ Alexander Nitzsche, Deputy Editor ■ Patricia Sutter, Associate Editor

For more information, see the OSCE website: <http://www.osce.org>