

Final Preparations for Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Logo of Elections '98 in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Election day in Bosnia and Herzegovina is fast approaching. The OSCE has played a leading role in the preparations for these elections and will also be instrumental in their supervision and observation. The Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Robert Barry, reports that despite the complexity of the elections, "things are going well, and I fully expect these elections to be technically the best we have seen in this country."

The elections, to be held on 12 and 13 September, will be the fourth Bosnian elections supervised by the OSCE as mandated by the Dayton Accords. Nation-wide elections will be held for the tripartite Presidency and the House of Representatives for Bosnia and Her-

zegovina. In the Federation, elections will be held for the House of Representatives and Cantons, as well as for nine newly created municipal councils. In the Republika Srpska, elections will be for the Presidency and the National Assembly, as well as for two newly created municipal councils. Nearly 6,000 candidates have been certified by the Provisional Election Commission (PEC).

Final voter registers are being prepared. All information obtained during the claims period including registrants' records, updated information on the assignment of voters to polling stations, and information on the resolution of challenges and appeals is being incorporated into the voter registration database. It is estimated that the number of people eli-

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gible to vote will be about 2.5 million. There will be 2,270 polling stations served by 2,600 international supervisors.

Voting by mail began on 10 August. Approximately 154,000 Bosnian citizens residing in 51 countries have received ballot papers and information (in their own languages) on the candidates, parties, and political platforms. As in earlier elections, out-of-country voting is being managed by the International Organization for Migration. The process allows Bosnian refugees to take an active part in deciding the future of their country, thereby creating an environment that will – it is hoped – facilitate their ultimate return.

Many refugees have returned before the elections. In some cases, returnees have been encountering bureaucratic and security problems. The return and reintegration of displaced persons and refugees is a key concern of the Mission which is working with municipal governments, community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations, not only in fostering inter-ethnic understanding during the build-up to the 1998 elections, but also in trying to ensure the long-term stability of the country.

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina was busy throughout August with final preparations for the elections. Disseminating information has been an important task for the Mission which has prepared a series of political party platform newspapers on the subjects of return, the economy and minority rights. These newspapers offer detailed information on each party's platform and are an important element in voter education. The Mission has established information hotlines and launched an information campaign explaining the voting procedures and the new ballot format and encouraging people to vote.

A Presidential Debates Commission has been established by the OSCE to co-ordinate efforts to hold presidential debates prior to the elections. Four live television debates are planned.

OSCE Political Party Service Centres (PPSC) have organized a series of activities to assist political parties throughout

the country. Parties can use the PPSCs for activities such as press conferences and forums on minority rights, the economy and education that are broadcast live on radio. The Mission's Media Access Support Teams have been trying to ensure that there is fair and equitable political party access to the media throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the Media Monitoring Centre has been providing the Media Experts Commission, which enforces compliance with the Provisional Election Commission's rules and regulations, with objective and updated information about media behaviour throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Logistical preparations are well advanced. Three and a half million ballots printed in England were delivered to Bosnia at the end of August. They have been distributed by the Swiss Support Unit, with national police escorts, to locations across the country. Security and communications procedures have been discussed with SFOR and the IPTF, and co-ordination meetings have been held on the movement and storage of election materials. Observation of the preparation of polling stations is also on schedule and arrangements are being finalized for the arrival of the international supervisors and the co-ordination of their activities.

The ODIHR's election observation mission has established a core office in Sarajevo and 12 long-term observers have been deployed throughout the country. They will be joined by approximately 150 short-term observers and by

observers from the OSCE Parliamentary Parliamentary Assembly, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina has established Monitoring Co-ordination Groups around the country for monitoring of the political campaign by international agencies. The OSCE is also working with the European Community Monitoring Mission which will provide logistical support and some observation teams for the election weekend.

To promote the active participation of citizens' organizations in the electoral process, to ensure the integrity of the electoral process, and to prepare for less involvement of the international community in future elections, the OSCE and the US-based National Democratic Institute are co-operating in a Domestic Election Monitoring Programme through which local non-governmental organizations are being trained in election monitoring.

The final touches are now being made to the election preparations. Head of Mission Ambassador Barry says of his team's efforts "we are tired, but we are ready."

**For the latest
news and information about
the elections and the activities
of the OSCE Mission
to Bosnia and Herzegovina
please check their website at
<http://www.oscebih.org>**

No Diplomatic Breakthrough as Crisis in Kosovo Reaches “Apogee of Violence”

The month of August witnessed a sharp escalation of military operations in Kosovo, mainly as a result of offensives launched by Serb forces against armed groups of Kosovo Albanians in the central, southern and western regions of the province. A number of armed clashes were reported along the border between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and Albania. Continued efforts of the international community aimed at a cessation of the hostilities and a resumption of the dialogue between Belgrade and Priština did not result in any breakthrough.

The worsening crisis has created a very serious humanitarian situation. In his regular report to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the “situation in Kosovo and measures taken by the OSCE” (submitted pursuant to paragraphs 13 and 16 of UN Security Council Resolution No. 1160/98), OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Polish Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek stated that the number of internally displaced persons was growing and “the inflow of refugees into Albania has shown a sharp increase again, with thousands of new refugees registered in the past month.” The UNHCR puts the number of refugees and displaced persons at approximately 230,000. Untold thousands are assumed to be roaming the forests awaiting help in the form of aid and assistance. Minister Geremek reported to the UN that “their passage to safety is hampered by the threat of military action and the placing, by FRY forces, of mines along the border area.”

Border monitors of the OSCE Presence in Albania have observed an influx of refugees into Albania and a marked increase in armed clashes along the Albania/FRY border. They have reported a number of incidents, including shootings, airspace violations and cross border bush fires. The OSCE Mission to Skopje is closely following the potential for any spillover effects of the conflict into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The OSCE continues to stress the need for a cessation of hostilities and the beginning of dialogue. A second round of exploratory talks between the OSCE and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) was held on 4 August in Warsaw. The representative of the Chairman-in-Office, Ambassador Jerzy Nowak, headed the OSCE delegation while the FRY delegation was led by Assistant Foreign Minister Branko Branković.

The objective of the meeting was to continue the exploratory talks initiated in Belgrade on 3 July. These talks were followed by the OSCE Technical Assistance Mission to the FRY carried out from 14 to 22 July to facilitate the mission of Mr. Felipe González as Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for the FRY and to search for ways and means of beginning a process that would lead to a comprehensive resolution of issues of relevance to relations between the FRY and the OSCE, including the return of the long-term missions, particularly to Kosovo. Although the Warsaw round of talks served to further clarify the positions of both sides, they did not result in any breakthrough.

The well-known positions of both sides were reiterated through an exchange of letters in August. In a letter dated 6 August, to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Mr. Živadin Jovanović, written in response to a letter from Mr. Jovanović dated 3 August, Minister Geremek stressed that the crisis in Kosovo could not be resolved by force. He described “the escalation of violence and bloodshed, from whichever side it may come” as “deplorable and inadmissible.” He reiterated the OSCE’s readiness to assist in finding a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Kosovo within the framework of Permanent Council decision No. 218 of 11 March 1998 and on the basis of CSCE/OSCE principles and documents.

In response, Minister Jovanović, in a letter dated 17 August, expressed the view that the “humanitarian disaster” was the result of actions taken by the “band of terrorists belonging to the so-called KLA.”

Concern has been expressed about the way in which journalists covering the crisis have been treated. This issue was raised by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Mr. Freimut Duve, in an address to the Permanent Council on 27 August. In his address, which was followed by a press conference, Mr. Duve described four disturbing trends which have been brought to his attention: a failure of the Belgrade authorities to grant visas to certain journalists seeking to report on the conflict; harassment of journalists; the expulsion of several journalists from Kosovo; and

the ill-treatment of Serbian journalist by Kosovar journalists. Mr. Duve wrote three letters in August to the Foreign Minister of the FRY expressing his concern and urging the Belgrade authorities to allow unimpeded access for the media to cover the events in the country, especially in Kosovo. Mr. Duve also urged OSCE participating States to put pressure on the Kosovo Liberation Army to let Serb reporters operate freely. He informed participating States,

and later the press, that he would continue to closely follow the issue of press freedom in Kosovo.

The OSCE will continue to follow all aspects of the crisis and seek to promote a peaceful solution, but for the moment the outlook is bleak. In his report to the United Nations, Minister Geremek said that "the escalation of the conflict in Kosovo has reached a phase that can be surely described as an apogee of vio-

lence and may seriously affect the neighbouring States, burning fragile peace in the Balkans." Warning of a humanitarian disaster and a protracted conflict he concluded that "the only hope for peaceful solution is an immediate cessation of Serbian military offensive and initiation of unconditional negotiations between the FRY's authorities and widely represented Albanians from Kosovo."



News from the Field

The OSCE currently has ten Missions in the field as well as the Assistance Group to Chechnya, the Presence in Albania and the Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus. The following are highlights from the work of some of the field operations during the past month:

Presence in Albania Engaged in Human Dimension Activities

The OSCE Presence in Albania remains engaged in a number of projects designed to promote the rule of law and the development of civil society in Albania. The Legal Counsellor's Office (LCO) has been monitoring cases concerning the removal of local government district councils. The issue has become politicized because the officials who have been removed belong to the Democratic Party. The LCO is also completing a plan for the augmentation of a Human Rights Alert Programme which is designed to allow the LCO to become more active in supporting the investigation and reporting of human rights related complaints throughout Albania. The Presence will also seek to empower domestic NGOs in human rights investigation and reporting. This is part of a larger strategy to assist

NGOs in order to strengthen democratic institutions in Albania.

The Administrative Centre for Co-ordination of Assistance and Public Participation (ACCAPP) is continuing to work closely with members of the Constitutional Commission in the organization of public hearings on the draft constitution throughout the country. It is devising ways to help the Government inform the public and the international community about the draft constitution.

Field offices are also engaged in human dimension activities. For example, in August members of the field office in Vlora completed a series of visits to pre-detention cells and the local prison, and members of the field office in Gjirokastra met with local authority representatives to discuss local government issues.

The Presence is continuing with its

other mandated activities, especially border monitoring. Numerous incidents and a further influx of refugees into Albania were reported by OSCE personnel in August (see story on page 3).

In addition the Presence is following the activities of the Albanian Parliament and other political developments. It reports that the arrests of six former Democratic Party officials at the end of August has created new tensions between the governing Socialist Party and the opposition Democratic Party. The Presence has stressed that the issue should be handled as a judicial rather than a political matter. In a joint statement of the Presence with the Council of Europe Special Representative of the Secretary General, all parties were urged "to comply with the relevant laws and procedures to resolve this issue in a manner consistent with a democratic state based on the rule of law."

Missions Focus on State Media in Croatia

The OSCE Missions to Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have been devoting attention to the activities of the state-run Croatian Radio and Television (HRT), particularly in view of the upcoming elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Croatian Parliament's debate on draft amendments to the Law on HRT which is due to be adopted in September or October.

On 31 July, the OSCE Mission to Croatia joined representatives of the Peace Implementation Council in making a demarche to the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs about HRT's involvement in broadcasting in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In their demarche, the international representatives called for a resolution of three issues – the use of transmitters, the unauthorized use of frequencies and the retransmission of HRT's signal in Bosnia and Herzegovina. HRT was also advised to modify its coverage of events in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to comply with European Broadcasting Union standards, Council of Europe recommendations and OSCE guidelines. These issues are now being taken up by two separate bodies. The legal and technical issues are being addressed by the International Media Commission, the regulatory agency authorized to licence all broadcasters within Bosnia and Herzegovina. The issue of content has been taken up by the Media Experts Commission of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The OSCE Mission to Croatia has given its comments on the draft amendments to the Law on HRT, which are due to be discussed in Parliament in September or October.

Head of Mission to Georgia Visits South Ossetia

In the fourth week of August, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Georgia, Ambassador Michal Libal, visited South Ossetia as part of the Mission's ongoing efforts to facilitate the reaching of a final settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. In Tskhinvali he met with the South Ossetian leader, L. Chibirov and other officials, with whom he discussed the economic and political situation in South Ossetia. While in that region of Georgia he was also briefed on procedures for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons and on the current security situation.

The OSCE Mission to Georgia is still closely following developments in Abkhazia where the situation remains tense and dangerous. August the 14th marked the sixth anniversary of the beginning of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict.

Referendum on Citizenship Law to Be Held in Latvia

The OSCE Mission to Latvia reports that a referendum will be held on 3 and 4 October on amendments to Latvia's Law on Citizenship. The decision to hold the referendum was taken after a signature campaign had shown that a sufficient number of Latvians were in favour of holding it. The constitution provides that if 10 per cent of the Latvian electorate sign a petition in favour of holding a referendum, the Central Election Commission is obliged to organize one no earlier than one month and no later than two months after the petitioning results have been announced. Since the petition was signed by more than 226,000 persons (roughly 17% of the electorate), the referendum will go ahead. The question will be "Do you

support the abolition of the amendments to the Law on Citizenship adopted by the Saeima on 22 June 1998?" The OSCE Mission to Latvia and the OSCE High Commission on National Minorities have been closely following the process of amending the Law on Citizenship since its initial stages.

Update from Tajikistan

The security situation in Tajikistan continues to be of concern to international bodies active in that country. The OSCE Mission to Tajikistan is continuing to monitor and facilitate the implementation of the General Agreement on Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan. The peace process has been slow and laborious owing to reluctance on the part of the Tajik parties to implement key aspects of the General Agreement. Likewise, discussions on the Tajik constitution have stalled because of debate on the issue of secularism, the opposition objecting to the inclusion of this term in the new constitution.

The OSCE Mission has recently expanded its activities in Tajikistan to cover more thoroughly the responsibilities outlined in its mandate. In the field of human rights, it is reporting on violations and creating a countrywide database on trends, particularly trends within refugee return areas. It is also supporting the creation of democratic institutions in preparation for the elections in Tajikistan, scheduled for December. In addition it is providing advice to the Tajik Government on legislative reform issues.

UPDATE from the ODIHR

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

Side-Meetings Planned for 1998 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

In an effort to increase the focus on issues of specific concern in the Human Dimension, the ODIHR is planning to organize separate side-meetings in the margins of the Implementation Meeting, as reported in the July issue

of the Newsletter. The schedule and topics for these side-meetings will be:

26 October..... Freedom of Expression

28 October..... Freedom of Religion

29 October..... Gender Equality

30 October..... Prevention of Torture

2-3 November..... Roma and Sinti

A tentative agenda for the five side-meetings will be available at the end of September. The 1998 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting will close on 6 November following a two-day plenary session with the participation of high-level officials and human rights experts. Please contact Erol Akdag, ODIHR Human Dimension Adviser, for further information.

Election News

Bosnia and Herzegovina – Presidential, Parliamentary and Cantonal Elections 12-13 September

On 21 July, the ODIHR established an Observation Mission headed by Mark Power-Stevens. Twelve long-term observers arrived during August to join the seven-member core team in observing the pre-election process and preparing for the short-term observers. The ODIHR has requested 150 observers and in addition. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe will also send observers.

Slovakia – Parliamentary Elections 25-26 September

On 18 August, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia formally invited the ODIHR to observe the September parliamentary elections. The ODIHR Election Observation Mission in Slovakia will have a core staff of seven people, a media monitoring group of four experts

and twelve long-term observers. It will be headed by Mr. Kåre Vollan, seconded by the Government of Norway.

On polling day, approximately 100 short-term election observers, as well as Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and other parliamentary bodies, will be deployed throughout the country. The OSCE Chairman in Office has appointed the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Ms. Helle Degn, as his representative for the Slovak elections. Ms. Degn will issue the preliminary post-election statement for the OSCE, in conjunction with the Head of the ODIHR Election Observation Mission. The purpose of observing the elections is to assess the election process in accordance with OSCE commitments and international standards.

Azerbaijan – Presidential Elections 11 October

In preparation for the October presidential elections, the ODIHR conducted a needs assessment mission to Azerbaijan

from 31 July to 4 August. The objectives of the mission were to assess the stages of technical preparations and to discuss the pre-election situation with representatives of all political factions.

Thanks to a voluntary contribution from the Government of Norway, the ODIHR has been able to provide substantial technical assistance to the authorities of Azerbaijan in reviewing the election law and drafting the rules and regulations issued by the Central Election Committee. A project to train election officials in practical implementation of the election legislation is also under way, in cooperation with the International Federation for Election Systems (IFES).

The Election Observation Mission will commence on 11 September and will be co-ordinated by Nikolai Vulchanov, ODIHR Election Adviser. The ODIHR has requested 20 long-term observers and is expecting at least 150 short-term observers.

FYROM – Parliamentary Elections 18 October

After conducting a needs assessment mission from 18 to 21 August, the ODIHR is ready to begin, on 17 Septem-

ber, observing the upcoming parliamentary elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Mark Power-Stevens will serve as Head of the ODIHR Election Observation Mission, and the ODIHR has requested eight

long-term observers. Should a second round of voting be necessary, it may take place on 1 November. In preparing for the parliamentary elections, the ODIHR is receiving excellent support from the OSCE Mission to Skopje.

REPORT 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: cscehcnm@euronet.nl

Georgia

From 10 to 13 August the High Commissioner on National Minorities visited Georgia where he met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Irakli Menagharishvili. The High Commissioner also travelled to Sukhumi to meet with the leader of the former Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, Vladislav Ardzinba.

The main aim of the visit was for the High Commissioner to inform himself, at first hand, about the current situation in Abkhazia. Besides meeting with other representatives of the Abkhazian leadership, the High Commissioner was briefed by UNOMIG officials and the head of the UN/OSCE Human Rights office in Sukhumi. In his discussions with his Georgian and Abkhazian interlocutors, it was made clear to the High Commissioner that the gap in the negotiating positions between Tbilisi and Sukhumi over the status of Abkhazia remains very wide indeed.

Latvia

On 24 and 25 August the High Commissioner paid a visit to Latvia where he was received by President Guntis Ulma-

nis. He also had meetings with Minister of Education Janis Gaigals, Foreign Ministry State Secretary Maris Riekstins, and the Head of the Naturalization Board Ms. Eizenija Aldermane.

The High Commissioner was accompanying a team of experts from his office who were invited by the Chairman of the Saeima Commission on Education, Culture and Science, Mr. Dzintars Abikis, for consultations on the revised text of a draft language law. Earlier in the year, the High Commissioner had been asked to arrange for a group of experts to make detailed comments regarding draft language legislation in Latvia and ensure its full compliance with international standards.

During his visit to Riga, the High Commissioner discussed the latest developments relating to the proposed referendum on amendments to the Citizenship Law, (which were adopted by the Saeima on 22 June), to the abolition of the 'window' system as part of the naturalisation procedure, and to the proposal to grant citizenship to stateless children born in Latvia since the country regained independence in August 1991. In his discussions, the High Commissioner

said that he respected the constitutionality of the referendum and the right of the Latvian people to decide this issue. He expressed the hope that those voting in the referendum would base their decision on full information and awareness of the important issues at stake.

High Commissioner Welcomes Agreement between Ukraine and Uzbekistan

On 21 August the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr. Max van der Stoep, issued a statement in which he noted "with great satisfaction" the recent agreement between Ukraine and Uzbekistan on simplifying the procedures for the renunciation of Uzbek citizenship by the formerly deported people of Crimea, including the abolition of the fee formerly charged for executing the procedure.

He said that "this act represents another important step in promoting the process of reintegration of the formerly deported people and is an excellent example of the co-operation between the two Governments, UNHCR, IOM and OSCE."

REPORT from the Parliamentary Assembly

The Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is located at Rådhusstræde 1, DK-1455 Copenhagen K, Denmark, tel.: (+45-33) 32 94 00, fax: (+45-33) 32 55 05

PA President to speak at Inter-Parliamentary Union

The President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA), Ms Helle Degn, will address the 100th Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union that will take place in Moscow from 6 to 12 September. While in Moscow, Ms. Degn will have meetings with the Speaker of the Russian State Duma (Lower House), Mr. Gennady Seleznev, who is also a Vice-President of the OSCE PA, with the Speaker of the Council of Federation (Upper House), Mr. Yegor Stroevev, and with other senior Russian officials.

Election Monitoring

Senator Tana de Zulueta of Italy, Vice-President of the OSCE PA, will be the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to lead the OSCE short-term election observation mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 12 and 13 September and to deliver the post-election statement. The OSCE PA delegation to the Parliamentary and Presidential elections is composed of more than 20 parliamentarians representing Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Romania and Turkey. The delegation also includes members of the North Atlantic Assembly from France and Portugal and is accompanied by senior advisers, including representatives of the U.S. Helsinki Commission. The delegation will co-operate closely with a similar delegation of the Council of Europe PA. Prior to the elections Senator de Zulueta will hold talks with the Speaker of the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Adnan Jahić, the Foreign Minister, Mr. Jadranko Prlić, and Ambassador Robert L. Barry, Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ms. Helle Degn, President of the OSCE PA, will be the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office with the task of leading the OSCE short term election observation mission to the parliamentary elections in the Slovak Republic on 25 and 26 September and of delivering the post-election statement.

Tbilisi Parliamentary Seminar

The OSCE Parliamentary Seminar on Conflict Resolution and Democratic Development in the Caucasus will be held in Tbilisi (Georgia) on 5 and 6 October in conjunction with the Expanded Bureau Meeting to be held on 3 and 4 October. This will be the fourth OSCE parliamentary seminar designed to enhance OSCE involvement at the interparliamentary level by providing parliamentarians of the newly independent States with programs and activities which address political issues facing their regions. A parliamentary training seminar in Georgia in 1996 and a joint parliamentary training seminar in Vienna in 1997 were followed by a joint seminar in Tashkent for parliamentarians from Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The forthcoming Tbilisi seminar will focus on strengthening civil society and economic development in the Caucasus, the free flow of communications and legislative guarantees for the development of free elections, citizenship issues and guarantees for minority populations.

International Secretariat

The OSCE PA International Internship Program accepted its 50th intern this month. This highly successful program, which is now three years old, has included graduate

students from more than 15 OSCE participating States. The Internship Program provides the International Secretariat with a language capability in all official OSCE languages. It also provides a highly motivated and talented research team to the Assembly. At present, eight former OSCE PA interns are working in the field as election supervisors and observers and in other capacities during the run-up to the elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Jan Jooren of Holland, who already served the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly during its previous Annual Sessions, has now been seconded by the Dutch Government to the International Secretariat of the OSCE PA on a full-time basis as Counselor for Press and Public Affairs. Mr. Jooren previously served in senior positions in the Dutch Parliament and in the Prime Minister's Office.



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