

Activity Report

June 2008 – May 2009

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE
Economic and Environmental Activities

PUBLISHED BY

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Vienna, May 2009
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This is not a consensus document.

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DESIGN AND PRINTING

red hot 'n' cool, Vienna, Austria.
Produced on 100% wood-free paper
The printed matter is recyclable.

PHOTOS

All pictures unless indicated otherwise: OSCE

COVER

Front cover:

Tajikistan, Lake Iskanderkul (from OSCE Photo Competition 2007, Mikhail Romanyuk)

Back cover:

Woman in Azerbaijan (OSCE), Steel plant in Belgium (Wim Robberechts), Shoemaker in Serbia (OSCE)

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Introduction by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Dear readers,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you, for the first time in my capacity as Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (since December 2008) an overview of the activities undertaken in the OSCE second dimension between June 2008 and May 2009.

Having worked successively under the Finnish and Greek Chairmanships, my Office has pursued over the past twelve months its mandate of promoting a more effective co-operation between OSCE participating States to counteract threats and challenges to security and stability caused by economic and environmental factors.

To define priorities under this overarching objective, my Office elaborated Action Plans for 2008 and 2009 (SEC.GAL/37/08 and SEC.GAL/23/09/Rev.2), which helped us focus on those areas of activity, in which our added value could be the most significant.

Under the Finnish Chairmanship in 2008, the importance of maritime and inland waterways co-operation received special attention. This was reflected in the theme selected for the 16th Economic and Environmental Forum, entitled, *“Maritime and inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area: Increasing security and protecting the environment”*. The focus on maritime concerns also resulted in the adoption at the Ministerial Council meeting in Helsinki in December 2008 of the MC Decision on Follow-up to the 16th Economic and Environmental Forum: on Maritime and Inland Waterways Cooperation (MC.DEC/9/08).

In line with ongoing efforts to ensure more consistency, continuity and coherence of the OSCE’s work in the *Second Dimension*, the Finnish 2008 Chairmanship produced and circulated in October 2008 a food-for-thought paper on the future of our dimension. As a result, an informal working group of Delegates to the OSCE was established at the beginning of this year to exchange views and explore ideas on the possible future orientation of our work. This consultative process is expected to lead to a set of concrete recommendations later in 2009, which I would be pleased to discuss further and take on board.



Goran Svilanovic, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities. (OSCE/Mikhail Evstafiev)

My Office continued and expanded its participation in the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative. The Initiative, which is run in close co-operation with other international partners, has a portfolio of more than 50 projects. In line with the objective of highlighting the impact of environmental issues on security, ENVSEC partners continued project implementation in Eastern Europe, South Caucasus, and Central Asia and completed a new assessment in the Eastern Caspian region.

As a follow-up to the 16th Economic and Environmental Forum, my Office organized in Odesa, Ukraine, on 24-26 June 2008, together with the Finnish Chairmanship and the Government of Ukraine, an International Expert Conference on “Safety of Navigation and Environmental Security in a Transboundary Context in the Black Sea Basin”. Over 150 representatives of transport and environment ministries and maritime authorities from the Black Sea region, as well as from international and non-governmental organizations, identified specific recommendations for enhanced co-operation on the safety of navigation and environmental security in the Black Sea basin. The discussions focused, among others, on important issues such as oil pollution preparedness and response, combating the transfer of invasive species in ballast waters, search and rescue co-operation and river basin co-operation.

In 2008, my Office continued to work very closely with the OSCE’s Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. Helping Mediterranean countries strengthen capacity in their fight against the laundering of illegal proceeds and human trafficking, as well as improve their co-operation in prevention efforts was the goal of a regional meeting organized in Larnaca, Cyprus in September 2008. The two-day event, which was jointly organized by my Office, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, aimed at raising the awareness of Government officials from the Mediterranean region on international standards in building an effective system to fight the laundering of illegal proceeds and human trafficking and how to better co-ordinate the fight against both crimes.

In 2008 and 2009, my Office continued its transport-related activities, following the recommendations of the 14th Economic and Environmental Forum and the Brussels Ministerial *Decision on Future Transport Dialogue in the OSCE*. Activities were conducted in the areas of cross-border facilitation, the promotion of good governance in customs and the specific challenges of landlocked countries. In the spring of 2008, my Office started, jointly with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and in coordination with the OSCE’s Action against Terrorism and CPC Borders units, the development of a *Handbook on Best Practices at Borders*. The publication, upon its finalization in the course of 2009, is expected to become a reference document for our participating States, in particular the landlocked countries and their transit neighbours, when wanting to develop more efficient border and customs policies. A balanced approach, paying adequate attention to both trade and transport facilitation as well security facets of borders will be promoted in this publication.

Together with the Greek Chairmanship, my Office initiated the preparatory process for the 17th Economic and Environmental Forum on “*Migration management and its linkages with economic, social and environmental policies to the benefit of stability and security in the OSCE region*”. The first Preparatory Conference to the Forum was held in Prague in October 2008.

The first part of the 17th Economic and Environmental Forum, which took place in Vienna on 19-20 January 2009, allowed, at a more political level, a fruitful exchange of experiences and the identification of areas where the OSCE could reinforce existing co-operation processes. The second preparatory conference to the Forum took place in Tirana on 16-17 March 2009, devoting particular attention to linkages between migration management and economic, social and environmental policies.

Throughout the last twelve months, the OCEEA has continued to provide support to the economic and environmental activities of the OSCE's field presences. The most significant activities are described in this report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those, particularly the economic and environmental officers, both in my Office and in the field presences, without forgetting our generous donors, who have, in one way or another, contributed to the success of our activities in terms of promoting enhanced security and stability, economic and social well-being.



Goran Svilanovic

Current issues and recent developments in the Economic and Environmental Dimension

The work of the OSCE's Economic and Environmental Dimension (EED) continued to advance through the interaction and joint efforts of its main pillars: the Economic and Environmental Committee (EEC), the Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) process, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) and the Economic and Environmental Officers (EEOs) from the OSCE field operations.

The EEC continued to be a valuable tool for ensuring continuity and consistency in the EED activities by providing a framework for political dialogue among the 56 participating States, for regular reporting on the work done, for prioritizing future activities and for identifying potential threats to security and stability.

In accordance with its mandate, the OCEEA continued to provide working support to the activity of the EEC and its Chairpersons. The OCEEA also presented regular reports on its own activities. Activity reports included references and updated information about ongoing activities in various areas, including OSCE activities in the field, OCEEA staff participation in relevant international meetings and co-operation with other international organizations.

2.1. Main issues addressed during Economic and Environmental Committee meetings since June 2008

Ensuring an adequate follow-up to the 16th EEF under the Finnish Chairmanship, which focused on *"Maritime and inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area: Increasing security and protecting the environment"*, was a continuous theme of both the OCEEA and the EEC over the reporting period. The discussions in the

EEC helped to identify the most appropriate follow-up actions. Based on the input received through the EEC, the Chairmanship and the OCEEA continued to plan activities and contacts with partner organizations.

Within the EEC framework, a debriefing on the Second Part of the 16th EEF (19 – 21 May 2008) took place on 17 June 2008. On 15 July 2008, a detailed follow-up plan prepared by the OCEEA and the Finnish Chairmanship (SEC.GAL/111/08) was discussed more thoroughly. The EEC was kept informed with regard to the progress in implementing various follow-up activities and their conclusions and results, for example, activities such as the OSCE Chairmanship Conference on *"The Safety of Navigation and Environmental Security in a Transboundary Context in the Black Sea Basin"* (Odesa, Ukraine, 24-26 June 2008).

(For more details on follow-up activities to the 16th EEF, please see the specific Chapter.)

In the second half of 2008, the EEC was instrumental in discussing and negotiating a Decision that was subsequently adopted at the Helsinki Ministerial Council: the MC Decision on Follow-up to the 16th Economic and Environmental Forum: on Maritime and Inland Waterways Cooperation (MC.DEC/9/08).

A Draft MC Decision on the Role of the OSCE in Addressing the Security Implications of Climate Change (MC.DD/14/08) was also discussed but did in the end not generate consensus among the 56 OSCE participating States.

On 24 July 2008, the EEC was instrumental in the adoption of the Permanent Council Decision (PC.DEC/857) on the theme, format and organizational modalities of the 17th EEF under the Greek Chairmanship. According to this decision, the Forum would focus on *"Migra-*

tion management and its linkages with economic, social and environmental policies to the benefit of stability and security in the OSCE region". Two meetings of the Forum were scheduled to take place on 19-20 January 2009 in Vienna and on 18-20 May 2009 in Athens. Following this decision, the Greek Chairmanship and the OCEEA engaged in the preparatory process. The EEC continued to play an important part in the 16th EEF process, with this subject being discussed at virtually every EEC meeting.



Moroccan migrants working in the agricultural sector in Spain. (ANAPEC/Morocco)

Other areas of focus of the EEC over the reporting period included:

- A field presence perspective on OSCE Economic and Environmental activities presented by Mr. Robert Mangham, Economic, Environmental and Regional Officer, OSCE Presence in Albania (EEC meeting on 23 September 2008);
- The future orientation of the Economic and Environmental Dimension, based on a food-for-thought by the Finnish Chairmanship (CIO.GAL/153/08, discussed at the EEC meeting on 14 October 2008).

According to the established tradition, the last meeting of the EEC in 2008, on 15 December, was used to assess the results of the Ministerial Council and their implications for the EED as well as to review, discuss and evaluate the work of the past year and make suggestions for future improvements. At the first EEC meeting in 2009, on 27 January, Greece, the new Chairmanship, presented its priorities and introduced

the plan of work for 2009. On 24 February 2009, the Co-ordinator presented to the EEC the OCEEA Action Plan for 2009 and received useful feed-back.

2.2. Annual Co-ordination meeting of Economic and Environmental Officers, Vienna, 20-21 January 2009

As co-operation and co-ordination between the headquarters and the field are crucial for the effectiveness of EED activities, the OCEEA continued to strive to maintain a regular dialogue and information exchanges with the OSCE field presences over the reporting period. As part of this effort, the annual Co-ordination Meeting with the EEOs took place on 20-21 January 2009, in Vienna, back-to-back with the First Part of the 17th EEF (19-21 January 2009). The meeting, with participation of representatives of the Delegations to the OSCE in Vienna, was organized with the support of the Greek OSCE Chairmanship. It was opened by representatives of the OSCE Troika (Finland, Greece and Kazakhstan) and by Mr. Goran Svilanovic, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

During the Co-ordination Meeting, the EEOs had the opportunity to present their priorities. A number of new ideas and replicable projects were presented in greater detail.

The OCEEA also presented its Action Plan for 2009 and discussed it with the EEOs, with the aim to improving the co-ordination between Vienna and the field and identifying areas for joint activities.

The Meeting represented an opportunity for the Greek Chairmanship to present, at an early stage, its priorities, also focused on the preparatory process for the 17th EEF - "Migration management and its linkages with economic, social and environmental policies to the benefit of stability and security in the OSCE region".

Discussions mostly concentrated on: the summary conclusions of the first part of the Forum and next steps; ongoing preparations for the Second Preparatory Conference in Albania and the Forum in Athens; a planned seminar on gender-sensitive labour migration policies which was held in Brdo, Slovenia on 16-

17 February 2009; as well as a project on developing practical training materials on labour migration management, including through the holding of two regional seminars in Albania and Kyrgyzstan. The ideas collected during the meeting were further utilized along the Forum's preparatory process.

Various financial and administrative issues as well as requirements regarding project management and financing procedures on travel management and logistics were also raised.

Regional working groups focused on: Central Asia, South Caucasus, South-Eastern Europe and Eastern Europe. Three main thematic sessions were held for each regional group, covering economic issues, environmental issues and good governance, in particular anti-corruption, anti-money laundering and combating terrorist financing.

2.3. Ministerial and Permanent Council Decisions and Declarations on Issues of Relevance to the OSCE Economic and Environmental Dimension

The OCEEA assisted the Finnish OSCE Chairmanship during the negotiations leading to the adoption of the MC Decision on Follow-up to the 16th Economic and Environmental Forum: on Maritime and Inland Waterways Cooperation (MC.DEC/9/08).

Bearing in mind the importance of appropriate follow-up to the Economic and Environmental Fora and noting the recommendations of the Chairmanship follow-up conference held in Odesa in June 2008 the Ministerial Council Decision stipulates that the OSCE might make contributions in the field of maritime and inland waterways cooperation by, *inter alia* addressing the challenges and opportunities related to: maritime pollution, in particular oil pollution and the need to develop effective oil spill response capacities; combating the transfer of invasive species through ballast water; the transport of dangerous goods; emergency situations and the need for joint emergency responses; integrated river basin management; the development of efficient and secure multimodal transport corridors; the multifaceted aspects of maritime security, including supply chain security.

In this context, the Ministerial Council decided to, *inter alia*:

- Urge participating States to strengthen dialogue and co-operation regarding the security, environmental and economic aspects of maritime and inland waterways;
- Encourage participating States to consider becoming parties to relevant international legal instruments developed by the IMO and the UNECE, in particular the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships and its Annexes, the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships, the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, and decides to support the full implementation by participating States of their obligations under these instruments;
- Encourage participating States to develop efficient and secure multimodal transport corridors including efficient and secure border crossings in order to facilitate access to the sea for landlocked countries, taking into account the relevant provisions of the OSCE Border Security and Management Concept as well as the relevant OSCE commitments related to transport;
- Encourage participating States to apply and share best practices and technological solutions relevant to addressing security, environmental and economic challenges in the field of maritime and inland waterways co-operation;
- Urge participating States to promote good governance and transparency and invite them to include all institutions, including the business community, civil society and academia, in the policy debate on maritime and inland waterways co-operation where applicable, as well as to promote public-private partnership;
- Task the Secretariat with continuing, within existing resources, exploratory consultations with the IMO in order to define the scope and modalities for co-operation and with reporting to the Permanent Council by mid-2009 so that it can take appropriate decisions.

Follow-up to the 16th Economic and Environmental Forum



River Cijevna in Podgorica, Montenegro.
(Jovan Nikitovic)



Seaport in Poland.
(Maciej Tamkun)

The Sixteenth Economic and Environmental Forum cycle, focusing on “*Maritime and inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area: Increasing security and protecting the environment*”, concluded at the second part of the Forum which took place on 19-21 May 2008 in Prague.

The Forum reviewed the conclusions and main suggestions which emerged from the preparatory process and attempted, in a result-oriented manner, to identify general policy recommendations for the OSCE as well as concrete follow-up activities.

A more detailed description of the Forum’s outcome is presented in the Forum’s Consolidated Summary (EEF.GAL/10/08 of 12 June 2008) and in the List of ongoing and proposed follow-up activities to the 16th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum prepared by the OCEEA following the Prague meeting (SEC.GAL/111/08 of 13 June 2008), which were discussed in the framework of the Economic and Environmental Committee.

During the Forum, it was emphasized the OSCE should aim at bringing added value to existing efforts towards increased co-operation in the areas of maritime and inland waterways, by contributing to **strengthening and stimulating existing synergies** and using its

political leverage in this direction. Follow-up activities should in principle be developed in co-operation with relevant international and regional organizations. Among the key partners in these areas, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) plays a leading role with regard to a variety of maritime issues and it was recommended that the OSCE develop a partnership with the IMO in the maritime field. As far as inland waterways co-operation is concerned, as well as transport and transit issues related to landlocked countries, it was recommended that the partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) should be further strengthened.

The Forum also emphasized the importance of engaging in partnerships with other stakeholders, including business community, civil society, and academia. The OSCE should promote a **multi-stakeholder dialogue** and participation as an important element of good governance.

Maritime and transboundary waterways issues are most efficiently addressed by using a **regional and sub-regional approach**. The OSCE could strengthen co-operation with regional organizations such as HELCOM, the Black Sea Commission (BSC), Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Caspian Environmental Programme

(CEP) and other organizations from the Mediterranean or Adriatic Seas. The OSCE could also contribute towards the exchange of best practices between regions.

Concerning river basin co-operation and water management, the Forum indicated that addressing environmental challenges should be a priority and that **Central Asia should be a priority region** for the OSCE.

At national and local level, OSCE activities in addressing maritime and inland waterways security and environmental challenges would mainly consist of **capacity building and awareness raising**. The OSCE field presences would play an important role.

Climate change, its related environmental challenges and its security implications, has come up in many interventions during the Forum. The OSCE could continue addressing this issue bearing in mind its comprehensive security concept.

The 16th Economic and Environmental Forum emphasized that, based on the experience developed follow-

More specifically, the Forum's conclusions referred, *inter alia*, to:

- The need to enhance the political dialogue on issues related to the theme of the Forum and to pay due attention to the implementation of commitments, in particular to the effective implementation of relevant conventions, legal instruments, regulations and standards.
- The possibility of developing a co-operation with the IMO in the maritime field in areas such as: maritime environment protection; combating invasive species transfer; developing oil spill preparedness and response capacities, including the transfer of technology; security issues, in particular supply chain security; emergency response; the possible application in the OSCE region of the Marine Electronic Highway Concept, etc.
- The importance of the OSCE – UNECE co-operation on transport and trade facilitation and on inland waterways, as well as the possibility of developing it further to address challenges related to the transport of dangerous goods.

ing the 14th Economic Forum, the OSCE could play an important part in the regional dialogue on issues related to transport and transit among countries. The OSCE could support the enhancement of regional co-operation towards efficient multimodal transport corridors. It has been stressed that customs co-operation and border crossing facilitation should be supported by the OSCE. The OSCE should pay special attention to addressing the needs of landlocked countries, in particular in Central Asia.

In this connection, it was stated that the development of a **Handbook on Best Practices at Border Crossings** would be a natural consolidation and extension of the OSCE engagement to-date. The OCEEA, jointly with the UNECE Secretariat, made a project proposal (No. 1100727) to develop a handbook of best practices to assist the participating States, in particular the landlocked countries and their transit neighbours, in developing more efficient border and customs policies.



View over the Dniester River. The OCEEA and the UNECE Environment and Human Settlements Division supported a project to facilitate an agreement between the two riparian States to the Dniestr River - Ukraine and Moldova, including the Transdnestr region - on how to develop co-operation on integrated water resource management in the Dniestr River basin. (Valeriu Rusu/NGO Habitat)

As a direct follow-up to the 16th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, a Chairmanship **Conference on “The Safety of Navigation and Environmental Security in a Transboundary Context in the Black Sea Basin”**, was organized on **24-26 June 2008 in Odesa, Ukraine**. The Conference was organized by the Finnish OSCE Chairmanship, the Government of Ukraine and the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

The aim of the conference was to enhance co-operation in the Black Sea region, to facilitate the exchange of experience, identify current challenges, and contribute to integrating efforts towards a more effective implementation of international and regional conventions. Organizations such as the IMO, UNECE, BSC, BSEC, ICPDR, as well as private sector initiatives such as the Oil Spill Preparedness Regional Initiative (Caspian Sea – Black Sea – Central Eurasia) (OSPRI), actively contributed during the Conference's sessions.

The meeting was open for participants from other regions as well, in particular the Caspian Sea region, thus contributing to strengthening synergies and exchange of best practices as well as models of co-operation between regions.

The Conference discussed, *inter alia*, topics such as:

- Regionally harmonized systems for the organization of vessel traffic on maritime waterways;
- The impact of navigation on environmental security;
- Pollution from oil spills and other hazardous substances;
- Combating the risk of invasive species carried in ballast water;
- Search and rescue regional co-operation;
- Waste management facilities;
- River basin co-operation.

The Odesa Conference highlighted that the growing transportation flows between Europe and Asia would increase environmental pressures on the Black Sea basin's through oil spills and other contaminations, the introduction of invasive species through ships' ballast water, coastal transformation linked to the development of port infrastructure, air pollution, etc. In order to reduce pollution in the Black Sea, which is linked to both marine and river navigation, environmental safety improvements are necessary. The right approach should allow achieving a proper balance between economic needs and environmental sustainability.

Activities addressing a number of these challenges are already ongoing in the region but participants con-



OSCE Conference in Odesa.

curred that they were not always sufficient or effective enough. A number of regional experiences of transboundary co-operation already exist. However there is a need to further promote co-operation and coordination among the countries in the region. This should be done at both expert and political level, between local and international actors, and between various stakeholders, *inter alia* between civil and military authorities, between public authorities, the business sector and the marine industry, as well as with NGOs, research and academic communities. Co-operation with neighbouring regions should also be strengthened.

Furthermore, the important role of sound international and regional legal instruments was stressed. Participating States and the OSCE should support their signing, ratification and effective implementation.

The Odesa Conference emphasized that the OSCE should support the existing processes and co-operation initiatives when needed and act as a catalyst for further co-operation. The OSCE can contribute to raising awareness at political level regarding the challenges and possible solutions. The OSCE could also, in partnership with relevant organizations, contribute to an effective delivery of capacity building programmes for the region.

Participants also emphasized that in order to achieve improvements, funding and international assistance for project implementation are of key importance.

The Consolidated Summary of the Odesa Conference was circulated under the reference number C/O. GAL/124/08 and includes detailed reports of the discussions and recommendations.

The 17th Economic and Environmental Forum



According to the Permanent Council Decision (PC DEC/857 of 24 July 2008) “*Migration management and its linkages with economic, social and environmental policies to the benefit of stability and security in the OSCE region*” was selected as the theme of the 17th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum under the Greek Chairmanship.

Following the adoption of this decision, the OCEEA in close co-operation with the incoming Greek Chairmanship for 2009 initiated the preparatory process. During the reporting period the following meetings were organized:

- The first preparatory Conference (16-17 October 2008, Prague)
- The first part of the Forum (19-20 January 2009, Vienna)
- The second preparatory Conference (16-17 March, Tirana)

Each of these meetings brought together experts and policy makers from OSCE participating States, Partners for Co-operation, international and regional organizations, the business community, academia and non-governmental organizations, as well as OSCE field presences, to analyze and discuss issues related to

the Forum’s theme across the OSCE region. For each meeting, the OCEEA in consultation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Chairmanship prepared substantial “background papers” that were circulated to the delegations and participants (SEC.GAL/184/08 for the Prague Conference; EEFGAL/3/09/Rev.1 for the Vienna Forum; and SEC.GAL/35/09 for the Tirana Conference).



Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, OSCE Secretary General (on the right) and Goran Svilanovic, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, at the Economic and Environmental Forum in Vienna, 19 January 2009. (OSCE/Mikhail Evstafiev)

The Forum process provided an opportunity for a vivid exchange of views and ideas and contributed to the formulation of valuable recommendations. The debates as well as the outcome of each meeting are reflected in the Consolidated Summaries (SEC.GAL/216/08 for the Prague Conference; EEFGAL/4/09 for the Vienna Forum; and SEC.GAL/46/09 for the Tirana Conference).

All the recommendations emerging from the above-mentioned meetings were analyzed by the OCEEA, together with the Greek Chairmanship as well as the participating States, in the framework of the Economic and Environmental Committee. These discussions paved the way for the preparations of the second part of the 17th Economic and Environmental Forum, which will take place on 18-20 May 2009 in Athens.

The Athens Forum, according to the respective PC Decision, will also review the implementation of OSCE commitments related to migration. The review session will benefit from substantial input from ILO, which has been asked to prepare a report for that purpose.

The Athens Forum Agenda (EEF.GAL/5/09) proposes the following topics for discussion:

- Managing migration in a changing global environment
- Gender and labour migration policies
- Enhancing the development impact of migration
- Addressing the environmental factors of migration
- Strengthening regional and interstate co-operation in the area of migration management for the benefit of stability and security

The Athens Forum is expected to generate recommendations concerning the possible OSCE contribution and future activities in the area of migration. It should initiate a dynamic follow-up process.

The first preparatory Conference (16-17 October 2008, Prague)

The first preparatory Conference to the 17th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum gathered over 180 participants, official representatives from OSCE participating States, International and Non-Governmental Organizations, the Business Community and the Academic Community, as well as OSCE field presences and OSCE Secretariat and Institutions.

The Prague Conference confirmed the relevance of the Forum's theme, brought a wealth of information on the topics under discussion, thus contributing to defining more clearly the possible role of the OSCE in the area of migration.

Some of the key preliminary conclusions of the Conference were the following:

Migration is a global phenomenon, becoming increasingly complex, and has differing impacts on various

The Conference's sessions were dedicated to the following topics:

- Migration context and trends in the OSCE region
- Management of legal migration
- Protection of migrants in countries of origin, transit and destination, including gender aspects
- Circular migration and return policies
- Border management co-operation to facilitate labour mobility and combat illegal migration
- Combating criminal networks, smuggling of migrants and trafficking of human beings
- Prospects for closer interstate and regional co-operation to develop comprehensive, effective and secure migration management approaches



Participants listening to a presentation in the first preparatory Conference in Prague. (OSCE/Martina Gadotti)

countries and regions. Therefore, effective migration management can only be sustained through partnerships and co-operation between destination, transit and origin countries, both bilaterally as well as at the regional and international levels. The OSCE could in particular help in stimulating political will as it is well placed to provide a platform for continued dialogue on how to strengthen co-operation towards effective migration policies and practices.

In order to develop coherent and effective migration policy approaches, consultations and exchanges of information and views between countries should be facilitated. Governments should also consider consulting the private sector, among other things, on improving the link between labour market needs and migration policy. Furthermore, the dialogue and co-operation

between governmental and civil society actors should be enhanced across the region.

The need for high quality statistics and their subsequent analysis was highlighted as an essential tool for informed and good policy making as well as policy impact assessment. The OSCE could serve as a platform for promoting the desirability of better migration information and raising political will to improve and strengthen current data collection practices.

The OSCE could promote a wider ratification of migration related international and regional legal instruments and support their effective implementation.

With regard to facilitating legal migration and improving legal migration channels, the issue of regulating the work of recruitment agencies was comprehensively discussed. The need for enhanced co-operation between labour and employment agencies - public and private, national and foreign – was emphasized.

It was repeatedly stressed that special attention should be paid to providing migrants and potential migrants with adequate information on legal migration channels, requirements, and other support services, i.e. through the establishment of migrants' information centres, pre-departure orientation and labour attachés.

Recent developments on circular migration policies were also discussed. The OSCE could be instrumental in facilitating the sharing of experience concerning the development and implementation of circular migration programmes in its region. It can also promote good practice exchange in regional and bilateral labour agreements.

Illegal activities such as trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants perpetrated by criminal networks should be firmly countered. Increased co-operation is needed in this field and in particular in areas such as: effective management of borders; inter-agency co-operation; inter-governmental co-operation; and joint cross-border investigation teams. The Integrated Border Management concept could be promoted as an effective border management tool. The OSCE should continue its engagement in this area.

The protection of the human rights of migrants, especially for the most vulnerable groups such as children, women and undocumented migrants, should be prioritized in the overall migration management process.

The issues of environmentally-induced migration and the need for more research in this area were also mentioned during the Prague Conference. The OSCE could contribute to awareness-raising of environmentally induced migration, its possible stability and security impacts and further research needs in its region.

Discussions also touched upon the close link between development and migration. The root causes of migration need to be tackled together by origin and destination countries, namely through the promotion of economic growth and good governance, employment creation, eradication of poverty and protection of human rights.

The first part of the Forum (19-20 January 2009, Vienna)



The first part of the 17th Economic and Environmental Forum took place in Vienna. (OSCE/Martina Gadotti)

The Forum meeting in Vienna focussed on the following issues:

- Prerequisites for effective migration policies
- Interstate co-operation for temporary labour migration
- Facilitation of legal migration
- Combating criminal networks involved in smuggling of migrants and illegal migration
- Regional co-operation towards a comprehensive approach to migration

The first part of the 17th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum built upon the conclusions of the Prague preparatory conference.

Over 250 participants attended the Forum and actively engaged in discussions. The main objective of the Forum was to contribute in defining a consensus on what the OSCE's role should be and to identifying follow-up areas in which the Organization could be engaged. In that connection, a number of recommendations for possible OSCE involvement were formulated.

The Forum reconfirmed the relevance of discussing the topic of migration, in particular given the current global economic situation, and indicated that the OSCE can bring added value in this field. In general, the OSCE contribution could consist in supporting and facilitating capacity building activities, as well as initiatives that could further strengthen regional and sub-regional co-operation in the area of migration management.

The OSCE, together with partner organizations, could provide assistance to participating States for more effective migration policy implementation. A good example is the new IOM-OSCE project on *“Development of Practical Training Material on Labour Migration Management”*. This project builds upon existing experiences, namely the OSCE-IOM-ILO Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies.

The need for capacity building on issues such as pre-departure training, recognition of foreign qualifications, twinning arrangements between employment agencies, portability of pensions and reintegration assistance was emphasized. Also, the continued support for migrants'

information centres in various countries was evaluated as highly important. Such centres could further expand the range of services they provide to migrants while also focusing on aspects of gender and migration. At the regional level, networking between migrants' information centres and labour and employment agencies will need to be facilitated.

Further to these recommendations, participants discussed the issue of data harmonization, which proves essential for the formulation of migration policies. In this regards, the OSCE and IOM explored future fields of co-operation in assisting participating States.



In the course of the Vienna conference, participants enjoyed the Special Event: Presentation of the Maps on Migration (from the *“Atlas des Migrations”* co-edited by La Vie - Le Monde), followed by a discussion.

Participants urged for encouraged and further improved synergy between destination, transit and origin countries to develop more flexible, coherent and comprehensive migration management policies.

As for the role of the OSCE in this respect, experts see its capacity to facilitate the sharing of experience on temporary labour migration programmes, including return and reintegration as well as integration aspects. The OSCE could provide a platform for countries to exchange information and knowledge on actions and changes needed in their regulatory framework to make circular migration programmes work effectively.

In addition, the OSCE could provide a platform for further discussion among its participating States and Partners for Co-operation on how to tackle smuggling of migrants by criminal networks utilizing the Organization's comprehensive security approach. The importance of effective management of borders and inter-agency as well as inter-governmental co-operation was emphasized. The links between the smuggling of migrants and money-laundering activities should also be further explored.

In the area of remittances, it was suggested that the OSCE could facilitate information exchange between governments on how to create better conditions and services. The OSCE could also facilitate capacity building and legislative reforms in the area of better utilization of remittances. In particular, activities improving financial literacy of migrants and their family members, focusing on women, should be considered.

Being aware of the current economic situation, the link between migration and economic development was emphasized. The OSCE should raise awareness, try to mitigate the possible negative consequences of the economic downturn and help improve the capture of the positive effects of migration and remittances in origin countries.

The Forum also highlighted the need for further research and analysis of the impact of environmental degradation and climate change on the phenomenon of migration. Based on the results, appropriate policy responses will be developed and implemented in close co-operation with other relevant organizations.

The second preparatory Conference (16-17 March 2009, Tirana)

Complementing as well as building upon the previous meetings of the 17th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum process, the Conference in Tirana addressed the linkages between migration management and economic, social and environmental policies.

The Tirana Conference brought together over 180 participants, with different backgrounds and affiliations, who engaged in a stimulating discussion.



The Greek Chairmanship opens the 2nd preparatory Conference in Tirana.

Many recommendations for further consideration by the OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee and the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum were put forward:

In Tirana it was emphasized that, in these times of the global financial and economic crisis, short term responses to economic difficulties should be shaped in a way that does not contradict the medium and long-term agenda. Migration has been and will remain an important engine for economic development of both origin and destination countries. Therefore the OSCE will continue to develop policies and institutional reforms that improve economic development and cre-

It paid particular attention to and focussed on the following topics:

- Migration and economic development
- Social policy issues linked with migration management
- Environment and migration

ate employment opportunities. Within its scope of work, the OSCE will also continue to strengthen bilateral and regional co-operation on economic and migration related issues.



Luca Barbone, Director, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management, Europe and Central Asia Region, World Bank, speaking at the 2nd preparatory Conference for the 17th Economic and Environmental Forum, Tirana, 16-17 March 2009. (OSCE/Agim Dobi)

Another important aspect highlighted in Tirana was the need to develop mechanisms to make the transfer of remittances easier and cheaper.

Due attention also needs to be paid to the protection of most vulnerable groups, such as through preventive measures against discrimination. Differential treatment and polarizing national preferences against migrants may encourage xenophobic hostility and violence that then become serious challenges to security and stability. The issue of social cost of migration, in particular on the “left-behind” was also highlighted.

With regard to migration and environment, it was stressed that the OSCE could act as a facilitator of regional, sub-regional and international co-operation. The OSCE could also raise awareness concerning the future impact of climate change and environmental degradation on migration in the context of regional security. In order to enable governments to design adequate policy responses based on solid scientific evidence we could further support research and data gathering on environmentally induced migration.

Promoting Good Governance

In many transition countries, weak governance represents one of the biggest hurdles for sustainable economic development. This deters domestic and foreign investment and causes the mismanagement of public resources. Promoting good governance is therefore essential, if States want to reduce poverty and inequality and increase social integration. The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities has received a strong mandate from OSCE participating States to get involved in the promotion of good governance. Based on OSCE Ministerial and PC Decisions as well as on the Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension, the OCEEA focuses its activities in the area of good governance on the fight against corruption, the laundering of the illegal proceeds of crime, the financing of terrorism, as well as organized crime. All activities in the area of good governance take place in close co-operation with partner organizations, such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, the Council of Europe and others.

5.1. Activities aimed at Promoting Transparency and Combating Corruption

The OSCE, and in particular the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA), received a strong mandate from OSCE participating States to engage in the fight against corruption. The Organization's activities are focused on the promotion of the efficient management of public resources, especially at the municipal level, as well as on the promotion of public participation.

Albania – Promotion of Transparency and Good Governance Practices

Over the past year, the OSCE Presence in Albania has actively supported the Government in fighting corruption by increasing the capacity of national actors and by promoting transparency and good governance practices. Among other things, the OSCE Presence supported the Government in drafting its Anti-Corruption Strategy. A major conference on local government efforts to fight corruption was also held in order to ensure that national priorities were reflected in local planning. In addition, the OSCE Presence continued to support the High Inspectorate for the Declaration of Assets and Audit through the training of 400 officials from local Government, tax, customs, education and health directorates, as well as three property agencies on the respective legal framework.

Azerbaijan – Enhancing Citizens' Awareness of Real Property Rights

In order to help citizens protect their ownership rights and facilitate lawful transactions of real estate, the OSCE Office in Baku produced an informative guidebook on the State registration system. The guidebook provides information on different procedures and rights of land acquired through a commercial transaction, privatization, inheritance or court decision. It also includes information on related service fees, locations and contact details of relevant institutions, as well as templates and related legal statutes.

Azerbaijan – Combating Corruption on the Grassroots Level

The OSCE Office in Baku actively supports Azerbaijan's "Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs)" in Sheki and Guba and their grassroots approach to fight corruption through the delivery free legal counselling and workshops to citizens. The Centres are also lobbying for good governance. The performance of the Office's implementing partner, the Azerbaijani chapter of Transparency International, in running the ALACs received recognition from the corporate level of Transparency International: the organization held its international ALAC workshops in Azerbaijan in 2008, using the Guba centre as a study tour destination. The anti-corruption work done over the years with Transparency International and national authorities is bearing fruit by giving impetus to

In the spotlight: Albania

Joint programme: OSCE Field Presence and Council of Europe are fostering municipalities in Albania

In the context of Albania's decentralisation process, the Government in Tirana has made considerable efforts in promoting good governance and democratic practices at the local level. By aiming at further strengthening respective policies, a joint programme, entitled "*Local Government Leadership Benchmark Programme*", was implemented by the OSCE Field Presence and the Council of Europe. The Programme was implemented in five pilot municipalities and was targeted at mayors and administration staff. It was meant to help the local



Citizens participating in community development planning in Permet, Albania.

administration be more engaged in the development of individual community plans. A final assessment of the programme took place

during a conference in Tirana, which was held in October 2008. The conference concluded that the joint programme had proven to be an important catalyst in the fostering effective municipalities' leadership, strategic management of public services and in increasing citizens' participation. Following the successful example and steered by guidelines that were published in the course of the pilot period, the project continued in 2009 with three of the initial municipalities focusing on performance management and budgetary planning mechanisms.



ALAC workshop in Azerbaijan (Transparency International Azerbaijani Chapter).

wider civic action against corruption in Azerbaijan: Baku university students campaigning against bribes in winter 2008 provided a visible example of this development.

Georgia – Efforts to Strengthen National Anti-Corruption Policies

The OSCE Mission to Georgia throughout 2008 continued to support the project "*Monitoring Georgia's*

Implementation of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Anti-Corruption Network Recommendations" since 2007, in order to promote transparency and combat corruption. The project was implemented by Transparency International (TI) Georgia and focused on monitoring compliance of the Georgian authorities with 14 out of 21 recommendations by the OECD to the Georgian authorities. The project resulted in an alternative report on the Georgian Government's efforts to fulfil the recommendations that was provided to the OECD Anti-Corruption Network as well as to more than 2,000 recipients of TI Georgia's mailing list.

Furthermore, the OSCE Mission to Georgia has supported a project to monitor aid flows to Georgia made at a Donor Coordination Conference on Georgia that took place in Brussels in October 2008. The project was implemented by TI Georgia. The project's purpose was to directly map and monitor aid flows, provide the general public with accessible and comprehensible information of aid allocation and implementation, and build a popular foundation for advocacy efforts.

In the spotlight: Bosnia and Herzegovina Activities aimed at Increasing Transparency

Code of Ethics for Elected

Officials. The Mission supported municipalities in introducing a Code of Ethics for elected representatives as a central tool in increasing government accountability and building public confidence. During the reporting period, five municipalities established boards of ethics to adjudicate complaints and to ensure compliance by elected officials with ethical norms. In order to increase citizens' awareness of how to use the Code of Ethics, municipalities conducted 80 information campaigns and 54 surveys to measure the level of public understanding of the Code. A total of 74 municipalities have now adopted a Code of Ethics and met criteria laid down in this module of the Mission's UGOVOR (Contract) programme.

Realistic and transparent budgeting.

The Mission assisted 32 municipalities to establish transpar-

ent, realistic and revenue-based municipal budgets. Fifty eight municipalities adopted internal documents requiring public consultation on the budget, including the obligation to provide responses to all proposals received.

Supporting sound budgeting in schools.

In order to remedy the potential capacity gap of school directors in budgetary issues, a working group was convened at the Mission's initiative to develop a "*Financial Guide for School Directors*", no such training materials or guidance existed before. The guide will deal with budgeting basics, financial reporting, monitoring and evaluation.

Increasing school board transparency.

School board members



A group of school board trainers at the concluding State-level conference in Bosnia.

are often selected and appointed on the basis of political criteria. In order to support transparent and operationally independent school boards, the OSCE Mission piloted a training programme in Zenica-Doboj Canton, with the support of the Cantonal Ministry of Education. Twenty-five trainers were trained, who in turn held 36 workshops. The programme will be extended to other parts of the country in 2009.

Kazakhstan - Training of Journalists in the Caspian Sea region

The OSCE Centre in Astana, together with the Soros Foundation and the non-governmental organization Centre for Budget Analysis and Economic Monitoring, organized a two-day training in the Caspian Sea region on the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) in Kazakhstan.

More than twenty participants took part in the training, including journalists and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The exercise helped to promote transparency and government accountability, intensified public debates on revenues from the extractive sectors and provided a platform for co-operation between civil society and mass media representatives on transparency regarding oil and gas revenues.

Kyrgyzstan - Improving Transparency Processes

The level of transparency in the budgetary process of the Kyrgyz Republic remains an important issue for the Government. In order to enhance and support the Government's efforts, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek in partnership with a consortium of donors, provided training to local government representatives on how to conduct public hearings for citizens, allowing them to comment and provide input to ongoing budgetary processes. In addition, the Centre worked closely with the Kyrgyz National Agency on Corruption Prevention on budget transparency and transparency in land distribution issues in the South of the country. By introducing relevant concepts for institutions of higher education, the OSCE Centre also played an important role in guaranteeing active input from students and

educational experts to the public debate on budgetary issues.

Montenegro – Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of Anti-Corruption Actors

In the anti-corruption field, the Economic and Environmental Programme of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro conducted a number of activities designed to enhance the institutional capacity of Montenegrin institutions, particularly the Government's "Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative". The project "*Raising awareness of the fight against corruption in Montenegro*" was successfully completed. It enabled the institution to improve its public relations and increase the visibility of anti-corruption activities. Following this project, the Economic and Environmental Programme designed and implemented two more activities: the "*Anti-Corruption Handbook Development*" and "*Promotion and Training in Anti-Corruption Handbook Implementation*". The first of these two projects produced a document of procedural instructions for handling reports of corruption reports. Following the adoption of this document a training programme was organized for the Police and Anti-Corruption Directorates.

Serbia – Promoting Transparency in Public Procurement and Fighting Corruption at Local Level

The OSCE Mission to Serbia supports the efforts of the Serbian authorities from the largest municipalities - Belgrade, Novi Sad and Nis - to implement a centralised procurement model. This centralized mechanism aims at enhancing efficiency and transparency in the purchasing of goods and services. In April 2009, the Mission supported a study-visit for representatives dealing with public procurement from the above mentioned municipalities to the Austrian Federal Procurement Corporation established by the Austrian Ministry of Finance. The visit improved participants' knowledge on how normative procedures and management solutions can be implemented. The Mission also supported the design and rollout of a procurement management IT system for the Public Procurement Agency of Belgrade.

The OSCE Mission continued its support for the Anti-corruption Centre from the Lebane, Bojnik and

Medvedja municipalities in southern Serbia. The Centre provided technical assistance to the anti-corruption advisory bodies of these three municipalities, which manage public funds. The Centre held several public debates aired on local television with representatives of institutions that are involved in fighting corruption, such as the Prosecutor's Office, Police and Judiciary. At the closing event of the project, there was an exhibition of cartoons and slogans related to the fight against corruption prepared by citizens.

5.2. Activities aimed at assisting legislative development and promoting the implementation of international standards

The OSCE continued promoting the implementation of key international anti-corruption instruments, above all the UN Convention against Corruption, adopted in 2003 and in force since 2005. Activities in this area are conducted in close co-operation with partner organizations. To this end, the Office of the Co-ordinator has established close working relationships with the key international players in the anti-corruption field: OECD, UNODC, the Council of Europe, IGAC (the International Group for Anti-Corruption Co-ordination), as well as leading anti-corruption NGOs such as Transparency International.

Central Asia Workshop on Asset Seizure

In July 2008, the OSCE, in co-operation with UNODC, organized in Almaty, Kazakhstan, a three-day workshop on confiscating criminal assets, combating the laundering of illegal proceeds and international mutual legal assistance. The workshop was jointly organized by the Strategic Police Matters Unit, the OCEEA, the OSCE Centre in Astana and the Organized Crime Section of the Division of Treaty Affairs of the UNODC. The event was set up in response to Permanent Council Decision No. 810, which calls upon participating States to develop effective central authorities to receive, execute and transmit requests for mutual legal assistance, as foreseen by Article 18 of the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC). Decision No. 810 also tasked the Secretary General to ensure the implementation of the relevant parts of Ministerial Decisions Nos. 3/05 and 5/06, in particular through

efforts to support implementation of the UNTOC, in co-operation and co-ordination with UNODC.

The purpose of the regional workshop was to facilitate capacity building of the national criminal justice systems in Central Asia. The primary goal was to improve national and international legal co-operation and information exchange between the investigative agencies and central authorities. The workshop focused on enhancing the co-operation between the authorities from Central Asian countries and other source and destination countries involved in the laundering of illegal proceeds and the financial manipulation of proceeds from crime. Participants were experts who were directly involved in criminal justice co-operation to combat the laundering of illegal proceeds or who dealt with the identification, freezing, seizure and return of the proceeds of crime.



Corruption is a stumbling block on the way to democracy and progress. It can jeopardize the success of long-term initiatives in any area of development. (OSCE/Kamran Bagirov)

Seventh General Meeting of the Anti-Corruption Network

The OSCE Mission to Georgia, in co-operation with the OECD, the OCEEA, the American Bar Association's Rule of Law Initiative and USAID, jointly organized the 7th General meeting of the OECD Anti-Corruption Network (ACN) in June 2008 in Tbilisi. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange information on anti-corruption activities, to elaborate best practices and promote donor coordination among organizations working on anti-corruption issues. It brought together 110 representatives of governments, NGOs and businesses from more than 30 countries. At the Conference, a high-level Georgian delegation present-

ed recent efforts to reform Georgia's public administration, fighting corruption and liberalising the national economy. A special meeting of donor representatives provided an opportunity for bilateral and multilateral assistance agencies and international organizations to share their views on the anti-corruption priorities for the region and planned activities.

Armenia – Simplification of Regulatory Regimes

During the reporting period, the OSCE Office in Yerevan attached significant importance to the removing of administrative barriers for the implementation of tax and custom related procedures. These processes and regimes are considered by almost two thirds of small and medium companies as key obstacles in doing business in Armenia and are seen as highly vulnerable to corruption. Comprised of representatives of Government policy making agencies, international actors and business associations, the expert working group developed a comprehensive legislative package with the goal to simplify tax regimes for SMEs. After the adoption of the legal acts, the OSCE assisted in the development and publication of a simplified explanatory guide, which was disseminated during a country-wide information campaign. This initiative across the regions of Armenia was based on the OSCE's collaboration with the "SME Development National Centre", the Armenian Network of Anti-corruption Reception Centres and was also facilitated by the OSCE Programme Implementation Presence in Syunik. Moreover, amendments to existing legislation were drafted and accepted by the Government of Armenia. The OSCE Office will stay closely involved and continue providing a platform for public debates on the proposals and respective trainings in remote regions of Armenia.

Belarus – Combating Cybercrime

In November 2008, the OSCE Office in Minsk jointly with the Ministry of the Interior organized a seminar on the fight against cybercrime. The event gathered international and national experts as well as key institutions. Based on the standards laid down in the Council of Europe's *Convention on Cybercrime*, participants examined the existing Belarusian legislation as well as the possible scope for increasing international co-operation in this respect.

Kazakhstan - Assistance in the Enforcement of Key Legislations

Following an official request by the Government of Kazakhstan to assist in strengthening their anti-corruption and anti-money laundering legislation, the OSCE Centre in Astana presented relevant best practices and attracted independent national legal experts to review and assess the draft law on the fight against corruption and shadow economy in the light of legislative examples provided by European countries. The reports were reviewed by representatives of the private sector and NGOs. As a result, most of the project's suggestions were introduced into the final version of the draft law. The amended law was then presented to the national Parliament and adopted shortly before the end of 2008.

Montenegro – Follow-up Activities in the Fight against Illegal Logging

Illegal logging was identified as one of the biggest threats for sustainable forestry in Montenegro and possible legal countermeasures have been at the centre of OSCE attention in recent years. The project “*Protect Montenegrin Forests*”, which started in 2007, included the signing of a Memorandum of Co-operation among the main national institutions. Over the reporting period, the OSCE Mission to Montenegro initialized several follow-up workshops and a number of inter-agency meetings at both the national and regional levels.

Serbia – Combating Cybercrime

In February 2009, the Mission in Serbia, in close co-operation with the Ministry of the Interior, the Council of Europe and other partners, organized a national seminar aimed at strengthening national capacity in the fight against cybercrime. The event brought together leading international experts and institutions. The event placed a particular focus on helping Serbia implement the Council of Europe's *Convention on Cybercrime*.

Uzbekistan - Supporting the Reform of the Law on Agriculture

In 2009, the Uzbek Committee for Agriculture, Water Management and Environment of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Management of the Republic of Uzbekistan, strive towards strengthening the agricultural sector within the country's economy. As a reaction to this endeavour, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan has initiated



Woman selling agricultural products in Uzbekistan.

a project aiming at supporting the reform of the Law on Agriculture and promoting a focused strategy process for agricultural development. This process is envisaged over two years and supported by renowned national and international experts. Topics of discussion and elaboration will be the improvement of competitiveness of the agricultural sector, the enhancement of the quality of life in rural areas and the encouragement of diversification of the rural economy.

Uzbekistan - Annual Publication of the Drug Bulletin for Central Asia

Further to an extra-budgetary contribution of the US, around 2,500 copies of the Information Bulletin on the Drug Situation in Central Asia were published each year from 2005 to 2008. Supported by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan, this publication was prepared by the National Centre on Drug Control under the Cabinet of Ministers of Uzbekistan and was based on official information received from the national centres on drug control in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The bulletin was distributed free of charge to relevant international and national institutions.

5.3 Activities aimed at combating the laundering of illegal proceeds of crime and the financing of terrorism

The OSCE is actively involved in combating the laundering of the illegal proceeds of crime and the financing of terrorism. Measures to combat both phenomena play a key role in the Organization's efforts to promote economic development, good governance and the rule of law in all 56 OSCE participating States. The Organiza-

In the spotlight: Uzbekistan

Close Collaboration with a local NGO in the Enhancement of National Legislative Processes

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan is actively involved in strengthening the country's economic development by supporting transparent legal procedures and good governance. In this context, since January 2009, the OSCE, together with the Ministry of Justice and the Uzbek NGO "Legal Problems Research Centre" has supported the drafting of a commentary to the first part of the Civil Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan. This key legislation has not been revised or commented on since its adoption in 1997. Therefore, by including a new commentary, Uzbekistan benefits from a profound interpretation of norms and regulations, which regulate activities of legal entities in market relations and in particular those concerning property rights. This will stimulate investment and support the country's economic development. Under the umbrella of

this project, two conferences with international experts are planned for 2009. During these conferences, best practice examples regarding the design of "commentaries" to national legislation from across the OSCE region will be exchanged.

Another successful example of the OSCE's close collaboration with the local NGO Legal Problems Research Centres is demonstrated in a project finalized by the end of 2008. Starting in 2007, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator's Office in Uzbekistan supported national efforts to establish arbitration courts as alternatives to commercial dispute resolutions. In association with the NGO, the OSCE offered legislative and information



OSCE Ambassador Istvan Venczel attends an arbitration session at the Arbitration Centre in Tashkent. (OSCE/Oleg Zaichenko)

assistance to the newly established arbitration courts in Tashkent. By doing so, the legal protection system of entrepreneurs and the country's investment climate were enhanced. In the course of the project, fourteen seminars were conducted and several consultations on the establishment of these courts, as well as on the implementation of the Law on Arbitration were held.

tion's activities are aimed at implementing the main international instruments in the field, i.e. the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) 40 + 9 Recommendations, the UN Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the UN International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, the UN Convention against Corruption as well as others. Activities have been implemented in close co-operation with UNODC's Global Programme Against Money Laundering (GPML), the Council of Europe, the World Bank as well as other international partners.

Joint OSCE-UNODC Meeting on Fighting the Laundering of Illegal Proceeds and Human Trafficking in the Mediterranean Region

Helping Mediterranean countries strengthen their fight against the laundering of illegal proceeds of crime and

human trafficking and improve their co-operation in prevention efforts was the goal of a meeting held in Larnaca, Cyprus, in September 2008. The two-day event was jointly organized by the OSCE, the UNODC and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. The meeting aimed to inform Government officials from the Mediterranean region on international standards in building an effective system to fight the laundering of illegal proceeds and human trafficking and how to better co-ordinate the fight against both crimes. The meeting, the first of its kind, aimed at help countries implement best international practices to protect their populations, meet their international obligations and improve regional and international co-operation. More than 100 officials and experts from over 20 countries in the Mediterranean region took part in the meeting. Experts from international organizations such as the Council of Europe, the European Commission, Europol, the International



Rescue operation in the Mediterranean Region.
(Darrin Zammit Lupi)

Organization on Migration and the International Chamber of Commerce, as well as State agencies, institutes and universities from Cyprus, France, Switzerland and the United States took part in the conference.

Regional Training for Judges on Combating the Laundering of Illegal Proceeds

In July 2008, the OSCE in co-operation with the Global Programme Against Money Laundering (GPML) of the UNODC organized in Vienna a regional workshop on Combating the Laundering of Illegal Proceeds of Crime. Participants of the event were judges from Central and Eastern Europe, who have a role in asset forfeiture actions in anti-money laundering cases. The workshop aimed at providing participants with a sound understanding of the key legal and practical issues relating to the adjudication of cases; explaining the international legal context in which national legislation has been developed; providing an introduction to and practical advice on the application of laws, which allow for the seizure and confiscation of proceeds of crime. The workshop also allowed for an in-depth exchange of experience with international experts and judges from other countries.

International Seminar on Combating Terrorist Financing

In October 2008, the OSCE in co-operation with the Financial Integrity Network (FIN) and the Council of Europe jointly organized a three-day international seminar on combating terrorist financing for investigators, prosecutors and other officials from OSCE countries in

Key notes: Joint OSCE-UNODC Meeting

„Individual countries cannot fight the double threats of money laundering and human trafficking alone,“ said the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities. He also added: *“Criminal groups thrive on evading detection by moving from country to country, playing the various agencies against each other. This requires co-ordinated actions by financial intelligence units and law enforcement agencies of the countries concerned.”*

“Effective anti-trafficking policies need to address factors such as the demand for cheap, socially unprotected labour and sexual exploitation. They also must focus on the economic costs of trafficking and disrupt the traffickers to create an environment where trafficking is less likely to happen in the first place”, said a representative of the Office of the Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

Davos, Switzerland. The seminar constituted a follow-up to the International Seminar held in Giessbach in October 2007 in co-operation with FIN and the Council of Europe, which looked into the challenges of combating terrorist financing and cybercrime. The aim of the 2008 seminar was to provide a platform for an in-depth exchange of experience and to increase international co-operation. The seminar addressed, in particular, the link between combating terrorist financing and human rights. More than 100 officials and experts from more than 20 countries in the OSCE region took part in the meeting. Experts from international organizations such as the Council of Europe, the IMF and the OSCE, as well as heads of Financial Intelligence Units and other senior officials took part in the meeting.

OSCE as an observer to the Council of Europe’s Moneyval Committee

In 2008, the OSCE became an observer to the Council of Europe’s Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures (MONEYVAL). The two organizations have already co-operated closely in the past and are committed to further deepen their co-operation and co-ordination.

Kazakhstan - Establishment of an Implementation Task Force

The OSCE Field Presence in Kazakhstan continued its partnership with the Ministry of Finance and the World Bank in helping to facilitate the introduction of efficient practices against the laundering of the illegal proceeds of crime and to establish a framework for combating the financing of terrorism. Respective activities resulted in several recommendations regarding the establishment of an Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Implementing Task Force and strengthened inter-agency co-operation. Furthermore, in September 2008, the OSCE Centre in Astana organized a two-day roundtable on amendments to the AML/CFT draft law, which is expected to be adopted by the Parliament of Kazakhstan in 2009.

Serbia – New Law on Combating the Laundering of Illegal Proceeds and the Financing of Terrorism

In March 2009, Serbia adopted a new Law on the Prevention of the Laundering of Illegal Proceeds and the Financing of Terrorism, which introduced, for the first time, measures to prevent the financing of terrorism. The OSCE Mission to Serbia contributed to the implementation of the new legislation by providing training on the new requirements and procedures for those who are tasked with its implementation. The training, which was held in April 2009, was attended by high-level representatives from the Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering and the Tax Administration within the Ministry of Finance as well as representatives of the National Bank of Serbia.

Serbia – Investigating and Prosecuting Financial Crimes

Serbian authorities are striving to enhance the professional capacities of institutions in combating financial crimes. The OSCE Mission supported the Government's efforts for more effective investigation and prosecution of economic crimes, which include the laundering of illegal proceeds, tax evasion and fraud. Jointly with the Ministry of Finance and the judiciary, and with the support of the Italian Financial Police, the Mission developed a comprehensive training programme tailored to the needs of each institution. It also helped authorities to facilitate exchanges between international experts and their Serbian counterparts.

Montenegro – Capacity Building of the Financial Intelligence Unit

The OSCE Mission to Montenegro implemented a comprehensive project called “*Capacity Building of the Financial Intelligence Unit*”. Financed by Germany and the USA, the project implemented a series of training seminars organized between October 2008 and January 2009. These events included four national workshops and two round tables and covered a wide range of issues such as international best practice sharing, the role of national institutions and the banking sector (including reporting entities, regulators, monitors and law enforcement agencies), as well as the need to enhance inter-agency as well as international co-operation. The project also aimed at facilitating the Montenegrin actors' discussions on AML/CFT issues, including the development of risk analysis and suspicious transaction indicators list. The latter resulted in the amendment of the forms used by reporting entities.

Uzbekistan - Improving Tax Control

In order to assist the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan in its enhancement of systems of identification, interception and prevention of tax evasion, the OSCE together with the UNDP designed a project aimed at providing support for the development of a more effective legal and normative framework. This would allow the introduction of a risk assessment system, a unified data base and a tax returns processing centre. The project followed a participatory approach involving the various institutions involved, such as the State Tax Committee, the private sector and various relevant international organizations, like the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation. In the context of this project, the OSCE supported three round table discussions, the recruitment of an international expert on risk assessments, three training seminars for State Tax Committee representatives in Turkey as well as a study tour to examine the distance control system in the Czech Republic.

Economic Activities

6.1. Migration activities

The size and composition of migration flows within and into the OSCE area have changed considerably in recent years. In 2005, when the theme of migration was discussed during the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum process, the countries of the OSCE were home to about 115 million migrants, representing 9.5 percent of the population of OSCE countries. Intra-OSCE migration has been very important in CIS and South-Eastern European countries.

The last years have seen an increase in international migration which is mainly due to globalization and reduced barriers to movements as well as different economic, social, demographic and environmental factors between regions. Migration has brought with it many benefits such as employment, investments, remittances and skills and knowledge transfers, but also some challenges in the form of irregular migration and associated criminal activities such as migrant smuggling and human trafficking as well as social tension. Irregular migration is partly caused by insufficient legal channels to accommodate labour market needs for both skilled and less skilled migrant workers.

The Economic and Environmental Dimension has promoted a comprehensive and coherent approach to effectively manage migration and in particular labour migration. It has facilitated regional information exchange, dialogue, co-operation and capacity building in areas related to economic and environmental migration among the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

The work is based on the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and guided by the Ministerial Decision on Migration No. 2/05 and the Ministerial Statement on Migration No. 6/06.

6.1.1. Regional co-operation in the area of migration management

The OCEEA has since 2005 promoted a comprehensive approach to migration management and interstate and regional co-operation as a way to promote legal migration and reduce irregular migration including associated criminal activities through organization of a number of regional events. The 17th Economic and Environmental Forum process and the ILO Review of OSCE Commitment in the area of Migration (in 2009) have allowed the OSCE to further strengthen its co-operation and exchange of information and activities in this field.

OSCE provides a unique platform for policy dialogue on migration management and security issues as there is no other one that incorporates all OSCE participating States.

6.1.2. Capacity building and training

OCEEA – Training materials on Labour Migration Management

The joint OSCE-IOM project on Developing Training Materials on Labour Migration Management is a response to a need for developing stronger institutional capacity among governments, social partners and other relevant practitioners to formulate labour migration policies that ensure safer, more humane and orderly labour movements as well as decent work conditions for migrant workers. The need for capacity building has also been a reoccurring issue during the OSCE 17th Economic and Environmental Forum process dealing with migration management under the OSCE Greek Chairmanship. The project is a follow-up to the Handbooks on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies. It is an inter-organizational project also including the ILO, the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

Under the project, eleven training modules will be developed that can be used together or separately

depending on the training requirements. The training methodology is highly interactive and modules are being designed for field use. The modules are on issues such as international legal frameworks for the protection of migrant workers; migration and development; foreign employment; admission policies; social cohesion, return and reintegration; irregular labour migration; and international co-operation.

Two regional training of trainers workshops are planned in 2009 to be held in Albania and Kyrgyzstan. The training manual is being produced in Arabic, English and Russian.



Vienna Expert Meeting on Training Materials, 21 April 2009.

Georgia – Helping the Government in its Response to Environmentally Induced Migration

Environmental degradation in Georgia has become increasingly evident during last years. Since the early 1980's, tens of thousands of people have become homeless as a result of flooding, landslides and mudflows.

For assessing the preparedness of Georgia to deal with natural disasters and their induced migration effects, the OSCE Mission to Georgia supported the development of a report assessing the preparedness of the country to tackle natural disasters and their induced migration effects and assisted in collecting information on people who already migrated due to natural disasters. Through the assessment, a number of recommendations were developed.

Tajikistan – Co-operative Approach in Fostering Migration Management

Since 2004, the OSCE Office in Tajikistan has co-operated with the Dushanbe office of the International Organization for Migration in operating a network of information centres for potential labour migrants. These centres provide clients with information on immigration, registration and working requirements in the Russian Federation, which is, besides Kazakhstan, the preferred destination country for the overwhelming majority of Tajik migrants. In co-operation with Tojikkhoriyakor, the State Foreign Employment Service, the centres help migrants to identify job opportunities in Russian companies, cities and regions that are interested in obtaining Tajik workers. The objective of the work of OSCE and IOM is to help the Tajik Government reduce the number of migrants who go abroad and work illegally, often finding themselves subject to police action and deportation. In 2008, the OSCE Office also funded two migration information centres in the Khatlon Region of southern Tajikistan.

Kyrgyzstan – Network of Labour Migration Centres

In order to curb the flow of illegal migration, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek continued to support a network of Labour Migration Centres across the country that provide legal job placements in Russia and Kazakhstan.

Kyrgyzstan – Research on Remittances

The Government's policies target towards domestic employment creation for youth and vulnerable population groups living in economically depressed areas,



Workers at a coal mine in Min-Kush, Kyrgyzstan. (William Daniels)

such as former uranium mining towns. The OSCE Centre in Bishkek, being aware of the important role of migrant remittances, is assisting the Government by supporting research on remittances to better understand the development of domestic investment opportunities for migrants and their families.

6.1.3. Sharing of best practices and information

OCEEA – Awareness raising of Gender-sensitive labour migration policies

Feminisation of labour migration has been observed in recent years in many OSCE countries.

Female migrant workers are becoming important actors in contributing to economic growth and welfare both in the destination countries and, through their remittances, in their home countries. They take up both skilled and less-skilled employment in destination countries. They generally work in feminised employment sectors such as domestic services, healthcare and social services, as well as seasonal agricultural and hospitality work. Especially those who work in care and domestic services are often unprotected by labour legislation and policies related to health and social security, lending them vulnerable to exploitation and rights abuses. Others are pushed into irregular employment in the informal sector due to the lack of sufficient legal migration channels in their area of employment.

To increase political awareness of these issues among the OSCE participating States, the OCEEA in partnership with the Gender Issues and Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings developed a joint project on Raising Awareness of the Need for Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies. The project provides a wide political platform for dialogue and exchange of experience and good practices in order to bring about faster gender mainstreaming in national labour migration policies. A Seminar on Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies was organized with the assistance of the Government of Slovenia in Brdo, in February 2009. It gathered 80 senior Government officials, representatives of workers' and employers' organizations and migrant associations.

At the 17th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum in Athens, 18-20 May 2009, the Guide on Gender-sensitive labour migration policies will be launched. The findings and recommendations of the Guide will also be presented to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and used in future related work by the three partners for awareness raising and capacity building.

OCEEA – Compendium on Temporary Bilateral Labour Arrangement

Bilateral labour arrangements can help to utilize the development potential of temporary migration, assure temporariness of labour migration, support return and reintegration as well as reduce irregular migration.

By request of the Brussels Global Forum and Development (GFMD), the IOM, the ILO and the OSCE assisted the Governments of Morocco and Spain to prepare a Compendium on good policy practices in bilateral temporary labour arrangements for the Manila GFMD meeting in October 2008. The Compendium provides a compilation of good policy practices and lessons learnt on designing effective bilateral labour agreements for interested Governments.

OCEEA – Handbook on Labour Migration Management

The OCEEA continued to promote the dissemination and use of the OSCE-IOM-ILO Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies in the OSCE area and among the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.



Handbook on Labour Migration Management. (OSCE/IOM/ILO)

6.1.4 Combating criminal activities related to smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings

Illegal migration including criminal activities related to smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings are of concern to the OSCE participating States as they carry both human and national security risks and implications. The OSCE participating States have committed themselves to fight illegal migration. Part of the 17th EEF discussions on effective migration management has also focused on how to combat illegal activities such as smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings. Apart from stressing the importance of providing sufficient legal migration channels, the meetings have also called for increased co-operation in the fields of border management, law enforcement, inter-governmental and inter-agency co-operation and combating money-laundering activities related to illegal migration.

Albania - Women's Economic Empowerment

The OSCE Presence in Albania is currently implementing a joint OCEEA/ODIHR project on "Combating Human Trafficking through Economic Empowerment and Protection Measures". One component of the project focuses on women's economic empowerment and sustainable livelihoods. The aim is to improve economic opportunities for vulnerable groups in northern Albania. Under the project, a local implementing partner is providing business support and access to micro-loans to about forty female entrepreneurs in disadvantaged situations. The loans are available in both rural and urban areas. Economic empowerment not only boosts their financial independence and self esteem but also renders them - and their families - less susceptible to the risks posed by trafficking.

Bosnia-Herzegovina – Research on internal trafficking of human beings

In response to the changing trend in trafficking of human beings, the OSCE Mission commissioned a research into the phenomenon of internal trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The most frequent risk factors turn out to be: poverty, ignorance and parents losing control over their children. Recommendations from the research are expected to serve as a basis for the

formulation of policies, in which all actors involved in prevention and protection of local victims of trafficking will play a role. The Mission will also continue to support the efforts of both governmental actors as well as civil society organizations, by monitoring the referral mechanism for victims of trafficking.

6.2. Investment and business development

Consistent with its mandate, the OCEEA supports economic empowerment and the development of attractive investment and business climates as means to create economic opportunities and to strengthen democratic and market principle in countries of transition. In particular in these times of the global financial and economic crisis, these activities gain even more importance.



Women selling fabrics in Uzbekistan.

Although the depth and extent of the global financial crisis cannot be fully predicted at this stage and it affects OSCE participating States at different levels and in different intensities, the crisis is expected to lead to a considerable downswing in the global economy. Among the group of most aggrieved victims of deteriorating economies are migrant workers. As highlighted in the course of this year's 17th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum process, migrants particularly face exacerbated problems, such as higher risk of job losses, reduction in wages and they are likely to be forced to return to countries of origin. Some other consequences might be the decline in remittances flows and the adoption of more restrictive immigration policies.

The OCEEA is working closely with field presences to build upon past experiences and to target future challenges by designing and implementing projects, which aim at strengthening local capacities in an effort to promote the sustainability of economies.

Investment and Competitiveness Initiative for Central Asia

In co-operation with the OECD, the OCEEA organized a ministerial-level conference that launched the “*Investment and Competitiveness Initiative for Central Asia*”. The initiative seeks to attract investment, improve the business climate and enhance competitiveness in Central Asia, Afghanistan and Mongolia. The Conference was hosted by the German Ministry of Economics and Technology and took place in Berlin in November 2008.



Participants at the Conference in Berlin which launched the “*Investment and Competitiveness Initiative for Central Asia*”.

The conference gathered around 60 participants including ministers, State secretaries and other high-level officials from all Central Asian countries, Afghanistan and Mongolia. The participants presented their investment policy priorities and discussed the Investment and Competitiveness Initiative developed by the OECD and OSCE.

As a result of the conference, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and Tajikistan agreed to a Concluding Statement that launched the Initiative, while Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan expressed interest in the theme and may join later. Under the Initiative, regional working groups will be established on priority issues for the participating countries. The working groups are based on the following themes: investment policy and promotion; access to finance and impact of the financial crisis;

human capital and technology; as well as infrastructure and transportation. One-two working groups are expected to start already in 2009. They will allow countries to exchange experiences, conduct peer reviews and develop recommendations to address common policy issues. The Initiative is a multi-year project lead by the OECD. The OSCE and its field presences will continue to assist if needed the OECD and the participating countries in the implementation of the Initiative.

Albania – Forwarding the Property Reform

The OSCE Presence in Albania is currently implementing an immovable property registration project along the country’s Ionian Sea coast. Since 1991, property ownership of this area with great economic potential has become highly disputed, causing significant strife and thus preventing the development of the area’s tourist potential. The aim of the property registration is to provide the legal status of immovable property so that a clear title of ownership can be issued. Clearly, this title is a pre-requisite for long term sustainable economic development in the area. The registration process, which aims at including more than 70,000 properties, also provides a mechanism through which property disputes can be resolved.



Property disputes undermine sustainable development of the Ionian coastline.

Armenia – Advancing Better Regulation

The Office implemented a project entitled “Building capacities for regulatory reforms – support to the introduction of regulatory impact assessment” to study advanced techniques of regulatory impact assessment and measurement of administrative burdens for domestic and international investors.

The Office also provided expertise to a Task Force that assists regulatory policy makers in designing

In the spotlight: Armenia Assistance in the Mitigation of Negative Impacts of the Global Financial Crisis

In January 2009, an ad-hoc intergovernmental “Anti-crisis Task Force” was established under the auspices of Prime-minister of Armenia. The OSCE Office in Yerevan, in conjunction with the SME Development National Centre, developed an Action Plan to assist this Task Force.

As a first step the OSCE Office supported on 6 March 2009 a high level conference that focused on Armenian and Russian perspectives on the global financial crisis. The Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, Ambassador Sergey Kapinos, in his presentation, emphasised the impact of the crisis on the private sector.



Ambassador Kapinos, Head of OSCE Office in Yerevan, makes a presentation at the conference on the global financial crisis.

In the current global financial crisis, supportive activities for Armenia’s SME sector in Syunik province gain crucial importance. The OSCE Pres-

ence together with local mining companies conducted a study to explore the opportunities of potential involvement and development of local SMEs in the production and supply of goods for the mining industry. In addition, in order to promote its long term sustainability, possibilities of connecting economic activities in surrounding villages to the industry were also assessed. Based on the results of this assessment the OSCE Office will organize SME Support Programmes, which will include technical trainings and vocational education for most vulnerable professions.

policy papers, conducting international negotiations and advising on regulatory simplifications for business in Armenia. In addition, the OSCE Office in Armenia supported the development of the “Concept Note and Action Plan on Armenia’s perspectives to become a regional centre of excellence for doing business”, which was consequently adopted by the Government in the third quarter of 2008.

Armenia – Working for a Competition-enabling Environment

In the framework of its activities aimed at supporting the development of a sound private sector and boosting small and medium entrepreneurship, the OSCE Office assists the Armenian Government in its competition policies, paying particular attention to strengthening the capacities of the “State Commission for Promotion of Economic Competition”.

The OSCE contracted an international expert to make a comprehensive assessment of competition related policies, structures and practices in Armenia. The resulting “Policy Paper” provides possibilities to ensure the more effective implementation of the Law

on competition. In April 2009, as a first follow-up to the “Policy Paper”, the OSCE organized a training for representatives of the State Commission and the business community on competition policies and regulations.

Armenia – Assisting Start-up Entrepreneurs

The OSCE Office’s Presence in Syunik province initiated the “Start-up Entrepreneurs Support Programme” in Kapan, a pilot project seeking to identify viable business ideas and supporting the establishment and further development of new businesses. Considering the role and strategic importance of the SME sector for the country’s economic growth, the establishment of new enterprises in the region is of crucial importance. In the course of the OSCE programme, start-up entrepreneurs are provided with technical assistance and financial resources. Business loans are facilitated through the “SME Loan Guarantee” of Armenia’s “SME Development National Centre”. As a direct result of the programme, seven local businesses have been registered and started their activities.

In the spotlight: Belarus

Promotion of Youth Entrepreneurship and the overall Business Environment

In order to further improve the investment climate in Belarus, the OSCE Office in Minsk, in partnership with the International Finance Corporation, organized a seminar on lowering administrative barriers for businesses. The reduction of these barriers is considered conducive to an improved business and entrepreneurship environment. Experienced key experts from the Balkans contributed to a fruitful event, during which best practices of countries with economies in transition were exchanged. The OSCE Office, together with the Minsk Forum,

also organized a seminar on foreign investment for foreign investors and national experts.

Starting in 2008 and in partnership with the “Slavgorod Fund”, the OSCE Office in Minsk initiated a project aimed at improving the livelihood of the young population in the region affected by the nuclear accident in Chernobyl. The Programme focuses at the promotion of youth entrepreneurship in rural areas and was created by local experts, family businesses and Belarusian local administration.



The OSCE Head of Office and the OSCE Economic and Environment Programme Manager visit a farm in Slavgorod district in which the OSCE promotes agro-business development.

Azerbaijan – Supporting Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

Contributing to the State policy of diversifying the economic basis of the country and promoting economic growth in regions outside the capital's metropolitan area, the OSCE Office in Baku supported SMEs in Azerbaijan's northern Economic Zone of Guba-Khachmaz and the southern Economic Zone of

Lenkoran. Based on previous needs assessment and in co-operation with regional partners, the Office provided consultancy services in the fields of production, marketing and financing of SMEs. For that purpose, the Office organized a regional workshop for private businesses from southern Azerbaijan. In addition, SMEs from both Economic Zones were addressed directly through fifteen outreach training sessions. All events combined, the Office managed to provide assistance to more than 400 representatives of private entities. The events provided a platform for dialogue between the private sector and relevant State institutions, regional authorities and state-sponsored support funds.



Employers interact with potential employees at a job fair organized by the OSCE and local partners in Zvornik, Bosnia.

Azerbaijan – Facilitating Donor Co-ordination

A donor co-ordination round table organized by the OSCE Office in Baku in December 2008 brought together international organizations that are active in the field of improving the business and investment climate in Azerbaijan. The purpose of the donor co-ordination round table was to share information on current and future projects. The meeting provided an opportunity for participants to identify possible overlaps and examine the possibility for inter-agency collaboration.

Participants represented major organizations such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the German Development Corporation (GTZ), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The event was also attended by the Ministry of Economic Development.

Bosnia and Herzegovina – Supporting Youth Entrepreneurship

The OSCE Mission organized several “Youth Job Information Fairs” in partnership with regional development agencies, municipalities, local businesses, employment bureaus and youth NGOs. The fairs provided information about vacant positions and advised on how to successfully apply for these, for example through trainings on writing CVs, job research techniques or interviewing skills. During the reporting period, 13,500 young people visited twelve fairs, in which 350 private and public companies participated as exhibitors and offered 7,800 work placements. As a result, 800 young people found employment. Another OSCE activity under the framework of the promotion of youth entrepreneurship was a three-day intensive training seminar in the course of which interested youth learned about how to best put business plans into practice. The 32 intensive trainings were attended by 370 young entrepreneurs and led to the establishment of 35 new businesses.

Georgia - Supporting Small and Medium Business Development in Gali Region

The OSCE Mission to Georgia financially supported the “Business Consulting Centre” in Gali Region, Abkhazia. The aim of the project was to build private business capacities in the region, to stimulate the establishment and development of local businesses and to promote the creation of employment opportunities for the local population. The project targeted youth, start-ups, small and medium businesses and farmers. In the framework of the project, intensive trainings were provided to more than 100 people in business planning, financial management, accounting and marketing. The trainings helped selected participants to enhance business skills, to start-up new businesses or to expand on existing ones. Apart from the training, the Business Consulting Centre provided on-job coaching to local farmers and businesses on how to manage projects in the most efficient manner.

Georgia - Regional Student Consulting Programme

The OSCE Mission to Georgia, in co-operation with the USAID SME Support Project, financed the “Regional Student Consulting Programme” in Samtskhe Javakhet. The overall objective of the project was to enhance skills and capacities of start-ups and entrepreneurs for the development of a functioning SME market in Georgia. A so-called “Business Development Centre (BDC)” has been established. The Centre provides local entrepreneurs, farmers and business oriented youth with consulting services. It also assists with topics such as marketing, financial management, business plan elaboration and writing of project proposals. Furthermore, the Business Development Centre created a Business Information Database for farmers and local entrepreneurs.

Kyrgyzstan - Promotion of Investment Opportunities

Improving the investment climate is a priority for the Kyrgyz Government and crucial for the country’s further economic development. The OSCE Centre in Bishkek works closely with central and regional Governmental authorities to increase their capacity in the promotion of investment opportunities. Among other activities, the Centre provided trainings for Government authorities and assistance in the development of information resources. Consequently, so-called “Investment Consultancy Centres” were opened in four villages in the



Youth entrepreneurship in Kyrgyzstan.

South of the country and a regional investment fair was conducted in Osh. The OSCE Centre also helped to establish small businesses along the new Osh - Batken bypass and the Osh - Sary Tash road within the framework of a road infrastructure development project.

Montenegro – Reducing Business Barriers at Municipal Level

Aiming at the establishment of so-called “Citizens’ Service Centres (CSC)” in selected municipalities, the Economic and Environmental Programme of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro initiated a series of projects in co-operation with the municipal authorities and other national institutions. The overall objective of this initiative, which is still in progress, is to render municipal procedures and requirements for the registering and starting up of business activities in a more streamlined, transparent and efficient manner. By reducing potential business barriers at municipal level, the Centres also favour an overall better environment for investment and employment.

Montenegro – Promoting the OSCE’s Best-Practice Guide for a Positive Business and Investment Climate

In order to advance the development of SMEs, the Economic and Environmental Programme of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro provided for the publication and the translation of the OSCE’s “Best-Practice Guide for a Positive Business and Investment Climate” into Montenegrin. The project also foresees the organization of three promotional events and the distribution of the Guide to the target population. These essential follow-up activities which will be carried out in co-ordination with the Montenegrin counterparts, the “Agency for the Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises” and the Montenegrin Employers Federation, are expected to be completed by May 2009.

Serbia - Supporting Youth Initiatives to Start Small and Medium Businesses

The OSCE Mission to Serbia supported a training programme for some 100 graduate students from technical faculties of Universities on how to start their own businesses. The students improved their skills in businesses decision making processes and in developing business plans. Training on developing business plans

included presentations on market analysis, managing a team and operative aspects of business.

Tajikistan - Improving Investment and Business Climate

The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities assisted the OSCE Office in Dushanbe and the Ministry for Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan to organize a “Seminar on Creating an Attractive Investment and Business Climate” in Dushanbe on 23-24 September 2008. The Seminar was designed to facilitate exchange of good practices and policies between policy-makers, practitioners, private sector representatives and international experts from other transition economies. The OSCE Best-Practice Guide for a Positive Business and Investment Climate was used as a discussion base.



Alexey Stukalo, OCEEA Deputy Co-ordinator (on the left), participates in the seminar in Dushanbe.

The Seminar was attended by senior representatives of Tajik Governmental and financial institutions dealing with investment and business development including the Ministries of Economy and Trade, Foreign Affairs and Agriculture. Members of Parliament as well as business representatives and representatives of foreign investors associations and international organizations (FAO and IFC) also took part in the event. Furthermore, a delegation of Government and private sector representatives of Afghanistan participated.

A significant part of the Seminar was devoted to investment incentives, special economic zones and developing cross-border trade. Particular attention was given to the free economic zone that is planned for Gorno-Badakhshon to support cross-border trade between Tajikistan

and Afghanistan. Moreover, the Seminar examined the ways of creating favourable conditions for investment in agribusiness and improving food security.

Turkmenistan – Workshop on Market Competition and Commercial Policies

For the purpose of supporting Turkmenistan's efforts to join multilateral trade institutions and strengthening movements towards a more liberal consumer policy and market competition, the OSCE Centre in Ashgabad provided training on trade negotiations.

A dozen of participants from the Ministry of Trade and Foreign Economic Relations, the Ministry of Economy and Development, the Ministry of Finance, the Chamber of Commerce and the Industry of Turkmenistan as well as representatives from the private sector participated in the workshop. They discussed issues related

to the development of a competitive market, the importance of transparency in industry regulations and the development of anti-monopoly policies. The training also addressed practical issues such as the drafting of commercial agreements. It also promoted fair competition while safeguarding consumer interests.

Uzbekistan – Working for SME Development and Entrepreneurship for Women

The project on Small and medium enterprise development was set up by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan with the aim of increasing, through the organization of a series of capacity-building seminars, the number of women entrepreneurs and their skills. The project was implemented in close co-operation with the Business Women's Association of Uzbekistan, which developed a training handbook and trained around 60 trainers in Bukhara and Karshi.

In the spotlight: Tajikistan Network of Resource and Training Centres

Since 2006 the OSCE Office in Tajikistan has developed a network of Resource and Training Centres for Small and Agricultural Businesses in order to provide legal, tax and banking advice for local business people and future entrepreneurs. The network consists now of ten centres scattered all over the country.

Success story from the Tajik Resource and Training Centre

The story of Bunafsha, an unemployed single mother of seven in Kulob, a city in the Khatlon Region, is a typical example of the benefits of the project. Along with sixteen other women living in poverty, she approached the local Resource and Training Centre for Small and Agricultural Business, where the group received the information and



legal advice they needed to start up their own business. As a result, the women managed to get four hectares of irrigated land from the State authorities and commenced their joint agricultural venture in

September 2008. Now that they have successfully started their agricultural activities, the Resource and Training Centre continues to provide them with technical advice on farming related issues.

Uzbekistan - Supporting Farming Development



Woman on a market in Tashkent.

Since many years, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan is actively involved in improving the socio-economic development and helping the Government to create employment in rural areas. In partnership with the Farmer's Association of Uzbekistan around 450 farmers have been trained since 2007. The training curriculum comprises of a business development module, but also pays attention to environmentally-friendly business methods and agro-technology know-how. Co-operation in the framework of this project continued in 2008 with advanced capacity-building on financing and credit schemes, taxation and the efficient and environmental-friendly use of chemicals in agriculture. In addition, training round tables for almost 250 farmers were held in seven regions. This programme will be continued and strengthened in 2009 with a focus on the establishment of three pilot information centres in Ferghana, Karshi and Urgench.

Uzbekistan - Developing Eco-tourism

Together with its implementing partner, the Tourism Development Centre "Ziyorat", the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan strived to engage economically inactive communities in remote areas of Uzbekistan and trained them on how to generate additional revenue through developing eco-tourism. The project, which started in 2007 and was concluded towards the

In the spotlight: Turkmenistan Trainings for Students and Professionals

The OSCE Centre in Turkmenistan encourages the promotion of business and investments in the country by reaching out to future entrepreneurs. Focusing on different economic sectors, it organized several issue-specific trainings for students in universities.

In this respect, the OSCE organized a workshop designed at addressing issues related to the development of agribusiness for the Agricultural University in Ashgabad. The train-

ing covered a wide range of issues, including how to professionally assess: the market potential and the market prices, consumer preferences, competitor behaviour, product development and supplier needs. It also provided impetus to the development of SMEs and disseminated knowledge and skills on how to conduct market studies.

Another seminar was held for students from Turkmenistan's Banking College. Aimed at discussing the

promotion of Turkmenistan's financial sector reform and the establishment of modern financial institutions, the training was also attended by professionals from the Central Bank, the Ministry of Finance and the Institute for Strategic Planning. It addressed the valuation of equity investments, provided an overview of stock market development in Central Asia and stimulated a discussion on challenges to the development of market economy structures.

end of 2008, was carried out in the districts of Tashkent Province. During the project's implementation phase, potential tourist sites and facilities as well as existing transport networks for possible tourism development were assessed and identified. In order to train local population in the operation of eco-tourist businesses, seminars and workshops were organized and attended by nearly 240 interested participants. Upon the finalisation of the project, the implementing partner Ziyorat published a promotion catalogue of tourist sites in the Tashkent Province.

6.3. Transit transport development and border crossing facilitation

Under the 2006 Belgian Chairmanship, the OSCE's economic and environmental dimension focused its work on *Transportation in the OSCE area: Secure transportation, networks and transport development to enhance regional economic co-operation and stability*. At the annual OSCE Ministerial Council in Brussels (2006), the OSCE participating States adopted Decision No. 11/06 on the *Future Transport Dialogue in the OSCE*. Based on this document, the OCEEA has implemented, in the course of 2008 and 2009 various activities aimed at facilitating transit transportation and legitimate cross-border trade across the OSCE region.

Activities in support of the implementation of the UN Almaty Programme of Action

The OSCE's active support for the implementation of the UN *Almaty Programme of Action (APA): Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New global Framework for Transit Transport Co-operation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries* in the region goes back to December 2006 when the OSCE participating States adopted a **Ministerial Council Decision on the Future Transport Dialogue in the OSCE**. In addition to developing and implementing a number of very practical projects such as capacity-building and training activities, the OCEEA has also been lending its political support to the APA provisions.

In this regard, on 1-3 October 2008, in New York, the Senior Economic Adviser represented the OCEEA at



A checkpoint leading to a new Tajik border customs terminal, near a bridge over the river Piandj on the Tajik-Afghan border.

the high-level plenary meeting on the **midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action** which was held in the framework of the UN General Assembly. The OSCE's intervention focused on the role the OSCE can play in intensifying regional dialogue and co-operation to help its landlocked countries to overcome transit transportation challenges.

On 2 March 2009, in Geneva, the Co-ordinator attended the **Fifth Inter-Agency Consultative Meeting on Accelerating the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action: follow-up to the mid-term review** jointly organized by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) and the UNECE. The Co-ordinator gave a detailed presentation on the OCEEA's planned contributions towards accelerating the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in the OSCE region in 2009 and beyond.

Further to providing political support, the OCEEA has also been involved in capacity-building and training activities: On 16-17 March 2009, the OCEEA together with the OSCE Centre in Astana, the UNECE Transport Division and the Customs Committee of Kazakhstan held in Astana a **National Seminar on Improving the Implementation of International Legal Instruments to Facilitate Cross-border Trade and Transport Operations**. The seminar brought together some 50 representatives of customs departments from Kazakhstan's regions, international experts, including from the UN, the World Customs Organization (WCO) and private sector representatives. Seminar participants

discussed, among others: Kazakhstan's recent completion of preparatory work to accede to the WCO's Revised Kyoto Convention, measures to facilitate railway border crossings along the Euro-Asian transport corridors, and benchmarking and performance measurements at border crossings, as well as risk management systems and the potential of advanced public-private partnerships.

On 5-6 May 2009, in Astana, the OCEEA together with the OSCE Centre, the WCO and the Customs Committee of Kazakhstan organized a **Seminar on Strategic Anti-corruption Methods in the Customs Field: Sharing International Best Practices**. The meeting gathered around 90 national participants, including the



A view of Astana looking towards the Presidential Palace.

heads of relevant departments of the territorial divisions of the customs service and several representatives of

The Almaty Programme of Action: Unlocking Growth and Development

At their Ministerial Council meeting in Brussels in December 2006, OSCE participating States agreed to support the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in the OSCE area, the first United Nations endorsed global document addressing the needs of developing countries with no coastlines.

In doing so, the Ministerial Council also encouraged the Secretariat to work closely with the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS).

The Almaty Programme was adopted at a UN conference in Kazakhstan in 2003, following the UN Millennium Declaration of 2000. Action measures aim to:

- Secure sea port access by all means of transport in accordance with international law;
- Reduce costs and improve services to increase the competitiveness of landlocked developing countries' exports;
- Reduce imports' delivery costs;
- Address problems of delays and uncertainties in trade routes;
- Develop adequate national networks;
- Reduce loss, damage and deterioration of goods en route;

- Open the way for expansion of exports; and
- Improve the safety of road transport and the security of people along transit corridors.

Closest distance from the sea (km.)

OSCE participating States

| | |
|--|-------|
| Armenia: | 693 |
| Azerbaijan: | 870 |
| Belarus: | 623 |
| Kazakhstan: | 3,750 |
| Kyrgyzstan: | 3,600 |
| the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: | 77 |
| Moldova: | 170 |
| Serbia: | 78 |
| Tajikistan: | 3,100 |
| Turkmenistan: | 1,700 |
| Uzbekistan: | 2,950 |

OSCE Partners for Co-operation

| | |
|--------------|-------|
| Afghanistan: | 1,960 |
| Mongolia: | 1,693 |

Main source: UNCTAD

law enforcement agencies, the private sector and international organizations. The ultimate aim of the event was to enhance the capacity of the national authorities to further improve and implement their existing national Anti-corruption Strategy.

OSCE/UNECE Handbook of Best Practices at Border Crossings

In May 2008, the OCEEA, jointly with the UNECE and in co-ordination with the CPC Borders and the Action Against Terrorism units, started the development a **Handbook of Best Practices at Borders**. Through the promotion of existing border-crossing best practices in the field, the Handbook's main purpose is to assist OSCE participating States, particularly landlocked countries with limited access to world markets, in developing more efficient border, transit transport and customs policies.



A large truck at the Ak-Jol/Korday border crossing point between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. (OSCE/Roel Janssens)

The Handbook is expected to become a reference document for:

- National policy-makers
- Senior customs, transport and border guard/police officials
- Heads of regional customs chambers/border crossing points.

In addition, the OSCE-UNECE Handbook will also be made accessible to representatives of transport agencies, the business community, civil society and academia. It will focus on border-crossing points along roads and railways and at sea and airports.

The publication will focus on border-crossing points along roads and railways, at sea and airports.



Michel Zarnowiecki, Senior Customs Expert, during an assessment visit to the Brest/Koroszczyn border crossing point between Belarus and Poland. (Graham Smith)

As the Handbook is expected to i) address the real concerns experienced on a day-to-day basis by the relevant authorities in our participating States and ii) to reflect existing best practice experiences, the OCEEA held, in October 2008 of last year, two regional preparatory stakeholders' meetings bringing together relevant Customs, Border Guard/Police and Transport officials: one in Minsk (for Eastern and Central Europe) and one in Bishkek (for Central Asia and South Caucasus). The valuable input received during these meetings will definitely find its way into the final publication.

The Handbook is expected to be published in the second half 2009. Upon its publication (both in Russian and English) it will be distributed to the Permanent Delegations to the OSCE in Vienna as well as through OSCE field presences across the region.

Building partnerships

The OCEEA relies on partnerships with international expert organizations to enhance its capacity to effectively address a wider range of issues. In this regard, in the course of the past year, the OCEEA continued deepening some of its already existing partnerships with technical players in the field of transport and border-crossing facilitation.

On 8 September 2008, upon invitation by the UNECE, the OCEEA participated in Geneva, in a meeting of the **Expert Group on Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL)**. The Expert Group discussed the programme of work, objectives, tasks and possible deliverables regarding

the continuation of Phase II of the EATL and fulfilling the recommendations of the ECE/ESCAP Joint Study on Developing Euro-Asian Transport Linkages. The OCEEA presented the OSCE approach on transport development and co-operation, as well as some recent and planned activities on transport, trade and border crossing facilitation.

The OCEEA contributed to a conference organized in Brussels by the British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium on “**Integrated Border Management: Delivering Integrated Border Management: Challenges and Solutions**” on 2nd December 2008. The OCEEA representative gave a presentation on *OSCE efforts aimed at facilitating legitimate cross-border trade and transport operations across its region*.

On 4 December 2008, the Deputy Co-ordinator represented the OSCE Secretary General at the **Anniversary Ministerial of the TRACECA Transport Programme** in Baku. He used this opportunity to discuss the OSCE transport-related activities with a number of delegations from Central Asia and the President of the CIS branch of the International Road Transport Union.

On 4-5 December 2008, the OCEEA participated in the **World Customs Forum 2008** on *Managing Secure Trade Lanes & the Future of Facilitation – Navigating the Seas of Change* which took place in Brussels. In the margins of the Forum, the OCEEA had consultations with representatives of the US Chamber of Commerce to discuss progress made regarding the Eurasia Business Platform (EBP), the WCO’s Compliance and Facilitation/Capacity Building Departments as well as the UNODC.

On 24-26 February 2009, the Deputy Co-ordinator participated in Geneva in the **Seventy-first session of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee**. On the first day, the Deputy Co-ordinator made a statement on the fruitful co-operation between OSCE and UNECE in the transport field and on the second day the Economic and Environmental Adviser gave a presentation on the forthcoming OSCE-UNECE Handbook of best practices at borders. On the margins of the event, several side-meetings took place with representatives of the UNECE Transport Division.

On 5-6 March 2009, in Paris, the OCEEA, contributed, upon invitation, to a joint **International Transport Forum (ITF), UNECE, World Bank Seminar on Overcoming Border Crossing Obstacles**. The OCEEA representative gave a presentation on “OSCE efforts aimed at facilitating legitimate cross-border trade and transport operations across its region”. On the margins of the seminar various side-meetings with representatives of the OECD, ILO, WCO, the World Bank and other relevant organizations took place.



Participants of the seminar on Overcoming Border-Crossing Obstacles in Paris on 6 March 2009 (OECD/ITF).

Tajikistan – Trans-border Trade Promotion Centres

The OSCE Office in Tajikistan has continued to promote trade growth between Tajikistan and Afghanistan and supported the operations of four permanent trans-border trade promotion centres, three in the Gorno Badakhshan Region and one in the Khatlon Region, serving the major border crossings to Afghanistan.

The Centres provide information on customs and markets to entrepreneurs from both sides of the border and offer business training focused on small enterprises involved in trans-border trade. The centres in the Badakhshan region continue to assist many businesses in the area. The latter praise the Centres for the information, advice and assistance that they provide on a permanent basis. In 2008, through consultations with the local authorities on the Afghan side of the border, the Centres succeeded in lifting a ban for Afghan businesswomen to participate in trade activities. In addition, the Centres facilitated changes in Tajikistan’s regulations on cross-border trade, which resulted in

simpler and more effective administrative procedures. The amended regulations were adopted on 1 October 2008.

Turkmenistan - Railway Infrastructure Planning, Safety and Management

The OSCE Centre in Ashgabad in co-operation with the OCEEA and with the substantial support of the Austrian Federal Railways set up two workshops, which aimed at sharing international best practices and technical expertise in the areas of railway safety, infrastructure planning, operations and maintenance. Fifteen employees from the Ministry of Railway Transport - engineers, technical operators and maintenance workers - participated in both workshops. Participants were also informed on risk management, safety procedures and technical maintenance by experts from the Austrian Federal Railways.



Participants assess the status quo of Turkmen railway infrastructure.

Uzbekistan - Development of a Regional Transport Programme

Based on the 2007 recommendations on the transport sector in Uzbekistan in phase I, the project commissioned by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan entered in its second phase, during which a transport sector policy team was set up. This team focused on analyzing existing legislation and guidelines. It also prepared Terms of Reference for the establishment of a “Dispatching Co-ordination Centre”, which will facilitate national, regional and international trade. Within the framework of the project a legal database was created, regular newsletters issued and a website containing information on

freights, road planning and conditions as well as on the overall transportation infrastructure set up. The project will continue in 2009 with OSCE’s increased co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, Investments and Trade and the Agency for Rivers and Automobile Transport.

6.4. Energy security dialogue

On the basis of the Ministerial Council Decision on “Energy security Dialogue in the OSCE” adopted in 2006, the OCEEA has further developed co-operation with competent international organizations (e.g., the International Energy Forum, International Energy Agency, Secretariat of the Energy Charter, International Atomic Energy Agency, European Commission, EBRD, Eurelectric, Eurogas).



Windmill in the Energy Park in Bruck an der Leitha, Austria.

In co-operation with the OSCE Anti-Terrorism Unit, the OCCEA organized in July 2008 an expert workshop to identify the ways and means to protect the critical energy infrastructures within the OSCE area against the potential terrorist threats. Held in Vienna, the meeting gathered experts from international organizations and representatives from participating States.

A Study visit on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energies was organized in Austria, in September 2008 for a delegation of experts on energy issues representing Governmental, research and academic institutions from Belarus. The visit was part of the preparatory process for the Regional Expert Workshop on Improving Energy



An expert at the Energy Park Bruck an der Leitha explains various methods of energy generation.

Efficiency in Central and Eastern Europe, in Minsk, on 6-7 October 2008. The programme, implemented in co-operation with the Austrian Energy Agency, outlined the European and the Austrian energy landscape, its focus on renewable energy sources and energy efficiency policies. On site visits to show best practices in the industrial and housing/building sector, were organized such as at the Biomasse Kraftwerk Simmering, the Energy Park Bruck a/a Leitha and at the European Centre for Renewable Energy in Güssing.

Armenia – Increasing Energy Security

With the aim to increase the level of energy security of the region and to promote renewable energies the OSCE Presence in Armenia initiated a project on the development of Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM) for a bundle of selected small-scale hydropower plants located in Syunik. The project is seen as a first step of a multi-stage process and aims to develop a project design document within the framework of Kyoto Protocol's CDM: an international market based mechanism for greenhouse gases abatement and trade. Besides contributing to the country's energy security and sustainable development (creating job opportunities, social benefits, etc.) the implementation of the whole process will improve the overall cash flow for investment projects and increase the attractiveness for the market due to additional revenue from Certified Emission Reduction credits to be generated by the projects under the CDM.

Belarus - Exchange of Best Practices

Through the organization of a regional expert workshop on best practices for energy efficiency in October

2008, the OSCE Office in Minsk successfully brought together key experts and policy makers from Central and Eastern Europe as well as from specialized organizations. The conference which offered an excellent opportunity for the sharing of expertise and experience was attended and co-organized by the Belarusian Department for Energy Efficiency and supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.



Workshop on Energy efficiency in Minsk.

6.5. Engagement with Afghanistan

Within the framework of the MC Decision on OSCE engagement with Afghanistan (MC.DEC/4/07), OCEEA has contributed to the OSCE package of 16 projects proposals implementing this Decision. These projects, which have been designed and will be implemented in co-operation with World Bank and World Customs Organization focus on the development of trainings for Afghan Customs officials and Tajikistan Customs, in order to promote common practice at Tajik /Afghan



Truck in Afghanistan. (OSCE/Patrice Dreiski)



Street scene in Kabul.

The OCEEA also participated in the OSCE Conference in Afghanistan, held in Kabul on 9-10 November 2009. Gathering representatives from several countries of the region, the Conference was an opportunity to present economic and environmental potentials for co-operation with Afghanistan. Together with the Customs Training Development, possible fields of co-operation, such as within the area of transport and water management were explored.

border crossing points. Capacity trainings will contribute to improve the control of goods and also help to preventing the transit of illegal goods at these border crossing points. Trainings will also help to consolidate the financial sustainability of respective State institutions.

Environmental Activities

7.1 The Environment and Security Initiative

The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) recognizes that the best path to addressing environmental and security concerns is through international dialogue and good neighbourly co-operation. It therefore assists Governments to identify common solutions and to develop joint projects for achieving them.

Founded in 2003, the ENVSEC Initiative is a partnership between six international organizations: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) and the associated partner – the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The ENVSEC Initiative has national focal points in the twenty participating countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia. Each ENVSEC partner contributes its skills, expertise and networks in support of assessment, policy development, institution-building and technical co-operation. Relying on support from the field presences of the OSCE, the UNDP, and the REC, the ENVSEC partners are rendering essential assistance to achieve goals that include policy integration, capacity building of Government institutions, hotspot risk mitigation and civil society strengthening. The project contributes to improved knowledge, understanding and management of environmental and security risks. The main beneficiaries of this project include policy-makers and experts of relevant Ministries (Environment and Natural Resources, Foreign Affairs, Economic Development, Emergencies, Transport and Industry, Agriculture, etc.), local government agencies and civil society organizations.

Activities conducted under the ENVSEC Initiative show that the environment can act as a bridge for cross-boundary co-operation. Joint assessments and infor-

mation exchanges have identified common interests, improved mutual understanding and built foundations for agreements on transboundary environmental management. The partnership approach, on which ENVSEC is based, brings explicit benefits of improved co-ordination and comprehensive approach on regional activities as well as enhanced synergies and coherence with other donor initiatives at the country and subregional levels.

7.1.1 Highlights from Central Asia



Entrance to the former Uranium mine in Min Kush village, Kyrgyzstan. (Daniel Williams)

Environmental Impact Assessment in the Transboundary Context: Pilot Implementation Project in Central Asia

The assessment of the environmental impact of facilities and activities at an early stage of planning, including their cross-border impact, is a well recognized procedure in modern environmental policy and are important prerequisite for good neighbourly relations between countries. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Convention stipulates that its parties shall assess the environmental impact of certain activities at an early stage of planning. It also obligates States to notify and consult each other on all major projects under consideration that are likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact across borders. Non-



Environmental Impact Assessment Meeting in Bishkek. (OSCE/Saba Nordstrom)

governmental Organizations have a key role to play in the implementation of the EIA Convention.

The ENVSEC project, which is financed by Norway, held its final meeting in Bishkek in March 2009, where results of the project were presented and discussed. In particular, the implementation of the pilot project between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, related to mining activities with likely transboundary effects, was elaborated upon. The project has clearly demonstrated the different steps in the consultation process between the two countries as well as the relevance of local Government and the NGO community.

The project has improved implementation mechanisms, updated guidelines for the implementation of the EIA Convention in Central Asia and increased the national capacity of experts, officials and NGOs in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. It should be noted that both Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, which both are considering ratifying the convention, participated in the final meeting.

Amu Darya Assessment

ENVSEC undertook field missions and assessments in the Amu Darya basin during 2008. The field presences of the OSCE were instrumental in terms of monitoring and facilitating good co-operation with the different entities of national governments and NGOs in order to gather the most up to date and relevant information for the report. The report is set to be published in 2009 and is financed by Finland.

Co-operation with the UN and the IAEA in Radioactive Waste Issues

The OSCE has been working with a number of participating States in order to mitigate the security concerns related to radioactive waste. Some field presences have been very active in this regard and have assisted in awareness raising events as well as assessments. Also, the ENVSEC Initiative undertook assessments in this area under the “*Environment and Security: Transforming risks into cooperation - Central Asia - Ferghana / Osh / Khujand area*”.

In this regard, the OSCE dedicated a special session of the Economic and Environmental Committee (on 7 May 2009) to inform, discuss and mobilise the OSCE network on the issue.

ENVSEC Assessment Report in the Eastern Caspian Sea region

High level environmental events in Tehran, Brussels and Almaty during November 2008 marked the launch of the latest ENVSEC Report “*Environment and Security in the Eastern Caspian region: Transforming Risks into Co-operation*”.

The document states that rapid development and exploration of oil and gas in the Eastern Caspian region poses a potential threat to both environment and security. The region is changing and undergoing fast development linked in particular to increased oil and gas exploration in Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.

The report considered the role and impact of environmental factors in securing human safety and sustained development of the Eastern Caspian Sea region, including parts of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan which border to the Caspian Sea. The analysis introduced a security perspective as it seeks to identify those environmental, socio-economic and political issues that are profoundly affecting the livelihoods of the populations and could lead to social tensions and instability.

The ENVSEC report also looked into the potential impacts of climate change on the vulnerable ecosystem of the Caspian Sea and on the region’s potential for tourism, as well as the opportunity for sustainable development of the coastal zone.

Environmental issues around the Cheleken peninsula, Turkmenistan



Source: ENVSEC East Caspian assessment (field missions to Turkmenbashi-Cheleken, April 2006 and March 2008)

The full ENVSEC Report can be downloaded under www.envsec.org.

7.1.2 Highlights from Eastern Europe

During 2008, the ENVSEC work programme in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine gradually developed into a solid portfolio of operations, actively engaging the three recipient countries and supported by a growing variety of donors.

All dimensions and partners of ENVSEC were active in the region. Many new activities started and old activities gained pace, altogether moving from the 2007 focus on awareness rising towards solutions for concrete regional and topical issues. The institutional network that supports coordination and project work

was strengthened, delivering a wide range of activities under the ENVSEC work programme.

Moldova* – Supporting the Confidence Building Measures Working Group

In June 2008, within the framework of the ENVSEC Initiative, the OSCE Mission to Moldova, together with representatives of the OCEEA and UNEP, held discussions with the environmental authorities of Transdnistria on the disposal of dangerous pesticides. Shortly afterwards, the Mission presented a draft project outline for the removal of the pesticides at the Confidence Building Measures Working Group on the Environment. At the time of the publication of this report the Mission

* Through environmental activities, the OSCE Mission to Moldova works cross-dimensionally to support the Crisis Prevention and Recovery Programme in its effort to build confidence and security in the region.



Forest in Belarus. (Anatoli Kliashchuk)

7.1.3 Highlights from South-Eastern Europe

In South-Eastern Europe, based on the outcomes of feasibility studies on new transboundary protected areas and an intergovernmental consultative process, ENVSEC continued its efforts in supporting transboundary co-operation in mountain areas and on the Timok River. Moreover, the activities on reducing transboundary environmental and human safety risks posed by sub-standard mining operations have catalyzed investment for remediation and clean-up of mining hotspots. Highlights of the year include:

continues its efforts to assist with the development of an extra budgetary project for the re-packing, centralisation, analysis and final disposal of the pesticides and the environmental remediation of the storage sites.

- In May 2008 the Environment Ministers of the region signed a joint statement committing their countries to create a well-managed and ecologically representative protected area network.

In the spotlight: Serbia

Training for Judges and

Prosecutors in Environmental law

The OSCE Mission to Serbia supported a training for judges and prosecutors aimed at increasing their knowledge of environmental legislation and its implementation. The training also contributed to the strengthening of efficient co-operation between the judiciary and the Environmental Inspectorate.

Promoting Alternative Sources of Energy in Eastern Serbia

Wind energy has recently become an economically feasible alternative to conventional sources of energy. In response to this, the OSCE Mission supported a project to strengthening energy security and to assess and promote the wind power potential in Eastern Serbia. The goal of the project was also to support the

efforts of authorities in promoting the use of wind energy as a renewable energy source.

Ecological Risks of Defence Technology in Serbia

The OSCE Mission to Serbia, through the *Democratisation of the Security Sector Programme*, supported a research project on the ecological risks of defence technology in Serbia. The results of the research were published and presented to experts and the relevant authorities in Valjevo, Cacak and Lucane. The main objective of the discussions was to raise awareness on the potential environmental risks associated with the defence industry and to encourage Government officials to include a broader audience in the decision making processes concerning defence related issues.



Heating plant in Belgrade. (Milutin Labudovic)



View from Kruja to Tirana. (OSCE/Martina Gadotti)

- Increased commitment from Bulgarian and Serbian authorities to develop transboundary protection regime for the Timok River was expressed.
- Resulting from the mission carried out in three mining sites in the northern part of Albania, three project proposals were prepared for each of the mining sites.

7.1.4 Highlights from South Caucasus

During 2008, ENVSEC made significant progress towards the planned outcomes in the South Caucasus region through a broad implementation of activities and projects in all of the priority clusters. National ENVSEC workshops convened in each country in April 2008 confirmed the relevance of these original priority cluster areas and underscored the continued commitment of the countries to the ENVSEC Initiative. The ENVSEC partners have managed to develop a comprehensive work programme designed to build transboundary cooperation in the South Caucasus region. The activity highlights during the reporting period were:

- In October 2008, ENVSEC supported a mission to assess the environmental impacts of the recent conflict in Georgia including a series of recommended confidence-building measures to be implemented during the upcoming year.
- ENVSEC created a series of projects to develop monitoring, legal, and institutional frameworks for the transboundary management of the Kura-Araks river basin — the main source of fresh water in the

region. Particularly noteworthy, ENVSEC partners completed its sixth and final year of support to cooperative transboundary river monitoring between the riparian States of the river basin.



Keli lake in Georgia. (Archil Gverdtsiteli)

- 2008 marked the full emergence of public environmental awareness centres (Aarhus Centres) as one of the most effective instruments to develop Government-civil society co-operation to resolve some of the region's pressing environmental issues.

South Caucasus - Forest Fire Management

During the reporting period, ENVSEC partners initiated discussions with the Governments of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia to increase the capacity of the local organizations and decision-making bodies involved in forest fire management. The goal of the project is to enhance co-operation and create opportunities for more dialogue among the South Caucasus countries on forest fire management. Under the framework of this project, participants of environmental and emergency agencies from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia participated in a preparatory meeting held in Skopje, Macedonia, in December 2008.

Armenia – Promoting Environmental Rights

The OSCE Office in Armenia, together with ENVSEC partners, organized national consultations with a broad range of stakeholders. In addition to the mobilizing of efforts to address the relationship of security to environment and good governance, a *Resource Centre on*

Environmental Rights was established at the Yerevan State University. The Centre is instrumental for raising awareness on environmental legislation and International Conventions as well as ensuring respect for the rule of law and human rights.

Georgia – Post-conflict Environmental Assessment

In August 2008, at the request of Georgia, the OSCE organized with UNEP a joint technical mission to assess the environmental impact of the conflict in Georgia. During the armed conflict in August 2008 a number of forest fires occurred as a consequence of military activities in several regions of the country. The Joint OSCE/UNEP Mission took place from 29 September to 3 October 2008 and was led by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and the Director of the UNEP Regional Office for Europe. The Mission aimed at listening to the widest possible range of views on the environmental impact of the conflict and at providing recommendations for remediation of identified environmental issues, including possible confidence-building measures.



The Environmental Damage Assessment Team prepares for its mission. (OSCE/David Swalley)

The Environmental Damage Assessment Team assessed the territory around Borjomi National Park as well as conflict-related environmental damages in regions adjacent to the conflict zone of South Ossetia. The Mission identified issues that need to be addressed including risks from land-slides and mudslides during heavy rainfalls in the fire affected area, as well as strengthening fire management capacity.

Georgia – Training for Judges

The OSCE Mission to Georgia implemented an ENVSEC project on “*Training of Judges on the Aarhus Convention*” on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental affairs. During the reporting period, a two-day training for judges was organized in March 2009, in which 16 judges from different regions of Georgia were trained by an international expert who shared his know-how and facilitated the exchange of international experiences.

7.2 Co-operation on combating land degradation and managing water resources

Chu-Talas II - Development of Cooperation on the Chu and Talas Rivers

As follow-up to the Chu-Talas project, Phase I, Phase II commenced and was financed by Finland. It was launched at a meeting of the Chu and Talas Commission in Bishkek in February 6-7, 2009. During this 7th meeting of the Commission participants reported on the progress of the Commission and its work, while approving the work plan and activities for 2009.

Under the Chu-Talas II project, the OCEEA, in partnership with UNECE, will, among other activities, assist the countries with updating methodologies of co-funding and developing unified methodologies for measuring water volumes.

Expert's Workshop on Environment and Security Issues in the Southern Mediterranean

The OCEEA, in co-operation with UNEP GRID ARENDAL, the Centre for International Relations and Development Studies and the Barcelona International Peace Centre, organized an expert's workshop in Barcelona, Spain in March 2009. The workshop aimed at identifying the environmental issues that may have an impact on security, and map them in an easily comprehensible format.



Expert's Workshop on Environment and Security Issues in the Southern Mediterranean. (OSCE/Raul Daussa)

7.2.1 Land degradation and waste management

Belarus – Rehabilitation of Chernobyl-affected Territories

Within the CORE programme – the Co-operation for the rehabilitation of Chernobyl-affected territories – the OSCE Office in Minsk supported several projects for safeguarding agriculture in the Slvgorod district. After assessing and elaborating possible further steps, the Office commissioned the exchange of expertise on methodologies and technologies for farmers specialized in pig farms. In addition to that, the OSCE Office supported local projects for safe environments at schools and kindergartens in Cherchersk, Stolín and Bragin districts.

Kazakhstan – Introducing a Course on Sustainable Development in the Higher Education System

Together with the Ministries of Education and Environmental Protection and the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia, the OSCE Centre in Astana launched the final phase of a project aimed at establishing a curriculum on education for sustainable development (ESD) at post-graduate level. Based on a pilot project at the Pedagogical Institute, which was implemented in northern Kazakhstan, project staff elaborated a course module on ecology and sustainable development. During 2008, 80 experts from different institutions for higher education, ministries and civil

society were trained to apply the ESD principles in their respective institutions.

Turkmenistan – Solid Waste Processing

Responding to the need for the promotion of civic awareness on environmental friendly waste management and following the Government's request to enhance SME development and entrepreneurial activity, the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat launched a pilot project on solid waste management in Bayramaly, situated in Mary province. Representatives of private enterprises and several Government representatives participated in two environmental awareness trainings and set up an effective small-scale solid waste management and recycling operation for biomass and organic matter.

Uzbekistan – Industrial Waste Water Management

The unregulated inflow of industrial hazardous substances causes high environmental damage in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The OSCE is assisting the Uzbek Government's legal and institutional efforts in strengthening its waste water management. Starting in April 2009, the Project Co-ordinator supports the enhancement of environmental security by a project that is designed for two years. Together with the Ministry of Environment and the Agency Uzkommunkhizmat, the OSCE Field Presence has helped to establish rules and regulations that will then be used to control and prevent the inflow of industrial waste water into surface waters.

In the spotlight: Kyrgyzstan Fostering Waste Management in Municipalities

Following the request of several mayors in the North and South of the country, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek designed a project to improve municipal services with a strong focus on those services connected with waste management. After assessing the needs and priorities of all interested parties, a project was developed that included a long term action plan. In its first step, the project foresaw the implementation in pilot areas. Thereafter the project was then duplicated in all districts of the main cities. Today, the cities of Naryn, Talas, Tash-Komur, Osh and

Uzgen are monitored by civil society groups and appear much cleaner than in the initial phase. In 2008 an additional billing system was introduced and the waste project is continuously refined, for instance in its response to scarce land available for future landfill sites.

In the area of toxic and radioactive waste the OSCE Centre in Bishkek initiated a health campaign to inform citizens of the southern towns of Sheftaftar and Sumsar about potential health hazards and possible protective measures. To this effect,



The OSCE provided the first garbage container in 8 years to Naryn City.

the Centre also worked with major donors to hold a pledging conference that would raise funds for the rehabilitation of radioactive waste sites across the country.

7.2.2 Strengthening the dialogue and co-operation on water management

Georgia – South Caucasus River Monitoring project

After six years of continued work, the OSCE project on “*South Caucasus River Monitoring*” concluded in February 2009. It was essential for the re-establishment of water quality monitoring activities in the Kura-Aras river basin. The project introduced new parameters for water quality monitoring, harmonized sampling and testing methodologies, trained local staff and established data sharing system accessible to all partners via internet in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Carried out in collaboration with scientific institutions of all three South Caucasus countries the project sets a good precedent of mutually beneficial co-operation on trans-boundary water quality issues.

Georgia – Implementing the UNECE Convention on Trans-boundary Watercourses

The OSCE Mission to Georgia and the UNECE have provided technical assistance to Georgia to assess legal and institutional needs for implementing the UNECE Convention on Trans-Boundary watercourses. The project allowed for the identification of legal and institutional needs and the estimation of costs related

to the implementation of the UNECE Water Convention by Georgia.

Moldova – Co-operation with the Environmental NGO “Eco-TIRAS”

In July 2008, in order to foster the relationship between communities on both sides of the River Dniester, the Mission gave financial support to a youth camp in Transdnistria organized by the Moldovan Environmental NGO Eco-TIRAS in partnership with two Transdnistrian NGOs: Pelikan (from Bender) and EKUT from (Tiraspol). A total of 65 youth attended the camp during which they took part in activities and discussed issues relating to the environmental status of the River Dniester, democratic development, and the role of NGOs. Co-ordinated by Eco-TIRAS, the project was implemented on a co-operative basis by Environmental NGOs and specialists from both side of the Dniester River. The resulting findings of the project were presented at the Dniester International Conference held in Chisinau on 2-3 October 2008, which was partly funded by the OSCE Mission.

Also, the OSCE Mission in Moldova funded the participation of experts from Chisniau and Tiraspol to attend a study visit to Spain on issues related to water management.



Experts from Chisnau and Tiraspol at the Water Expo in Zaragoza, Spain. (OSCE/Raul Daussa)

Tajikistan – International Conference on Water Related Disaster Reduction

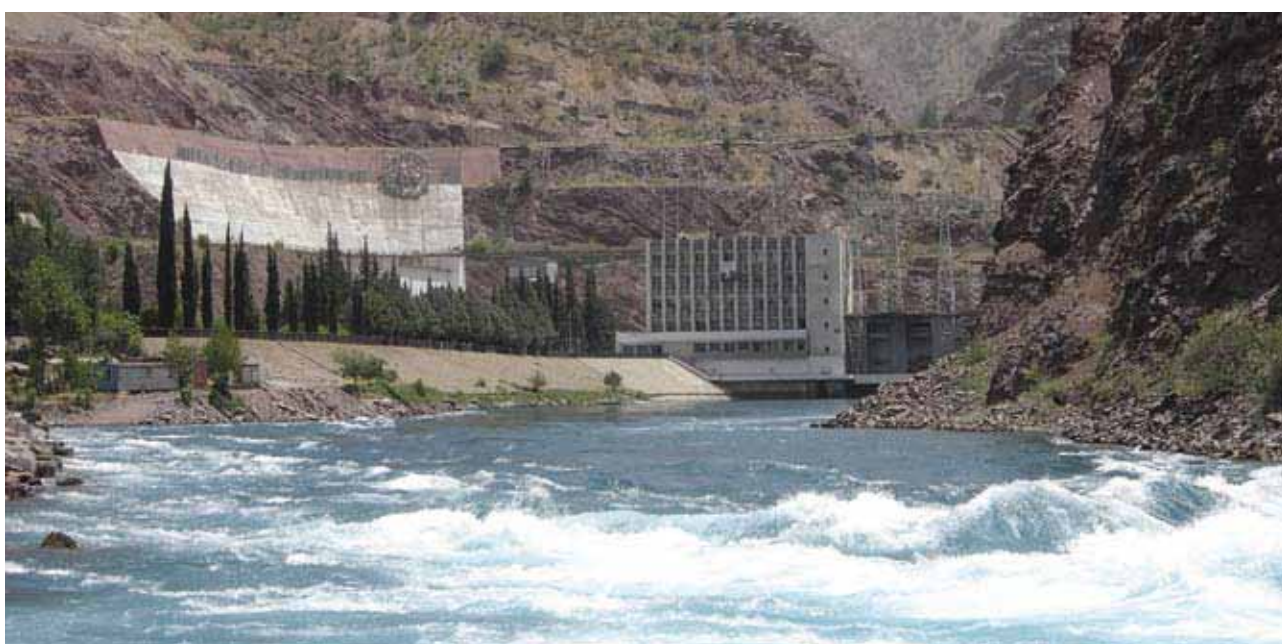
In responses to requests from the host Government, the OSCE Office supported the International Conference on Water Related Disaster Reduction held in June 2008 in Dushanbe. This Conference advanced the realization of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, which aims to protect countries and communities from various disasters. It also included recommendations of the First Asia-Pacific Water Forum held in Beppu, Japan, in December 2007. Besides being supported by OSCE, the Conference was held in assistance with various UN bodies, the Swiss Agency on Cooperation and Development, the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) and other organizations. Moreover, the OSCE

Office helped in the development of a paper on water management in the Aral Sea basin, titled the “Water Doctrine”.

Turkmenistan – Improving Irrigation Water Systems

For the benefit of improved water economy in irrigation, better crop yields and environmental friendly practices in water use, the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, together with the Turkmen Ministry of Water Resources organized a three-week training course on “*Design operation and management of micro-irrigation systems*”. Experts from Turkmenistan’s regional and municipal water utilities, farmers’ associations, agronomists and university faculty took part in the events, which were held at the Agribusiness School in Turkmenabat, and the Agricultural University in Ashgabat. The workshop presented best practices of water saving micro-irrigation technologies and how they are used in OSCE participating States.

Another related activity organized by the OSCE Field Presence was a workshop on Geographical Information Systems (GIS). During the workshop officials from the Ministry of Water Resources, the National Institute of Deserts, Flora and Fauna, the Institute for Water Resources as well as five regional water companies dis-



As part of the Conference, participants examined the Nurek Hydro-electro station, which is located in deep gorge along Vaksh River in western Tajikistan. (OSCE/Saba Nordstrom)

cussed how the administration of irrigation water distribution could be refined by using this new software. Participants then practiced using global positioning satellite (GPS) devices for data collection on a sample irrigation scheme and performed a technical analysis of irrigation infrastructure through the GIS software.

Uzbekistan - Workshop on “Environmental Security and Safety – A Major Factor of Water Management”

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan, together with the OCEEA and their implementing partner, the Scientific Information Centre of the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (SIC ICWC) organized a workshop on “Environmental Security and Safety – A major factor of water management”. The workshop was attended by high-level representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Management, the State Nature Protection Committee, the Ministry of Reclamation and Water Resources of Uzbekistan and additional sixty senior representatives from the water management sector of all Central Asian States. As a result of the event, several recommendations were formulated, such as the need for a strengthening of organizational structures in the management of trans-boundary water basis and better collaborative mechanisms to satisfy the needs of upstream and downstream countries concerning the usage of hydro-energy resources. Moreover participants agreed on the relevance of harmonized water legislation, ecological norms and standards in the Central Asian States.



High level representatives at the Water Workshop in Tashkent.

Study Visit to Spain on Water Management

From 1 to 6 July 2008, the OCEEA organized in cooperation with the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation, the Spanish Ministry of Environment, Expo Zaragoza 2008 and the Chamber of Com-



To produce a glass of wine it is necessary to use 120 liters of water. Participants to the study visit learned that and other facts at the EXPO Zaragoza 2008. (OSCE/Raul Dausa)

merce and Industry of Zaragoza a study visit to Spain to learn about Spanish experiences on water management. Twenty-seven experts from Central Asia, Caucasus and Eastern Europe met with officers of the Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Environment, and in Zaragoza with the Ebro River Basin Organization. A visit to the Expo Zaragoza was also organized.

7.2.3 Protecting the environment in maritime and inland waterways

Georgia - Enhancing State Capacity in the Minimization of Oil Spill Risks

As Georgia has several port facilities on the Black Sea coast that export oil via ships to the global markets, the country is trying to expand its capacity for increased oil throughput. In order to limit the risks of oil spills it is important for decision makers to understand the main principles of oil spill preparedness and to develop response mechanisms. In this regard, the OSCE Mission to Georgia organized and funded the “Workshop on oil spill preparedness and response” for mid-and-high level government officials. The meeting led to the development of concrete recommendations and follow-up activities.

7.3 Raising awareness and promoting public participation in environmental affairs

Albania - Encouraging Public Consultation in Planning Processes

In recent years, Albania has seen unprecedented levels of economic growth, fuelled particularly by investments in the infrastructure and energy sectors. This has led to a stronger awareness of the need to ensure that the details of these investments are shared with local communities as part of the wider planning process and that decision making processes should be transparent. In co-operation with the Ministry of Environment, the OSCE Presence in Albania is supporting efforts to encourage public participation in environmental decision-making in line with international standards. In September 2008, government and civil society representatives examined local public participation methodologies during a study visit to Finland. Participants were introduced to best practice in all sorts of participatory planning – from bicycle lanes to water treatment plants. The “lessons learnt” have contributed to further Government and civil society efforts to increase public engagement in the policy planning process.



Participants of study tour examine waste water plant.

Azerbaijan – Promoting Environmental Education in Nakhchivan

In November 2008, the OSCE Office in Baku supported the introduction of the Green Pack environmental educational toolkit in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. In a training course delivered by the Baku-based NGO “For Sustainable Development”, a group of thirty Nakhchivan State University professors and students



Area of Bibiejbat in Azerbaijan. (Nonna de Gubek)

received training on the Green Pack education methodology. Participants were also provided with the Green Pack teaching materials, with the expectation to pass on their skills and knowledge to over 400 students of pedagogy and natural sciences of the Nakhchivan State University. The NGO has initiated the Green Pack to Azerbaijan and trained more than 1100 education professionals since 2007.

Belarus – University Student Contest

The OSCE Office in Minsk jointly with the International Sakharov Environmental University organized a regional contest on environment and security. In the course of this event, student teams from Russia, Ukraine, Armenia and Belarus focused on regional co-operation in environmental matters and elaborated on scenario approaches. The Office in Minsk also assisted Belarus in living up to its commitment in the framework of environmental conventions. Capacity building activities relating to the Aarhus Convention have been held, particularly with respect to its Article 9 on “Access to justice”. Moreover the Office organized a conference on the legal implications of the Espoo Convention for regional co-operation at the Faculty of law at the Belarusian State University.



Student and event organizers at a joint OSCE-Sakharov University regional students competition on Environment and Security in Belarus.

The Espoo Convention

Adopted in 1991 in Espoo, Finland, the “Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in a Trans-boundary Context” disposes obligations and regulations for its signatory parties to assess the environmental impact of certain activities in an early stage of planning. It also sets out general requirements for States to notify and consult each other on major projects that might have negative trans-boundary impacts on the environment.

Following the global development of the environment, Parties to the Espoo Convention decided in 2003 to further strengthen its legally binding character and adopted the so-called “Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessments” during the Ministerial “Environment for Europe Conference” in Kyiv, Ukraine. Not yet entered into force (status as of early 2009), the Protocol will require States to undertake strategic environmental assessments at an even earlier stage than it is currently the case and also foresees extensive public participation in related governmental decision making processes.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - Establishing Partnerships between Citizens and the Government

The OSCE Mission focuses on establishing partnerships between municipalities and citizens in the development and delivery of municipal services and in carrying out municipal tasks and responsibilities. For example, in the municipality of Ugljevik, a local community board successfully worked to remove an illegal waste site in partnership with the municipality. Following this, the municipality successfully registered all illegal garbage dumps on its territory and action plans were developed to remove them.

During the reporting period, several Youth NGOs from Bratunac and Srebrenica, with support from the Mission, implemented a pilot project in the eastern part of the country to promote volunteerism, improve links between the municipalities and youth activists and raise the level of environmental awareness. The project included a workshop on volunteerism and a related initiative to clean the bank of the River Drina.



Supported by the OSCE, local communities and municipalities in Ugljevik cleaned illegal garbage dumps.

Georgia – Eco Club, Eco Bus and “Think naturally – go green” campaign

In order to strengthen environmental awareness, the OSCE Mission to Georgia has implemented a series of projects and supported several activities, such as the “Eco Clubs” for school children in the Brojomi-Kharaguail National Park zone or the launch of the “Eco Bus”. Travelling through Georgia, the bus educates on alternative energy sources and energy efficiency methods. Another activity in the area of awareness raising was the “Think naturally – go green campaign”, which promoted the principles and practices of sustainable waste management, and targeted consumers as well as entrepreneurs.



Eco-club members in Georgia.

Tajikistan – TV show “Green Five”

The OSCE Office has continued to support activities which aim at raising awareness on environmental issues: in 2008, close to 14,000 youngsters were involved in a youth environmental movement, the “green patrols”. Within the framework of the green patrols project, three “Green Five environmental TV shows” were produced and broadcasted to raise awareness and promote public participation on environmental issues. The TV shows were broadcasted in the northern Sughd province, a region of Tajikistan facing numerous environmental challenges. Topics on the rational use of water, waste management, and the environmental challenges faced by cities were included in the “Green Five” show programme.

Uzbekistan - Implementation of the National Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan (WMAP)

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan rendered support to the improvement and putting in place of organizational, legal, scientific, and economic prerequisites to reform the waste management system. To this end the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan was instrumental in the setting up of a permanent working group, which identifies the role and responsibilities of key stakeholders in implementation of the Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan (WMAP). Institutional activities were developed to ensure the realization of the WMAP, and the inclusion of its activities in the work plans of ministries, organizations and agencies. Together with the State Nature Protection Committee, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan is engaged in the organization of regular

meetings and the overall co-ordination among different national bodies.

Uzbekistan - Environmental Education for School Kids with Disabilities

In co-operation with the World Bank, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan supported the NGO “Eko-maktab” and the Youth organization “Kamolot”, both of them are working with school children with disabilities. The project aimed at combining personal and professional development with ecological education and awareness-rising on nature protection. In the course of this project several training seminars on eco-design took place in Tashkent.



Eco-design workshop in Tashkent. (NGO “Ekomaktab”)

7.3.1 Aarhus Centres

By setting principles for “Access to information”, “Public participation in decision-making” and “Access to justice”, the Aarhus Convention provides the OSCE with a unique tool to protect citizen’s rights to a healthy environment, promote democracy and good governance and further the openness and transparency of decision-making processes across the OSCE region.

The OSCE has been promoting the Aarhus Convention principles and supporting their implementation in close co-operation with the UNECE Aarhus Convention Secretariat. It is within this framework that since 2002, OSCE has been co-operating with several Governments for the establishment and functioning of Aarhus Centres. In close co-operation with the ENVSEC Initiative, Aarhus Centres have been established in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and

Tajikistan. Efforts are also in place for the establishment of an Aarhus Centre in Kazakhstan. These Centres serve as link between the Government and the NGOs in the sphere of environmental policy making and implementation. They also provide the platforms for coalition-building and partnerships among NGOs in addressing environmental issues.



In May 2008 the OCEEA published an information brochure on Aarhus Centres in English and Russian.

The year 2008 witnessed a leap in OSCE’s Aarhus Centres initiative. The **Third Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention** that convened in Riga between 11 and 13 June 2008 provided a platform where there was significant recognition of the Aarhus Centres both at the technical level as well as the high-level segment of the Meeting. The UNECE Executive Secretary identified the Aarhus Centres as *“good examples of a bridge between good intentions and concrete results”*. Furthermore, the OSCE organized a side event in Riga on **Aarhus Centres: Platforms for Cooperation, Participation and Partnership** on 11 June 2008, which was attended by over 40 participants, including representatives of Governments, NGOs, international organizations and financial institutions. The side event provided an effective platform for sharing experiences, lessons learned and best practices among various practitioners of the Aarhus Centres in all seven countries which currently have Aarhus Centres.

Given the increasing demand and interest for further enhancement of the Aarhus Centres as a tool for addressing environment and security challenges, the OSCE commissioned an **Independent Evaluation of the Aarhus Centres** in 2008. Overall objective of

the evaluation was to generate knowledge from the experience of the Aarhus Centres within the context of OSCE’s efforts to raise awareness on environmental issues as well as promoting participatory approaches in environmental decision-making and thus implementing the principles of the Aarhus Convention. The Evaluation concluded that the Aarhus Centres form a wide network that can implement regional, national and local activities and can be an effective instrument in facilitation of the implementation of the Aarhus Convention at all levels, including in a transboundary context. In most of the countries, the Aarhus Centres are the only platforms for dialog and co-operation between the Governmental authorities and the civil society organizations and the public at large. Therefore, it is important that the OSCE and its partners continue to support the establishment, functioning and expansion of the Aarhus Centres. Development of an Aarhus Centre Guidelines on roles and functions of Aarhus Centres was among the major recommendations followed by the need for increased networking and information-sharing among Aarhus Centres; the need for full utilization of Aarhus Centres as a tool by the Governments in implementing the Convention; the need for increased focus on local and regional authorities, local self-government and business community; as well as the need to ensure the financial and technical sustainability of the Aarhus Centres.

On 22-23 January 2009, the OSCE organized an **Aarhus Centres Meeting** in Vienna. The meeting aimed to bring together the Aarhus Convention National Focal Points, Aarhus Centre Managers and the OSCE Economic and Environmental Officers and provide an effective platform for sharing experiences, lessons learned, best practices and challenges in putting Aarhus Convention into practice. In addition to the Aarhus practitioners from above listed countries, representatives of the UNECE Aarhus Convention Secretariat and several OSCE Delegations participated at the meeting along with a number of experts from various organizations. The primary outcome of the meeting has been a Road Map – an action plan for Aarhus Centres – which also benefitted from the findings and recommendations of the Independent Evaluation as well as the strategic direction provided by the Third Meeting of the Conference of Parties of Aarhus Convention.

The OSCE continued to respond to the capacity building needs, particularly in implementation of the third pillar of the Convention. ***The High-Level Judicial Workshop on Access to Justice in Environmental Matters for the South-Eastern Europe*** organized jointly by the OSCE and the UNECE in Tirana, on 17-18 November 2008 has been highly instrumental in this respect.



Participants of the Aarhus Centres Meeting engaged in pro-active discussions and elaborated on the “Road Map for Aarhus Centres”. (OSCE/Martina Gadotti)

Albania - Strengthening Aarhus Information Centres

The OSCE Presence in Albania has continued to assist in the further strengthening of the services of the Aarhus Information Centres of Shkodra and Vlora as part of a programme between the Presence and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and Water Administration to promote the Aarhus Convention. These Centres present opportunities for civil society to address local environmental concerns, using the framework of the Aarhus Convention to lobby for access to information, to participate in the decision-making process and in gaining access to justice. The Centres also provide a practical resource centre where information such as the Environmental Impact Assessment reports can be shared.

Armenia – Developing Local Environmental Strategies

The OSCE Office continues its efforts to support the Government of Armenia in the implementation of the Aarhus Convention. As of 2008, thirteen Aarhus Centres are operating in different regions of Armenia. In 2009 the Office focuses on strengthening the network

of Public Environmental Information Centres and pays special attention to transparency and participation in developing local environmental strategies. Moreover, as for strengthening the third pillar of the Convention, it supports the Resource Centre on Environmental Rights at the Yerevan State University.

Kazakhstan - Promoting the Access to Justice on Environmental Matters

The OSCE Centre in Astana together with the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan supported the development of a manual for judges on the implementation of the Aarhus Convention and assisted with the introduction of environmental law into the compulsory training curriculum for judges. The manual was presented to the wider judiciary from various regions of Kazakhstan during a number of training exercises. As a result, some 40 judges underwent the training and raised their knowledge and skills on environmental law and relevant international treaties.

Kyrgyzstan – Continuing its Support to the Aarhus Centre Osh

The OSCE field office is continuing its support to the Aarhus Centre in Osh, which was established in 2004 to improve public awareness about environmental International Conventions and National laws and to promote their effective implementation. Other objectives include increased civil societies’ participation in decision-making process related to environmental issues as well as the promotion and protection of



Ambassador Alexandr Keltchewsky, Head of the OSCE Centre in Astana (left), and Kairat Mami, Chief Justice of the Kazakh Supreme Court (right), look through training materials on the implementation of the Aarhus Convention.

populations' ecological rights through the third principle of the Aarhus Convention Access to justice. With these aims in mind, the Centre is implementing various activities: trainings and seminars for civil societies on the principles of the Aarhus Convention, trainings on the conducting of public hearings for the areas facing ecological problems, roundtables and meetings for the government and nongovernmental organizations to improve dialogue between State authorities and public sector in addressing environmental related issues. Besides, the Centre is promoting public access to information via producing and distributing newsletters, shootings of video films on different ecological topics and the installation of information boards.



Activities in the Aarhus Centre in Osh, Kyrgyzstan.

Serbia – Strengthening Aarhus Centers

The OSCE Mission to Serbia supported the strengthening of the Aarhus Centres in Belgrade and Tara National Park. Environmental problems faced in this area include noise, air and water pollution, waste and lack of urban green space. In Belgrade's Municipality of Vracar, sev-

In the spotlight: Georgia

The Aarhus Convention was ratified by Georgia in 2000. However, the Ministry of Environment, which is the authority responsible for the Convention's implementation does not have sufficient technical and financial means to fulfil its rules and obligations. In order to meet these challenges, the OSCE together with the Georgian Government set up the Aarhus Centres. Since then, three Centres in the country have been instrumental in providing a bridge between the Government and the public on environmental matters. During this reporting period, the Aarhus Centres have succeeded in a number of activities covering all three pillars of the Aarhus Convention:

Access to Environmental Information

In order to ensure easy access to environmental information, Aarhus Centres have conducted more than twenty campaigns in the reporting year and developed a tri-lingual, interactive web site. The site pro-



vides diverse information, ranging from environmental news to announcements and documents of different State, non-governmental or private environmental organizations. The website also provides various groups of users with full texts of environmental conventions and is used as a database and tool for information-sharing.

As the Aarhus Centre in Tbilisi administrates the UNECE National Clearing House, the Centre's activities also facilitate the information flow from the Ministry of Environment and NGOs with international actors.

Public Participation in Environmental Decision Making

As for the promotion of the Convention's second pillar, the Tbilisi Centre continued facilitating public hearings and provided information on EIA reports in Georgia. It also pursued the monitoring and analyzing of EIA systems. In the course of respective activities, four observer reports were developed and recommendations elaborated and discussed with interested parties.

Access to Justice

The Centre put strong efforts into promoting the "Access to justice" pillar. Among others through the provision of free legal consultations or the preparation, upon request, of assessments of national legislation on some particular topics. The OSCE Mission to Georgia also conducted a special two-days training for members of the judiciary on the Aarhus Convention.

eral public environmental awareness campaigns were conducted. Officials from the Energy Efficiency Agency and Agency for Recycling contributed to activities throughout the campaign.

Tajikistan – Opening of a new Aarhus Centre

The OSCE Office in Tajikistan has been supporting the Tajik authorities in the implementation of the Aarhus Convention by promoting public participation on environmental issues in the decision making process at the national and district levels. Moreover, the Aarhus Centres work with lawyers and journalists on the issues related to public participation and access to information via activities such as awareness-raising and training seminars, publications, radio and TV programmes. At present, there are three Aarhus Centres operating through the support of the OSCE in Tajikistan.

On 10 April 2009, the third Aarhus Centre was officially opened in Kurghon Teppa and now provides the most populated region in Tajikistan, the Khatlon district, with a much needed resource centre to foster the implementation of the Aarhus Convention. Also preparations are underway to transform the Aarhus Centre in Dushanbe to a National Republican Aarhus Centre.

7.3.2 Addressing security aspects of climate change and environmental protection

Belarus – Assistance in Fulfilling Kyoto Protocol Commitments

Belarus is a signatory State to the protocol of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol, since the year 2005. At the request of the Government, the OSCE Office in Minsk assists Belarus in specified commitments, such as through a training seminar on carbon registry for Belarusian experts which was held in Bonn, Germany. Besides, the Office supported the Belarusian delegation to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Poznan, Poland, in December 2008 and will continue its assistance in 2009 by facilitating the elaboration of a methodology for the assessment of carbon emissions of key sectors.

Tajikistan – Environmental Protection Concept

The environmental strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan was drafted in 2007 by an OSCE supported strategy working group composed of experts representing the Government and civil society. The draft concept document was submitted in 2008 for comments to 19 ministries and governmental institutions and then finalized and approved by presidential decree on 31 December 2008. Building on this achievement, the OSCE Office now supports the development of an action plan for the implementation of the ecological concept. The plan will identify priorities and measures that help to address priorities, responsible person/institutions, required budget as well as performance indicators.

List of Acronyms

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|------------------|--|
| ABA | American Bar Association | ILO | International Labour Organization |
| ACN | OECD Anti-Corruption Network | IMO | International Maritime Organization |
| ALAC | Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre | IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| AML | Anti Money Laundering | MC | Ministerial Council |
| APA | Almaty Programme of Action | MONEYVAL | Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures |
| BP | British Petrol | NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| BSC | Black Sea Commission | NGO | Non-governmental Organization |
| BSEC | Black Sea Economic Cooperation | NRCan | Natural Resources Canada |
| CEP | Caspian Environmental Programme | OSCE | Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe |
| CER | Certified Emission Reduction Credit | OCEEA | Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities |
| CFT | Combating the Financing of Terrorism | OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| CORE | Co-operation for the Rehabilitation of Chernobyl-affected Territories | OSPRI | Oil Spill Preparedness Regional Initiative |
| EATL | Expert Group on Euro-Asian Transport Links | PC | Permanent Council |
| EBRD | European Bank for Reconstruction and Development | REC | Regional environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe |
| EEC | Economic and Environmental Committee | SDC | Swiss Agency on Co-operation and Development |
| EED | Economic and Environmental Dimension | SME | Small and Medium Sized Enterprises |
| EEF | Economic and Environmental Forum | UN | United Nations |
| EEO | Economic and Environmental Officer | UNECE | United Nations Economic Commission for Europe |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment | UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| ENVSEC | Environment and Security Initiative | UNDESA | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment | UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| FIN | Financial Integrity Network | UNICEF | United Nations Children Fund |
| GHG | Greenhouse Gases | UN ISDR | United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction |
| GIS | Geographical Information Systems | UNODC | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime |
| GPML | Global Programme against Money Laundering | UN OHRLLS | UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States |
| GPS | Global Positioning Satellite | USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| GTZ | German Agency for Technical Co-operation | WCO | World Customs Organization |
| HELCOM | Helsinki Commission (Baltic Marine Environmental Protection Commission) | WMAP | Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan |
| IFC | International Finance Corporation | | |
| ICPDR | International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River | | |
| SIC ICWC | Scientific Information Centre of the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination | | |
| IFAS | International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea | | |
| IGAC | International Group for Anti-Corruption Co-ordination | | |

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