

Annual Report 2004 OSCE Annual Report



early warning conflict prevention crisis management post-conflict rehabilitation human rights democratization
confidence-building measures arms control preventive diplomacy security-building measures election monitoring

Annual Report on **OSCE** Activities 2004

early warning
conflict prevention
crisis management
post-conflict rehabilitation
human rights
democratization
confidence-building measures
arms control
preventive diplomacy
security-building measures
election monitoring
police training
freedom of the media
anti-trafficking
protecting national minorities
economic and environmental security
action against terrorism
institution-building
border monitoring
building civil society



OSCE PARTICIPATING STATES

Albania | Andorra | Armenia | Austria | Azerbaijan | Belarus | Belgium
Bosnia and Herzegovina | Bulgaria | Canada | Croatia | Cyprus | Czech Republic
Denmark | Estonia | Finland | France | Georgia | Germany | Greece | Holy See | Hungary
Iceland | Ireland | Italy | Kazakhstan | Kyrgyzstan | Latvia | Liechtenstein | Lithuania
Luxembourg | the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | Malta | Moldova | Monaco
Netherlands | Norway | Poland | Portugal | Romania | Russian Federation | San Marino
Serbia and Montenegro | Slovakia | Slovenia | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | Tajikistan
Turkey | Turkmenistan | Ukraine | United Kingdom | United States of America | Uzbekistan

PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION

Afghanistan | Japan | Republic of Korea | Mongolia | Thailand

MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION

Algeria | Egypt | Israel | Jordan | Morocco | Tunisia

2004

Annual Report on OSCE Activities

KEY EVENTS IN 2004

- >> The OSCE deploys its largest election observation mission ever, with more than 1,200 monitors who observe the repeat of the second round of the presidential election in Ukraine.
- >> For the first time in its history, the OSCE sends an election team outside its region: the Election Support Team to Afghanistan advises the country's election authorities on their electoral framework.
- >> A major management reform overhauls the OSCE's internal structure and procedures.
- >> The 55 participating States engage in a lively debate about the relevance and future of the OSCE and take steps to transform and strengthen the Organization.
- >> Three major conferences focus on combating anti-Semitism, intolerance and racism.
- >> The Chairman-in-Office appoints a special representative to strengthen the fight against human trafficking.
- >> Mongolia is accepted as a new OSCE Partner for Co-operation.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL, JÁN KUBIŠ

This is the last OSCE Annual Report that I will have the honour of presenting since my term as Secretary General expires in June 2005. I am proud to have served the OSCE for more than a decade and to have played a part in implementing the Organization's mandate to promote security through co-operation between equal partners across Europe. This report is a testament to the important work that the OSCE continues to carry out in the name of comprehensive security, democracy, human dignity and peace. It also rightly highlights the valuable work of our professional and dedicated staff in the field, the Secretariat, and the Institutions, and demonstrates to a broader audience the often unsung achievements of this unique and remarkable Organization.

The year was a challenging one for the Organization. The OSCE continued to serve as a forum for addressing some of the most topical European political and security issues of the day. 2004 began with the repeat presidential election in Georgia and ended with the re-run of the second round of the Ukrainian presidential election. Both events were observed by the OSCE, as were 13 other elections throughout the year. They demonstrated again the Organization's importance as an election monitoring instrument.

However, the year also brought into the foreground some fundamental questions concerning the future of the Organization. There are differences of opinion on the functioning, effectiveness and relevance of the Organization in a number of areas and on some key issues within the OSCE.

Many OSCE countries have spoken about the need for transforming the Organization. Our Chairman-in-Office, Solomon Passy, championed the cause and challenged participating States to introduce sweeping reforms. One step was to clarify and strengthen the role of the Secretary General – powers which I hope my successor will make full use of. Another was to establish a Panel of Eminent Persons on Strengthening the Effectiveness of the OSCE, which will make recommendations in 2005. Discussions on reforming field activities and other aspects of the OSCE – such as our rules of procedure – continue. All this will influence the work of the OSCE in 2005, when we will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the 15th anniversary of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe.

The year 2004 witnessed increased attention to border-related issues, a strong emphasis on combating trafficking in human beings, intolerance and discrimination, and the adoption of a Gender Action Plan.

Our ability to work effectively was enhanced by the introduction of the integrated resource management system, known as IRMA. For a relatively modest amount of money, we have put in place a system that allows us to effectively manage our material and personnel resources, provides transparency and accountability to



OSCE/Svetoslav Stancev

participating States – our stakeholders – and allows us to quickly and flexibly transform political decisions into action.

The OSCE broadened its outreach in 2004. In September, we sent an Election Support Team to Afghanistan to assist the Afghan authorities in that country's major step towards a representative and pluralistic democracy. Because this was the first time the OSCE launched such an operation on the territory of one of its Partners for Co-operation, it receives special attention in this report. We continued our close co-operation with Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation and welcomed Mongolia as the newest Partner. We also strengthened co-operation with other regional and sub-regional organizations, such as the Shanghai Co-operation Organization or the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It is encouraging to see the level of interest that people outside of the OSCE area have for our Organization.

The OSCE is at a turning point. What happens in 2005 in the area of reform will very much determine the attitude that participating States will adopt towards the OSCE in the future. Finding the right path which would fully preserve and reinforce the basics and *acquis* of the Organization may be difficult, but that is a reflection of the changes in Europe at the moment, especially after European Union and NATO enlargement. Europe is in transition: it is only logical that the OSCE should also be transformed and remain attuned to the political desires, interests and objectives of its participants.

Throughout its history, the OSCE has demonstrated its creativity, flexibility, and ability to effectively tackle some of Europe's more complex and salient security challenges. This period of change should be no exception.

I will miss the OSCE, but I am confident that it has a bright future. I leave in the knowledge that the Organization is dynamic, adaptable, administratively in order and well-equipped to serve the interests of its participating States.

I take this opportunity to thank the participating States for their support, and I salute all OSCE staff for their excellent work. Through the words and pictures of this report, I hope that you, the reader, will gain a better appreciation of an organization which, day-in and day-out, demonstrates the importance and practical value of co-operative and constructive multilateralism.

Ján Kubiš

The OSCE at a glance

Spanning the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is the world's largest security organization. It is characterized by its broad membership of Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian States, its co-operative and comprehensive approach to security, its special conflict prevention instruments, its established tradition of open dialogue and consensus-building, and its well-developed pattern of co-operation with other international organizations. At the heart of the Organization's work lies its large, operational network of field missions.

From a conference to an organization

The OSCE evolved out of a meeting process that started in the early 1970s. Back then, an intense series of diplomatic negotiations began on the issue of security and economic co-operation in Europe. In 1973, during the Cold War, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) was created to serve as a continuous multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between East and West.

In 1975, 35 Heads of Government or State signed the CSCE Final Act in Helsinki. This event, which represented a breakthrough for East-West relations, served as the foundation of the 'Helsinki Process', which became the main forum for political consultation and negotiation on a comprehensive set of issues, including questions of human rights during the Cold War.

Until 1990, the CSCE functioned mainly as a series of meetings and conferences that built on and extended the participating States' commitments. However, with the Cold War coming to an end, the Paris Summit of November 1990 set the CSCE on a new course. In the Paris Charter for a New Europe, the CSCE was called upon to respond to the new challenges of the post-Cold War period. In addition, a major arms control agreement, the original Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, as well as other important military security accords were adopted.

In the early 1990s, the Secretariat and the first Institutions were set up, missions were established, and the Conference's work became more structured. By the mid-1990s, the CSCE was no longer a process – it had become an organization. As a result, the CSCE was renamed the 'Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe' with effect from 1 January 1995.

Today, the OSCE has 55 participating States, with 11 countries in the Mediterranean region and Asia as its Partners for Co-operation. In 2004, the Annual Budget amounted to €180,832,700. The Organization has no legal status under international law. Thus, all decisions taken by the OSCE are politically though not legally binding.

How the OSCE is run

Overall responsibility for executive action lies with the Chairmanship, which rotates annually. The foreign minister of the country holding the Chairmanship assumes the position of Chairman-in-Office (CiO). In 2004, Bulgaria held the Chairmanship, while the Netherlands (2003 Chairmanship) and Slovenia (2005 Chairmanship) were the other members of the OSCE Troika. In addition, the Chairman-in-Office may appoint Personal or Special Representatives to deal with specific issues or situations.

Summits or meetings of OSCE Heads of State or Government are held periodically. In between Summits, the Ministerial Council meets as the annual meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the 55 OSCE participating States to provide guidance and orientation to the Organization. The Senior Council meets once a year as the Economic Forum in Prague to discuss the economic and environmental dimension.

The Permanent Council is the main regular body for political consultation and decision-making. Composed of the permanent representatives of the participating States, it meets weekly in Vienna to discuss all issues pertinent to the OSCE and to take appropriate decisions. Also convening weekly in the Hofburg,

the Forum for Security Co-operation deals with the military aspects of security, including arms control and confidence- and security-building measures.

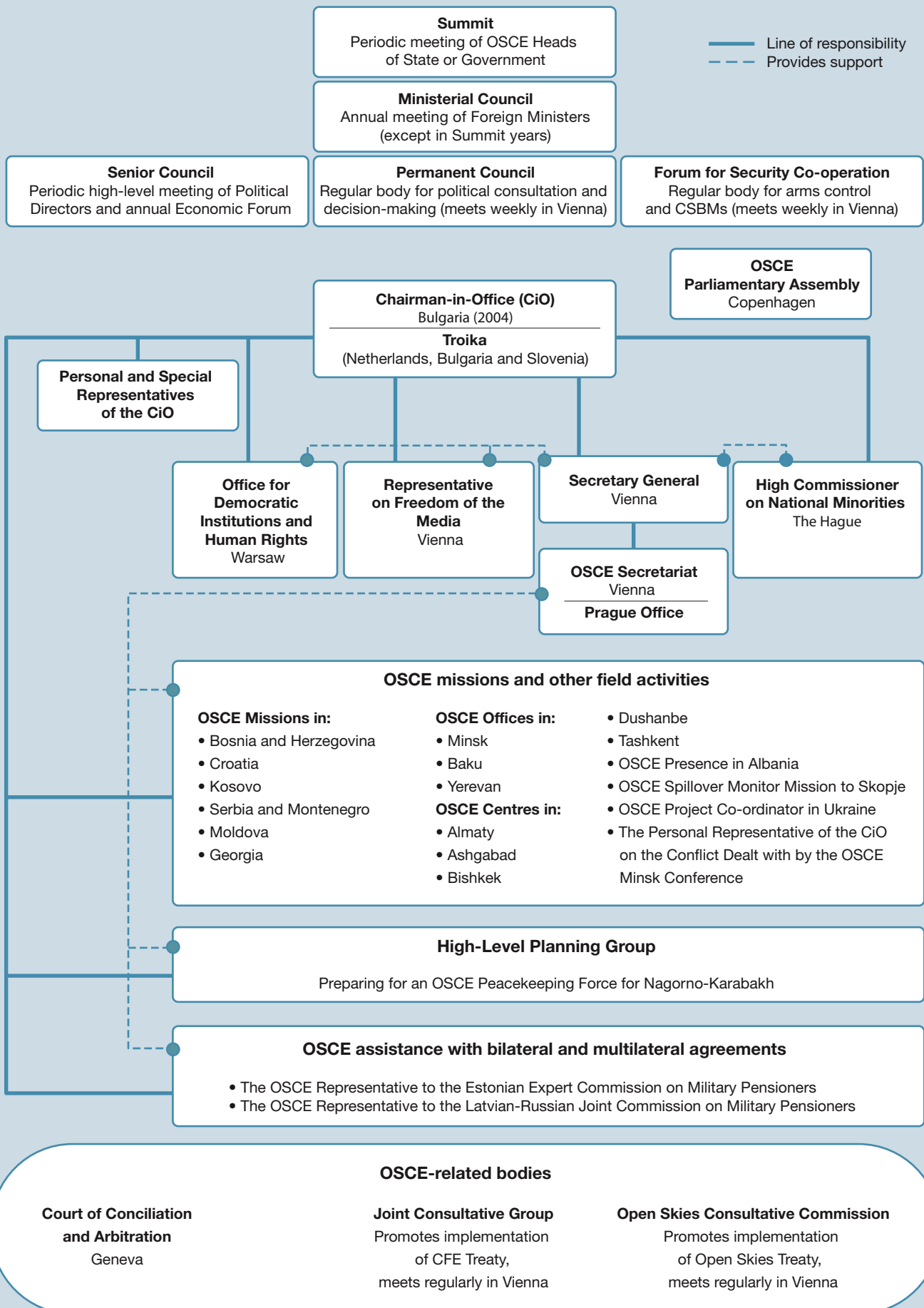
Located in Copenhagen, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly consists of more than 300 parliamentarians from all the participating States with the aim of providing a parliamentary dimension to the activities of the OSCE. It facilitates inter-parliamentary dialogue, while its members also play an important role in election monitoring. The main annual session of the Parliamentary Assembly is held in summer.

The Secretariat of the OSCE is based in Vienna. It is headed by the Secretary General, appointed on a three-year basis. Ambassador Ján Kubiš of Slovakia is currently serving his second term ending in June 2005. The Secretary General acts as the representative of the Chairman-in-Office and supports him in all activities aimed at fulfilling the goals of the OSCE. His tasks include managing the OSCE structures and operations, working closely with the Chairman-in-Office in the preparation and guidance of OSCE meetings, and ensuring the implementation of the Organization's decisions. The Sofia Ministerial Council in December 2004 further strengthened the Secretary General's role by mandating him to support the process of political dialogue and negotiations among participating States.

To help the OSCE fulfil its mission, the Organization established specialized institutions and field operations. While holding three very different mandates, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (established in 1990), the High Commissioner on National Minorities (1994) and the Representative on Freedom of the Media (1997) all work towards assisting States to comply with OSCE principles and commitments within the region. Currently, the OSCE has 18 field missions in 16 States with a total staff of around 3,500. Some 77 per cent of the OSCE's funds in 2004 went into field operations, providing a testimony to the Organization's commitment to the field.



OSCE STRUCTURES AND INSTITUTIONS



Chairmanship Chairmanship Chairmanship



AP/Bas Czerwinski

Chairman-in-Office | Permanent Council | Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office
Chairpersons of the Contact Group with Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation

Report of the Chairman-in-Office

“The OSCE has come a long way in the past decades. Looking at the distance covered and casting a glance into the foreseeable future, I think we can state with conviction that the OSCE remains relevant and important for all of us.

Many challenges will confront us in the year ahead. However, united by our common values, keeping together in the spirit of solidarity and drawing strength from our diversity, we will not spare efforts to make the Organization stronger.”

OSCE 2004 Chairman-in-Office, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy

The OSCE’s agenda in 2004 was largely set by the decisions taken at the Maastricht Ministerial Council in December 2003, particularly the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century and the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension. In light of these decisions, the Bulgarian Chairmanship decided that implementation should be the main theme for the year. A major topic in 2004 was reform of the OSCE. The Chairmanship also put tolerance and non-discrimination high on its agenda, holding key events on combating anti-Semitism, racism, and xenophobia, and tackling hate speech on the Internet. Intensifying the co-operation between the OSCE and other international organizations engaged in maintaining security and stability in the OSCE area featured prominently in the activities of the Bulgarian Chairmanship. With the Organization’s first mission outside its area – the Election Support Team to Afghanistan – the OSCE broke new ground under the Bulgarian Chairmanship. Mongolia was welcomed as the OSCE’s newest Partner for Co-operation.

Reforming the OSCE

In 2004, the debate on OSCE reform gathered considerable momentum and achieved prominence in the Organization’s agenda. The enlargement of both the EU and NATO has redrawn the political map of Europe, with implications for other organizations such as the OSCE. New threats and challenges to security have affected strategic priorities. Ideas were proposed, suggesting that ten years since the transformation of the CSCE to the OSCE, the Organization should be re-assessed, adapted and strengthened. Some participating States were particularly outspoken about the need to transform the OSCE. On 3 July 2004, Presidents of nine members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) issued a statement on the need to reform the OSCE, which was followed on 15 September by an appeal by eight CIS Foreign Ministers meeting in Astana.

The Chairman-in-Office was personally involved in the reform debate, as manifested in his address to the 13th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Edinburgh on 5 July. There, and on subsequent occasions, he emphasized the need for:

- making the OSCE less bureaucratic;
- better matching resources with priorities;
- shifting resources from south-eastern Europe to the Caucasus and Central Asia;
- changing the venue of human dimension and Economic Forum meetings to better reflect the geographic diversity of the OSCE area;
- updating the OSCE rules of procedure;
- improving the effectiveness of field activities; and
- strengthening the role of the Secretary General.

These and other ideas were discussed in the Working Group on Reform, chaired by the Ambassador of Romania, and the Working Group on Improving the Functioning and Effectiveness of OSCE Field Operations, chaired by the Ambassador of Canada and, since September, by the Ambassador of Austria.

For the first time since 1973, an exercise on updating the rules of procedure was carried out, and significant progress was made. At the Sofia Ministerial Council, a decision was taken clarifying the role of the Secretary General.

In line with the prevailing view that the OSCE's effectiveness should be increased, the Ministers decided in Sofia to establish a Panel of Eminent Persons on Strengthening the Effectiveness of the OSCE. This would be followed by specially convened high-level OSCE consultations in 2005 aimed at drawing up a strategic vision for the OSCE in the 21st century.

The reform process is ongoing and will be a topic for debate in 2005 when the OSCE celebrates a number of anniversaries and looks ahead to the future.

The fight against terrorism

Terrorism remains one of the gravest threats to the individual and common security of OSCE participating States. The horrendous attacks in Beslan and Madrid in 2004 further demonstrated that terrorism is a clear and present danger in the OSCE area. Reinforcing the Organization's role in combating terrorism therefore remained a high priority of the Bulgarian Chairmanship.

The Chairmanship broadened the mandate of the informal Group of Friends on Combating Terrorism, which was established in 2003. This enabled the Group, chaired by the Ambassador of Sweden, not only to review the implementation of previous commitments, but also to turn its attention towards responding to other current and emerging terrorist threats.

The high degree of attention paid to terrorism by participating States was also demonstrated at the second Annual Security Review Conference held in Vienna on 23 and 24 June.

In the framework of its specific mandate, the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) made a significant contribution to enhancing the OSCE's role in curbing the terrorist threat.

The success of the work of the informal Group of Friends and the FSC was evident in the number and range of counter-terrorism decisions that were taken at the Sofia Ministerial Council:

- combating the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes;
- enhancing container security;
- reporting lost/stolen passports to Interpol's database;
- developing principles on export controls of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS);
- developing principles on the control of brokering in small arms and light weapons;
- producing standard elements of end-user certificates and verification procedures for exports of small arms and light weapons;
- implementing the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition;
- endorsing Permanent Council decisions on further measures to suppress terrorist financing; and
- demonstrating solidarity with victims of terrorism.

The Sofia Ministerial Statement on Preventing and Combating Terrorism reaffirmed the resolve of participating States to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

"What is called for are practical robust measures to fight terrorism."

Solomon Passy

In addition, a number of practical OSCE conferences and workshops gathered experts from OSCE participating States for an exchange of information, experiences, and best practices in countering urgent terrorist threats such as the MANPADS threat to civil aviation.

In its efforts to guide the OSCE's counter-terrorism work, the Chairmanship focused on the fundamental principle that the fight against terrorism should not be used as a pretext to restrict human rights and civil liberties in any way.

Recognizing the OSCE's growing role in counter-terrorism and its successful interaction with other organizations, the OSCE hosted, in co-operation with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Third Special Meeting of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (UNCTC) with International, Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations in March.

Border security and management

With the adoption of the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century at the Maastricht Ministerial Council in 2003, participating States agreed on developing an OSCE Border Security and Management Concept. An informal Working Group of Friends on Borders was set up in January under the chairmanship of the Ambassador of Belgium. The Working Group started its work by exchanging information and experience on what had been done so far in the field of border-related issues, both inside and outside the OSCE, and by promoting a focused discussion among participating States. Between June and October, extensive work was done on drafting the concept. Due to the complexity of the issue, some participating States felt that the time was not yet ripe to agree on a concept on borders in the OSCE. In Sofia, the Ministers identified the political goals, principles and considerations to be taken into account in completing the task in 2005.

As a response to the OSCE's commitment to the Ohrid process in terms of civilian aspects of training and advice to border police, assistance to and facilitation of institution-building as well as promotion of regional co-operation, the OSCE's South Eastern Europe Cross-border Co-operation Programme was implemented. The Programme's first phase consisted of six seminars, all based on the results of a needs assessment mission that took place in autumn

2003. The Programme responded to the most urgent needs and demands in this field and addressed senior and middle management at the regional and sub-regional levels. It aimed at accelerating regional cross-border co-operation among the respective border police forces and at setting the scene for more specific topics under the second phase in 2005. All seminars were well attended by the Programme's countries and their neighbouring States. Participants were unanimous in agreeing that the aims had been successfully met, in particular the 'quick impact' solutions to problems that the Programme had set out to achieve.

In September, the Bulgarian Chairmanship organized a two-day joint OSCE-UNODC Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security. The aim was to share international organizations' experience in promoting more effective border management and security as well as to develop a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to delivering international assistance. Almost 200 participants from all 55 OSCE participating States, Partners for Co-operation and international organizations such as NATO, the European Commission, CIS, Europol, Interpol, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Wassenaar Arrangement, and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, attended the conference. The event set the scene for ensuring better and closer co-operation among the international organizations that have border management and security-related mandates.

The Chairmanship, the Secretariat and the OSCE Mission to Moldova developed contingency plans for an OSCE Border and Customs Monitoring Operation (BCMO) at the Moldovan-Ukrainian border. As of the end of 2004, implementation of the BCMO was not yet possible.

Education

“Education is vitally important for empowering individuals and groups and for developing their capacity for the peaceful resolution of conflicts within and among nations.”

Solomon Passy

At the outset, the Bulgarian Chairmanship included education, in the widest sense of the word, among its priorities. Taking into account the global interest towards security in the Central Asian region, a main focus of the Bulgarian Chairmanship was to draw the attention of participating States and other international organizations to education in Central Asia. This was deemed important as high educational standards can help foster stability and security in the area and can give a further impetus to the reform process.

In light of the above, a one-day Ministerial Conference on Education as an Investment into the Future was held in Tashkent on 5 April. Organized by the Bulgarian Chairmanship and hosted by

the Uzbek Government, the Conference brought together Ministers of Education of Central Asian States and of Afghanistan as well as institutions and international organizations. This included international financial institutions, development agencies and research institutes from within and outside the region. The Chairman-in-Office addressed the conference.

The event's main objectives were to offer a platform to the region's States to illustrate their achievements, foster increased co-operation and synergies with all actors, and take stock of ongoing supporting activities by international organizations. The conference issued a number of recommendations, including: (i) internationalizing the education systems; (ii) achieving quality education for all; (iii) providing higher salaries to teachers; (iv) strengthening vocational training; (v) training staff at education ministries; (vi) developing an education financing framework based on medium-term targets and on associated costs of inputs; and (vii) developing ideas for regional co-operation, following the example of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek.

The Bulgarian Chairmanship further encouraged synergies with the OSCE's other education-related work since the topic cuts across different dimensions and facilitated education-related activities in the framework of:

- field operations, in particular the curriculum development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, and Latin script schools in Moldova as well as the OSCE Mission in Kosovo's youth and education programme;
- the OSCE Conferences on Anti-Semitism in Berlin, and on Tolerance and the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination in Brussels;
- the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights' (ODIHR) Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on human rights education and training held in March;
- the 12th Economic Forum, which developed recommendations for education, capacity-building and training programmes;
- the work of the High Commissioner on National Minorities; and
- the activities of the Representative on Freedom of the Media.

Furthermore, the Chairmanship tasked the Secretariat's Conflict Prevention Centre to prepare an OSCE-wide survey of all past, present and future OSCE education-related activities. The survey highlighted that the scope of the OSCE's involvement in education covered activities from capacity-building of educational institutions to vocational training as well as awareness-raising activities and advocacy for OSCE values and commitments. The findings reconfirmed a considerable role and investment on the part of the OSCE in education as it relates to conflict prevention.

Sofia Ministerial Council

Foreign Ministers from OSCE participating States met in Sofia on 6 and 7 December for the 12th Ministerial Council of the OSCE. The Ministers adopted 19 decisions on a range of issues, including fighting terrorism, curbing illegal small arms and light weapons, promoting tolerance and non-discrimination, and combating corruption. The Sofia Ministerial Council documents include:



- Ministerial Statement on Preventing and Combating Terrorism
- Ministerial Declaration on the Sixtieth Anniversary of the End of World War II
- Statement of the Ministerial Council on the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict
- Decision No. 1: Extension of the Mandate of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities
- Decision No. 2: Elaboration of an OSCE Border Security and Management Concept
- Decision No. 3: Combating the Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes
- Decision No. 4: Reporting Lost/Stolen Passports to Interpol's Automated Search Facility/Stolen Travel Document Database
- Decision No. 5: Further Implementing the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition
- Decision No. 6: OSCE Standard Elements of End-User Certificates and Verification Procedures for Small Arms and Light Weapons Exports
- Decision No. 7: OSCE Principles on the Control of Brokering in Small Arms and Light Weapons
- Decision No. 8: OSCE Principles for Export Controls of Man-Portable Air Defence Systems
- Decision No. 9: Enhancing Container Security
- Decision No. 10: Improving the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Economic Forum
- Decision No. 11: Combating Corruption
- Decision No. 12: Tolerance and Non-Discrimination
- Decision No. 13: The Special Needs for Child Victims of Trafficking for Protection and Assistance
- Decision No. 14: 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality
- Decision No. 15: Role of the OSCE Secretary General
- Decision No. 16: Establishment of a Panel of Eminent Persons on Strengthening the Effectiveness of the OSCE
- Decision No. 17: OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation
- Decision No. 18: OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2007
- Decision No. 19: Time and Place of the Next Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council

Politico-Military Dimension

Forum for Security and Co-operation

The Bulgarian Chairmanship welcomed the OSCE's efforts in promoting the fight against trafficking of small arms and light weapons. The implementation of the Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons adopted in 2000 was high on the FSC's agenda in 2004. In May, the FSC's determination to reduce the risk of diversion of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) into illicit markets led to the adoption of a decision on OSCE Principles for Export Controls of MANPADS. Furthermore, a decision on OSCE Principles on the Control of Brokering in Small Arms and Light Weapons was adopted just before the Sofia Ministerial Council. The decision aimed at improving the control of arms brokering, thus minimizing the risk of diversion of these weapons into illegal markets and into the hands of terrorists and other criminal groups. The FSC recognized the need for stricter export controls of these weapons to prevent the destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread. This resulted in the adoption of two decisions on Verification Procedures for Small Arms and Light Weapons Exports and Standard Elements of End-User Certificates. The Ministerial Council in Sofia endorsed all these decisions.

The Chairmanship also noted the risks and challenges to human security and to the environment posed by the presence of stockpiles of conventional ammunition. The Chairmanship welcomed the principles and procedures agreed to by participating States and the steps already taken to implement the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition. The Ministerial Council in Sofia therefore asked the FSC to submit a progress report on the implementation of the Stockpiles Document to the next Ministerial Council in 2005.

The Bulgarian Chairmanship strongly believes that the implementation of the Documents on Small Arms and Light Weapons and on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition will enhance security in the OSCE area. The OSCE has already received several requests for assistance from participating States. Three States indicated their willingness to receive operational assistance for the destruction of these weapons, and five States requested assistance for the destruction of surplus ammunition. Considerable financial means will be required for these operations. The Chairmanship encouraged participating States to continue to address this issue.

Annual Security Review Conference

The Chairmanship welcomed the results of the second Annual Security Review Conference, which was convened with the support of the Secretariat in Vienna on 23 and 24 June. The event reviewed activities undertaken the previous year in the field of security. Its goals were to improve the exchange of information on major security issues and to set strategies and define priorities for the coming year. The conference consisted of four sessions. Participants from all 55 participating States including additional representatives from capitals took part in the discussions, together with all ten Partners for Co-operation and a number of key international partners of the OSCE. Special focus was placed on terrorism-related initiatives, border-related work, traditional politico-military activities, and

the way forward, touching specifically on the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century and the need to make the Strategy operational.

Economic and Environmental Dimension

The 2004 agenda in the economic and environmental dimension was largely set by the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension. With guidance from the Economic and Environmental Sub-Committee, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) engaged in a number of activities to implement the Document in the fields of economic co-operation, good governance, small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) development, anti-trafficking, human capacity-building, and sustainable development.

Special emphasis was placed on improving the OSCE's performance in the areas of early warning and implementation of existing commitments. To this end, a Memorandum of Understanding of Co-operation was signed at the Sofia Ministerial Council between the OSCE and the UN Economic Commission for Europe.

The 12th Economic Forum took place in Prague on 31 May under the theme of 'New Challenges for Building up Institutional and Human Capacity for Economic Development and Co-operation'. The Chairman-in-Office suggested that in future, Economic Forum meetings should be organized differently and held in other locations within the OSCE area. At the Sofia Ministerial Council, a decision was taken on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Economic Forum. Tajikistan and Turkmenistan sent invitations to host future meetings of the Economic Forum.

The OCEEA assessed the recommendations made at the 12th OSCE Economic Forum and suggested concrete follow-up in the fields of SME development, investment, human capacity-building, economic integration and the fight against corruption. The Sofia Ministerial Council adopted a decision on combating corruption.

Human Dimension

The Chairmanship's activities in the human dimension pursued several tracks. A number of activities were channelled through the regular OSCE human dimension meetings: the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, the Human Dimension Seminar and the three Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings (SHDMs). Other activities stemmed from decisions taken at the 2003 Maastricht Ministerial Council, such as the Conferences on Anti-Semitism and on Tolerance and the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, the Meeting on the Relationship between Racist, Xenophobic and Anti-Semitic Propaganda on the Internet and Hate Crimes, and the work on the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality.

The three SHDMs in Vienna, organized in co-operation with the ODIHR, were devoted separately to human rights education and

training, electoral standards and commitments, and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The first of these meetings took place on 25 and 26 March. The theme 'Human Rights Education and Training' was chosen to give all interested parties, including international organizations and NGOs, the opportunity to consolidate ongoing efforts to promote human rights education and training in the OSCE region. Participants shared best practices and discussed topics such as formal human rights education, its inclusion in school curricula and training of public officials, and informal human rights education. Useful recommendations on how to improve the quality of human rights education and training were examined.

The second meeting on 15 and 16 July was devoted to Electoral Standards and Commitments. It provided a discussion forum on the implementation of existing OSCE commitments for democratic elections and follow-up to ODIHR recommendations. Several OSCE delegations emphasized that the participating States should consider the possibility of supplementary commitments in addition to existing ones. The meeting underlined the necessity to address emerging challenges, such as electronic voting, low turnout trends, recall elections and referenda.

The third SHDM on 4 and 5 November examined the situation of IDPs. The main objective was to discuss practical solutions that OSCE Institutions and participating States can apply to alleviate the plight of IDPs in the OSCE area. The meeting featured general discussions of state responsibility towards IDPs, their fundamental rights and freedoms and more focused debates on durable solutions, including return, resettlement, reintegration and property restitution. Participants called on participating States to develop detailed laws and policies to protect IDPs.

As stipulated by the OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues, the Organization's participating States developed an Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality that sets out the OSCE's priorities in promoting gender equality in the Organization and all participating States and in monitoring the Plan's implementation. The Action Plan was endorsed by the Sofia Ministerial Council. The annual Human Dimension Seminar held in Warsaw from 12 to 14 May was devoted to Democratic Institutions and Democratic Governance. The meeting provided a forum to revive the debate on the current state and future of democratic institutions and democratic governance. The meeting underscored the urgency of fostering a more developed understanding of how democratic processes work. Moreover, the need to develop a culture of respect and to take active part in developing effective and inclusive mechanisms of interaction between citizens and governmental authorities was underlined.

As tasked by Ministerial Council Decision No. 4 on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination adopted in Maastricht, the Bulgarian Chairmanship continued the important work begun in 2003. In co-operation with Germany and Belgium, it organized two major conferences on these issues. The first one, which took place in Berlin on 28 and 29 April, focused on anti-Semitism. It was

followed on 13 and 14 September by the Conference on Tolerance and the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination in Brussels. Both events confirmed the OSCE States' determination to work together in combating racism, xenophobia, discrimination and anti-Semitism. In addition, two Permanent Council decisions tasked the ODIHR with further action in promoting tolerance and non-discrimination. The conferences highlighted the key role of the ODIHR as a data collection point and urged participating States, NGOs and others to work in partnership with the Office. The Chairman-in-Office's Berlin Declaration and Brussels Declaration reflect the spirit of the two conferences.

As urged by the Ministerial Council in Maastricht, the Chairmanship, in co-operation with France, organized a special Meeting on the Relationship between Racist, Xenophobic and Anti-Semitic Propaganda on the Internet and Hate Crimes' The meeting, which took place on 16 and 17 June in Paris, reaffirmed the importance of fully respecting the rights to freedom of information and expression, reiterated the commitment to combat hate crimes and stressed the need of promoting tolerance, mutual respect, dialogue and understanding, including through the media and the Internet.

The Human Dimension Implementation Meeting took place in Warsaw from 4 to 15 October. The first week was marked by a comprehensive review of all OSCE commitments in the Human Dimension. Three selected topics were discussed: promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination, freedom of assembly and association and complementarity, and co-operation between international organizations in promoting human rights. On a special day devoted to freedom of assembly and association, participants highlighted the need for the OSCE to maintain its focus on the protection of human rights defenders. Other recommendations included continuing the political dialogue with participating States, training of government officials, introducing changes in administrative practices and deepening co-operation between international organizations in promoting human rights.

On 10 March, following a silence procedure by the Ministerial Council, the Chairman-in-Office appointed Miklós Haraszti of Hungary to the position of OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

In line with Maastricht Ministerial Council Decision No. 2 on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the Chairman-in-Office appointed Helga Konrad of Austria as his Special Representative on Trafficking in Human Beings for a two-year period, beginning in May 2004.

As part of the OSCE's overall fight against discrimination and the Organization's efforts to promote tolerance, the Chairman-in-Office appointed three Personal Representatives on 22 December: Anastasia Crickley of Ireland as Personal Representative on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions; Gert Weisskirchen of Germany as Personal Representative on Combating anti-Semitism; and Ambassador Ömür Orhun of Turkey as Personal Representative on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims.

Combating anti-Semitism, xenophobia and discrimination

The OSCE's activities in the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance gained increased momentum in 2004. Three major international events devoted to these issues were held in the course of the year, which concluded with the appointment by the Chairman-in-Office of three Personal Representatives to promote greater tolerance and combat racism, xenophobia and discrimination in the OSCE region. At the Sofia Ministerial Council meeting in December, the Foreign Ministers adopted a strong decision on tolerance and non-discrimination that further underlined the Organization's continuing focus on the issue.

Moving on to action: Berlin Conference on Anti-Semitism

At the invitation of German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, more than 500 delegates from OSCE States and their ten partner countries met in April in Berlin for the OSCE's second Conference on Anti-Semitism. The meeting, which was attended by many ministers, high-level politicians and public figures, received worldwide media attention. German President Johannes Rau, who opened the conference, said that the OSCE had been the first security organization to recognize the relationship between international security and human rights.

Key topics for discussion at the event were the roles of government, civil society, education and media in combating anti-Semitism and in promoting tolerance. The Chairman-in-Office – on behalf of the delegates – concluded the two-day conference with what he called the “Berlin Declaration”, which condemned all manifestations of anti-Semitism and committed the OSCE participating States to take specific, practical counter-measures in this regard, including the submission of information and statistics on anti-Semitic and other hate crimes to the ODIHR. The ODIHR was tasked with reporting on and publicly disseminating this information as well as closely following anti-Semitic incidents in the OSCE area.

The importance of this major international meeting was underlined by many of the key speakers. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy, said: “I believe our conference in the last two days has made a significant contribution to making our collective response to anti-Semitism more credible.” He also stressed the crucial role of education in the fight against anti-Semitism and hate crimes: “Bias is learned in childhood. Special importance has to be given to the promotion of educational programmes for combating anti-Semitism and of

education about the Holocaust and about respect for all ethnic and religious groups.”

The end of the Berlin Conference was marked by an emotional moment: as a tribute to the European-Jewish dialogue, Minister Passy handed over the yellow star his grandfather had worn as a Jew in Bulgaria during World War II to the German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer.



AFP/Michael Urban-STF

Presenting the small yellow star to Fischer, Passy said: “My grandfather used to say that the time would come when we and the Germans would be allies again. He used to say: ‘Then we shall return the yellow star to the Germans.’ I am happy that I can now fulfil the legacy of my grandfather and return the yellow star which he wore.”

The Paris meeting: racist propaganda, hate crimes, and the Internet

In June, a meeting in Paris enlarged the ongoing debate on intolerance by including the most modern means of global communication: the Internet. For two days, senior officials from OSCE States and professionals from the Internet industry as well as NGO experts exchanged views on whether the upsurge in hate crimes in OSCE countries could be related to the reportedly steady increase of racist and anti-Semitic content on the Internet.

The event reflected the diverse views of participating States and NGOs on the subject. Several countries called on the OSCE to take steps against such Internet content and hold Internet providers responsible for their sites. Others warned of stifling the diversity of the Internet as a modern information tool and emphasized the role of self-regulation, educational measures and best practices. In following up to the Meeting, the OSCE Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 633 on Promoting Tolerance and Media Freedom on the Internet, which commits the participating States of the OSCE to take concrete actions in combating hate crimes, which can be fuelled by racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic propaganda on the Internet.

“A clear route mapped out”: Brussels Conference on Tolerance and the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination

The series of conferences ended in Brussels in September, where some 700 government representatives, among them many ministers, public figures and leaders of civil society, discussed actions that best promote tolerance and bring forward effective measures to combat discrimination and xenophobia in the OSCE region.

In his keynote address, Prince Hassan of Jordan urged participants not just to tolerate but to respect others. He spoke about universal awareness of diversity and the importance of shared values as a means to combat xenophobia and racism.

The Chairman-in-Office, on behalf of the participating States, concluded the conference with what he called the “Brussels Declaration” that, among other issues, condemned without reserve all forms of racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and other acts of intolerance, including against Muslims as well as all organizations and individuals promoting such hatred or acts, and urged a structural follow-up to ensure implementation of the commitments on tolerance and non-discrimination. The Declaration also committed participating States to promote and facilitate open and transparent interfaith and intercultural dialogue and to consider establishing training programmes for law enforcement and judicial officials on legislation and enforcement of legislation related to hate crimes.

“We now have a clear route mapped out,” Minister Passy said at the conclusion of the conference. “Action is called for and the OSCE is determined to provide a strong lead.”

Three new Personal Representatives

An additional important step was taken in December, when the Chairman-in-Office appointed Anastasia Crickley, Chair of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, Gert Weisskirchen, Professor of Higher Education and Member of the German Parliament, and Ambassador Ömür Orhun, Head of the Turkish Delegation to the OSCE from 2000 to 2004, as his Personal Representatives to further promote action in the area of non-discrimination and tolerance (see also Report of the Chairman-in-Office).

Operational capacity of the OSCE

OSCE Troika

Consisting of the countries representing the current Chairman-in-Office, his predecessor and successor, the OSCE Troika continued to function as an important tool for co-ordinated action and mid-term planning. In 2004, the OSCE Troika met at the level of foreign ministers in January and in July, including also the Secretary General, the Heads of Institutions and the President of the Parliamentary Assembly.



The 2004 Troika of OSCE Foreign Ministers: Bulgarian Chairman-in-Office, Solomon Passy (centre) and his counterparts from the Netherlands, Bernard Bot (right), and Slovenia, Dimitrij Rupel (left)

Co-operation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

The Chairmanship continued to co-operate closely with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, including through the Assembly's special representative in Vienna.

The Chairman-in-Office addressed the Assembly's Winter Session on 19 February in Vienna, where he stressed the need for enhancing the co-operation between the Parliamentary Assembly and other OSCE Institutions and bodies.

He also addressed the Assembly's 13th Annual Session in Edinburgh on 5 July, which focused on the theme 'Co-operation and Partnership: Coping with New Security Threats'. He commended the choice of such a timely topic and underlined the role of the Parliamentary Assembly as an important institution promoting the OSCE's values. He also presented a number of ideas for transforming the Organization in order to further improve its efficiency and maintain its contemporary security priorities. These recommendations and ideas found support among the parliamentarians and were included in a Parliamentary Assembly resolution.

Financial issues

Pursuing the activities in 2003 of the informal Financial Committee Working Group on the OSCE's Scales of Contribution, the Bulgarian Chairmanship undertook steps to reach a timely agreement on the Scales. In this endeavour, the Chairmanship was also guided by the two relevant PC decisions on this issue adopted in 2001 (No. 408) and in 2002 (No. 468). During the negotiation process, systematic efforts were made to reconcile the diverging views through consultations in different formats, to reach an acceptable compromise and move further towards 'capacity to pay' levels. From the outset, it was openly stated that reaching consensus on the Scales of Contribution would only be possible if all participating States applied creativity, realism and clear political will to reach a consensus.

In December, following the issuing of several papers representing the Chair's 'Guesses' on the issue, the Chairmanship introduced a final proposal for the two Scales of Contribution, which followed the basic criteria of PC Decisions No. 408 and No. 468 as well as the methodology developed by the Working Group in 2003. The Chairman's proposal avoided both large increases and decreases of the contributions, achieved through limitations in the fluctuation. Practically only one participating State withheld the consensus on this proposal.

Regional issues

In 2004, a priority for Bulgaria's OSCE Chairmanship was to support the process of democratization in Georgia, to re-invigorate the process of dialogue in Moldova, and to maintain effective co-operation with all States where the OSCE maintains field activities. In the course of the year, the Chairmanship had to respond quickly to developments in Ajara and South Ossetia in Georgia, a flare-up of violence in Kosovo, and mass protests in Ukraine following the presidential election there.

CAUCASUS

Southern Caucasus

One of the Chairmanship's main priorities in the southern Caucasus was to promote the peaceful settlement of the existing conflicts and to prevent the occurrence of new conflicts in the region.

In 2004, **Georgia** underwent significant political changes, making OSCE activities in the country particularly challenging and also demanding increased attention from the Organization's Chairmanship.

Following the pledges of support by participating States at the OSCE Ministerial Council in Maastricht in December 2003, the Georgia Election Assistance Programme (GEAP) was set up by the Mission to Georgia to assist the country in the conduct of extraordinary presidential and parliamentary elections on 4 January and 28 March 2004.

The Chairmanship took an active stand in response to the crisis around Ajara. In particular, during the peak of the crisis in mid-March, the Chairman-in-Office flew to Poti to promote a peaceful settlement of the crisis. He met Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania and had a telephone conference with the Head of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara at that time, Aslan Abashidze. The Chairmanship also supported the increased activities of the OSCE Mission in Ajara, particularly in relation to the development of local free media and human rights protection organizations.

In the summer, violence erupted in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. The OSCE appealed repeatedly to Tbilisi and Tskhinvali to cease hostile actions and seek a peaceful solution to the conflict. The Chairman-in-Office discussed the situation with President Saakashvili, Prime Minister Zhvania, and South Ossetian leader Eduard Kokoity. He also discussed issues related to the settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian Conflict with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Colin Powell. In support of the existing OSCE efforts to reduce tensions, the Special Envoy of the Chairman-in-Office, former Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev, visited Georgia from 25 to 28 July. He held talks with

representatives of both sides, urging them to exercise maximum restraint and implement commitments entered into within the framework of the settlement process.

Throughout the crisis, the OSCE actively monitored developments on the ground and sought to reduce tensions. On 6 August, the Permanent Council decided to enhance the Mission's staff by two monitoring officers. After a cease-fire agreement was reached on 13 August, a group of 20 Heads and members of OSCE delegations, accompanied by a representative of the Chairman-in-Office, visited Georgia from 5 to 9 September to get first-hand information on the situation in the country, in particular on the developments related to the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

The OSCE actively sought and welcomed the resumption of the high-level dialogue between the Georgian and South Ossetian leadership. On 5 November, Prime Minister Zhvania and South Ossetian leader Kokoity met and agreed on a number of issues, including the phased demilitarization of the zone of conflict and the necessity to support economic development and ensure freedom of movement of people and goods in the area. Building on these developments, the Chairmanship offered to host a high-level meeting

Observing the November elections in the United States

On 2 November, the citizens of the United States cast their ballots for a new President – an event monitored for the first time by OSCE observers. As is customary for OSCE election observation missions, a team of election experts arrived several weeks before election day in Washington, D.C., to gain an impression of the electoral campaign in the run-up to the polls. Some days before voting day, they were joined by a group of 70 short-term observers, who fanned out to a total of 11 US states: California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia.

to lead the OSCE Short-Term Election Observation Mission. The ten ODHR election experts representing the Long-Term Observation Mission were headed by Professor Rita Süßmuth of Germany.

“The Election Observation Mission enhanced the credibility, not only of the OSCE but also that of the United States as a participating State of the OSCE. It is important for the Organization not to be perceived as applying double standards in the observation and monitoring of elections in the OSCE area.”

Barbara Haering, Head of the Short-Term Election Observation Mission

Electoral reform issues were at the centre of the OSCE's election observation efforts in the US. In 2002, the US Congress approved the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), a law to further reform the electoral system. It stipulates, for the first time, nationwide rules and regulations for election procedures that set national minimum standards for running elections. It also provides federal funds to support the upgrading of voting machines.

The OSCE observers took a close look at the implementation of HAVA, paying special attention to electronic voting machines, whose introduction in the US as well as in other parts of the world had caused much controversy.

The widespread introduction of ATM-style voting machines caused new concerns because of the lack of a paper trail and the potential for manipulation.

“This was an excellent opportunity to exchange democratic practices and know-how, and to get an insight into the spirit of the US approach to the conduct of elections.”

Rita Süßmuth, Head of the Long-Term Observation Mission

Although some observers found themselves barred from entering polling stations because of different local regulations, election monitoring went, for the most part, smoothly. On 4 November, Ms. Haering and Ms. Süßmuth presented the Mission's preliminary post-election statement.

The report concluded that the elections had been conducted in an environment reflecting a long-standing democratic tradition, comprising institutions governed by the rule of law, free and professional media and an active civil society involved in all aspects of the election process. HAVA was to be viewed as a process rather than as a final legislative step. At the same time, the report called for nationwide voter registration rules and clearer procedures for handling provisional ballots and identification as well as for military and overseas voting.



Voter registration in Arlington county, Virginia

Most of the short-term observers were members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Barbara Haering, Vice-President of the Assembly, was appointed by the Chairman-in-Office

in Sofia devoted to identifying possibilities to resolve the conflict. The Chairmanship also welcomed the parties' acknowledgment of the OSCE's positive role in the settlement process, including its financing of the demolition of military fortifications, its support for setting-up a Secretariat of the Joint Peace-Keeping Force and its active role in the implementation of confidence-building projects and the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure in the zone of conflict.

Regarding the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, the OSCE continued to support the UN's efforts to bring about a comprehensive settlement and is following closely developments in the region. The Chairmanship expressed its hope that negotiations will be resumed as soon as possible once a decision on the future political leadership of Abkhazia is reached. The Chairmanship supported the OSCE's work with the UN Observer Mission in Georgia towards opening a Gali branch of the UN Human Rights Office in Abkhazia.

The OSCE Border Monitoring Operation (BMO) in Georgia played an important confidence-building role, thus contributing to the promotion of security along the Ingush, Chechen and Dagestan segments of the border between Georgia and the Russian Federation. However, at the end of 2004, the BMO's mandate was not extended due to lack of consensus among participating States.

“With the practical, pragmatic approach that is so characteristic of our Organization, we have concentrated our efforts on concrete areas where we can make a real difference.”

Solomon Passy

The OSCE continued to support **Armenia** in the process of electoral and constitutional reforms with special focus on Electoral Code reform and constitutional amendments. In addition, the OSCE continued to promote the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments in all three dimensions in Armenia. Special attention was given to the fight against corruption, freedom of the media, anti-trafficking, preventing and combating terrorism, penitentiary reform, police assistance and economic and environmental activities. The preparation for the implementation of the Police Assistance Programme and the Project on Elimination of Rocket Fuel Component (*Melange*) as a typical OSCE cross-dimensional activity were another focus of the OSCE's activities in the country.

The Chairmanship closely followed developments in relation to opposition rallies held in Yerevan in April. The OSCE expressed its concern over actions against opposition supporters and journalists during these rallies and disturbances that followed. The Organization continued to emphasize the importance of dialogue between the authorities and the opposition, and the participation of all factions in the Parliament's law-making activities.

In **Azerbaijan**, the Organization continued to promote the implementation of OSCE principles and commitments in all dimensions, with a special focus on the rule of law, good governance and freedom of the media, including projects in the areas of police assistance and economic and environmental development.

During his visit to Azerbaijan on 16 March, the Chairman-in-Office raised the question of democratization and respect for human rights in the country and also expressed concern over the fate of those detained and awaiting trial after the October disturbances. He welcomed the decision of President Ilham Aliyev of 17 March to pardon 129 people and release them from prison. The OSCE expressed its concern over the conduct of the trials, including the decision of the Court of Appeals to uphold the prison sentences of the seven senior opposition members on 19 November. In the framework of the ODIHR's Trial Monitoring Programme, the Office in Baku, along with local lawyers, monitored the trials and prepared a report, which was set to be discussed with the Government.

The Chairmanship was closely involved in the promotion of a political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Close cooperation involving the Chairmanship, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, and the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, was further pursued under the Bulgarian Chairmanship. In his contacts with the parties, the Chairman-in-Office assured them of his and the OSCE's commitment to finding a solution to the conflict and his support for the positive momentum gained in 2004 in the course of the meetings between the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan under the auspices of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk

Group as well as in the framework of the 'Prague Process'. Through the Prague Process, the Foreign Ministers of both countries methodically explored all the parameters of a future settlement. The Chairmanship considered it encouraging that a statement was agreed on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict at the Ministerial Council in Sofia.

To add impetus to the peace process, the Chairman-in-Office also asked former Bulgarian Prime Minister Philip Dimitrov to visit Armenia and Azerbaijan as his Special Envoy for the conflict. Mr. Dimitrov, who travelled to the region from 20 to 24 September, reaffirmed in Baku and Yerevan the Chairman-in-Office's support for the efforts of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group and his Personal Representative. He also called on the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to take into account the framework presented to them by the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group in mid-September in Astana, which could serve as basis for a settlement. Mr. Dimitrov was reassured in Baku and Yerevan that the sides were committed to reaching a peaceful solution to the conflict.

The activities of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference were instrumental in reducing tensions along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and the line of contact, particularly during the summer, when a number of violations against the cease-fire agreement took place.

The fight against trafficking in human beings

Trafficking in human beings – often referred to as “modern-day slavery” – has been recognized as a major challenge to civilized society and a horrendous crime against humanity. The problem is of a multi-dimensional nature and needs to be addressed by simultaneous and concerted efforts on the national and international level.

In 2002 and 2003, the OSCE took a number of decisions that provided the basis for a co-ordinated approach in the fight against human trafficking. As a result, the Organization took on a central role in steering international co-operation in combating organized crime, defending the human rights of trafficked persons, and assisting participating States in the implementation of their commitments and translating theory into practice.

The Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings

Between 2000 and 2004, the Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (SPTF) – placed under the auspices of the OSCE – led the way to the creation of a comprehensive regional strategy and the establishment of institutional mechanisms in this region. Having achieved the overall goal of south-eastern European countries taking on the ownership of this process, the SPTF began in 2004 to hand over the leadership in the fight against human trafficking to these States and their institutions.

In order to build on the positive accomplishments in the region and to keep the intensity of anti-trafficking activities at a high level, the SPTF took additional steps to strengthen the collaborative capacity of the governmental co-ordinators and the national structures on a regional basis. It transformed the Regional Clearing Point, established in Belgrade in July 2002 to collect regional data on victims of trafficking and victims assistance, into a new Nexus Institute, which will undertake innovative and ground-breaking research in the field of trafficking in persons – both qualitative and quantitative in nature – to provide the foundation for sounder, more informed and ultimately better policies and practice. This will enable research and policy implementation on human trafficking, anchor the mainstreaming of law enforcement training across the region, and ensure the implementation of the SPTF’s media project aiming at creating a strong regional reporting network on human trafficking in the region.

Following the appointment of the Chair of the SPTF as OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the SPTF closed its Secretariat in Vienna

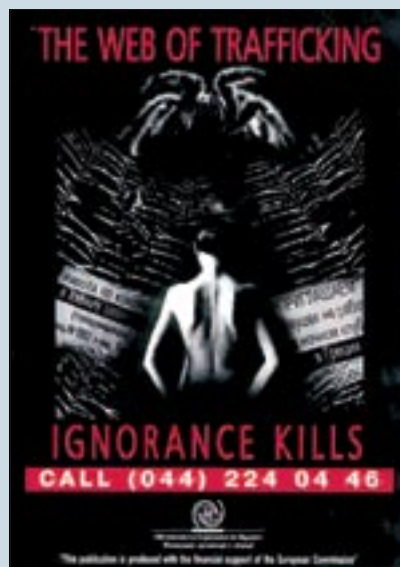
in October 2004. An overview of the Task Force’s activities between 2000 and 2004 was published as a chronicle, entitled ‘South Eastern Europe’s Struggle against Trafficking in Persons’.

The OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

In accordance with a decision taken by the 55 OSCE Foreign Ministers at the Maastricht Ministerial Council in December 2003, the Chairman-in-Office appointed Helga Konrad, the Chair of the SPTF, on 10 May 2004 as the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

The Special Representative’s mandate is to enhance and facilitate co-operation among participating States in the fight against human trafficking, to give assistance in the implementation of the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, and to improve the Organization’s co-operation with other international organizations in this field.

Under the heading of ‘Alliance against Trafficking in Persons’, the Special Representative held a first high-level conference, followed by a series of expert meetings in order to develop joint anti-trafficking strategies with other international actors and to provide the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation with a co-ordinated approach in the fight against trafficking in persons. As part



The IOM is a key partner in the OSCE’s fight against human trafficking.

of this strategy and in order to make these efforts sustainable, the Special Representative built partnerships with organizations such as the Council of Europe, the UNODC, UNICEF, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the IOM, and the UNHCR. She also established close relationships with NGOs, includ-

ing *Terre des Hommes*, *Save the Children* and *Anti-Slavery International*. A number of country visits by the Special Representative gave the OSCE’s fight against human trafficking a higher profile, uncovered the real problems faced by participating States, especially those of destination, and stimulated the dialogue between authorities and civil society. In addition, the Special Representative addressed a substantial number of regional and international conferences and meetings.

The OSCE Secretariat’s Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit

In October 2004, the OSCE established the Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit (ATAU). The task of the Unit, which forms part of the OSCE Secretariat, is to support the Special Representative’s activities and to improve co-operation and co-ordination between the OSCE Institutions and other structures.

Together with the Special Representative, the ATAU organized workshops gathering international experts in the framework of the ‘Alliance against Trafficking in Persons’ and participated in various other events that focused on anti-trafficking issues. These included:

- a seminar in Trier on ‘Trafficking in Persons: Towards a Common Legal Framework in the EU’;
- the Consultative Workshop of the European Experts Group on Trafficking in Human Beings in the Framework of the EU Forum for the Prevention of Organized Crime, held in Brussels;
- a seminar at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna on ‘Trafficking in Human Beings in South-Eastern Europe: the case of Moldova’; and
- ‘STOP – International Conference against Child Trafficking’ in Osnabrück.

In addition, ATAU members accompanied the Special Representative on country visits and to regional and international conferences and meetings.

As focal point in the OSCE Secretariat for the co-ordination of all anti-trafficking issues and liaison with the relevant regional, national and international organizations, the ATAU advised and assisted the participating States and the OSCE field operations on the issue. The Unit also established a close working relationship with OSCE Institutions and other structures that are involved in the fight against human trafficking, such as the ODIHR, the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, and the Strategic Police Matters Unit.

Northern Caucasus

With regard to the situation in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation, the Chairmanship continued the dialogue initiated by the Netherlands Chair with the Russian Federation in 2003, aimed at an agreement on a long-term OSCE programme of technical co-operation in Chechnya.

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

The OSCE continued to foster peace and stability in south-eastern Europe by enhancing regional co-operation, and promoting and supporting legislative reform, respect for human and minority rights, and institution- and capacity-building. It made further concrete efforts to facilitate, in co-operation with its partner organizations, the repatriation of refugees and internally displaced persons, to assist in enhancing the capacity of domestic judiciary systems and to monitor domestic war crimes trials.

The Chairman-in-Office visited **Kosovo**, together with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, on 23 March to assess the situation following the violent unrest in the area. In Pristina, he called the violence “unacceptable” and said that “it is not welcome on the path to Europe”. The Chairman-in-Office conveyed the message that the OSCE, working with its international partners in Kosovo, was prepared to continue to work to secure peace and stability. He also pledged the OSCE’s assistance towards free and democratic elections in October 2004. Following the visit, the Chairman-in-Office went to Belgrade to discuss the situation in Kosovo with Serb leaders. At the invitation of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Chairman-in-Office and the OSCE Secretary General attended meetings in September at the UN Headquarters in New York, which focused on the way forward in Kosovo, including the international community’s tasks and responsibilities in the foreseeable future.

“OSCE activities in the Balkans should remain part of an integrated multilateral approach.”

Solomon Passy

On 29 March, the Chairman-in-Office visited **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. During his visit, he reiterated the OSCE’s continued interest and support for the country’s political stabilization and the ongoing process of reforms, in particular in defence and education.

On 10 and 11 May, the Chairman-in-Office travelled to **Croatia**. His visit focused on refugee return, property restitution, occupancy tenancy rights, and co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The Chairman-in-Office and Croatia’s Prime Minister Ivo Sanader made field trips to Zadar and other communities to observe first hand the situation of refugees and returnee families and to assess the efforts of the Croatian Government to facilitate the return and the re-integration of refugees, through the reconstruction of destroyed properties, repossession of occupied properties, and the provision of alternative housing to Bosnian Croat settlers.

The Special Co-ordinator of the **Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe**, Erhard Busek, was invited by the Chair to address the Permanent Council on 20 May. There was a common understanding that the repatriation of refugees and IDPs should be given priority, as lack of progress could be an obstacle to long-term stability in the region. The continued co-operation between the OSCE and the Stability Pact – in areas such as stabilizing population movements, combating organized crime, trafficking in human beings, and border management – was noted with appreciation, as was the OSCE’s contribution to the follow-up to the Ohrid Conference.

Between 18 and 21 October, the Chairman-in-Office toured south-eastern Europe, visiting Skopje, Pristina, Belgrade, Podgorica and Tirana. In Kosovo, the main purpose of his visit was to become better acquainted with the situation on the ground and the OSCE’s activities on the eve of the Kosovo Assembly elections on 23 October. In Pristina, he urged politicians from all sides to reach out to the electorate by inviting them to participate in the elections. He strongly encouraged Kosovo Serbs to take part in the polls. In Skopje, he discussed the implication of the 7 November referendum on decentralization. In Belgrade and Podgorica, he urged Serbia and Montenegro to speed up reforms related to their OSCE commitments to achieve their objective of European and Euro-Atlantic integration. The Chairman-in-Office also discussed concrete forms of co-operation between the OSCE and the respective countries, taking their foreign policy objectives into account.

The Chairman-in-Office strongly supported an initiative co-ordinated by the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC), which was meant to enhance inter-state co-operation in war crimes proceedings. The CPC, together with three OSCE Missions in south-eastern Europe and the ODIHR, considered ways in which the OSCE could facilitate a direct and concrete dialogue among practitioners from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia and Montenegro for the purpose of enhancing inter-state co-operation in dealing with war crimes proceedings, such as investigations, prosecutions, and trials. ‘Witness issues’ were the topic of a first OSCE-facilitated expert meeting that took place in Palić, Serbia, on 29 and 30 November. The meeting took place in a spirit of regional ownership and was considered as an excellent starting point in the broader, more technical process that the OSCE has launched in this important field.

CENTRAL ASIA

The Bulgarian Chairmanship increased its attention to the region of Central Asia, offering assistance to the five participating Central Asian countries in their pursuit of political, social and economic reform. The Chairmanship aimed at enhancing the States’ awareness of the wide range of opportunities available to them through the OSCE and how a balanced approach to the three OSCE dimensions could help boost the reform process.

The Bulgarian Chairmanship sought to enhance the relationship between the OSCE and the Central Asian countries by fostering an open and regular dialogue. When he visited the five Central Asian States and Afghanistan in April, the Chairman-in-Office

was received by each Head of State and met the respective Foreign Ministers as well as representatives of civil society.

During the Chairman-in-Office's visit to **Uzbekistan**, the key topics discussed included education, the fight against terrorism in light of the April bombings in Tashkent and election preparation. The Chairman-in-Office opened the Ministerial Conference on Education as an Investment into the Future, which took place in Tashkent on 5 April. In his statement, he underlined the key role of education in building security, ensuring political stability and reducing poverty.

In **Kazakhstan**, discussions revolved around the country's bid for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2009, water resource management, anti-trafficking activities, and elections. In **Kyrgyzstan**, the Chairman-in-Office stressed the importance of regional initiatives such as the OSCE Academy, elections, combating terrorism, prison reform and border issues. In **Tajikistan**, issues pertaining to demining, tax reform, labour migration, media and elections were the focus of talks.

During the Chairman-in-Office's visit to **Turkmenistan**, enhanced co-operation between Ashgabad and the OSCE were discussed as well as media issues and the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking. Younal Loutfi, Vice-Chairman of the Bulgarian National Assembly, also visited Turkmenistan at the beginning of December following a request by the Chairman-in-Office. Issues related to the country's forthcoming elections, combating terrorism, education, national minorities and access for the International Committee of the Red Cross to prisons were reviewed.

The re-appointment of former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari as **Personal Envoy of the Chairman-in-Office for participating States in Central Asia** further demonstrated the Bulgarian Chairmanship's commitment to continued engagement with the five Central Asian participating States. President Ahtisaari maintained contacts at the highest political level in every State and followed up issues discussed during the Chairman-in-Office's visit in April. He visited Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan twice in 2004, and Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan once. In his discussions, President Ahtisaari focused on elections, freedom of the media and other issues related to the political, economic and environmental developments in the respective countries.

EASTERN EUROPE

Moldova

The Bulgarian Chairmanship was actively involved in finding solutions to the Transdniestrian conflict. The efforts of the Chairmanship began with consultations between the mediators who convened in Sofia in January, resulting in promising reactions from both the Moldovan and Transdniestrian parties to the proposals presented. As a result, subsequent consultations between the mediators were held in Belgrade in February, culminating in the first round of negotiations of the five-sided format in Tiraspol and Chisinau in April. These were the first such talks in six months. A follow-up meeting was held in May.

The Chairman-in-Office visited Moldova in June, meeting all parties and expressing support for the documents proposed by the mediators as a basis for a political settlement as well as concern over the lack of progress in the implementation of the OSCE Istanbul Summit commitments concerning the Russian military forces.

The Chairmanship also closely followed the developments linked to the crisis involving the Moldovan schools teaching in the Latin script in Transdniestria. Bulgarian Deputy Foreign Minister Petko Draganov visited Moldova in July to assist the efforts of the OSCE Mission in Moldova in the search for solutions to the rising tensions between the two parties over this issue.

As the crisis deepened, the Chairman-in-Office appointed former Bulgarian President Petar Stoyanov as his **Personal Envoy for Moldova**. President Stoyanov's visit to Chisinau and Tiraspol in September demonstrated the Chairmanship's commitment to seeking an overall settlement of the dispute. However, despite the continuing work of the mediators and some positive developments during the first half of the year, there was a lack of progress towards a comprehensive political settlement.

The Chairmanship tried to break the deadlock in the negotiation process by convening a meeting of the mediators in Sofia on 11 and 12 October. This was followed by a meeting in Varna, Bulgaria, on 8 and 9 November with the participation of the mediators, and representatives from the Republic of Moldova and from Transdniestria. Work on confidence- and security-building measures was continued through the end of the year.

In all its contacts, the Chairmanship called upon the parties to the conflict to establish and strengthen a working dialogue, which could eventually lead to a more effective and lasting solution. Additional efforts are still needed to find a formula for a comprehensive settlement on the basis of strengthening Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity while providing a special status for Transdniestria.

Belarus

A representative of the Chairmanship paid a visit to Minsk in March for consultations on relations between the OSCE and Belarus, during which preparations for the visit of the Chairman-in-Office were also discussed. The Chairman-in-Office visited Minsk in June to discuss ways of enhancing co-operation between the OSCE and the host country in light of OSCE commitments and to collect first-hand information on the situation in Belarus. The Chairman-in-Office also took the opportunity to convey the OSCE's message in the context of specific issues of concern, such as the trend towards the deterioration of the situation with civil society, NGOs, mass media and political parties. In anticipation of the parliamentary elections on 17 October, the Chairman-in-Office stressed the need to conduct free and fair polls. He supported the OSCE Office in Minsk in pursuing the activities set out in its mandate, in co-operation with the Belarusian authorities and civil society, towards assisting the country to live up to its OSCE commitments.

International mediation during Ukraine's electoral crisis: the OSCE's role

For several weeks in autumn 2004, Ukraine found itself under the spotlight of the international media. Allegations of vote rigging in the second round of the presidential election on 21 November, contested by Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich and opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko, had provoked a serious political crisis in the country. In what soon became known as the 'Orange Revolution', hundreds of thousands of people gathered on the main square in the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, and millions took to the streets all across the country. Pictures of Ukrainian citizens standing in the cold and protesting peacefully – but also resolutely – for their right to free and fair elections dominated the TV screens for 17 days.

Finding a political compromise

The crisis was finally resolved with the help of international mediation. In November and December, three roundtable meetings were convened in Kyiv's Mariinsky Palace. At the request of the Chairman-in-Office, OSCE Secretary General Ján Kubiš took part in all three meetings. He joined a group of high-level political figures, including President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland, President Valdas Adamkus of Lithuania, EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and the Speaker of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Boris Grizlov. On the Ukrainian side, participants included the then incumbent President Leonid Kuchma, Chairman of the Ukrainian Parliament Vladimir Lytvyn, and the two presidential contenders.

The first meeting on 26 November provided the country's authorities and the opposition with the first opportunity to meet and negotiate since the beginning of the crisis. A joint statement was adopted, calling all sides to refrain from the use of force and to start political negotiations. This call was repeated by the international mediators in meetings on 1 and 6 December.

The discussions created a good basis for the political compromise reached on 8 December. The Parliament voted for a broad package of agreements, including amendments to the Law on Elections of the President of Ukraine, aimed at preventing fraud and falsification, and amendments to the Ukrainian Constitution directed at reforming the country's political system and attaining a better balance between the branches of power.

This compromise paved the way for the peaceful resolution of the crisis and for the conduct of free, fair and transparent repeat elections during the second round of the presidential poll.

Largest-ever OSCE election observation mission

These repeat elections, held on 26 December, were monitored by an all-time high of OSCE observers. Some 1,300 international monitors were deployed to Ukraine by the ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.



An ODIHR Election Observation Mission had originally arrived in Kyiv on 31 August to observe the 31 October presidential election. Headed by Ambassador Geert-Hinrich Ahrens, the Mission included 57 experts and long-term observers, charged with the responsibility of monitoring the election campaign, the legislative framework and its implementation, the media situation and the work of the election administration and relevant government bodies. On the eve of election day, the team was joined by 600 short-term observers to follow voting and counting. The Chairman-in-Office appointed Bruce George, President Emeritus of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, to lead the short-term election observers.

The observers reported a number of concerns about this first-round electoral process, including bias by the state media, interference by the state administration in favour of Prime Minister Yanukovich, the disruption or obstruction of opposition campaign events by the state authorities, and inadequacies in the Central Election Commission's handling of complaints.

Since none of the candidates obtained an absolute majority in the first round, a second round of voting took place on 21 November. The Central Election Commission (CEC) announced that in the second round, Mr. Yushchenko and Mr. Yanukovich ob-

tained 46.61 per cent and 49.46 per cent of the votes respectively. Again, the Election Observation Mission came to the conclusion that the second round had failed to address election irregularities and lacked transparency, especially in the tabulation of votes.

"While this was certainly a competitive election, it was not conducted on a level playing field," Mr. Ahrens said.

Following a ruling of the Supreme Court of Ukraine on 3 December invalidating the second round and a subsequent decision of the CEC of Ukraine on 4 December, a re-run of the second round was scheduled for 26 December. The importance of the re-run did not escape the OSCE participating States when they decided to strengthen the Election Observation Mission to about 1,300 monitors.

The observers noted that campaign conditions for the repeat second round were markedly more equal, observers received fewer reports of pressure on voters, the election administration was more transparent, and the media was more balanced than in the previous rounds.

"I cannot express to you how delighted I am to say that, in our collective view, Ukraine's elections have moved substantially closer to meeting OSCE and other European standards in such a short period of time," said Bruce George.

"In our judgment the people of this great country can be truly proud that they took a great step towards free and democratic elections, in electing the next president of Ukraine."

Ukraine

Since his meeting with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Konstantyn Gryshchenko on 14 April, the Chairman-in-Office has been forthright in outlining the assistance that the OSCE could provide to Ukraine's electoral process, beginning with the first round of the electoral process on 31 October. The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine was engaged in the run-up to the elections through a project that assisted in improving the electoral process.

The country's presidential election put Ukraine and the OSCE in the spotlight. The ODIHR was outspoken in its criticism of some aspects of the election process. Following the second round on 21 November and the subsequent political crisis, the Chairman-in-Office, in a statement issued on 24 November, urged the Ukrainian authorities "to investigate, in a proactive and timely manner, the irregularities which were identified". He also designated the OSCE Secretary General as his envoy to join other international mediators at roundtable discussions to help bring about an end to the crisis.

On 4 December, the Chairman-in-Office issued a statement welcoming the decision of the Ukraine's Supreme Court to declare the second round of the presidential election invalid and pledged full support of the OSCE for a re-run of the vote. He noted that the Supreme Court decision echoed the findings of international observers, including the ODIHR, and said that "the decision will make it possible to find a peaceful outcome to the present political crisis". He called on the Ukrainian authorities to conduct a fair campaign and underlined, in particular, the need for unbiased reporting in state-controlled media.

Ukraine was also on the agenda of the Ministerial Council in Sofia. In his opening remarks, the Chairman-in-Office said that the victors in the process were democracy and the rule of law and emphasized the OSCE's key role in election monitoring and as a facilitator. He called on participating States to support the international monitoring effort of the second round's re-run. With close to 1,300 monitors, the OSCE's efforts to monitor the re-run elections on 26 December were significant.

Co-operation with other international organizations

Further development of relations between the OSCE and partner organizations and institutions was one of the Bulgarian Chairmanship's priorities.

Establishment of closer working ties with the **United Nations** (UN) was supported throughout the year by the Chairmanship. In July 2004, the Chairman-in-Office took an active part in the UN Security Council meeting with regional organizations on the theme 'Co-operation between the United Nations and Regional Organizations in the Stabilization Processes'. At the invitation of the UN, the Chairman-in-Office, together with the Secretary General and high-level EU and NATO representatives, participated in a meeting that enabled an exchange of views on the way forward in Kosovo. In October, the Bulgarian Deputy Foreign Minister addressed the

59th Session of the UN General Assembly dedicated to the Co-operation between the UN and the OSCE.

Efforts were made throughout the year to strengthen relations between the OSCE and the **European Union** (EU). Meetings between the OSCE and the EU Ministerial Troikas were held during the Irish and the Dutch Presidencies on the margins of the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council in January and July. Further meetings of the OSCE and the EU Political and Security Committee troikas were hosted in Vienna in February and October. The fact that the Netherlands held the EU Presidency and was part of the OSCE Troika at the same time made matters easier. The Chairmanship maintained also close ties with the EU Presidency, the Council Secretariat and the European Commission at the policy level. A major concern of the Bulgarian Chairmanship was to continue a dialogue with EU member States on relevant developments within the OSCE and promote the formulation of EU positions supportive of the OSCE's policy. To promote a smooth flow of information and co-ordination, several EU representatives were invited to address the Permanent Council, including the Irish and Netherlands Foreign Ministers and the Commissioner in charge of External Relations.

"In view of the scope of the challenges ahead, co-operation with other international organizations is of the highest importance."
Solomon Passy

Relations with the **Council of Europe** featured especially prominently on the OSCE agenda in 2004. The OSCE's Chairman-in-Office responded positively to an initiative by the Norwegian Chairmanship of the Council's Committee of Ministers to strengthen relations and launch closer co-operation between the two organizations. This was one of the main items on the agenda of the meeting between the Chairmen of the two organizations, which took place in Sofia on 13 October. The Ministers agreed that there was scope for enhanced interaction to ensure that the OSCE and the Council of Europe avoided unnecessary duplication and fully met the expectations of participating and member States. On 2 December, the OSCE Permanent Council adopted a decision on enhanced co-operation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe, which would lead to the establishment of an OSCE-Council of Europe Co-ordination Group.

The Chairmanship made a systematic effort to have a regular dialogue with the **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation** (NATO). The Chairman-in-Office addressed the North Atlantic Council and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in January and November respectively, bringing issues related to OSCE-NATO co-operation to the attention of Member and Partner States. On the occasion of his address to the North Atlantic Council, the Chairman-in-Office met Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer to discuss further enhancement of OSCE-NATO co-operation at all levels. Members of the OSCE Troika were also involved in working-level consultations between the OSCE Secretariat and representatives of NATO's international staff.

The Chairmanship also participated in the regular Tripartite Meeting, which includes the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe, and is attended by the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU, the European Commission, the ICRC, and the IOM. It was also present at the Target-oriented Meeting at expert level within an expanded Tripartite format. Both meetings were hosted by the OSCE in Vienna. The Tripartite meeting was devoted to addressing threats to security and stability in the 21st century and co-operation in the field, while the Target-oriented Meeting focused on activities of and co-operation between partner international organizations in the southern Caucasus.

The Chairmanship conducted a series of consultations with partner organizations on the ad hoc consultative mechanism. Proposed within the Maastricht Strategy, the mechanism is a tool offered by the OSCE as a flexible framework for consultation by initiating contacts with relevant organizations and institutions as a specific threat arises or intensifies.

Strengthening co-operation with other regional and sub-regional organizations was also promoted by the Chairmanship. In May, the Chairman-in-Office participated in the Arab Summit held in Tunisia.

Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

In 2004, further to the decisions adopted at the Maastricht Ministerial Council, there was a marked increase in contacts at various levels between the OSCE and its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. Based on the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century, participating States adopted PC Decision No. 571, which identified additional fields of co-operation and interaction with Partners for Co-operation for the purpose of enhancing mutual security and to encourage them to voluntarily implement OSCE norms, principles and commitments as a means to further interact with the OSCE.

A comprehensive report on this improved co-operation was developed by the informal Group of Friends, chaired by the Ambassador of Finland, based on all three OSCE dimensions. As a result, the Ministerial Council in Sofia adopted a decision on the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation (Decision No. 17), underlining the importance of the report, which is based on an exchange of various views, including with the OSCE Partners for Co-operation. The decision tasks the Permanent Council and the FSC to remain seized of the matter.

The Partner States were also invited more frequently as observers to Permanent Council and FSC meetings. They participated more regularly in meetings of the respective Mediterranean and Asian Contact Groups, which bring together the OSCE participating and Partner States.

Representatives of the Partners for Co-operation took part in OSCE events to promote awareness on tolerance and non-discrimination, the Annual Security Review Conference, and a Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security organized by the OSCE and the UNODC.

The OSCE-Japan Conference, co-hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the OSCE, on 'The Search for Effective Conflict Prevention in the New Security Circumstances: European Security Mechanisms and Security in Asia' took place in Tokyo on 15 and 16 March. The Chairmanship was represented by the Bulgarian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, who emphasized that the conference presented an excellent opportunity to share experiences on conducting crisis prevention activities and to discuss ways of promoting the dialogue between the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation on security matters.

Participants highlighted the fact that both regions faced similar challenges and that they shared a common interest to find appropriate responses in the new security environment. A number of proposals for follow-up were made and discussed during the meetings of the Asian Contact Group. Following this conference, an informal meeting of its participants with attendees in the ASEAN Regional Forum workshop on preventive diplomacy took place in Tokyo on 16 and 17 March so that members of the Forum could share the conclusions of the OSCE-Japan Conference and the experience of the OSCE in preventive diplomacy. The event was co-chaired by Japan and Thailand.

The annual OSCE Mediterranean Seminar, co-organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt and the OSCE, on 'Addressing Threats to Security in the Twenty-First Century: Interaction between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation' was convened in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, on 18 and 19 November. The Chairman-in-Office said that the OSCE was pleased to share its considerable experience in confidence-building and in fostering tolerance and non-discrimination with the Mediterranean countries as a contribution to building a just and lasting peace in the region. A number of concrete suggestions were made, including further joint work on issues concerning tolerance and respect, the integration of migrants, including their rights and obligations, and the responsibilities of host countries. Several participants proposed that the OSCE play a role in the Palestinian elections scheduled for 9 January 2005.

A highlight in 2004 was the OSCE's engagement in Afghanistan. At the invitation of the country's Government, the OSCE deployed an OSCE Election Support Team to Afghanistan. It was the first time the OSCE had ever deployed an operation out of its region.

Closer and deeper interaction between the OSCE and Partner States was highlighted during the two Ministerial Troika meetings with counterparts from the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. These events were chaired by the Chairman-in Office on 5 December on the eve of the Ministerial

Council meeting in Sofia. Participants felt that significant steps were taken in 2004 towards joint work and activities and that the outcome provided a solid basis for next year's work.

In his remarks to the Ministerial Council in Sofia on 6 December, the Chairman-in-Office called on his colleagues to go even further in reaching out since the OSCE had a lot to offer.

Reaching out to a Partner State: the Election Support Team to Afghanistan

In September, the OSCE broke new ground when, for the first time in its history, the Organization sent an election team to one of its Partners for Co-operation. A 42-person Election Support Team was deployed to Afghanistan to help the country conduct its first-ever presidential election on 9 October. This move came in response to a letter from Afghan Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah to the Chairmanship, inviting the Organization to send ODIHR experts. The Permanent Council agreed on 29 July to dispatch the Team in order to support efforts to foster democracy and human rights and strengthen stability in Afghanistan.

"The Bulgarian OSCE Chairmanship attaches great importance to assisting the normalization of Afghanistan and its steady progress towards democracy and respect for human rights. We believe that the presidential election on 9 October 2004 should accelerate the pace of these historic developments. The deployment of the Election Support Team demonstrates the OSCE's strong determination to assist an important neighbour and the Organization's ability to respond quickly and effectively."
OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy

The Team's mandate differed substantially from any previous OSCE election mission. Its key responsibility was not to observe the elections as such, but to analyse the electoral process and offer recommendations, where applicable, to the electoral management body. This analysis included particular issues such as voter registration, the work of electoral commissions, vote count and tabulation as well as complaint and appeal procedures.

The Team's deployment on 26 September was preceded by high-level visits to Kabul by several senior OSCE officials, including the Chairman-in-Office, who was there in April, and Secretary General Ján Kubiš in early September. A needs assessment mission by the OSCE Secretariat and the ODIHR visited Afghanistan in July. An advance party headed to Afghanistan some weeks prior to the full Team's deployment to prepare logistics and security for the arrival of the 28 election experts. Most of these were sent a week before polling day to the country's seven regional centres. The remainder of the two-person teams covered Kabul and its environs.

Apart from providing immediate and on-the-spot advice on how to improve the electoral management, the Team compiled important analytical data that helped overcome a sudden political crisis on polling day, when a coalition of presidential candidates threatened not to recognize the election over perceived voting irregularities. In addition, the Team prepared a set of recommendations to the electoral management body, which were issued in October, outlining in detail what needed to be done to allow for parliamentary elections scheduled for 2005.

"October 9 was a historic day in Afghanistan, and the millions who came to the polls clearly wanted to turn from the rule of the gun to the rule of law ... Our teams were deeply impressed by the fact that millions of Afghan men and women turned out yesterday in Iran and Pakistan as well as Afghanistan, waited patiently in line, often in snow, rain, and dust, in the face of threats to their lives, and cast their votes with enthusiasm. We do not yet know what their choices are, but we know they should be respected."

Ambassador Robert L. Barry, Head of the OSCE Election Support Team to Afghanistan



A total of 18 candidates ran for the position of head of state in Afghanistan's first-ever presidential election on 9 October.

The Work of the Permanent Council



Ambassador Ivo Petrov from Bulgaria, Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council in 2004



In 2004, the Permanent Council was actively engaged in a range of issues that are high on the OSCE's agenda. Following up on the Maastricht Ministerial Council, participating States took a number of key decisions on counter-terrorism, on combating anti-Semitism, on tolerance and the fight against racism, xenophobia and discrimination, and on promoting tolerance and media freedom on the Internet. An OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality was adopted, and decisions on establishing an Audit Committee and on Enhanced Co-operation with the Council of Europe were taken.

Partnership was strengthened through important decisions on sending an election support team to Afghanistan and granting Mongolia the status of Partner for Co-operation.

Discussion under 'Current Issues' in the Permanent Council was often lively, with participating States raising questions or comments about developments in the OSCE area and debating the role and future of the Organization. Active use was also made of the Preparatory Committee to enable adequate discussion on and preparation of decisions before their presentation to the Permanent Council.

Specialized discussions were carried out in a number of working groups that focused on issues ranging from specific financial and management issues and the preparation of the Annual Security Review Conference to more general thematic issues such as reform, borders, gender equality and anti-trafficking, combating terrorism, outreach, and improving the functioning and effectiveness of OSCE field operations.

The Permanent Council, chaired by Ambassador Ivo Petrov, was regularly briefed by Heads of Institution and Heads of Mission. In line with traditional practice, the Permanent Council took decisions on the extension of mission mandates. The Permanent Council was addressed by a number of special guests, including ten ministers.

As in previous years, the most intense period for the Permanent Council was in the run-up to the Ministerial Council when decisions were prepared and adopted for approval by the OSCE foreign ministers in Sofia. Attempts to reach consensus on a number of key issues kept delegations engaged until the very end of the year.

The Permanent Council had a heavy agenda in 2004 and demonstrated its importance as the Organization's main political forum and decision-making body.

Special guests who addressed the OSCE Permanent Council in 2004

	Special Guest	Topic of Address
22 January	Dick Roche, Minister for European Affairs of Ireland	Irish EU Presidency
5 February	Ilinka Mitreva, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	EU and NATO enlargement
12 February	Heidi Tagliavini, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General to Georgia	Activities and priorities of the UN Observer Mission in Georgia relating to the settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia
16 February	Miomir Žužul, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Croatia	The Croatian Government's main policy goals
26 February	Kastriot Islami, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania	Co-operation in south-eastern Europe and Albania's efforts to seek membership of the EU and NATO
1 April	Heikki Talvitie, EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus	Report on activities
22 April	Lucius Cafilisch, Member of the Bureau of the Court on behalf of the President of the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration	OSCE Court of Conciliation and Arbitration
13 May	Udo Janz, UNHCR Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina	OSCE-UNHCR collaboration in Bosnia and Herzegovina
20 May	Erhard Busek, Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe	Stock-taking on the Stability Pact's fifth anniversary
27 May	Bruce George, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly	Farewell speech
18 June	Vuk Drašković, Foreign Minister of Serbia and Montenegro	Call for dialogue and decentralization in Kosovo
14 July	Bernard Rudolf Bot, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands	Priorities of the Netherlands EU Presidency
15 July	Christopher Patten, Member of the European Commission in charge of External Relations	EU-OSCE co-operation
22 July	Walter Schwimmer, Outgoing Secretary General, Council of Europe	Building Europe: Agenda for a dream
22 July	Vasile Sova, Minister for Reintegration of Moldova	School crisis in Moldova's Transdnestrian region
29 July	Salome Zourabichvili, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia	Latest events in Georgia
18 August	Salome Zourabichvili, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia	Latest events in Georgia
9 September	Kassymzhomart Tokaev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan	Parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan
21 October	Javier Ruperez, Executive Director of the UN Counter- terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)	Seeking OSCE support in the fight against terrorism
21 October	Heikki Talvitie, EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus	Report on activities
11 November	Alcee L. Hastings, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly	First speech of the new President including an activities report
25 November	Antonio Maria Costa, UNODC Executive Director	Report on opium cultivation in Afghanistan
30 November	Andrei Stratan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Moldova	Moldova's views on current OSCE issues

Activities of the Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office

The Agreement on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Article II, Annex 1-B) and the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control (Article IV, Annex 1-B, Dayton Peace Accords)

Making a huge step forward in the region's normalization process, the Parties to the Agreement on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina decided on 28 September to terminate the provisions to Article II of Annex 1-B of the Dayton Peace Accords. In their decision, they noted the exceptional progress made in the implementation of the CSBM regime and took into account the implementation of the Defence Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), which resulted in the creation of a single defence establishment. The termination of the Agreement does not preclude any of the Parties from agreeing to the voluntary continuation of any measure previously included or associated with the Agreement.



Under supervision of the Chairman-in-Office's Personal Representative for Articles II and IV, military units from both Bosnia and Herzegovina's Entities participated in a natural disaster training exercise.

The Parties to the Article IV Agreement continued to implement the arms control process in the region, which greatly contributed to the further stabilization process. As scheduled, 13 inspections involving experts from 28 OSCE countries were conducted by the Parties. The Personal Representative took part in two inspections conducted by a BiH team in Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro

and noted the spirit of co-operation and transparency. The quality of the Annual Information Exchanges was of a high standard. Due to the continuous restructuring process of the Armed Forces, mid-year updates were provided by the Parties. Reduction of weapons proceeded accordingly.

At the fourth Review Conference on the Agreement, key decisions were taken aimed at closing certain loopholes, such as exempted equipment that allowed Parties to maintain large quantities of equipment above agreed ceilings. In accordance with Decision 1/26 taken by the Sub-Regional Consultative Commission (SRCC), a special agreement was reached on the reduction of armaments exempted for Research and Development up to a maximum of five per cent of each category limited by Article IV by the end of 2004. Progress was also made regarding the reduction of armaments held within the internal security forces.

The Personal Representative continued consultations with OSCE delegations to develop a long-term strategy consistent with the overall policy within the region, namely giving the Parties ownership of this process and streamlining the role, presence and responsibility of the international community. Within the confines of the Article IV Agreement, the policy on ownership has been achieved. The Personal Representative will continue to provide the Parties with guidance and technical support for implementing the inspection regime and analysis and expertise for managing the annual information data exchanges.

Office of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference

Negotiations towards the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict gained momentum in 2004, particularly with meetings between the Azerbaijani and Armenian Presidents and the so-called 'Prague Process' of meetings between the respective Foreign Ministers. This increased activity resulted in intensified work by the Personal Representative, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, in keeping the Chairmanship and the Minsk Group, including its Co-chairs, informed of developments.

The Personal Representative and his Office continued the mandated task of monitoring the front line to assess the military situation and to assist in reducing tension. This was especially important in

June, when a raised number of cease-fire violations were reported. Reports from the Personal Representative gave early warning of this rise in tension and steps were taken to normalize the situation. The military situation on the front line appeared to have stabilized.

He also assisted the High-Level Planning Group in fulfilling its mandated tasks. Contact was maintained with organizations such as the EU, the Council of Europe, the UNHCR, the ICRC, and various international NGOs with relation to the major problems of internally displaced persons and refugees, prisoners of war, missing persons and detainees as well as mine clearance.

Confidence-building measures promoted by the Office between the sides were largely confined to what was needed to carry out monitoring activities and assist in the return of prisoners of war detained by the sides. Efforts continued to encourage contact between the sides at local level. Towards the end of the reporting period, the increased momentum towards the settlement of the conflict resulted in an agreement between the sides on an OSCE Minsk Group fact-finding visit to the occupied territories around Nagorno-Karabakh, to be held in early 2005.

The High-Level Planning Group

Established in 1994 at the Budapest Summit of the CSCE participating States, the High-Level Planning Group (HLPG) is tasked with making recommendations to the Chairman-in-Office for planning a multinational OSCE peacekeeping force for the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference. This includes plans for the establishment, force structure requirements, operations as well as the size and characteristics of this force.

In order to improve its current level of information, the HLPG maintained and expanded contacts with several international bodies in 2004, such as the Headquarters of the South Eastern Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG) in Constanta, Romania, and the Multinational Stand-by High Readiness Brigade for United Nations Operations (SHIRBRIG), based in Copenhagen, Denmark.

In view of the continued delicate situation in the area of conflict, the HLPG was not able to carry out the much-needed operations and logistics reconnaissance mission to the conflict area. Instead, the Group participated in a number of monitoring missions on the line of contact, as it has done since September 1998.

The Personal Envoy of the Chairman-in-Office for the participating States in Central Asia

Appointed in 2003, former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari continued as the Personal Envoy of the Chairman-in-Office for Central Asia, his mandate being to assist the Chairman in maintaining contacts with the highest political levels of the participating States in Central Asia. To advance his mission, the Personal Envoy made two visits to Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan and one visit to Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In addition to meeting with political leaders, President Ahtisaari fostered contacts and held negotiations with representatives from civil society, media, the international community and the Ambassadors of OSCE participating States. He also witnessed the developments of OSCE-supported projects such as the Labour Migration Information Centre in Dushanbe and the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, where he had a long discussion with the students.

With many elections held in the countries of the region in 2004 and due in 2005, elections were high on the agenda of the Personal Envoy in his discussions with the authorities. To help familiarize himself with the election laws and election systems, he met the chairs of the Central Election Commissions in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. President Ahtisaari reminded his interlocutors that free and fair elections were a necessary, although not sufficient, condition for democracy.

Other items in the discussions included education as one of the priorities of the Chairmanship, good governance, a moratorium on and eventual abolition of the death penalty as well as issues such as mine action, civil society development, and the combat of terrorism and extremism. In fulfilling his mandate, the Personal Envoy was supported by the Finnish NGO, *Crisis Management Initiative*.

Reports of the Chairpersons of the Contact Groups with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation*

The Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation are: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.
Chairmanship of the Mediterranean Contact Group in 2004: Slovenia

The Asian Partners for Co-operation are: Afghanistan, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia and Thailand.
Chairmanship of the Asian Contact Group in 2004: the Netherlands

Deepening interaction with the Partners for Co-operation. As a result of the decisions adopted in December 2003 at the Maastricht Ministerial Council, the year 2004 witnessed a richer, more focused and intensive dialogue between the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation. The OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century and a subsequent decision on further dialogue and co-operation with the Partner States (PC Decision No. 571¹) provided an opportunity to discuss possible new avenues of interaction.

Discussions were carried out in the informal Group of Friends, chaired by the Ambassador of Finland. The importance of the resulting report, based on an exchange of various views, including with the Partners for Co-operation, was underscored by a Ministerial Council decision taken in Sofia in December 2004, which recognizes the increasing importance of the well-established co-operation between the OSCE and its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation.

The work conducted in the Mediterranean and Asian Contact Group meetings in 2004 complemented the increased access of the Partner States to various OSCE activities, including to the Permanent Council and the FSC. The Chairman of the Permanent Council provided regular briefings on the Chairman-in-Office's current activities to the Contact Group meetings. The work of the Mediterranean and Asian Contact Group meetings was also linked to discussions in the informal Group of Friends on the Implementation of PC Decision No. 571.

Partner States participated actively in the OSCE's Berlin Conference on Anti-Semitism, the OSCE Meeting on the Relationship between Racist, Xenophobic and anti-Semitic Propaganda on the Internet and Hate Crimes, held in Paris, and the OSCE Conference on Tolerance and the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination in Brussels. Partner States were invited to a Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security, organized by the OSCE and the UNODC and to the Joint OSCE PA-CPC Conference on democratic control and parliamentary oversight of armed forces and police and security forces. They also took part in the OSCE's Annual Security Review Conference.

Mediterranean Contact Group. Under the Chairmanship of Slovenia, eight Mediterranean Contact Group meetings took place in 2004, often preceded by meetings at the working level of Con-

tact Points. The agendas of those meetings reflected a balance in all three OSCE dimensions – including, among others, an exchange of views with the Chairman of the Forum for Security Co-operation, the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the Director of the ODIHR.

Other OSCE activities relevant to the Mediterranean Partners were discussed, ranging from the combat against human trafficking to gender issues and border management matters. In addition, a discussion took place with the Head of the Secretariat's Action against Terrorism Unit on the OSCE's activities in this context, including a Workshop on Countering the MANPADS Threat to Civil Aviation Security at Airports.

The Contact Group also invited representatives from other international organizations, such as the Director of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) of the Council of Europe and representatives of the European Union Presidency on the EU's Barcelona Process.

Sharing knowledge of Confidence- and Security-Building Measures. In response to interest expressed by the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, the Chairman of the Mediterranean Contact Group organized an unprecedented working visit and informal exchange of views in May, which was based on selected OSCE Confidence- and Security-Building Measures under the Vienna Document 1999.

The event included a simulation of an evaluation visit at a military base in Maribor. Such exercises represent not only an important contribution to confidence-building in the Mediterranean, but also a useful tool to demonstrate the OSCE *acquis* to Partner States. It is foreseen that similar events could take place in all three OSCE dimensions in 2005.

Promoting further build-up of relations through side-events. At the request of the Mediterranean Partners, side-events were organized in parallel to several OSCE activities. These events, which were chaired by the Chairman of the Mediterranean Contact Group, aimed at further promoting relations between the OSCE and the Partners. They included discussions on human resource development, which took place on the margins of the Economic Forum in Prague, and meetings to discuss the OSCE's election

* See also reports of the Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General on Interaction with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners and Regional Organizations Beyond the OSCE Area.
1 On Further Dialogue and Co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and Exploring the Scope for Wider Sharing of OSCE Norms, Principles and Commitments with Others.

observation experience held alongside the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw.

Parliamentary delegations from the OSCE States and the Mediterranean Partners also participated in side-events organized both at the Winter and Annual Sessions of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. The OSCE Secretary General and the Chairman of the Mediterranean Contact Group participated in the Second Mediterranean Forum of the Parliamentary Assembly held in Rhodes on 1 October.

OSCE Mediterranean Seminar. Hosted by Egypt in Sharm El Sheikh in November, the 2004 Mediterranean Seminar was dedicated to 'Addressing Threats to Security in the Twenty-First Century: Interaction between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.' The two-day event emphasized the importance of the OSCE Mediterranean dimension and the increasing interaction between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation against the backdrop of current global threats and challenges to security. The Seminar was attended by 37 participating States, all the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, two Asian Partners, and representatives of other international organizations and institutions.

One of the main messages emanating from the Seminar was the recognition that the global security threats needed to be addressed jointly. Suggestions for activities included further work on issues of tolerance and respect, and a stronger focus on the question of the integration of migrants and on their rights and obligations. A proposal was also made for the OSCE to consider a role in supporting the Palestinian presidential election on 9 January 2005.

Asian Contact Group. Under the Chairmanship of the Netherlands, the focus of the four Asian Contact Group meetings in 2004 was on ongoing work within the OSCE, preparations for the 2004 OSCE-Japan Conference and the 2005 OSCE-Korea Conference. Subjects discussed included the OSCE Border Security and Management Concept, joint efforts to counter terrorism in view of the Follow-up Meeting to the UN Security Council-Counter Terrorism Committee Special Meeting and preparations for the 12th Economic Forum. Discussions also dealt with the presidential election in Afghanistan and the role of the OSCE Election Support Team in this context.

OSCE-Japan Conference. In March, some 180 representatives of participating States, Asian and Mediterranean Partner States, international organizations, academic institutions and NGOs from Asia and Europe met in Tokyo for the OSCE-Japan Conference. At the event, which was entitled 'The Search for Effective Conflict Prevention in the New Security Circumstances: European Security Mechanisms and Security in Asia', proposals were brought forward to organize joint events with partners in Asia, notably the ASEAN Regional Forum, on combating trafficking in small arms and light weapons and in human beings.

Following the Conference, participants met informally with members of the ASEAN Regional Forum who had attended a workshop on preventive diplomacy, chaired by Japan and Thailand. The

objective of the workshop had been to share among the attendees the conclusions made at the OSCE-Japan Conference and the OSCE's experience in preventive diplomacy. The event was a useful step in building further links between the OSCE and the ASEAN Regional Forum.

OSCE-Korea Conference in April 2005. The second OSCE-Korea Conference, focusing on 'New Security Threats and a New Security Paradigm', is scheduled to take place in Seoul on 25 and 26 April 2005. It is expected that the event will be attended by OSCE participating States, Partners for Co-operation, representatives of international organizations and institutions, ASEAN Regional Forum member States as well as civil society representatives.

OSCE Election Support Team to Afghanistan. In response to a letter by Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah to the OSCE Chairman-in-Office inviting the ODIHR to observe the country's first presidential election in October, the Permanent Council decided in July to establish the Election Support Team to Afghanistan. The Team, led by Ambassador Robert Barry, was sent to Afghanistan to analyse aspects of the electoral process such as voter registration, the work of electoral commissions, vote count and tabulation, and the complaint and appeal procedures.

The OSCE's support to the country paid tribute to the importance of democratic elections for fostering democracy and human rights and furthering stability in Afghanistan and for contributing to international efforts to combat terrorism. The OSCE's engagement was widely welcomed as contributing to Afghanistan's stability. The Chairman-in-Office also received an invitation for the OSCE to supervise Afghanistan's parliamentary elections scheduled for spring 2005. (For more on the OSCE Election Support Team to Afghanistan, see page 25.)

Ministerial Troika meetings with Partner State representatives. On the eve of the 12th Ministerial Council meeting in Sofia, the Ministerial Troika met their counterparts, respectively, from the Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. Among other issues, they discussed interaction between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners on addressing contemporary threats to security and stability in the context of the implementation of PC Decision No. 571 as well as proposals for consolidating dialogue and joint activities.

Mongolia – a new Partner for Co-operation. Mongolia was granted the status of Partner for Co-operation following a request by the Mongolian Foreign Minister in a letter to the Chairman-in-Office. This followed the adoption of a Permanent Council decision on 2 December stating that Mongolia had supported the OSCE principles and objectives and shared its comprehensive and co-operative approach to security and related issues of economic and human development. Mongolia, which shares common borders with the OSCE, expressed its interest in establishing close relations with the Organization through the exchange of views and information on various issues of mutual interest and participation in OSCE meetings and activities.

Forum for Security Co- operation



Forum for Security Co-operation

Established at the Helsinki Summit in 1992, the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) is responsible for the politico-military dimension of the OSCE. At their weekly meetings in the Vienna Hofburg Congress Centre, the representatives of the OSCE States negotiate and consult on measures aimed at strengthening security and stability in the entire OSCE area, from Vancouver to Vladivostok. The Forum's main objectives are:

- negotiation and adoption of politically binding decisions on arms control as well as disarmament and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs);
- regular consultations and intensive co-operation on matters relating to security issues;
- further reduction of the risks of threats and conflicts;

- implementation and verification of the implementation of agreed CSBMs and commitments.

In addition, the Forum takes charge of the annual Implementation Assessment Meeting, which provides a forum for discussing and clarifying information exchanged under agreed CSBMs. Contributing to the Annual Security Review Conference, preparing seminars and workshops and informing the Ministerial Council about progress achieved during the year are also among the Forum's responsibilities.

The Forum's chairmanship rotates every four months according to the alphabetical order of the OSCE participating States. In 2004, the Forum was chaired by Andorra, Armenia and Austria.

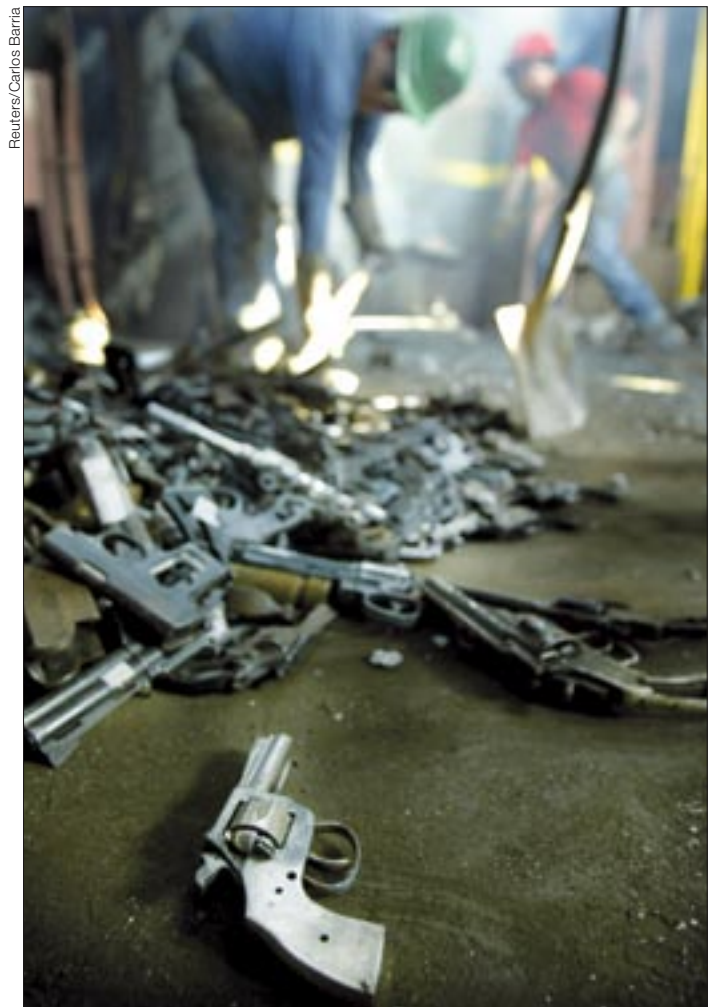
The Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) has recently taken on an increasingly diverse range of security tasks responding timely and effectively to the need to adapt tools and focus to a changing security environment and new challenges, such as the reduction of the risks posed by dangerous stockpiles of excess ammunition and the control of small arms and light weapons.

Improving security, stability and transparency. Based on its commitment to improve security, stability and transparency in the OSCE area, the Forum continued its work in 2004 on full and comprehensive implementation, timely adaptation and further development of activities related to arms control, disarmament and CSBMs. Decisions taken by the OSCE Ministerial Council in Maastricht and in Sofia, such as the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century, gave specific mandates and tasks to the FSC. The decisions underlined the Forum's key role in contributing to the Organization's overall efforts aimed at preventing and combating threats to security and stability in the OSCE area. In 2004, four drafts proposed by the Forum were adopted by the Sofia Ministerial Council.

Tackling dangerous stockpiles of ammunition and small arms and light weapons. Surplus stockpiles of ammunition and small arms and light weapons (SALW) left over from the Cold War pose a significant threat to the population, infrastructure and environment of many OSCE countries. Often poorly guarded, they can also become a general security threat should they fall into the hands of terrorists.

The OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition and the Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons provide participating States with a framework for requesting or giving assistance to secure or destroy such stockpiles. Finding an adequate response to the requests presents a new challenge to the FSC and to the OSCE.

Requests for assistance in securing or disposing of surplus stockpiles of ammunition were presented by Ukraine, Belarus, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and, most recently, by Kazakhstan.



Reuters/Carlos Barria

A special meeting on 29 September to examine the problems, technical means and managerial and financial resources required to address the surplus stockpiles revealed the magnitude and urgency of the issue. It became clear that substantive efforts by donors were necessary to respond to the requests. Intensive consultations



James Cox, Chief Arms Control Delegate of the US Mission to the OSCE, at the Forum for Security and Co-operation in Vienna

helped to clarify the next steps, such as the preparation of assessment missions, for example to the Kaliningrad Oblast.

Belarus, Tajikistan and recently Kazakhstan submitted requests for assistance to secure or destroy excess stockpiles of SALW. Deliberations in the FSC and initiatives of participating States led to a series of measures comprising assessment visits to Belarus and Tajikistan and, in the case of Belarus, to a decision of the Permanent Council and the preparation of detailed project plans.

Raising public awareness about the underlying threat to public security as well as international co-operation will be necessary to ensure that the required means can be provided by donor countries and that the most efficient solutions can be applied.

Assessing the OSCE's work on security issues. The Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) was established by the Porto Ministerial Council in 2002 as "a framework for enhancing security dialogue and for reviewing security work undertaken by the OSCE and its participating States". The Forum was tasked to make important contributions to this review of the politico-military dimension of the OSCE, which is necessary to assure the timely adaptation of tools to the changing security environment. The second ASRC took place in June and focused on terrorism, border security as well as strategic security and on the way forward. It produced more than 100 proposals aimed at further improving security co-operation among participating States.

An essential task of the Forum is to assess participating States' implementation of their numerous commitments concerning CSBMs contained in the Vienna Document 1999 and in other relevant FSC decisions to assure compliance of all participating States. The 14th Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting organized by the Forum in March enabled a complete review of all implementation measures, producing some 40 proposals aimed at further improving the transparency and relevance of the military information exchanged. Several of the proposals have already been implemented.

Combating terrorism. The Forum's contribution to the fight against terrorism is notably reflected in the adoption of three key documents on:

- OSCE Principles for Export Controls of Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS);
- OSCE Principles on the Control of Brokering in Small Arms and Light Weapons; and
- Standard Elements of End-User Certificates and Verification Procedures for Small Arms and Light Weapons Exports.

These documents represent important tools in preventing the proliferation of portable anti-aircraft missiles and other small arms and light weapons to illegal markets and terrorists. Other decisions adopted by the Forum include a revised questionnaire on antipersonnel landmines and explosive remnants of war as well as an update of the internal communications system that allows the direct exchange of military information between participating States.

Maintaining a dialogue on security questions. The Security Dialogue is an essential and dynamic tool of the Forum for Security Co-operation. A regular feature on the agenda of FSC meetings, it represents an opportunity for all participants to bring up security-related issues of a more general nature, such as the changing security environment and its consequences, new developments in defence policy or in military doctrine, and cross-dimensional aspects or new ideas for documents. In 2004, participating States and international experts addressed a broad range of items, including defence planning, reform of armed forces, international missions, terrorism and military doctrine as well as non-proliferation and stockpiles of ammunition.

Strengthening co-operation with other international bodies. The Forum invited a considerable number of experts from other international bodies to address specific security-related questions. These included presentations on anti-terrorism activities, weapons of mass destruction, the European Security and Defence Policy, European and American Defence Strategies, cross-dimensional security aspects such as links between arms imports and sustainable development as well as possible forms of inter-organizational co-operation.

Strengthening internal co-operation. Efforts were also made to further improve the co-operation with other OSCE bodies and Institutions, in particular the Conflict Prevention Centre and the Permanent Council. The Forum also further developed co-operation with the ODIHR, the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, and with the Organization's field operations. To intensify involvement of the OSCE Partners for Co-operation, the Forum prepared a paper encouraging the Partner States to co-operate in the politico-military field and to implement relevant principles and confidence- and security-building measures on a voluntary basis.

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly



Activities of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) represents the Organization's parliamentary dimension. Comprising in total 317 parliamentarians, the Assembly's primary task is to support inter-parliamentary dialogue, which is an important aspect of the overall effort to meet the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE region.

Originally established by the 1990 Paris Summit to promote greater involvement in the OSCE by national parliaments, the Parliamentary Assembly has grown into a very active member of the OSCE family. Its President regularly participates at the political level in the work of the OSCE, including meetings of the Ministerial Troika and the Ministerial Council. The Assembly's Secretary General and the staff of its International Secretariat work closely with the OSCE Secretariat and the other OSCE Institutions.

A unique structure

Each year, the Parliamentary Assembly elects by majority vote a

President to chair its regular meetings and act as its high representative. The President is assisted by nine elected Vice-Presidents and an elected Treasurer.

The International Secretariat is located in Copenhagen, Denmark, in facilities provided by the Danish Parliament. The International Secretariat is headed by Secretary General Spencer Oliver, who was elected in 1992 and whose current term runs through 2005. The Assembly is financed by an annual budget approved by the Standing Committee of Heads of Delegations each July. During its last fiscal year, which ended on 30 September 2004, the Assembly remained within its annual budget for the 11th year in succession. The current annual budget is €2,309,576.

In 2003, the Parliamentary Assembly Secretary General established a sub-office in Vienna, which is tasked with following the work of the Permanent Council and the OSCE Secretariat.

Winter Meeting, Vienna, February 2004

A total of 250 parliamentarians from 50 OSCE participating States attended the Assembly's third Annual Winter Meeting in Vienna. The Meeting followed up on the Declaration adopted in the previous year, prepared for the Annual Session in Edinburgh and heard reports from leading OSCE officials, including the Chairman-in-Office. He expressed his personal opinion that survival of the Organization required change in the consensus rule and that he would be very happy with a simple majority.

Annual Session, Edinburgh, July 2004

Under the title 'Co-operation and Partnership: Coping with new Security Threats', more than 300 parliamentarians from 52 OSCE participating States met in July for the Parliamentary Assembly's 13th Annual Session. The conference ended with the adoption of the Edinburgh Declaration that covered a wide range of political, economic and human rights aspects. Several additional documents were adopted, including resolutions on

- combating trafficking in human beings;
- fulfilling OSCE commitments regarding the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia;
- torture;
- measures to promote commitments by non-state actors to a total ban on anti-personnel landmines;
- national minorities;
- Kosovo;
- Moldova;
- Ukraine;

- economic co-operation with the OSCE's Mediterranean Partners;
- serious human rights violations in Libya;
- peace in the Middle East; and
- Georgian peace-keepers in South Ossetia.

The parliamentarians also overwhelmingly approved resolutions urging the OSCE to carry out necessary reforms regarding its consensus-based decision-making procedures which, according to the text of the resolutions, often obstruct the work of the Organization.

As in previous years, both the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the OSCE Secretary General addressed the Annual Session in Edinburgh and answered questions from the floor. A special meeting of woman parliamentarians was dedicated to the Assembly's 2004 Gender Report. On the final day of the conference, the Assembly elected US Congressman Alcee L. Hastings as its President. Three Vice-Presidents were elected for a term of three years: Panos Kammenos (Greece), Giovanni Kessler (Italy), and Nebahat Albayrak (Netherlands).

Ministerial Council, Sofia, December 2004

On 6 December, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Alcee L. Hastings addressed the opening session of the 12th OSCE Ministerial Council in Sofia. In his address, he highlighted the contributions of the Parliamentary Assembly to the work of the OSCE, the merits of the Bulgarian Chairmanship, the important role of parliamentarians in election observation missions, and the support of the Assembly for the OSCE Statement on Preventing

and Combating Terrorism. He also emphasized the Assembly's contributions in strengthening relations between the OSCE and its Mediterranean and Asian partners and the need to reform the Organization.

“The Parliamentary Assembly shares the Chairmanship's views on the need for reform and adaptation of the OSCE,” he said. President Hastings reminded the Council that with its Resolution on Co-operation, the Assembly reiterated its previous recommendations that the OSCE carry out the necessary reforms with regard to its decision-making procedure. He said this should be undertaken both in terms of enhancing its transparency and looking into the possibility of differentiating the consensus principle. It could provide, for instance, for consensus minus two or three for decisions on budget and personnel, particularly for the appointment of Heads of Institutions and Missions as well as of other high-level personnel.

Monitoring elections

The Parliamentary Assembly continued to play a key part in the monitoring of elections in the OSCE area, particularly parliamentary elections. Whenever the Assembly plays a leading role in monitoring elections, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office appoints a senior member of the Assembly to act as his Special Co-ordinator, leading the OSCE observers and presenting the conclusions of the observation mission, in conjunction with the ODIHR and other official observers.

In 2004, the Chairman-in-Office appointed the following Parliamentary Assembly officials as his Special Co-ordinators:

- Bruce George – for the presidential election in Georgia in January and the parliamentary polls in March (as OSCE PA President) as well as for the parliamentary elections in Ukraine in October and December;
- Vice-President Ihor Ostash – for the parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan in September;
- Vice-President Tone Tingsgaard – for the parliamentary elections in Belarus in October; and
- Vice-President Barbara Haering – for the presidential and legislative elections in the United States in November.

Conducted in close co-operation with the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, the European Parliament and the ODIHR, the election monitoring missions in 2004 included nearly 300 parliamentarians from throughout the OSCE area.

Parliamentary field visits

To enable parliamentarians to observe the OSCE's activities in the field more closely and to support the work of the Organization's field operations, the Parliamentary Assembly organized regular parliamentary visits to OSCE missions and field offices.



OSCE PA Vice-President Ihor Ostash observing the September elections in Kazakhstan

In March, three members of the Assembly travelled to Ukraine to meet the OSCE Project Co-ordinator and Ukrainian parliamentarians. This second visit of OSCE parliamentarians to Kyiv provided the group with an opportunity to discuss with representatives of the major political groups in the country and to assess the political and electoral reforms underway prior to the November 2004 presidential election.

Ad hoc Committees

The Parliamentary Assembly has established several Ad Hoc Committees to address specific issues or areas that can benefit from parliamentary attention. In 2004, these Committees continued to make a positive contribution to the OSCE's work in the following way:

Strengthening transparency and accountability within the OSCE. The improvement of working relations between the OSCE and the Parliamentary Assembly is the main goal of the Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability. At the Annual Session in Edinburgh, the Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution, sponsored by the Head of the Committee, which called for reform of the OSCE.



Bruce George hands over the 2004 OSCE Journalism Award to Ann Cooper, Executive Director of the *Committee to Protect Journalists*.

The Ninth OSCE Journalism Award

At its Winter Meeting in February, the Assembly awarded the 2004 Prize for Journalism and Democracy to the US-based *Committee to Protect Journalists* (CPJ). The CPJ is a non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1981, which is dedicated to the global defence of press freedom. Presenting the prize, Bruce George, the then President of the Parliamentary Assembly, said:

“By honouring the work of the *Committee to Protect Journalists*, one of the best-recognized media freedom watchdogs in the world, we are simultaneously drawing attention to the thousands of cases of media freedom abuses which CPJ has vigorously investigated and responded to, since its inception over 20 years ago.”

The award was first presented in 1996 to the journalist, Adam Michnik. Recipients have included Anna Politkovskaya, Andrei Babitsky, Christiane Amanpour, Timothy Garton Ash, Friedrich Ortler and Pavel Shermet. It was also awarded posthumously in 2001 to Georgiy Gongadze and José Luis López de la Calle.

In their resolution, the parliamentarians recommended that the consensus-based decision-making procedure, on which the OSCE is based, be reformed and the level of accountability be increased. It also recommended strengthening the role and status of the OSCE Secretary General with a view to enlarging his prerogatives, especially in the political sphere. The document also included a request by the Parliamentary Assembly to be given free access to all OSCE meetings and events and to include the Assembly’s Special Representative in Vienna in the Organization’s consultative processes.

The resolution also comprised a decision to establish a working group within the Parliamentary Assembly to examine the budget process within the OSCE and to prepare a report for the Assembly on this matter. As a result, the Assembly’s President appointed a Working Group on the OSCE Budget, which met for the first time at the Assembly’s autumn meeting in Rhodes. As in previous years, the OSCE Secretary General presented the draft OSCE budget for the coming year to the Standing Committee at the autumn meeting and gave Assembly members an opportunity to pose questions.

Facilitating dialogue between political forces in Belarus. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Belarus continued its work on facilitating the dialogue between the different political actors in the country. In June, members of the Working Group travelled to Minsk. On the sidelines of the Annual Session, the Group also moderated a discussion on the media situation in Belarus, which was attended by a wide variety of Belarusian political figures and journalists from pro-government and opposition groups. In October, most of the Working Group members went to Belarus to monitor the parliamentary elections on 17 October, representing close to 50 observers from the Parliamentary Assembly in this mission.

Looking for ways to resolve the status of Transdniestria. Following the halt of negotiations on the status of the Transdniestrian region in Moldova at the end of 2003, the Assembly’s Parliamentary Team on Moldova looked for ways to promote dialogue between legislators and political forces in Chisinau and Tiraspol. A visit to the two cities in June resulted in a proposal by the Team to hold a roundtable meeting between the two legislative bodies to promote the negotiation process and to agree on principles that could serve as a basis for a potential solution. Both sides having agreed to participate in such a meeting, the Team was looking for a date convenient for all parties.

Meetings, conferences and seminars

In May, the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) and the Parliamentary Assembly held a seminar in Vienna on the parliamentary oversight of armed forces and police and security forces. The second of its kind, the seminar aimed at promoting awareness of parliamentary responsibilities outlined in the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and furthering the dialogue between senior military personnel and parliamentarians involved in the oversight of armed forces.

In September, more than 130 parliamentarians from 43 OSCE participating States and partners travelled to the Assembly’s autumn meeting in Rhodes. The event focused on trafficking in human beings as a security challenge and as a new form of slavery and discussed international strategies in the fight against this crime. The Rhodes meeting was directly followed by the Parliamentary

Forum on the Mediterranean, which debated the fight against terrorism, economic security, and trade and co-operation in the region.

Other activities

Meetings of the Assembly's leadership. Several regular high-level meetings of the Parliamentary Assembly's leadership were held in 2004. These included meetings of the Assembly's Standing Committee in Vienna in February, in Edinburgh in June, and in Rhodes in September. The Standing Committee consists of the heads of national delegations to the Assembly, members of the Bureau, and the Chairs of the General Committees. Together with the Bureau, it prepares the work of the Assembly between sessions and ensures its efficient operation. The Bureau consists of the Assembly's President and its nine Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer and the President Emeritus. It met in July in Edinburgh and in December in Sofia.

The Expanded Bureau, which had its annual meeting in Copenhagen in April and is tasked with preparing the Assembly's Annual Session, comprises the Bureau and the Officers of the General Committees. There are three General Committees: on Political Affairs and Security; on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment; and on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions.

A new President. Prior to his election as the Assembly's seventh President at the July Annual Session, Alcee L. Hastings served several years in different functions for the Parliamentary Assembly. He occupied the position of Vice-President, Chair and Vice-Chair of the First General Committee and, for two terms, of Committee Rapporteur.

In 2004, President Hastings engaged in an active programme representing the Assembly and promoting the OSCE's parliamentary dimension. He paid official visits to Turkey, the Russian Federation and Austria, where he spoke before the OSCE Permanent Council. He addressed the 50th Annual Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Venice and the Conference on Tolerance and the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination in Brussels, which was organized by the OSCE and the Belgian Government.

Another important point on President Hastings's agenda was the continuation of efforts to strengthen the OSCE's and the Assembly's work with the Organization's Mediterranean partners. In September, he chaired the Assembly's third Parliamentary Forum in Rhodes.

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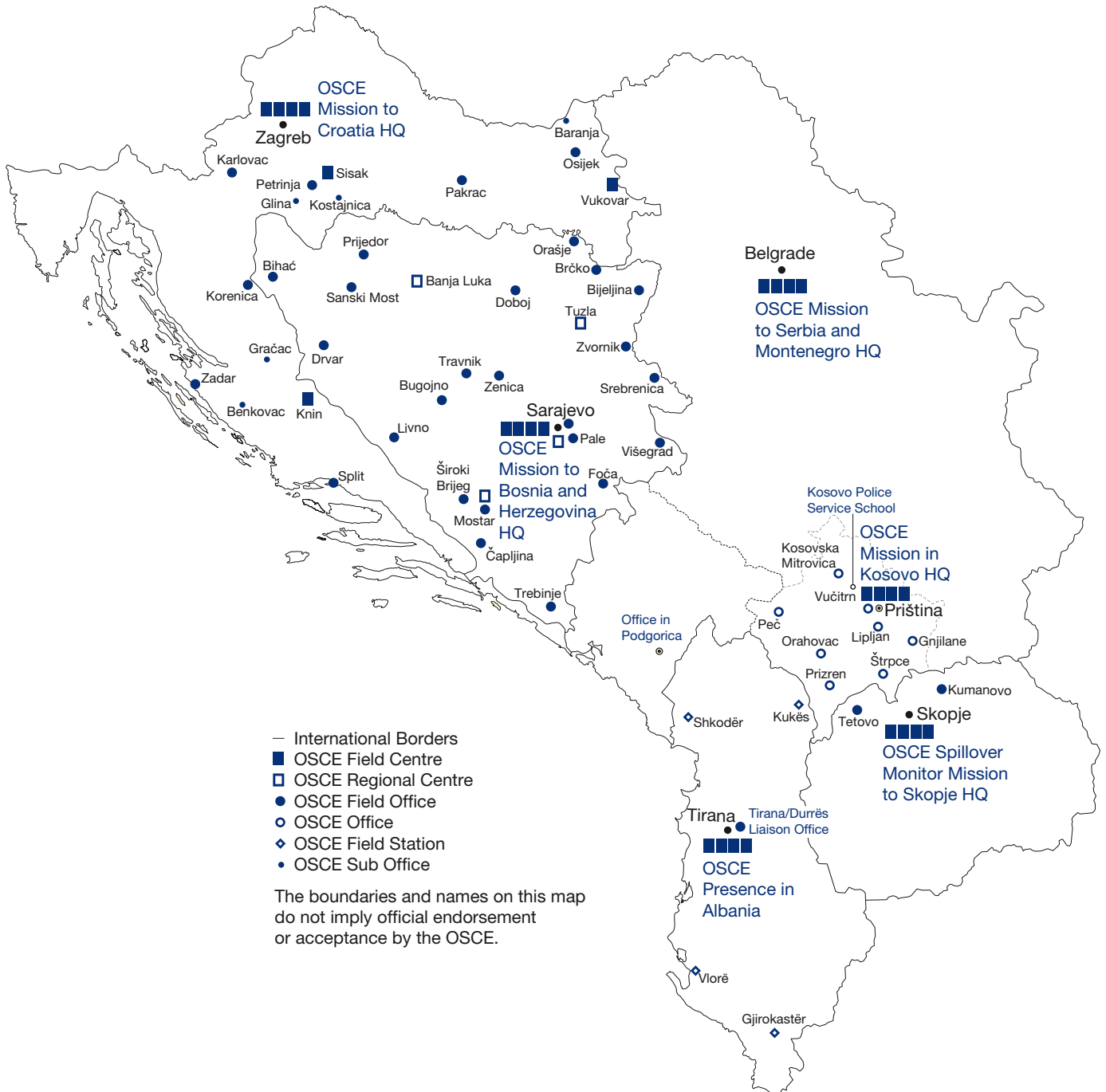


OSCE PA President Alcee L. Hastings

Field Operations Field Operations Field Operations



SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE



OSCE Presence in Albania

The OSCE Presence assists Albania in its legislative and judicial reform process, including electoral and regional administrative reform, parliamentary capacity-building, anti-trafficking and anti-corruption activities, support for independent media, good governance and civil society projects, and police assistance. Since its establishment in 1997, it has made a considerable contribution to the stabilization and democratization of the country.

In 2004, electoral reform was a main focus of the Presence's activities. Together with its Albanian partners and the ODIHR, the Presence made a significant contribution to this process, which culminated in July with the establishment of an ad-hoc parliamentary committee on electoral reform. This in turn facilitated

the passage in October by the Albanian Assembly of two laws allowing for the restructuring of the country's Central Election Commission and an improved voter registration system.

The Presence-led Technical Experts Group drafted a Law on the Restitution and Compensation of Property, which was passed by the Assembly in July. The Law was expected to help resolve long-standing disputes over land ownership in Albania. Decisive progress was also made in reforming the Assembly's Rules of Procedure. This was the first step in modernizing the Assembly, a process that is expected to be completed after the 2005 parliamentary elections.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Boosting cross-border co-operation and the fight against organized crime.

In order to assist the Albanian Government with implementation of the Strategic Integrated Border Management Plan, the Presence expanded the regular Joint Border Co-operation Meetings. These served as the primary forum for the exchange of information between the Albanian border police, the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR).

To improve the nationwide police communications network and the ability of the Albanian border police to respond to threats posed by cross-border and organized crime, the Presence donated its radio and repeater system, worth €200,000, to the border police.



"This donation has helped modernize our border services, in particular with regard to standardizing the legal procedures for the movement of people and immigration problems," said Bajram Ibraj, Director General of the Albanian State Police.

The Presence introduced Albanian customs officials to the meetings and facilitated monthly meetings between mayors from municipalities in Albania and Kosovo.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Supporting government institutions in fighting economic crime. A regional conference on fighting economic crime held by the Presence in Tirana in January helped promote transparency, good governance and the rule of law among participants from public and private institutions. The Presence also continued to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Finance's Directorate for the Fight Against Money Laundering.

Promoting economic empowerment initiatives. Targeting young Roma, victims of trafficking and rural women, the Presence began implementing the third phase of a project to equip young people with entrepreneurial skills and advise them on creating their own businesses.

Increasing citizens' responsibilities for sustainable environment. To raise public awareness of the importance of protecting the environment, the Presence produced a TV documentary on environmental 'hot spots' and their impact on public health. It also organized seminars to train local government experts on the new environmental laws.

Human Dimension Activities

ELECTORAL REFORM AND DEMOCRATIZATION

Preparing for the 2005 parliamentary elections. 2004 was marked by follow-up to the final ODIHR report on the 2003 local government elections, issued in February, and the release of the Joint Recommendations on the Albanian Electoral Code by the ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission. This report was the first full assessment of election legislation in Albania and underlined the need for further revision of the Electoral Code and other related legislation.

To re-launch the electoral reform process, the Presence worked with the ruling Socialist Party and opposition Democratic Party towards an agreement on how to implement the ODIHR recommendations. Under the agreement, which was signed on 1 July, the Assembly established a parliamentary ad hoc committee on electoral reform. A Technical Experts Group, chaired by the Presence, was tasked with drafting the amendments to the Electoral Code in compliance with the joint recommendations.

In October, the Socialist and Democratic parties signed another agreement on the re-structuring of the Central Election Commission, resolving a long deadlock of the ad hoc committee. This agreement stipulated that the existing Electoral Code should be abrogated upon publication of final results of the 2005 parliamentary elections. It also provided for a systematic constitutional

and legal review of the electoral system for elections after 2005.

Modernizing the Albanian Assembly.

The Presence's parliamentary support project, launched in 2001, provided expert assistance in the process of reforming the Assembly's Rules of Procedure to make the institution more transparent and efficient. In order to help Albanian members of parliament to improve the infrastructure in their areas and to reach out to their constituencies, the Presence launched a pilot programme to provide training to a group of Members of Parliament's aides. A training programme for parliamentary administration staff, started in December 2002, continued in 2004. It included support in improving personnel management practices.

Supporting civil society. More than 3,000 people received training and consultancy services through a network of Civil Society Development Centres that was established by the Presence in 2001. Over 2,500 people used the office space and meeting rooms available in the Centres. The Network delivers a grass-roots development programme to local NGOs and community-based groups. The Centres registered as local NGOs in 2004 and became independent implementation partners for the Presence. A sixth centre was opened in Shkodra to extend the activities to the northern parts of the country.

Fostering civil society participation in decision-making. Working closely with the Government and Albanian NGOs focusing on disability issues, the Presence assisted with the development of a 'National Strategy on People with Disabilities' and a National Action Plan. For the first time, a donor conference gave governmental and non-governmental institutions an opportunity to present a joint project portfolio reflecting the priorities of the Strategy.

Promoting women's empowerment.

Together with the UNDP, the World Bank and UNICEF, the Presence convened an international working group on gender issues to co-ordinate support for women's organizations and key state institutions such as the National Committee on Equal Opportunities. The group and its mailing



OSCE Presence in Albania

Fostering civil society participation: the Presence helped develop a National Strategy on People with Disabilities.

list served as a major tool for the exchange of information and best practice. As a result of an initiative by the Presence, a Women's Counselling Centre was established in Kukës in the north of Albania, providing victims of domestic violence with counselling and legal aid. Through the network of Civil Society Development Centres, capacity-building on gender mainstreaming was provided to local civil society and municipal governments. In consultation with the Presence's Gender Unit, OSCE field stations ensured that gender issues were integrated into their joint work with local officials and that awareness of gender mainstreaming was raised in the regions.

RULE OF LAW AND LEGAL REFORM

Improving property legislation. Disputes over land ownership continued to complicate Albania's economic development. The Presence chaired the Technical Experts Group that drafted the much-anticipated Law on the Restitution and Compensation of Property, and assisted the Albanian authorities in drafting the secondary legislation on property. The approval of the Law by the Assembly in July was generally recognized as a major breakthrough towards final resolution of the property issue.

The Presence also included in its property project the first registration of property, a necessary step for the economic development of the country and for the proper

implementation of the restitution and compensation programme.

Supporting legal reform. To help the Albanian government complete the country's legal framework, the Presence drafted secondary legislation for the Witness Protection Law and assisted in its practical implementation. The Presence and the ODIHR also assisted the Ministry of Justice draft legislation to amend the current juvenile crime laws.

A first in Albania was the publication by the Presence of a Legal Sector Report, a resource to assess current developments in the country's legal sector. The Report describes the legislative framework and organizational status for each legal sector institution as well as the assistance given and makes recommendations for improvement.

Increasing transparency in court practices and raising trial standards. In order to increase the confidence of citizens in the criminal justice system, the Presence initiated a Fair Trial Development Project. The project involved not only observation of courts, but also concrete follow-up projects to improve the skills of people working in the judicial sector. The Presence published an interim report summarizing the findings of the five Court Observation Reports and set up a database of country-wide written verdicts from cases involving serious crimes and corruption.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Fighting human trafficking. The Presence launched a project on the pre-screening of irregular migrants and asylum seekers in 2004. The joint initiative with the Albanian Directorate for Refugees, the IOM and the UNHCR provided for detained foreigners to be referred to the appropriate procedures for asylum, assistance and voluntary repatriation, with the ultimate goal of establishing a sustainable asylum system. The Presence trained and deployed five pre-screening officers at key border-crossing points to assist the Albanian Government in fully assuming the management of the asylum system.

More than 500 people benefited from the second phase of the Women's Rights and Anti-Trafficking Education (WRATE) seminars. The seminars, an important tool for the prevention of human trafficking and the raising of awareness about domestic violence, targeted vulnerable groups such as high school students, rural women from north-eastern Albania, and Roma.

Promoting prison reform. In 2004, Albania took a step forward in improving the pre-trial detention system. Following the publication of the recommendations on the issue by the Presence in March, the Government changed the process according to which the transfer of responsibilities over the pre-trial detention system from the Ministry of Public Order to the Ministry of Justice was to be done to better reflect the needs of the Albanian pre-trial detention system. Although such a transfer has been done over one facility only, the Albanian Government has compiled a master plan that will make possible the completion of the process.

Raising awareness about workers' rights. A national conference held in December focused on key problems and priorities for improving the rights of Albania's workers and laid the foundations for a new strategy. The conference was arranged by the OSCE Presence, Albania's Office of the People's Advocate, the country's trade unions, and several other international organizations.

OSCE Presence in Albania



MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Improving media legislation. At the invitation of the Prime Minister, the Presence assisted the Albanian authorities in aligning the country's media legislation with European standards. In co-operation with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, ARTICLE 19 and the Council of Europe, the Presence provided a thorough assessment of existing and proposed media laws. This included the electronic media law, the charter of Albanian Radio and Television, the law on access to information, the print media bill, defamation legislation, and draft amendments on digital terrestrial broadcasting.

Strengthening media institutions. The Presence offered its technical expertise on a number of media-related issues to the country's broadcasting regulator, the National Council of Radio and Television (NCRT), and the Parliamentary Media Committee. In co-operation with the European Radiocommunications Office, it provided recommendations on the NCRT draft strategy for digital broadcasting.

Supporting the creation of self-regulatory mechanisms. To help strengthen ethical and professional standards in the Albanian media, the Presence encouraged the idea of establishing a Council of Media

Ethics. In July, it held a meeting for leading journalists, editors and media owners on the development of self-regulatory mechanisms and the creation of associations to protect the professional status of journalists.

Head of Presence:
until October 2004,
Ambassador Osmo
Lipponen, since then:
Ambassador Pavel Vacek
Revised budget: €3,740,900
www.osce.org/albania

OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

The pace of reform accelerated in Bosnia and Herzegovina during 2004, and the Mission made considerable progress in its programmes. In co-operation with its international partners – in particular the Office of the High Representative (OHR), the EU Special Representative (EUSR), the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR)¹, the Council of Europe, and the UNDP – the Mission continued to work towards consolidating peace, democracy, and stability in the country.

The Mission's main focus areas in 2004 were:

- monitoring human rights protection and assisting local efforts to promote and defend human rights, consolidate the rule of law and build sustainable human rights institutions;
- promoting the development of effective, transparent and accountable government institutions;
- supporting the political engagement of citizens to increase accountability of government at all levels and encourage the development of community support;
- assisting the development of an education system that gives students access to schools free from political, religious, cultural and other bias;
- ensuring the sustainability of education reform efforts and strengthening the foundation for a modern education system;
- supporting the electoral process and helping the country's Election Commission become a self-sustaining, effective state institution;
- giving active assistance to local authorities in reforming the public administration system; and
- encouraging democratic state-level control over the country's armed forces.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Supporting the defence reform process.

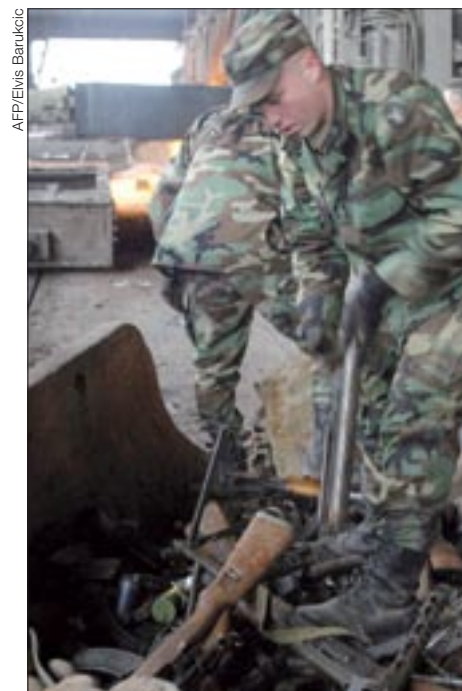
To help Bosnia and Herzegovina comply fully with its politico-military commitments, the Mission continued to play a central role in assisting the country's authorities with the process of reforming its defence structures. Important developments in this context were the creation of a state-level Ministry of Defence in March and the appointment of

the country's first Defence Minister, Nikola Radovanović, that same month. Both events were brought about with the help of the Mission and other international organizations in the country.

As a result of this assistance, Bosnia and Herzegovina's authorities continued to reduce force numbers and arms stockpiles, and introduced a new doctrine of command and control for the country's armed forces. This led to a financially more sustainable and legitimate defence capacity. The Mission also assisted the country's Defence Ministry in developing training programmes to prepare the armed forces for future participation in peace support operations.

Furthering democratic control of the armed forces. After the establishment of the Joint Defence and Security Policy Committee in December 2003, the Mission continued to assist both Houses of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Parliamentary Assembly in enhancing democratic control over the armed forces. In addition, it promoted co-operation between the Defence and Security Committees of the State and Entity Parliaments by organizing five joint meetings and a bilateral visit to the Croatian Parliament in November.

Helping establish a modern intelligence service. The Mission provided expertise for the development of a modern, state-level Intelligence Agency. It assisted in establish-



AFP/EWS Barukcic

Weapons being prepared for melt-down

The defence reform process reduced Bosnia and Herzegovina's active and reserve military personnel from 19,800 to 11,891, thereby further contributing to a huge stockpile of excess weapons. Together with other international organizations, the Mission supported a pilot project, under which 20,000 surplus small arms and light weapons were melt-down. The initiative served as a model for future arms destruction in the wider region of south-eastern Europe.

Supporting implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords

As a result of the extensive politico-military reform process in Bosnia and Herzegovina over recent years, the Agreement on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures – Article II of Annex 1-B of the Dayton Peace Accords – was terminated on 28 September (see also page 28). For almost eight years, the Mission provided technical and logistical support to the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Articles II and IV. The document ending the Agreement was signed by the Personal Representative, together with representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its two entities – Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – at a final meeting in June of the Joint Consultative Commission, which oversaw the implementation of the Agreement.

¹ On 2 December 2004, SFOR's mandate ended. The Stabilization Force was replaced by the European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR).

ing state-level supervisory and control institutions for the agency and gave support for the creation of an effective intelligence community, capable of information-sharing with other Euro-Atlantic intelligence agencies.

The Mission continued to provide support to the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Article IV, which foresees measures for sub-regional arms control in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (now Serbia and Montenegro).

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

An increasingly important focus of the peace implementation process in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the creation of a well-functioning, professional and depoliticized public administration. When the Government pledged its commitment to public administration reform to the Peace Implementation Council in March 2003, the Mission decided to assist it in this crucial process.

Reforming public administration. The Mission's assistance in this field concentrated on the development of transparent financial management structures and the implementation of modern administrative procedures within municipal government. In total, Mission advisers provided support to 90 out of 142 municipalities to improve their financial and human resource management practices and establish comprehensive internal control capacities.

Making human resource management more efficient. Bosnia and Herzegovina's municipalities spend on average 60 to 70 per cent of their revenues on administration. To reduce this figure and channel more funds towards serving the country's citizens, the Mission helped municipal administrations modify their institutional organization, correct the size of their administrative structure, and improve the selection of their staff. To develop a more results- and performance-oriented civil service, the Mission also provided the municipalities with assistance in strategic planning and progress monitoring.

Improving financial management.

Fundamental changes in the country's existing financial management systems are needed to bring the public sector to a level where it can support the needs of a modern, competitive economy. The Mission concentrated its activities in this area on addressing issues such as weak internal control, insufficient strategic planning and undue emphasis on the control of inputs rather than the efficient and effective delivery of outputs.

Based on a multi-year approach, the Mission assisted municipal authorities in implementing effective and transparent budgetary and public expenditure management and reporting frameworks. It also supported the development of enhanced

Breaking the debt spiral of Bosnia and Herzegovina's municipalities

Having assessed the public finance and human resource management practices of all the country's municipalities in 2003, the Mission moved to hands-on assistance in 2004. The assessment had shown that poor financial management was the cause of sizeable debts and arrears in many municipalities. One of them was Lukavac in the north-east of the country.

Against an annual budget of €2.3 million, the municipal administration of Lukavac, a municipality of 56,000 inhabitants, had accumulated a deficit of more than €6.1 million. The situation prevented the municipal government from spending on local infrastructure projects or other local needs.

The Mission's finance adviser conducted a review of all debts and claims and advised the municipality to prioritize the payment of employee salaries and pending lawsuits. In addition, the municipal administration received assistance in preparing a final debt repayment plan. It was based on eliminating outstanding liabilities, preparing individual repayment plans with main debtors and overall strong financial discipline regarding expenditures. With the Mission's assistance, Lukavac decreased its deficit by 70 per cent (4.3 million) by the end of 2004 and is solidly on its way to financial solvency.

financial management systems that facilitate planning, programme monitoring and evaluation while improving managerial decision-making.

In an effort to strengthen local economic development and increase internal control of municipal administrations, the Mission developed a pilot project with five municipalities. It comprises proper accounting of their fixed assets, consolidating their cadastre and asset records, and producing an updated inventory of municipal property. Other initiatives aim at establishing mechanisms to regulate financial and human resource management processes in the public sector and report inadequacies to the relevant authorities.

Human Dimension Activities

HUMAN RIGHTS

Verifying completion of the Property Return Process. Together with the OHR and the UNHCR, the Mission continued to support the process of returning properties to their pre-war owners or occupants. In 2004, it initiated checks to verify that local authorities settled all property claims. Over 200,000 such claims have been submitted and resolved since the end of the war. The Mission also monitored the situation of people requiring temporary accommodation to ensure that their housing needs are effectively and equitably addressed.

Promoting and protecting economic and social rights. To assist local authorities in progressively securing economic and social rights for all, the Mission undertook an assessment of the barriers that Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens encounter in accessing health care, social assistance and housing. These efforts focused on vulnerable groups such as returnees and members of the Roma minority, but the results of this initiative, which is planned to be continued in 2005, will ultimately benefit all.

Building strong national human rights institutions. The goal of the Mission's Human Rights Institutions Programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina is to ensure that accessible and independent remedies for human rights abuses exist, are properly

understood and provide effective, non-discriminatory protection to all. To this end, the Mission supported the process of unifying the country's three Ombudsman institutions. The Mission also continued to monitor the implementation of decisions by the Human Rights Chamber, established under the Dayton Peace Agreement to consider complaints about human rights violations, and the transfer in 2004 of the Chamber's competencies to the Constitutional Court's Human Rights Commission.

Protecting the human rights of Roma and other national minorities. To support the rights of Roma to non-discriminatory access to healthcare, education, and housing, the Mission raised awareness and assisted the civil registration of births of Roma children in co-operation with Roma communities and municipal authorities. The Mission also facilitated the work of a task force established to develop a national action plan on the educational needs of Roma and other national minorities, ensuring the active participation of NGOs, the Ministries of Education and minority representatives. A plan was adopted by local education authorities in February calling for measures to incorporate national minority culture, history and literature into existing curricula, to reduce social and economic barriers to education facing minorities through financial assistance for textbooks and transport, and to raise awareness among Roma about the importance of education. The Mission also completed a review of the status of informal Roma settlements in order to support local efforts to assist Roma in securing tenure to the land on which they reside.

Fighting trafficking in human beings. Efforts in this field concentrated on supporting the Office of the State Co-ordinator for Anti-Trafficking and on awareness-raising campaigns. To ensure that it can draw on sufficient resources, the Mission seconded an expert staff member to the Office and provided financial support through a voluntary contribution from Iceland. In addition, it produced a comprehensive overview of the National Referral Mechanism for victims and conducted public awareness campaigns in print and broadcast media

National Referral Mechanisms: protecting the rights of trafficking victims

An integral part of the OSCE's anti-trafficking strategy, National Referral Mechanisms (NRMs) are the toolkit which helps governments establish relationships and work together with law enforcement bodies, NGOs and other stakeholders in the fight against human trafficking. The OSCE's Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings recommends that its participating States establish NRMs by building partnerships between civil society and law enforcement bodies, creating guidelines to properly identify trafficked persons, and establishing cross-sector and multi-disciplinary teams to develop and monitor anti-trafficking policies. The basic aims of an NRM are to ensure that the human rights of trafficked persons are respected and to provide an effective way for referring victims to support services.

In 2004, the ODIHR published a handbook on NRMs, which provides guidance on how to design and implement sustainable structures that aim both at prosecuting traffickers and at providing support to victims.

to alert potential victims to the problem of trafficking and inform law enforcement officials about how to identify victims.

RULE OF LAW

In early 2003, new criminal procedure codes were introduced at the State and Entity levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of comprehensive legislation initiated by the High Representative to reform the criminal justice system. The purpose of the new codes was to strengthen the rule of law and establish an efficient, accessible and equitable justice system. The new codes caused fundamental change in the procedures governing criminal investigations and the administration of justice in the courts. Among the most significant changes were the elimination of the position of the investigative judge, the shift to an adversarial trial procedure and the introduction of new procedures, such as plea bargaining. From January to August, the Mission undertook a project to assess the implementation of the new codes and monitored a total of 1,032 criminal trial proceedings across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Findings and recommendations were reported to local institutions involved in the criminal law reform process.

Reform of the judiciary. In 2004, Bosnia and Herzegovina continued its efforts to establish a fair and effective criminal justice system – one that is compliant with international human rights standards and presided over by a professional and independent judiciary.

To support these efforts, the Mission deployed 24 trial monitors to 38 courts, who then provided the local authorities with systematic reporting on criminal proceedings in the courts of Republika Srpska and the Federation as well as the country's State Court. In addition, workshops were held for judges and prosecutors to discuss the implementation of the new criminal codes, resulting in more independence in judicial decision-making and greater consistency in the application of the law.

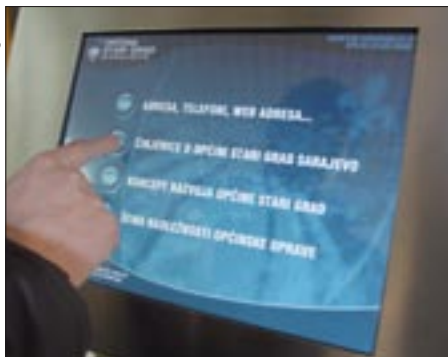
The Mission also seconded two staff members to provide technical assistance to the Criminal Codes Implementation Assessment Team of the country's Justice Ministry and provided the Republika Srpska and Federation Judicial and Prosecutorial Training Centres with regular feedback on implementation issues that require further training efforts in adversarial procedures, evidence gathering, plea bargaining, and sentencing.

Monitoring war crimes cases. The Mission monitored and reported on war crimes cases tried by the domestic courts, highlighting obstacles that hinder the fair and effective prosecution of these cases. It assisted local authorities and the OHR in establishing the War Crimes Chamber of the State Court and participated in initiatives aimed at improving regional co-operation in the investigation and prosecution of war crimes.

DEMOCRATIZATION

Promoting transparent and accountable government. Within the framework of its Parliamentary Support Programme, the Mission helped amend the Rules of Procedure of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Parliamentary Assembly (BiH PA). This reform will increase the efficiency and transparency of the BiH PA, providing for both a harmonized legislative procedure and improved parliamentary oversight. The Programme also included assistance for the establishment of a Research Directorate at the BiH PA and a Parliamentary Press Gallery.

OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina



Improving access of citizens to municipal services

Strengthening local democracy through dialogue between citizens and local government was another important initiative. The initiative included a range of outreach mechanisms to involve citizens in the process of local government reform, such as public discussions and roundtables, working bodies and commissions as well as projects developed in partnership between citizens and municipal representatives. Efforts were based on the implementation of the Freedom of Access to Information Acts (FOIA), compliance with the European Charter of Local Self-Government and the introduction of a Code of Ethics for elected officials. The performance of the 20 municipalities selected for these core programmes was encouraging. By December, the FOIA achieved an implementation rate of nearly 80 per cent in these municipalities, while the implementation rate of the Charter and the Code of Ethics reached approximately 60 per cent.

Improving legislation and regulatory frameworks. Working closely with international partners and both Entities,

the Mission helped revise the Entities' draft laws on local self-government. At the local level, 20 municipalities and seven cantons received assistance in revising their rules of procedure, harmonizing them with the overall legislative and constitutional framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Strengthening civil society. To reverse public apathy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and convince citizens of their capacity to bring about change, the Mission encouraged over 100 citizens' groups to take a more active part in public life. This included organizing pre-election debates that focused on holding Government accountable as well as NGO campaigns for local community improvements such as cleaner streets, safer roads, and the provision of student scholarships.

The Mission also supported more than 400 partnership initiatives between citizens and local authorities that addressed issues such as youth participation in public life, gender equality, the environment, employment and education.

An example of an innovative partnership approach developed by the Mission is the Citizen Outreach and Participation Initiative (COPI), which was funded by the UK Government and implemented in partnership with two local NGOs. Through COPI, citizens and officials from 30 municipalities received training on municipal decision-making and learnt about tools for citizen participation, writing project proposals, how to use the FOIA, public relations, and managing conflict. Participants subsequently implemented joint initiatives on the FOIA, the environment, and youth participation, to increase the participation of citizens in local decision-making. The initiative resulted in the introduction of new policies in several municipalities. For example, the municipality of Rudo established a joint citizen-municipal commission on youth issues, which started to develop a strategic vision and an annual action plan, whereas the municipality of Ustiprača improved implementation of the FOIA by publishing municipal information guides. In several other municipalities, either information officers or youth co-ordinators were appointed to deal with full implementation of the FOIA.

Developing young leaders. The Successor Generation Initiative (SGI), devised by the Mission in 2002, continued its successful work with young people, developing their ability as leaders and helping them to put into practice projects that improve their communities. Of the 25 participants in 2004, two were elected in October as municipal councillors.



Turning ideas into projects: SGI participant organizes youth fair to provide advice on career and education options

Dzenita Bosto, a 21 year-old student from Bugojno and a former SGI participant, found a solution to a constant problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina: it is almost impossible



for young people to find comprehensive information about education and employment anywhere in the country.

Dzenita's solution: to organize a Youth Information Fair, where this kind of information is made available to all. The initiative, the first of its kind in Bosnia and Herzegovina, met with success: about 300 students and representatives of relevant authorities from across the country travelled to Bugojno, where the fair was held in October. "Youth had the opportunity to receive first-hand information about employment opportunities, professional qualifications expected for business, and study opportunities, which they found invaluable," said Dzenita. The fair received comprehensive and positive coverage in the media and ended with expectations that a similar event would be held in 2005.

Promoting fair employment practices and accountable businesses. As a result of the Mission's efforts in this field, the nine largest employers in the country introduced fair employment practices, benefiting more than 20,000 employees as well as potential new hires. The Mission provided technical support to businesses to encourage them to develop fair employment policies and adopt and incorporate such principles in their by-laws and internal documents. This ensured that the companies' hiring and employment process was designed according to the highest standards of modern human resources management. The Mission also worked towards strengthening the capacity of employees to hold businesses accountable for their employment practices. By distributing leaflets explaining basic labour rights and organizing roundtables and radio shows to promote fair treatment in employment and labour relations, the Mission helped employees and the wider public to advocate for fair employment policies and identify the most effective means to eliminate discrimination in employment and work relations.

EDUCATION

Promoting an education system open to all. During the 2003/04 school year, the Mission worked closely with the Co-ordination Board for the Interim Agreement on Accommodation of Special Needs and Rights of Returnee Children to continue addressing the needs of returnee children. The Co-ordination Board, comprising representatives from entity and cantonal ministries and pedagogical institutes, plays the lead role in ensuring that the Implementation Plan for the Interim Agreement, signed by all education ministers in November 2003, is carried out in full. The main goal of this co-operation is to ensure that more returnee children attend school in the area where they live. Building on achievements during the 2002/03 school year, the efforts of the Co-ordination Board included the development of a set of guidelines on appropriate, non-political, non-divisive names and symbols used in schools.

In co-operation with the Council of Europe, the Mission supported the establishment of an independent Textbook Commission,

responsible for developing guidelines for history and geography authors. Textbooks used in schools all too often view history from a single perspective and do not favour diverse viewpoints. It is hoped that such new guidelines, based on a 'multi-perspective approach' developed by the Council of Europe, will encourage the reflection of diverse viewpoints in textbooks and allow students to acquire a basic understanding of the history and geography of all constituent peoples who make up the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Working towards multi-ethnic education: Mostar's Old Gymnasium



OSCE/Richard Medic

After two years of effort by the Mission, the prestigious Old Mostar Gymnasium – an important symbol for quality education in the region – opened its doors in September, re-uniting over 200 Bosniac and 200 Croat students. War-damage and subsequent neglect had left the building in dire need of repair and the Mission lobbied heavily to obtain funding for its reconstruction as well as for extra-curricular activities. Efforts continue to help further integrate and refurbish the school and improve the level of education.

"This is a significant achievement, not only in addressing the problem of divided schools, but also in contributing to the amelioration of the quality of education."

**Ambassador Douglas Davidson,
OSCE Head of Mission**

Another step forward was taken in the field of minority education. Under the auspices of a working group co-chaired by the Mission, a National Action Plan on the Educational Needs of Roma and Other National Minorities was agreed in February by all Education Ministers on both Entity and cantonal levels.

Supporting structural reform. Following the adoption in June 2003 of the state-level Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education, the Mission actively lobbied for the adoption of legislation in harmony with this Law by the authorities of Republika Srpska, the Federation's cantons and the Brčko District. The Law not only ensures equal access to education and promotes European educational standards, but also allows for greater school autonomy and increased parent-teacher involvement in educational affairs. To support the implementation of such legislation, the Mission helped develop model by-laws.

A state-level higher education law is essential for the implementation of commitments made by Bosnia and Herzegovina's authorities in signing the 1999 Bologna Declaration¹ and ratifying the 1997 Lisbon Recognition Convention². These commitments include facilitating degree recognition and student mobility as well as increasing the autonomy of universities. In spring, a state-level law was put into parliamentary procedure in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but political obstruction caused significant delay in its adoption. As a consequence, the Mission continued throughout the year to lobby for the adoption of a state-level framework law on higher education. A revised higher education law is expected to go into parliamentary procedure in early 2005.

Vocational training was another priority area for the Mission. Working closely with the European Union and stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it developed a draft state-level framework law on vocational education and training, which is expected to go into parliamentary procedure in early 2005. The law will also bring standards in vocational education and training into line with trends in other European countries. This will ensure student mobility and employability and, as a result, contribute to economic development.

Encouraging civic involvement in the education reform process. The Mission hosted two education forums in 2004 – one on higher education and another on vocational education – each drawing over 300 people. In addition, scores of

¹ The Bologna Declaration aims at establishing a European area of higher education by 2010.

² Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region



Participants at the sixth Education Forum

roundtable meetings as well as radio and TV shows were held, many on the development of parent and student councils. These combined efforts encouraged citizens to get more involved in their community and education, shaping the decisions that affect their lives.

Students are what education reform is all about. Amila Rujanac showed what can be accomplished when students speak up and voice their interests and concerns. As an active member of the Parent Student Council of Bugojno's Gymnasium, Amila and her classmates realized a number of different projects in 2004: campaigns against drug abuse, ecological initiatives and a *Gitarijada*, which brought together young people from different social environments through a guitar concert.

"I believe that the OSCE's co-operation with our Parent School Councils and with NGOs helps us better understand our needs and issues", Amila said. "Our aims are a very good match with what the OSCE is doing: improving education, civic society, and society in general."

ELECTORAL REFORM

Throughout the year, the Mission continued to support the country's election process. Through its two seats in the seven-member Election Commission (ECBiH), the Mission focused on the reform of electoral legislation and implementation of the Law on Conflict of Interest.

Taking charge of the voting process: Bosnia and Herzegovina holds municipal elections

On 2 October, municipal elections were held in 139 municipalities, the cities of Mostar and Banja Luka and in Brčko District. The polls broke new ground in several respects:

- They were the first elections to be fully administered and funded by the country's authorities since 1995 when the General Framework Agreement for Peace came into force.
- For the first time, mayors were elected directly (with the exception of Mostar and Brčko District).
- They were the first elections held under a new electoral regime in Mostar since its administrative unification in March 2004.
- They were the first direct elections for the Brčko District Assembly since the issuance of the Final Arbitral Award in March 1999.

The ECBiH certified a total of 27,426 candidates from 70 political parties, 18 coalitions and six lists of independent candidates. Candidates stood for 140 mayoral positions and 3,145 councillor positions. The ODIHR assessed the elections as having been conducted successfully.

The Election Commission and the Mission also participated in a working group established by the Parliamentary Assembly to refine the country's Election Law by filling legal voids, clarifying provisions and adjusting deadlines. Amendments to the Law were adopted in January and April. Most of the changes were of a technical nature referring to issues such as the com-

position and appointment of polling station committees, media rules, complaints and appeals procedures, observers, and paid advertising in electronic media.

Meanwhile, the Mission started planning its withdrawal from the ECBiH. To ensure seamless disengagement, the Mission will continue to provide support and expertise, focused on legislative reform, the implementation of the Law on Political Party Financing, and the improvement of the voter registration system.

Promoting gender equality

The Mission incorporated the principal elements of the OSCE Gender Action Plan in both the programmatic field as well as its own administrative procedures. Through its Democratization and Public Administration Reform programmes, the Mission promoted non-discriminatory and inclusive practices in the human resource management of businesses and municipal administrations. Internally, the Mission made gender mainstreaming an integral part of its programme development and implementation, and undertook efforts to provide a professional working environment for all Mission staff ensuring equality of both genders.

Head of Mission:
Ambassador Douglas Davidson
Revised Budget: €19,465,300
www.oscebih.org

OSCE Mission to Croatia

Probably one of the strongest images in Croatia in 2004 was that of Prime Minister Ivo Sanader breaking the traditional bread (*pogača*) with one of the more than 100,000 Serb refugees who have returned to the country since the end of the 1992–1995 war. This event coincided with the visit of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office in May. It was the first-ever appearance by a Croatian Prime Minister at the home of a Serb returnee. For the many Croatian refugees still living in exile, undecided as to whether to return, this image said more than the proverbial thousand words.



Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader (centre) breaking the traditional bread with Serb returnees and OSCE Chairman-in-Office Solomon Passy (left)

The year 2004 was also one in which Croatia, as the first country in south-eastern Europe gravely affected by the war, was granted candidate status by the European Union. The mandate of the OSCE Mission to Croatia closely parallels the political tasks that the country needs to address for EU membership, most of which are related to normalization and reconciliation after the war. Against this background, Croatia has turned to the OSCE as an essential partner in realizing this agenda. With the signing of an agreement with minority MPs in Croatia in December 2003, the Government acknowledged the importance of refugee return and minority issues.

“Consolidating its role as a provider of independent advice and a catalyst for change, the Mission established an effective partnership with the Government.”

Ambassador Peter Semneby, Head of Mission

Human Dimension Activities

REFUGEE RETURN

As in previous years, refugee return was at the core of the Mission's work in Croatia. The key to success in this area was the Government's commitment to the policy that those refugees who wish to return should be able to do so under adequate conditions, which means, first and foremost, a secure environment and access to housing.

Resources to reconstruct war-damaged properties were made widely available to Serbs, and the Government increased its efforts in support of the repossession of properties occupied during and after the

war. At the end of 2004, only about 1,500 cases of occupied property remained. The Government also indicated that it would participate in a joint regional initiative proposed by the OSCE, the European Commission and the UNHCR to the Governments of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia and Montenegro, in order to close the refugee file within a reasonable time frame.

Another significant achievement for the Mission was the Government's taking on board of advice on ways to remove legal and administrative obstacles hampering the return and settlement of refugees. The Mission also provided the Government with a detailed analysis on the lack of electricity

faced by many villages to which refugees have returned. As a result, some of those villages will finally receive electricity in 2005. Encouraged by this success, the Mission plans to tackle the more difficult issues of water supply shortages to return villages and other basic infrastructural needs.

Housing programmes for former occupancy/tenancy rights holders. Despite all the Mission's efforts, one category of refugees and displaced persons remains without access to housing – those who once lived in socially-owned housing with occupancy/tenancy rights and have lost that right. In 2004, the Mission took the lead in finding a solution for this pressing issue together with the Government, the

Changing Mission structure

Reflecting Croatia's progress toward fulfilling the OSCE mandate and the resulting change in the nature of the Mission's work, the Mission began streamlining its structure in 2004. While individual case work with returning refugees was decreasing, advice and support for regional political authorities gained in importance, indicating the improving political climate in which the Mission implements its mandate.

The structural change also affected the Mission's field presence, which was consolidated into a smaller number of relatively larger field offices, to make more efficient use of staffing resources. The OSCE Mission to Croatia now has field offices located in Gospić, Karlovac, Sisak, Split, Vukovar and Zadar.

Sofija Škorić and her husband Svetozar, both Croatian Serbs, returned to their destroyed home in the devastated village of Biljane Donje in the Zadar hinterland in 1997, after living as refugees for two years. After a difficult first year, the UNHCR began reconstructing their home. Their hopes that they would finally be able to move back in were shattered when construction works on their property had to be stopped after a land mine exploded. With the help of the OSCE Mission to Croatia, the Škorićs applied for – and received – the state assistance for reconstruction to which they were entitled. However, acts of arson and other forms of intimidation stalled the progress until finally, all hope was lost with the further destruction of their house and the theft of newly purchased building materials.

For six years, Sofija and her husband had to temporarily live in a nearby house. They feared that this temporary arrangement would become permanent. However, the joint field trip by Croatian Prime Minister Sanader and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to returnee villages in the Zadar hinterland on 11 May proved to be a turning point. In a record five days, the Škorićs' house was rebuilt, just in time for the visit.

Sofija and her husband have since been joined by other refugees who have also decided to return to the village of Biljane Donje, which until then was completely deserted.



Sofija Škorić in front of her home in Biljane Donje

UNHCR and the European Commission. The Government's promise to implement two housing programmes for this category of refugees will be reinforced by the launch of an information campaign targeting former occupancy/tenancy rights holders residing in neighbouring countries.

The successful implementation of these programmes will mean that many refugees from Croatia's urban areas will for the first time have access to housing.

In order to create a positive atmosphere among refugees and displaced persons who wish to return home but who need a clear signal that they are welcome and can return in an atmosphere of security and acceptance, the Mission, the Government, and its international partners in September launched a public awareness campaign on 'Reconciliation and Sustainable Return in Croatia'. The campaign aims at encouraging refugees and internally displaced persons to make an informed decision on whether they want to return. It is also designed to foster a climate conducive to sustainable return by promoting the importance of tolerance and integration in a multi-ethnic society based on European values. In preparation for the project, the Mission commissioned and published a widely quoted report on attitudes toward refugee return.

RULE OF LAW

Providing expert advice for war crimes trials. The Mission asserted its role as a key source of information and advice on the conduct of war crimes trials in Croatia. As part of the exit strategy of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which foresees the transfer of ICTY cases to domestic courts, the Mission was asked to provide its expertise on such trials.

Through its extensive field presence, the Mission monitored virtually all war crimes trials in domestic courts, which resulted in three major reports. Released at a joint press conference by the Head of Mission and the Croatian Minister of Justice, the reports were widely cited – also by the ICTY's President – as a reference for the possible transfer of ICTY cases to the Croatian courts.

Another important focus of the Mission was the improvement of inter-state judicial co-operation, an activity that is particularly important and sensitive in war crimes trials. As a result of support from the Mission, Croatia's Chief State Prosecutor reached preliminary agreement with his counterparts in Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina on landmark memoranda regarding direct co-operation, a move that will facilitate both war crimes investigations and the struggle against organized crime in south-eastern Europe.

Assisting judicial reform. The Mission continued to provide assistance to the Government in its efforts to reform the judiciary. Of particular concern was the implementation of judgments by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and the Constitutional Court, many of which focused on the functioning of the judiciary.

A report by the Mission, analysing all cases involving Croatia before the ECHR, highlighted the need for the country's authorities to enhance human rights protection by strengthening domestic institutions. In particular, the report recommended measures to strengthen the Constitutional Court. The report was presented to the Croatian Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities, which then adopted a resolution based on the Mission's recommendations.

The Mission also continued its efforts to enhance and support the role of the Constitutional Court in its capacity of safeguarding human rights in Croatia. Since 2003, the Mission, with the financial backing and support of the Norwegian Government, has helped the Constitutional Court transform its website into an effective tool for the dissemination of information about court practice and procedure. The website contributes to increasing both the knowledge and capacity of the court's 'consumers', namely attorneys, NGOs, and private litigants. To simplify and improve access to the Court, the Mission also prepared an 'E-guide', which gives Croatian citizens information on how to file a complaint with the Constitutional Court.

With the adoption of a free legal aid system still pending, the Mission supported NGO



Supporting the repossession of property

The Panda Café and Sara Pizzeria cases are possibly the most high-profile property repossession cases in Croatia. They involve the State's allocation of private businesses owned by refugees to temporary occupants. Even their mention at the UN Security Council in 1997 did not bring about their resolution.

In 2004, the OSCE Mission, through the Norwegian Refugee Council, contracted a Zagreb-based attorney to provide five refugees with free legal aid to help resolve their legally complicated repossession cases. The owners of Panda and Sara were also offered similar assistance. Otherwise, the returnees would have faced an expensive, long drawn-out legal battle which they could not have afforded.

The successes achieved during the first year were encouraging. Two of the five cases resulted in the owners having their properties returned to them, including the Panda Café case. The owners of Sara are scheduled to recover their property in early 2005.

At the same time, there have been further legal complications. In a separate court case, the illegal temporary occupants of Panda and Sara have sued the owners, demanding compensation. While the appeals lodged by the owners are still pending, it is ironic that they, who fought so long to get their businesses back, may now have to sell their properties in order to compensate the temporary occupants. These later developments also show that legal assistance will continue to be crucial for some time to come.

projects that provide free legal aid to disadvantaged groups. This initiative targets in particular cash-strapped refugees and displaced persons by helping them to claim their rights on return-related legal issues, such as the repossession and reconstruction of their pre-war property.

Promoting minority rights. In this field, the Mission continued to work with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in advising Croatia's authorities on the development of plans for minority representation in the judiciary and state administration. This is the most important part of the Constitutional Law of National Minorities adopted in 2002 that remains to be implemented.

To improve voter registration among Croatia's minority communities, the Mission ran an information and awareness-raising campaign targeting in particular the country's Bosniac and Roma minorities. The under-registration of these communities directly impacts on the level of minority representation at all levels of government. This message was also highlighted in a series of lectures held in town halls across Croatia.

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

The review of the country's media legislation continued to be an important Mission activity. Together with the European Commission and the Council of Europe, the Mission asked international media experts to review several pieces of media legislation and bring them into line with international standards. The first major result was the adoption of a new law on media in April. The Government declared that future amendments to media laws, due to be adopted in 2005, will follow the experts' guidelines.

In co-operation with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the Mission continued to advocate decriminalization of libel in Croatia. Although libel has not been entirely decriminalized, amendments adopted in 2004 to the country's Penal Code incorporate important parts of OSCE advice. For the first time, the burden of proof in libel cases has shifted from the defendant to the plaintiff.

DEMOCRATIZATION

Civil society development was again a key element of the Mission's work. In total, 52 projects initiated and developed by the Mission, local partners and participating States were successfully carried out in 2004, representing a total expenditure of €1.3 million.

Encompassing a broad array of issues, these projects not only supported the Mission's core activities in the field of refugee return, rule of law, and media development, but also promoted good governance and civil society in the war-affected areas and contributed to bringing ethnic communities closer together. The projects ranged from high-level nationwide activities, such as judicial reform workshops, to local grass-roots initiatives, such as a university work camp.



Mission staff distribute information on the OSCE in Daruvar, Eastern Croatia, on Europe Day, 9 May.

Promoting electoral reform. In the field of electoral reform, the Mission and the ODIHR began following up on recommendations made by the ODIHR after last year's parliamentary elections. These included the need to create a permanent body to prepare and conduct elections, improve transparency in campaign financing and management of voters' lists, and to streamline the conduct of out-of-country voting. The Mission brought together Croatia's top legal and government experts to discuss and give guidelines on electoral



Croatian police officers 'on patrol' in Brighton, England

reform – a topic particularly relevant in view of Croatia's presidential and municipal elections scheduled for 2005.

Police development. Turning Croatia's police force into a modern police service is the joint goal of both the Mission and the Interior Ministry. Helping this process along, the Mission assisted the Ministry in developing a plan for police reform and in organizing a forum on the management of police reform, with participation of the OSCE and the European Commission. The Mission also began to focus on reforms that improve the representation of women and national minorities in the police force. Additional efforts by the Mission and other international partners, primarily Germany and the United Kingdom, focused on further developing the concept of community policing in the country. This included the training of some 150 community police officers (called 'Contact Officers') and a visit to the UK for Croatian police staff, who worked alongside their British counterparts to study the local model of community policing, which aims at establishing a community approach to crime prevention. Highlighting the importance of well-organized

human resource management – the key to any effective police force – the Mission worked with the German police to exchange good practices and experience in this area. The Mission sponsored a five-day training workshop on this topic, run by two expert human resource managers from the German police. The workshop was followed by a Mission-sponsored study visit to the Interior Ministry of the German Federal State of Saxony-Anhalt for five high officials of the Croatian police, who were acquainted with the management of human resources in a modern European police force.

The Mission promoted the improvement of regional and international police co-operation. In addition to co-ordinating international assistance offered to the Croatian police, the Mission also provided advice on a variety of security and human rights issues, such as the detection and prevention of human trafficking.

Promoting women's participation in public life. The Mission continued to support two extra-budgetary projects that aim at empowering women to increase their participation in political and public life.

Financed by the Italian Foreign Ministry and implemented by the Gender Task Force Offices of the Stability Pact for South East Europe, the projects have been ongoing since 2001. Both projects contribute to raising awareness among women on the need for their greater involvement in politics.

In 2004, the first-ever regional meeting of NGOs dealing with anti-trafficking and anti-corruption issues in the Stability Pact region took place. Supported by the Mission, the initiative was organized by the Women's Room Centre (ACTA) and received funding by the ODIHR. The meeting succeeded in helping ACTA members establish future strategic and operational action plans.

Head of Mission:
Ambassador Peter Semneby
Revised Budget: €10,404,300
www.osce.org/croatia

OSCE Mission in Kosovo

The serious outbreak of inter-ethnic violence in mid-March 2004 represented a setback for Kosovo on its way to lasting peace – and overshadowed the rest of the year. Despite all obstacles, the OSCE Mission continued its efforts to help Kosovo on its path from a

troubled past to a stable future based on peace and tolerance between the different communities. Although it often played a quiet role, the Mission's efforts yielded concrete results: democratic self-government is forming and beginning to take hold in Kosovo.

“The ‘Standards for Kosovo’ describe a Kosovo where public institutions are representative and democratic, where the rule of law is effective, respected and accessible to all, where those IDPs who wish to are free and able to return to Kosovo without hindrance, threat or intimidation, where all individuals, regardless of ethnic background, can travel and work safely, and use their languages (and where that use is respected) anywhere and in any institution of Kosovo, where the framework for a functioning market economy is in place and where the Kosovo Protection Corps operates strictly within its mandate; furthermore, the standards describe a Kosovo where Pristina is participating in successful dialogue with Belgrade and where Kosovo is in stable and peaceful relationships with its regional neighbours. In short, a truly multi-ethnic, stable and democratic Kosovo which is approaching European standards.”

Quoted from: Kosovo Standards Implementation Plan

Since its establishment in 1999 as Pillar III of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the OSCE Mission has been striving to prepare the groundwork for the building and consolidation of democratic institutions while fostering the rebuilding of ties between Kosovo's communities. In 2004, the Mission's main objectives were the strengthening of local ownership of the ‘Standards for Kosovo’ process laid down in December 2003. This process sets out specific goals that Kosovo's Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) have to meet before Kosovo's final status can be addressed.

The Mission focused its activities on four areas:

- building the capacity of governmental and non-governmental institutions;
- monitoring and promoting human rights and the rule of law;
- development of the media; and
- continued training and specialization of the Kosovo Police Service.

Human Dimension Activities

ELECTIONS

In October, 1.3 million Kosovans went to the polls to elect a new central Assembly. After having organized three successive cycles of elections since 1999, the Mission for the first time turned over key responsibilities to a local election management body, the Central Election Commission Secretariat (CECS).

Handing over the baton. The CECS was created in 2003 as the operational arm of the Central Election Commission. Based in Prishtinë/Priština, the Secretariat has a technical, non-political mandate and is equipped with sufficient resources and capacity to provide fair electoral administration.

“The OSCE, with its seasoned field presence, is uniquely qualified to play the leading role in the critical process of local capacity-building and monitoring the transfer of responsibilities to Kosovo's institutions.”

**Søren Jessen-Petersen,
Special Representative
of the UN Secretary-General, UNMIK**

Consolidated Budget and its entire staff is made up of Kosovans. All future elections will be carried out by the CECS.

Preparing the electoral groundwork. To increase local ownership of the electoral process, the Elections Working Group – a consultative forum hosted and chaired by the Mission and composed of representatives of the main local political and civil forces – recommended to the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General the electoral framework for the 2004 election.

Many of the tasks outlined by this framework were taken over by the CECS, including co-ordination of the polls on election day and planning with municipal commissions and polling staff. Other responsibilities included the certification of political parties, candidates and other groups standing for election, public information activities, observer accreditation and distribution of electoral material. In the final push to the election, the CECS and the Mission made a special effort to ensure that all displaced persons were able to take part in the poll.



For the 2004 Assembly elections, the OSCE Mission played an advisory role, passing on its electoral know-how and operational responsibilities to the emerging CECS. This marked an important step forward for Kosovo's institutions to take over ownership and manifested the OSCE's commitment to successively transfer the electoral process to the people of Kosovo. The CECS is financed by the Kosovo

DEMOCRATIZATION

Supporting central government institutions. A key programme to support central governance in Kosovo is the Assembly Support Initiative (ASI), begun in 2001 by ten international partners and led by the OSCE Mission. The Initiative played a central role in developing Kosovo's Assembly as an institution. In 2004, the ASI partners continued their series of training seminars on parliamentary work and policy issues in Kosovo and abroad. Many programmes focused on developing parliamentary life and offering technical support to Assembly Committees in the legislative process.

The Initiative encouraged international working visits and public hearings, and offered advice and a capacity-building programme to the Assembly Secretariat. To help minority communities reach common positions on issues affecting their constituencies, the Initiative promoted the role and participation of these communities in the Assembly. In addition, an eight-month long capacity-building programme was organized, including working visits for the PISG political advisers to Vienna and Brussels and, following the Assembly elections in October, a two-month orientation programme for the newly-elected Assembly members.

Supporting municipal governance. To improve good governance practices at the local level, the Mission provided advice to municipal officials in using legislation and administrative procedures that encourage effective accountable government. Various programmes were implemented to strengthen and enhance their skills in formulating and executing policy decisions. In the Prishtinë/Priština and Lipjan/Lipljan regions, for example, the Mission and the Regional Enterprise Agency worked with the Policy and Finance Committees on budget and economic development issues. Support was given in creating municipality-gearred brochures in all languages. All people in these communities benefit as they become more familiar with the services the municipality provides for them. Furthermore, it highlighted the fact that the municipality is there to serve the people and not vice versa.

Involving Kosovo's youth in decision-making processes

An important initiative to improve young people's understanding of local policy-making processes and community issues is the Mission's Youth Assemblies Project, created in 2003. Involving Kosovo Albanians, Serbs, Roma, Ashkali and Turkish young people, the project aims at improving their interaction with local and central government institutions.

In August, the Mission organized the first of two four-day retreats with participants of these Assemblies to widen the network of young people involved in the initiative. More than 240 members of ten Youth Assemblies from throughout Kosovo travelled to neighbouring Montenegro, where they discussed election processes, tolerance and the role of central government institutions. A highlight was the simulation of a session of the Kosovo Assembly, during which the young participants presented and voted on draft legislation.

"It is imperative that young people in Kosovo come to understand both their own role and importance in political developments and the day-to-day implications of governance," commented Matthew Minns, the Mission's Project Manager in charge of the programme.

In an effort to promote their roles as essential anti-discrimination mechanisms, the Mission continued work with the Communities and Mediation Committees. These are mandatory municipal committees, which serve as an anti-discrimination mechanism to ensure that the rights and interests of all communities are protected while encouraging active engagement by minority community members. Financial and in-kind support, such as capacity-building sessions, was given to the Municipal Assembly outreach project, which aims at encouraging the electorate to establish a better contact with those elected. The Mission also carried out the 'Your Municipality, Your Future' programme, a series of workshops with secondary school students, designed to increase their involvement with municipal structures.

Promoting the link between local institutions and the public

The Mission's continuing commitment to good governance at the local level helps ensure that legislative bodies are responsive to the needs of their constituencies. As part of these efforts, the Mission's office in Strpce/Shterpce organized a field trip for municipal representatives from Ferizaj/Urosevac in June. Municipal assembly members, UNMIK officials and local media representatives visited the local villages of Dubrave/Dubrava and Babljak/Bablak to gain a first-hand impression on the living standards there and to give citizens an opportunity to express their concerns directly to their local leadership. For many assembly members, this was the first time they had truly seen the poor living conditions of people within their responsibility, and they immediately began discussions on actions to take to improve the conditions in visited areas.

Promoting civil society participation.

To support the growing engagement of civil society in public activities, the Mission continued its work with grassroots initiatives that promote citizens' rights and democratic values within communities and municipal structures.

With support from the Mission and the European Agency for Reconstruction, a Youth Reconciliation Initiative was established and entered into a partnership with a network in Peje/Pec to increase political awareness among young people. Through initiatives such as the production of a multilingual newsletter, the project helped young people to get active in policy decision-making processes at the municipal level.

Activities in this field included the Civic Dialogue project created in 2002, which connects NGOs and other groups from Kosovo and Serbia proper through non-political activities and reconciliation projects on issues such as gender equality and co-operation with NGOs working on and with media outlets. The Mission's network of NGO Resource and Com-

munity Centres provided assistance to local civil society groups in the design and implementation of grassroots projects that support best practices in civil society participation throughout Kosovo. As part of the Mission's policy to increase local ownership of responsibilities, the Centres have successively been handed over to local civil society groups.

Supporting minority communities. An issue of particular concern to the Mission are the challenges Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children face in the field of education. In co-operation with the PISG Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Mission sponsored a project that prepared for the inclusion of Romani language classes in the school curricula, catch-up classes to help integrate these children into the school system, and the training of potential teachers in the Romani language. The Mission's education programme also included awareness-raising campaigns among parents to emphasize the importance of pre-school and school education and of vocational training.

The Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which entered into force on 1 February 1998, is the first legally binding multilateral instrument devoted to the protection of minorities in general. The Framework Convention can serve as a model and legal benchmark for the legislation and practice of Council of Europe member states and of states willing to become members, with regard to their treatment of minorities.

The Mission continued to be a leading force in the promotion of minority language rights, through its involvement in the UN-led Task Force on Language Compliance. In September, the Mission hosted a '*Pax Linguistica*' conference on language diversity in Kosovo, which aimed at offering constructive support to the PISG institutions on improving the implementation of official language policy. The event was attended among others by international experts and representatives of Kosovo's communities and NGOs.

In addition, capacity-building seminars were organized to help minority NGOs draft a 'shadow report' on how civil society representatives themselves see human rights standards implemented by governmental authorities, as suggested by the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Advising the Office of the Prime Minister

A key activity under the Mission's good governance programme is its support for the Advisory Office on Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunity and Gender and the Advisory Office on Communities set up in the Office of the Prime Minister. Representing an important entry point for the Mission's institution-building work within the central institutions, the Offices assist the Prime Minister in carrying out the transfer of powers from UNMIK on human rights as well as on ethnic minorities issues. Support was also provided on a wide range of other topics to the Prime Minister's Office, such as on the implementation of laws; government strategy and policy; citizen participation; standards implementation; anti-discrimination in employment and services; gender issues; the fight against human trafficking; and the protection of cultural heritage.

Sustainable refugee return and reconciliation.

Refugees returning to Kosovo continue to face a number of serious obstacles. The Mission concentrated its efforts on initiatives that help returnees to remain in Kosovo, establish themselves and build working relationships with their neighbours. This work included improving the conditions for returnees, ranging from equal access to basic services and employment to property questions. Government institutions were encouraged to provide the necessary services and protection, free from discrimination.

The Ethnic Communities Sustainability Fund (ECSF), established in January by the Mission and funded through voluntary contributions by OSCE participating States, supported the reconciliation and integration processes of smaller communities through small but effective inter-ethnic and tolerance-building projects such as peace-

building and social education activities in Gjilan/Gnjilane and a bus line offering services to Kosovo Bosniacs and Kosovo Serb returnees in Prizren. Efforts focused on the local level and brought together communities to address common concerns through alternative means. In the Štrpce/Shtërpçë municipality, ECSF support was used to organize dance and aerobic fitness activities that bring Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serbian children together in a mutually beneficial and fun atmosphere.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The protection and promotion of human rights remained a top priority for the Mission. To fulfil this aim, it conducted capacity-building training for local institutions and active monitoring to help overcome inadequate remedies for violations. Issues were brought to the attention of the relevant authorities, with the Mission recommending sustainable remedial measures and public reporting on the status of the respect for human rights. The Mission continued to promote and instil a human rights culture among thousands of students, educators, the PISG and NGO officials.

Human rights capacity-building for Kosovo's institutions. In parallel with the transfer of powers from UNMIK to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, which entails their subsequent taking over of responsibility for human rights protection, the Mission developed a new strategy that provides for the inclusion of its human rights expertise as an integral part of the local government structures.

A central part of the strategy is the deployment of human rights experts to work in municipalities throughout Kosovo. By the end of 2004, such experts had been deployed to 17 municipalities in Kosovo. In addition, an expert was also assigned to the Office of the Prime Minister to help develop institutional mechanisms for ensuring gender equality and human rights protection. The Mission gave technical expertise and support to the Advisory Office on Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunity and Gender to help implementation and awareness-raising of Kosovo's Anti-Discrimination Law.



The Mission helped establish human rights clubs for secondary school students in 14 Kosovo municipalities.



'Global Motion' on stage

Increasing tolerance through the arts: 'Global Motion'

An alternative reconciliation activity is the 'Global Motion' project, an initiative funded by the Italian Government through the OSCE Mission to empower Kosovo's youth to address critical social issues that affect their communities through the arts. Young people from different backgrounds learn to work together, creating and performing artistic material, gaining skills such as creative and critical thinking, self-expression and tolerance.

The Mission's capacity-building programme also used workshops and training seminars to train public officials on human rights and help them incorporate a human rights-compliant methodology in their daily work. The Mission also helped set up human rights clubs in 14 municipalities aimed at conveying human rights attitudes to secondary school students. The clubs enabled them to develop a critical understanding of human rights through informed debate, which they then shared with classmates and in their communities.

Monitoring and reporting on human rights concerns. The Mission continued to monitor the human rights situation in Kosovo. Special attention was given to the protection of human rights with regard to law enforcement and judicial systems, non-discrimination issues, property questions, protection from and prevention of human trafficking, and domestic violence.

Reporting focused on the judicial system, paying special attention to municipal courts. Recognizing the improvements to the criminal justice system since 1999, which enabled the Mission to hand over responsibility to local monitors, efforts were extended to cover the civil and

administrative courts. Responsibility to monitor these courts remained exclusively with international human rights monitors.

The Mission also published an update to a catalogue of legal remedies under Kosovo legislation, giving Mission and government officials the tools to improve the monitoring of their implementation and effectiveness.

Following the March riots, the Mission compiled a comprehensive report on human rights challenges, outlining the key human rights problems stemming from these violent events. This included the access of minorities to Kosovo's justice system, the monitoring of the legal system, property rights, the effect of parallel institutions, and the responses by the authorities.

Combating trafficking in human beings.

The Mission's technical and financial support was instrumental in drafting the first Kosovo Action Plan on Anti-Trafficking, which is hoped to be launched in spring 2005. The Mission's human rights officers served as regional counter-trafficking focal points, monitoring Kosovo's Centres for Social Work and Trafficking and Prostitution Investigation Units, and screening presumed victims.

The Mission continued to support shelters for victims in need of short-term safe housing. Through its field offices, it ran awareness-raising programmes on trafficking-related issues through roundtable discussions, conferences and seminars, newspaper articles, newsletters, and radio interviews.

RULE OF LAW

Supporting Kosovo's legal community.

In this field, the Mission continued its capacity-building programme for present and future members of Kosovo's legal community and worked with existing institutions to enable the legal experts to eventually take on such projects themselves. Activities fell into the following three categories:

- supporting the Kosovo Chamber of Advocates;
- supporting legal aid NGOs to offer free legal aid services in civil and administrative matters; and
- fostering the development of the Judicial/Bar Exam.

To buttress their sustainability, the Mission also continued building the capacities of the institutions that it has founded, the Kosovo Judicial Institute and the Kosovo Law Centre.

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Strengthening media development.

Fostering the development of Kosovo's media remained an important priority for the Mission. Activities concentrated on advancing formal journalism education, improving the educational component in media programmes, and promoting broadcasting for minorities.

Laying the groundwork for a more professional media, the Mission developed training programmes for media managers focusing on marketing and quality programming. With a view to institutionalizing journalism training in Kosovo, the Mission led efforts to establish a professional media institute. As a first step, a feasibility study was undertaken to help determine how a mid-career training programme would best serve journalists. The final terms of the media institute are expected to come to fruition during 2005.

Sesame Street on Kosovo TV – teaching tolerance and understanding to children

Bert, Ernie and Big Bird have made it onto Kosovo's TV screens. Since December, one of the world's most successful TV programmes for children, Sesame Street, can be watched by Kosovo's children in their own languages. Brought to Kosovo by the OSCE Mission, UNICEF and Kosovo's public broadcaster, Radio Television of Kosovo (RTK), the series helps pre-school children develop critical skills in literacy, numeracy and understanding of their own culture and those of their neighbours.

The live film segments were produced locally and are based on an educational curriculum developed with both ethnic

OSCE Mission in Kosovo



Albanian and Serbian content advisers. They celebrate diversity, showing children's daily lives, family relationships and cultural elements such as festivals, language, dance and music.

Broadcast in Albanian as *Rruga Sesam* and in Serbian as *Ulica Sezam*, the programme is shown on RTK and three Serbian language televisions. A total of 52 episodes in each language are planned.

Other media support projects included:

- RTV Herc, a multi-ethnic and bilingual broadcasting initiative in the town of Štrpce/Shtërpçë. The initiative received financial help and training to create a team of Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian staff that produces a quality information programme for both communities.
- The Kosovo Media Network (KOSMA) connecting 27 Kosovo Serb radio stations. It received equipment and training

to be able to produce and communicate news in their own language.

- A 'police and media' programme to improve communication between police officers and journalists was devised. The sessions included the set up of realistic crisis scenarios, riot control activities, and protection of crime scenes.

POLICE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Providing basic training for police officers.

The goal of the Kosovo Police Service School to help create a new police force in Kosovo took another step towards completion in 2004. Over the year, the School trained a further 665 new Kosovo Police Service (KPS) officers, bringing the total number of basic recruits who have successfully completed the training to 6,925. Of these, 16 per cent are women and 17 per cent represent minority communities. It is planned to meet the final target number of 7,300 basic recruits in 2005.

KPS officers were trained in the practices and principles of democratic policing and human rights, including modern techniques to deal with domestic violence, awareness in human trafficking and community policing. Many of the instructors are local KPS officers who themselves went through the training course. To create a sustainable police service, the officers were instructed on supervision and management techniques. Advanced and specialized police training classes included investigation techniques for homicides and organized crime. The School addressed these issues through an increased number of specialist courses, which focused on criminal investigation, the tasks of border and boundary police, forensics and drug surveillance.

The Kosovo Police Service School began its work in 1999. It represents both a unique success story for Kosovo and a shining example of best practices used for police education and development in post-conflict areas. Since 2004, KPS officers patrolling Kosovo outnumber their UN Civilian Police counterparts and by all accounts are performing their new duties in an exemplary manner.



More than 660 new Kosovo police officers graduated from the OSCE-established Kosovo Police Service School.

Promoting gender equality

The Mission continued to support programmes and projects that promote equality between women and men and the protection of the rights of women as essential components of a sustainable democracy. This included work in the areas of victims assistance, capacity-building and awareness-raising as well as legislative and policy development.

In domestic violence issues, the Mission continued to press for a multi-sector response to gender-based violence, encourage regional networks and strengthen the Kosovo-wide referral mechanisms. A new domestic violence policy was issued in January 2004, while anti-trafficking procedures were extended to foreign victims. The Mission also conducted two awareness campaigns in support of gender issues. The first one targeted high school students and focused on dating and domestic violence. The other, entitled 'Violence Can Be Stopped, Accept Protection', addressed the general public and offered the services of a helpline to victims.

In addition, the Mission made efforts to raise awareness and build capacities on gender issues at the Kosovo Police Service. A total of 170 KPS officers participated in a specialized course on domestic violence investigation, designed for officers who investigate gender crimes and domestic violence. The Mission also worked with KPS officers on the proper handling of domestic violence cases and created notebooks containing relevant legislation and policy as well as contact information for direct assistance.



A helpline poster for victims of domestic violence

Reaching out to Kosovo's communities.

The Police School's outreach work include activities aimed at strengthening the relationship between the police and youth and increasing safety in the community. In July, the School organized a three-day youth camp for future leaders, which provided young Kosovans of all communities with an opportunity to develop mutual trust and respect. Some 150 secondary school students took part in the activity, worked together to learn more about community policing, non-violent problem-solving methods and civic responsibility. The initiative formed part of the School's efforts to improve the relationship of Kosovo's young citizens with the police forces, particularly following the participation of many young people in the March violence. The students also learned about establishing and running a democratically elected student council in their schools.

In addition, the School helped set up Community Safety Action Teams, which strive to widen traditional policing focusing on crime to encourage community empowerment and ownership in safety. Its objectives are to assist the relationships between police, local governance and the community, while helping reduce crime and improving life and safety in the community through co-operative projects and strategies.

Head of Mission:
Ambassador Pascal Fieschi
Revised Budget: €42,607,700
www.osce.org/kosovo

OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro

The activities of the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro in 2004 were marked by a number of successes in areas that represented important challenges for the country and its two constituent republics. Throughout the year, the staff of the Mission's headquarters in Belgrade, Serbia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Office in Podgorica, Montenegro (Serbia and Montenegro), and its presence in southern Serbia as well as the law enforcement training centres in both republics continued to support overall democratic reforms.

The Mission focused in particular on the consolidation of progress in maintaining stability and fostering inter-ethnic integration in southern Serbia, a region with diverse ethnic Albanian and Serb communities. Despite the unrest in Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro, in March, the region remained calm.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Conflict prevention in southern Serbia.

The ethnic Serbian and Albanian communities in southern Serbia were at the centre of the Mission's conflict prevention activities. Efforts were aimed at giving the ethnic Albanian community a stake in the work of their local authorities, breaking down feelings of mistrust between the various ethnic communities, and creating local judicial and security structures that work for everyone in the municipalities.

The Mission continued assisting the authorities in implementing the 2001 'Covic' peace agreement aimed at re-integrating the ethnic Albanian community. To prevent tension, a range of structures, such as the government-appointed Southern Serbia Co-ordination Body, were set up to enable community and political leaders, senior police officers and representatives of the local administration address any problems that might arise. In addition to these initiatives, the Mission promoted multi-ethnic policing in the region, which also helped reduce tensions between the communities and the security forces.

To better inform the public about these issues, the Mission provided training and technical assistance to local broadcasters that developed multilingual programmes. Students from minority communities were offered specialized training courses that allowed them to work for the local authorities, the judiciary and municipal assemblies. One highly effective project, which

focused on providing tutoring for legal students preparing for the bar exam, was attended by a total of 76 ethnic Albanian and Serbian students.

Reforming the police forces. One of the most significant tasks of the Mission is the reform of Serbia and Montenegro's police forces through its Police Development Programme. The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in November buttressed the already existing close working relationship between the Mission and the Serbian Interior Ministry.

The Development Programme introduced modern curricula and targeted different levels of serving officers. Using the 'train-the-trainers' concept, it included courses in trainer development, community policing and management techniques. A total of 396 Serbian and Montenegrin officers were trained in 2004.

To strengthen internal oversight of the police and avoid corruption within the ranks, the Mission organized specialist training seminars and study visits for Serbia's Inspector General's Office and provided it with modern IT and technical equipment.

The promotion of community-policing was also a major focus for the Mission. In Montenegro, the Mission carried out a number of surveys among the police and the general public on the concept, initiated pilot projects in all of the Republic's seven security centres and developed an overall community policing strategy for Montenegro.

In Montenegro, the Mission played a key role in encouraging the major opposition parties to return to Parliament after a lengthy boycott so that urgent political and economic reforms could be discussed in the proper forum.

Much of the day-to-day effort of the Mission was centred on supporting the ongoing reforms in Serbia and Montenegro, including the advancement of human and minority rights, the fight against corruption and organized crime, and the reform of the media. Other activities included strengthening the capacity of Serbia's legal staff to conduct domestic war crimes trials in accordance with international standards.



OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro

OSCE police trainers and Serbian police officers meet community representatives during a Citizen Advisory Group meeting.

In Serbia, the concept was introduced as a pilot project at ten security centres. It is planned that the experiences gained during these pilot periods would serve as a basis for a Serbia-wide strategy on community policing, due to be introduced in 2005. Evaluations of the progress incurred by the community policing concept are periodically made by experts to determine the reaction of the local population.

Similar to efforts by neighbouring countries, Serbia and Montenegro is preparing itself to transfer control of its borders from the Defence Ministry to the Interior Ministry. To build up the capacity of the border police forces, the Mission organized specialist training seminars on issues such as the combat against trafficking and smuggling, and helped with the development of a migration management strategy.

In support of the Ohrid Process, the Serbian Interior Ministry co-hosted in July an international conference on joint training

measures, bringing together representatives from all the former Yugoslav states and their neighbours. The Montenegrin Internal Ministry held a follow-up seminar in September, which emphasized control of the so-called 'blue (maritime) borders'.

The Ohrid Process

In May 2003, the OSCE, the EU, NATO, and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe initiated the so-called Ohrid Process, named after the town in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia where the plan was adopted. The Ohrid Process is a joint effort by the countries of south-eastern Europe and their international partners to address the very sensitive issues of border security and management, building on a common platform proposed by the four international organizations involved.

Continuing the fight against corruption.

According to the Corruption Perception Index 2004 published by *Transparency International* – a leading global NGO devoted to combating corruption – Serbia and Montenegro occupied rank 97 of 145 countries surveyed. To help improve this situation, the Mission continued to assist the Serbian Government's Anti-Corruption Council with legal advice and expertise. It organized several international conferences to encourage regional co-operation and an

exchange of experiences. These brought together government officials and NGOs as well as representatives of the ILO, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the UNDP.

Combating organized crime. The fight against organized crime remained a top priority for the Mission in 2004. The Mission continued to follow a number of high-profile trials in Serbia and Montenegro, including those of the suspected assassins of the late Prime Minister Zoran Djindjić, former President Ivan Stambolić, and Duško Jovanović, Editor-in-Chief of the Podgorica daily newspaper, *Dan*.

One example of effective international co-operation in the combat of organized crime was the relationship established between the Serbian Interior Ministry and the Italian anti-Mafia Directorate, following an OSCE-brokered visit to Belgrade by its Prosecutor in July. Future bilateral assistance co-ordinated by the Mission in this context is expected to include the setting up of an effective database and the holding of training seminars conducted in Italy for organized crime investigators.

The Mission provided expert assistance with the drafting and implementing of witness protection laws in Serbia and Montenegro, urgently needed for the effective prosecution of organized crime cases and local war crimes trials. In Montenegro, such a law is already in force and could become an important instrument in bringing the criminals responsible to justice. In addition, 210 police officers from Serbia and Montenegro received training in modern forensic techniques.

War crimes. The requirement for Serbia and Montenegro to fulfil its international obligations regarding the ICTY was a recurrent theme of the Mission's information strategy in the country. Without full co-operation with the ICTY, the state union cannot advance on its path towards integration into the Euro-Atlantic institutions.

As part of its assessment of the Serbian judiciary's capacity to conduct local war crimes trials according to international standards, the Mission monitored a number of such trials in Serbia. In the

context of an OSCE-facilitated process to enhance inter-state co-operation in war crimes proceedings, the Mission hosted an expert-level meeting of judges and prosecutors from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia and Montenegro in November, which produced a number of recommendations on witness issues.

"It is not an act of weakness to deal with war crimes and the horrors of the past. On the contrary, it is an act of courage and a demonstration of inner strength. It is the best way for Serbia and Montenegro to enter the family of European democracies with full self-confidence. War crimes are therefore not only about the past, but also about the future."

**Ambassador Maurizio Massari,
Head of Mission**

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Improving the business climate. The Mission's activities in this area focused on fostering economic and business development by promoting a stronger partnership between local authorities, the business community and various local representatives of the international community. Under the Youth Entrepreneurship Seminar (YES) programme, more than 180 young entrepreneurs from throughout the country participated in a series of workshops that conveyed to them the fundamental principles of starting a small business.

To create a permanent place where young entrepreneurs can turn for advice, the Mis-

OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro



The Mission published a manual on fighting corruption in February.

OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro



A participant at the YES/Human Trafficking Awareness-Raising Programme in Niš

sion assisted the establishment of business incubator centres in Kikinda, Knjaževac, and Smederevska Palanka. These centres, which are located in municipalities with a similar economic and social structure and a comparably high rate of unemployment, provide workspace, coaching, and support services to young entrepreneurs and early-stage businesses. They are considered a strong tool to support sustainable economic and human resources development, contributing to security and stability in the region.

Bringing development to Niš. In May, the Mission and the Serbian town of Niš signed a document outlining a strategic partnership for sustainable development. The Mission committed itself to providing the expertise to prepare a framework strategy for the town's economic and environmental development, concentrating on local industries such as tourism and food production. These areas were considered central for the creation of employment in the area. The strategy, the first of its kind in Serbia, also allows Niš to participate in regional and Europe-wide initiatives and programmes, since it takes into account the common economic, environmental and cultural interest of neighbouring countries.

Human Dimension Activities

Assisting the return of refugees. Together with the UNCHR and the respective delegations of the European Commission, the three OSCE Missions in the region proposed in September a 'road map for returns' to the Governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia and Montenegro. Highlighting the remaining obligations of the States in facilitating the return of refugees, the initiative offered their governments assistance to translate the broad political commitment into concrete progress on the ground. This assistance, which has been offered since 2002, consists of legal advice to both governments and NGOs on international legal standards for the protection of refugees and returnees.

Independence of the judiciary. Advocating an independent judiciary system that lives up to international standards, the Mission supported the drafting of legislation that guarantees the independence of

judges and prosecutors. In this context, it welcomed the changes made to three laws in Serbia in 2004, namely the Laws on Judges, on Prosecutors, and on the High Judicial Council. While these changes marked a positive development, structural reform for an improved legal framework remains essential. Bringing the Laws on Judges and on the Public Prosecutors' Office into conformity with international law remains a priority.

The Mission also supported the Judges Association, the Public Prosecutors Association, and the Judicial Training Centre. This included the training of judges in issues relating to war crimes trials and exchange programmes with other European associations.

Assisting prison reform. Prison conditions in Serbian jails remain dire due to overcrowding and the low quality of medical facilities for prisoners, among other reasons. To garner international donor support for improving prison conditions, the Mission and the Ministry of Justice held a donors' conference inside Belgrade's Central Prison to show to potential donors the need for major infrastructure investments. International donor organizations also attended the event to evaluate the Government's reform plans. The Serbian Government is seeking funding for the construction of three new high-security prisons.

Building on the success of a series of prison warden training seminars held by the Mission since 2001, the Ministry of Justice opened Serbia's first prison staff training academy in September. The Mission is planning to assist the academy, which is located in Niš, in developing a curriculum for the training of new and existing prison staff, reflecting Serbia's commitment to international conventions on the treatment of prisoners.

Supporting parliamentary and local self-government. The Mission continued organizing training seminars for local municipal staff on the provisions of the Serbian Law on Local Self-Government adopted in 2002. The programme also included training on effective management strategies and negotiation skills as well as on the promotion of gender equality at all levels of government. With assistance by the Mission, especially on lobbying parliamentarians and giving legal advice, the

Assembly of Vojvodina adopted a decision on gender equality, which represents the first formal effort in this direction in Serbia.

"If I were the Prime Minister of Serbia..."

In an effort to foster political awareness among young people, the Mission organized an essay competition for high school students in May. The jury, which comprised prominent journalists and human rights defenders of Serbia and Montenegro, gave the awards to the three students whose essay, under the title "If I were the Prime Minister of Serbia...", represented best their original thoughts and ideas on political leadership and democracy. More than 1,000 students from 100 high schools in Serbia participated in the competition. The awards included publication of their essay in the national daily newspaper, *Danas*, a study visit to the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna, and a generous contribution to the schools' libraries.

Protecting the rights of national minorities. Most of the Mission's assistance in the field of minority rights protection focused on training programmes for members of the National Minority Councils, which took place between 2001 and 2004 under the State Union Law on National Minorities and Ethnic Communities. Almost 50 members of 11 election councils were trained in public advocacy, consultation processes, team management and leadership skills.

A specific target group among Serbia and Montenegro's minority groups is the Roma community, which faces particularly grave socio-economic problems, including high levels of illiteracy, unemployment and poverty. The Mission supported the elaboration of a National Strategy for the Integration of Roma, which was adopted by the Roma National Council in April but remains to be adopted by the Government. The assistance included a comprehensive training programme for members of working groups on the issue, aimed at transforming strategy plans into concrete action plans and project proposals. The working group members were either representatives delegated by the respective Ministries or the Roma National Council, or independent experts belonging to the Roma minority.

The Mission also organized technical and editorial training for Roma media outlets and helped them produce Roma language programmes for multilingual broadcasters.

The fight against human trafficking.

With only one in ten victims of trafficking identified as such by the authorities in Serbia and Montenegro, the development of a comprehensive National Referral Mechanism was crucial to moving ahead with the fight against trafficking in human beings. To support the identification, protection and referral of victims to the appropriate institutions, the Mission helped develop such a mechanism in both republics.

Since organized crime is a regional phenomenon that does not recognize any borders, the Mission supported the exchange of technical expertise and sharing of best practices on anti-trafficking measures and shelter management. In addition, it provided specialized training on the problem to judges and prosecutors as well as to police officers, social workers, government staff, and NGO representatives. The Mission also monitored more than a dozen human trafficking court cases.

Promoting gender equality. The Mission continued to play an active role in supporting the creation of institutions that help develop gender equality at all levels of government in Serbia and Montenegro. Following the establishment of gender focal points in 30 municipalities by the Mission, 12 additional municipalities across Serbia joined the project at their own initiative. These new municipalities received basic gender equality training in 2004 and are scheduled to be included in the Mission's capacity-building programme in 2005.

The Mission also continued to implement the 'Women Can Do It III' seminars in 17 municipalities of Serbia, which form part of the OSCE's project on Municipal Gender and Equal Opportunity Focal Points (GEOFP). The project is aimed at prominent women from local self-government, local political parties, and municipal institutions as well as businesswomen. Its goal is to empower and train these women, facilitating gender mainstreaming in local decision-making bodies and promoting women's participation at political decision-making levels.



Gender workshop

In advance of the local elections, the Mission conducted five gender-awareness training sessions for women candidates for local assemblies. The sessions took place in co-operation with the GEOFP and significantly contributed to the focal points' political visibility and recognition as well as their continuous work in the post-election period.

Supporting media development. The Mission's activities in this field concentrated on strengthening the regulatory bodies of the electronic media in both republics. This included particular efforts to resolve the dispute over the members of the Serbian Broadcasting Council, which has been an issue since 2003. The Serbian Parliament approved an amendment of the Broadcasting Law allowing for the re-nomination of the entire Council. Once the Broadcasting Council is appointed, the next steps in the process of transforming the state broadcaster, Radio TV Serbia (RTS), can be implemented.

The Broadcasting Law stipulates that municipal broadcasters need to prepare for their privatization, which is due to take place in the coming years. To assist them with this process, the Mission organized training on technical, editorial and managerial skills for broadcasters from various language communities. The goal of this initiative is to help them improve the quality of their broadcasts and develop a variety of business plans so they can become economically self-sustainable.

The Mission also assisted Montenegro's state broadcaster in the process of transforming itself into a largely self-sustainable

public broadcaster. Individual media outlets received training on journalism and media management, with some courses focusing on specific topics such as reporting on Parliament, financial topics and minority issues.

In the legal sphere, the Mission provided expertise to the drafting of a Freedom of Information Law, which aims at making the Serbian Government and official institutions more transparent to the public. The Law was adopted by the Serbian Parliament in November. It gives individual citizens the right to request information on the functioning of the State and provides the media with another important source of information.

Reaching out to local communities

Throughout the year, the Mission continued its successful 'outreach programme', which consists of regular visits by the Head of Mission and OSCE staff to different communities in Serbia and Montenegro. The visits serve as opportunities to meet local government officials and representatives of the media, civil society, religious groups and police. They also help the Mission staff to familiarize themselves with the situation on the ground and outline the projects under implementation.

In 2004, such visits took place to Kikinda, Zrenjanin (Vojvodina), Kruševac, Aleksandrovac, Čačak, Novi Pazar (Central Serbia), Bijelo Polje, and Herceg Novi (Montenegro). As part of this programme, the Mission donated books worth approximately €1,000 to 15 high schools throughout the country. The books cover a number of subjects depending on the individual needs of the respective high schools and were given to the school libraries for use by the pupils. "We hope that this will encourage reading among the young and improve their chances for better grades," Ambassador Massari said.

Head of Mission:
Ambassador Maurizio Massari
Revised Budget: €9,834,300
www.osce.org/sam

OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje

Despite significant progress in the longer-term policy objectives of the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the Government's activities in 2004 – strongly supported by the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje and other international partners – were coloured primarily by two unforeseen events which gripped the nation: the tragic death of President Boris Trajkovski on 26 February and the 7 November referendum on territorial organization called for by the opposition following the adoption by Parliament of a law redrawing the country's administrative boundaries. The mature response from both the Government and the opposition, however, ensured that delays in larger policy objectives did not threaten to throw the country off course. The country not only submitted its formal application for EU membership, but also

broke the impasse in passing vital legislation on decentralization. These unexpected events also tested the Mission's resources and flexibility, starting from increased security monitoring and confidence-building activities to supporting the ODIHR with its election monitoring work. The Mission was able to provide this support without losing its focus on core activities. In part, this was possible due to intensified co-ordination within the international community and with the country's authorities in key areas of activity regarding the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. The focus was particularly on judicial reform, equitable representation of the country's communities, decentralization and education.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Continuing support to comprehensive police reform. Backing the Government's long-term Police Reform Strategy, the Mission continued to consolidate activities focused on community-based policing and training programmes at the Police Academy. Other priorities included support to the Border Police and joint work with the Interior Ministry on its community policing outreach programme through media skills training courses and public information campaigns.

At the top of the Mission's agenda in this area was specialist training. Support to the Police Academy in basic and advanced training continued, as did 'train-the-trainers' courses and support for curricu-

lum development. Coaching for police officers on drugs identification, human rights, and trafficking in human beings continued throughout the year. The trafficking course focused on multi-disciplinary training seminars, which included judges, police staff, prosecutors and NGO representatives.

Maintaining its focus on capacity-building, the Police Development Unit concentrated on further developing the Citizen Advisory Groups and strengthening their sustainability. These Groups were created over the last two years by the Interior Ministry to give a broad range of citizens and local police officers an opportunity to exchange information and discuss issues of mutual concern. The Mission organized a training class for more than 300 members of these Groups on issues such as local self-governance, partnership-building, problem-solving

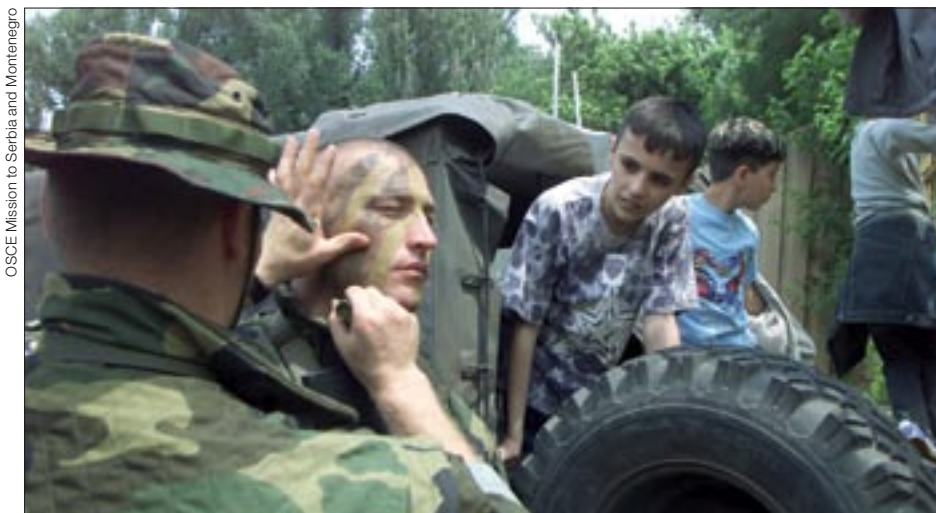
and project proposal writing. It is hoped that this will help them play a major role in ensuring the delivery of quality police services at the municipal level.

Expanding police training to a new generation of border guards

In December 2003, the Government adopted the Integrated Border Management Strategy, which moved responsibility for the control of the country's 850 km of border from the Defence Ministry to the Interior Ministry. Until the end of 2005, when the handover of border security to the Interior Ministry is planned to be completed, the OSCE Mission will include some 1,000 new police cadets in its border police programme at the Police Academy in Idrizovo.

At a ceremony marking the first border control transfer in May, OSCE Mission Head Ambassador Carlos Pais welcomed the move. "It is always a good sign when it is not necessary for the army to be involved in securing the border and when this task can be transferred to the police," he said.

By September, the Ministry had taken control of the borders with Greece and Bulgaria. At the same time, more than 550 police cadets underwent training at the OSCE-supported Police Academy. The Mission's Police Development Unit also trained border police management staff to enhance the managerial skills of senior officers and further improve the staff's effectiveness and efficiency.



Children watch as the Rapid Deployment Police Force demonstrates an action preparation drill at a police open day at Veles in May.

Recognizing the need to bring the police closer to the citizens, the Mission, together with the Interior Ministry and the Netherlands Embassy, organized five community police open days throughout the country. Thousands of children attended the events, familiarized themselves with the role and duties of the police and took part in various educational activities, with topics ranging from road traffic safety to the dangers of drugs.

Close-up on policing at prime time

For six months, media specialists from the Mission and a small TV crew travelled around the country in search of stories showing police officers in action. Whether it was intervening against illegal fishing on Ohrid Lake, pickpockets working the markets, seatbelt safety and winter driving, all gathered material was turned into several two-minute spots, which became part of the Interior Ministry's national public information campaign *Odblisku* ('Take a closer look') to highlight the importance of community policing and the benefits it yields for the local communities. Many of the spots, more than 50 of which were produced in 2004, were broadcast on primetime in both Macedonian and Albanian languages on 24 local and national TV stations throughout the country. They presented, among others, the role of sniffer dogs, the fight against juvenile drug abuse, environmental protection and basic self-defence.

Strengthening confidence-building measures.

The Mission's Confidence-Building Unit (CBU) continued its conflict prevention and early warning efforts and implemented a number of projects to promote reconciliation between the country's communities and the building of a multi-ethnic society.

A particular focus was put on education issues, which were recognized as a potential source of inter-ethnic tension and intolerance. The CBU reacted to specific sources of tension by implementing conflict resolution initiatives and general confidence-building support projects aimed at encouraging long-term integration and reconciliation. This included multi-ethnic professional development courses for school staff, starting with a pilot project

to teach Albanian to ethnic Macedonian school teachers. The Mission also supported the work of the High Commissioner on National Minorities in advising the recently legalized Tetovo University before its opening in fall 2004. An expert was sent to participate in the commission that legally established the Tetovo University as the third State university.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Garnering support for the decentralization process. Continuing its activities in support of the decentralization process, as stipulated by the Framework Agreement, the Mission's Public Administration Reform Unit – a successor to the earlier Public Administration Support Unit – strove towards demystifying this development for the general public. In co-operation with other national and international partners, the Unit carried out a multi-faceted programme that included training courses for local leaders and citizens as well as assistance to the Government in running a public education campaign highlighting the benefits of a decentralized system.

The Unit also commissioned studies on inter- and intra-municipal co-operation in the context of the planned transfer of competencies from central to local government, which represent an important step in the decentralizing process. The study on inter-municipal co-operation explored the extent to which such collaboration could be a viable option for more efficient and effective public services at the municipal level. The study on intra-municipal co-operation was undertaken in the context of the Ministry of Local Self Government's interest in strengthening 'neighbourhood self-governments' or village councils. The studies laid the foundation for future engagement by the Mission in this area.

The Mission also provided technical and material support to the Municipal Gender Equality Commissions, under a project launched at the end of the year. The Mission's Public Administration Reform Unit, in co-operation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Unit for the Promotion of Gender Equality and the Union of Women's

Organizations of Macedonia (UWOM), aims to enhance the capacities, mandates and profiles of Gender Equality Commissions so that they can be transformed into effective and sustainable bodies of local government on the municipal level. The project coincided with governance reform initiated in 2004 within the framework of the Law on Local Self-Governance. It also reflected progress in the area of the OSCE's gender empowerment initiatives, moving on from national level initiatives to municipal capacity development.

Providing hands-on advice for local councillors. To give newly elected local officials, such as councillors, the tools to better understand their roles and the responsibilities their function carries, the Mission funded the publication of a guide containing practical and hands-on information and advice. The first of its kind in the country, this handbook was planned to be distributed to some 1,500 newly elected municipal officials following local elections, scheduled for March 2005.

Human Dimension Activities

Rule of law monitoring and long-term programme development. Given that the security situation in the country remained stable throughout the year, the Mission continued its move away from general rule of law monitoring, concentrating increasingly on longer-term programmes with a focus on institution- and capacity-building, the fight against human trafficking and judicial reform. However, the Mission's Rule of Law Unit continued to monitor individual allegations of abuse by law enforcement officials, war crimes cases, and other high-profile arrests and trials. Although there were a few new high-profile cases in 2004, their overall number significantly decreased in 2004 relative to preceding years.

Through close co-operation with the Ombudsman's institution and the Interior Ministry's Sector for Internal and Professional Controls in supporting their reform efforts, the Mission saw an increase in public willingness to seek redress through the rule of law. As a result, some progress was noted in the effectiveness and engagement of these domestic human rights complaint mechanisms.

To increase the awareness of representatives of the judicial system of their obligations stemming from international anti-torture conventions, the Mission organized a high-profile training seminar in April, which was attended by some 50 judges, prosecutors and members of the Interior Ministry. The keynote speaker was UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Theo van Boven.

Continuing institution-building. An important component for the building of sustainable rule of law institutions and a requirement of the Framework Agreement is the establishment of six regional Ombudsman offices in the country. The Mission co-ordinated international support for this endeavour and, despite some delay for political reasons, the offices were opened in November. They are due to become fully operational in early 2005. However, at the end of 2004 six new deputies still needed to be appointed.

A coalition to bring about fairer trials

For one year, the OSCE-sponsored NGO coalition, *All for Fair Trials*, observed trials throughout the country not only to identify shortcomings but also develop constructive suggestions to improve the judicial system.

“This is a real network – a grassroots movement that can effect real change,” said Lukasz Bojarski, a lawyer who also works as a trainer with the Polish Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights. “This coalition not only exercises the rights of civil society to monitor the fairness of court proceedings, but also provides feedback to help reform the judiciary.”

Following the publication of its final report, a working group of judges and law experts was established to ensure that the report’s recommendations were included in the judicial reform process.

To manage complaints of alleged police abuse, the Rule of Law Unit established the *Human Rights Support Project*, an NGO network that began handling most of the new individual cases. It was planned to expand the network in 2005 to cover the entire country, in an effort to ensure the

sustainability of the Mission’s institution-building efforts.

Reforming the judiciary. The Mission fostered public debate among professionals and experts on the National Strategy on the Reform of the Judiciary through public consultation conferences held by the NGO, *Association for Citizens’ Tolerance and Co-operation*. The Mission’s Rule of Law Unit chaired the Judicial Reform Information Group and supported a project of the Association, which surveyed the opinions of judges and legal staff in basic courts throughout the country on the problems and the need for judicial reforms. Survey results will be issued to guide the Mission’s activities in this area and will be shared with the relevant State bodies.

The Unit also completed a comprehensive analysis on the present situation of equitable representation of minorities in the judiciary. Its report outlines detailed recommendations on measures that authorities can implement to improve the participation of members of non-majority communities in the judicial system. The report serves as the basis for the Unit’s further engagement in promoting a more representative judiciary.

In addition to these projects, the Mission initiated a pilot project to provide free legal advice to marginalized communities in the former crisis areas in order to improve their understanding of and trust in the legal system. About 450 people have taken advantage of the legal aid offered by local lawyers.

Combating human trafficking. On the basis of the OSCE’s Action Plan and the Government’s National Plan of Action to combat human trafficking, local and international partners focused in 2004 on three areas of activity:

- establishing a witness protection framework;
- strengthening the capacity of NGOs to raise awareness and assist victims; and
- improving prosecutorial and investigative efforts in trafficking cases.

Together with the Judges Association’s Centre for Continuing Education, the Mission sponsored a series of specialized train-

ing seminars for legal professionals and law enforcement officials. A total of seven workshops, benefiting some 240 participants, focused on improving prosecution of trafficking cases and ensuring fair trials in cases involving human trafficking.

Moving the country closer towards fulfilling its international commitments, the Mission helped establish the first NGO-managed safe house in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, addressing the immediate needs of trafficked persons, particularly minors. The importance of assisting the country in its anti-trafficking efforts is also demonstrated by the Mission’s on-going sponsorship of an SOS helpline for citizens, which is managed by the local branch of the NGO, *La Strada*.



Promoting gender balance. In support of the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues and the Government’s National Action Plan for Gender Equality, the Mission supported the efforts of national partners such as UWOM and the Government’s unit for promotion of gender equality to improve the gender balance in the electoral process. One result of these efforts is an amendment to the Law on Local Elections passed in 2004, which stipulates that a 30 per cent quota of women is required in both the upper and lower halves of all candidate lists. These efforts, the ‘Woman Can Do It II’ initiative, are scheduled to continue in 2005 due to the postponement of the municipal elections.

Following the publication of the country report on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) by the authorities, the Mission funded the drafting and publishing of an NGO ‘shadow report’ to assess whether the treatment of women in the country is in compliance with the UN Convention.



With support from the Minister of Education, the OSCE *Point* Magazine – a multi-ethnic monthly publication for and by young people – opened its own well-equipped office in September. Published in both Albanian and Macedonian languages, *Point* has a regular team of students from all over the country and a monthly circulation of 13,000 copies. According to the magazine’s manager, Violeta Josifovska, *Point* has come a long way from the early days of secondary school recruits. “The students now working at *Point* not only write articles and take photos, they also work closely with the editors on the contents and the layout,” says Josifovska proudly. “Some of the kids even work on the marketing of the magazine, as we try to move away from relying on donors’ purses towards self-sustainability.”

Focus on media development: reforming the state broadcaster. The Mission continued to work on the transformation process within the state broadcaster, Macedonian Radio and Television (MRTV). The main activities consisted of on-the-job-training seminars at the MRTV training centre with the TV news teams, the staff of the radio station’s six language departments and of the documentary and educational programme departments. In addition, the Mission held capacity-building seminars with the employees of the MRTV archives and the online service department.

Improving the legal environment for media. Working closely with the Council of Europe and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the Mission supported the drafting of a new law on broadcasting, which would ensure the independence of the Broadcast Council and allow for the

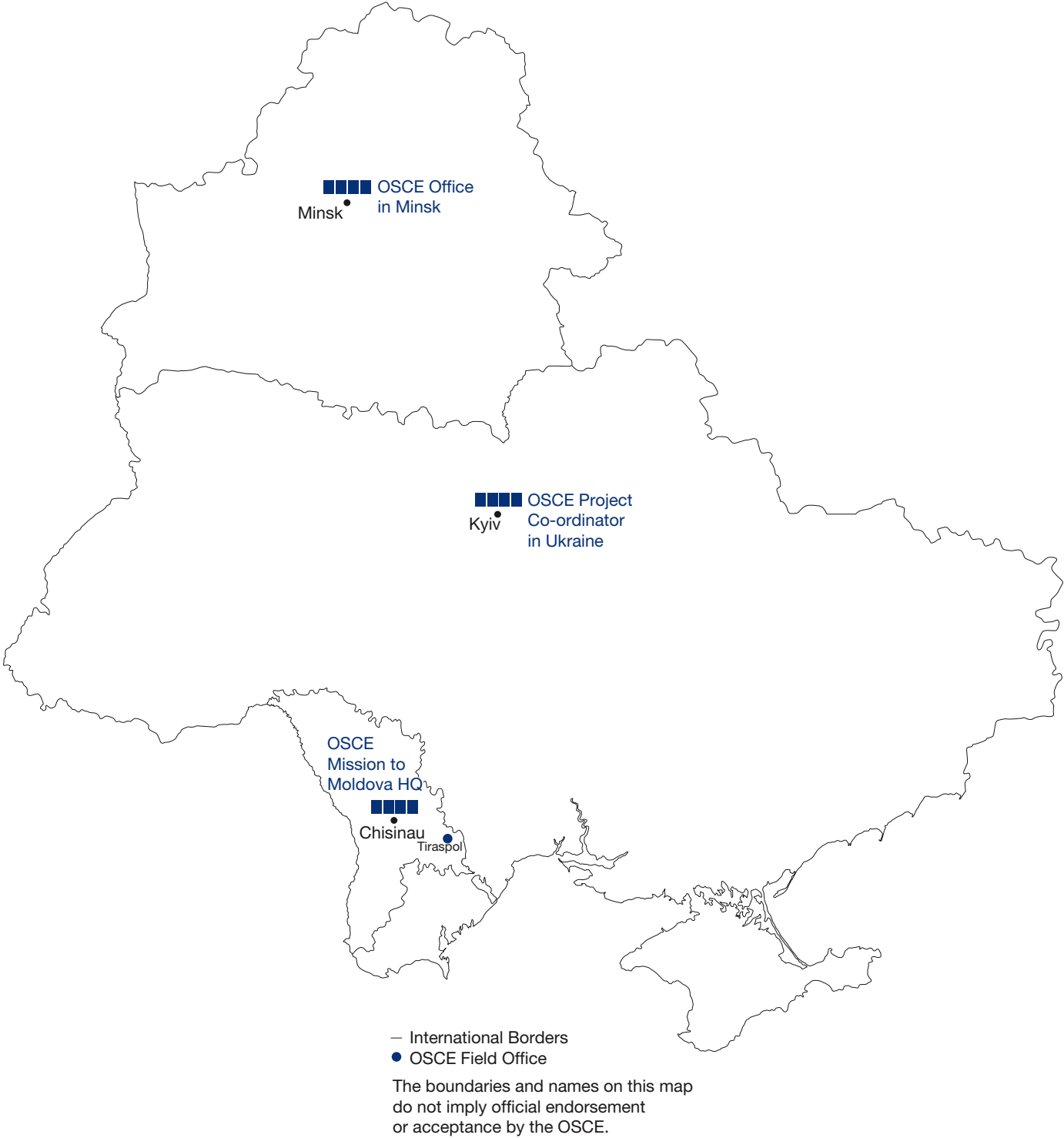
legal transformation of the state broadcaster into an independent public broadcaster. Such a new law would also improve the legal environment in which private broadcasters have to operate.

Improving media professionalism. Institutionalizing professional journalism training that is sustainable and accessible to journalists from various backgrounds continued to be a key priority of the Mission’s media development activities. The Mission’s Media Development Unit provided support to an internationally recognized, one-year certification course for young and mid-career journalists at the Macedonian Institute for the Media and to a summer practical laboratory course at the Journalism Department of the State University in Skopje. The goal of the certification course, which began in August, is to assist the media in preparing professional journal-

ists to embrace the challenges of modern journalism and to participate in creating a modern, professional media community in the country.

Head of Office:
Ambassador Carlos Pais
Revised Budget: €13,745,600
www.osce.org/skopje

EASTERN EUROPE



OSCE Office in Minsk

The mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk provides for assisting the Belarusian Government to further promote the building of institutions, consolidate the rule of law, develop relations with civil society and support the country in addressing economic and environmental issues.

Keeping in mind its mandate, the Office in co-operation with the Belarusian authorities implemented a number of projects in the

field of the economic-environmental and human dimensions. It developed a good working relationship with the authorities and civil society representatives and endeavoured to create a framework for dialogue and co-operation. In addition, the Office followed the situation in Belarus, in particular regarding the functioning of civil society.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Strengthening economic development.

Together with a number of partners, the Office held several meetings and seminars to advocate the reform of legislation on SMEs, with the aim of improving the general investment climate in Belarus. Partners included the International Education Centre, the National Law Drafting Centre, the Ministry of Economy and the Financial Investment Advisory Council.

In November, the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities visited Minsk to chair a session on SME legislation that focused on issues such as micro-lending opportunities and the minimizing of administrative restrictions. The event resulted in the adoption of recommendations for a new draft law regulating state support for SMEs. During his visit, the Co-ordinator also discussed with Belarusian government officials further projects in the field of combating money laundering and the fight against corruption.

Tackling environmental issues. Trans-boundary water issues featured high on the Office's agenda. To help harmonize the procedures for monitoring the water quality of the Neman River, which flows through Belarus and Lithuania, the Office organized a working session with the Belarusian Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and the Lithuanian Environment Ministry. Building on an existing analysis by experts from Belarus, Lithuania, and the EU, the session resulted in a detailed action plan that provides for the development of co-ordinated water quality monitoring standards in both countries.

OSCE Office in Minsk



Tourism fair in Minsk

Bringing tourism to rural Belarus

Throughout the year, the Office in Minsk supported a project that helps develop rural tourism in Belarus. Launched by the local NGO, *Agro&Eco Tourism*, the initiative produced a catalogue of more than 45 houses that offer bed and breakfast facilities in rural Belarus. The catalogue was presented at a three-day exhibition on the tourist business in Belarus held in Minsk in November. This presentation produced a lively public response by tourist companies and information agencies and immediately increased the demand for information about such activities. The idea of *Agro&Eco Tourism* is simple and effective: "Inform people about tourism opportunities in Belarus and then respond to their requirements." The initiative presents an opportunity to revive the Belarusian countryside and to bring employment to areas that otherwise enjoy little economic development. The Office contributed to the idea by providing financial assistance for the inspection of houses, assessment of their quality and categorization. Several workshops sponsored by the Office were organized for hosts, focusing on improving the quality of services.

In view of the country's need for laws that adequately protect the environment, the Office supported a team of lawyers from the Belarusian State University and the local NGO, *EcoPrava*, who prepared a detailed analysis of the gaps in the law and a commentary on the existing legislation. The commentary was reviewed by the National Law Drafting Centre and presented for discussion at a public forum in November. The initiative marked the first step by Belarus to harmonize its legislation in the area of environmental protection.

Supporting rehabilitation of Chernobyl-affected areas. In May, the Office organized a small grants competition to promote the implementation of the CORE Programme, a rehabilitation project for areas in Belarus affected by the Chernobyl disaster. The programme aims at improving the living conditions of people in the Bragin, Cherchersk, Slavgorod and Stolin regions. It focuses on health care, education, socio-economic development, radiological quality, and the involvement of local initiatives. More than 40 project proposals were submitted to the competition, five of which were selected to represent each of the regions. These included assistance for people with disabilities and for a children's health centre as well as a project to restore a fruit orchard. Following approval by the CORE Project Assessment Committee and the Approval Board in November, the Office submitted the project proposals for registration with the Ministry of Economy.

Human Dimension Activities

Promoting human rights education.

To convey basic human rights principles to the young people of Belarus, the Office and the Ministry of Education prepared a

textbook for secondary school students. Fundraising by the Office helped cover a substantial part of the production costs. The Office continues to co-operate with the Ministry and civil society institutions in providing methodological support to school teachers working on human rights programmes.

Strengthening the rule of law. The Office continued its support for a joint project by the EU and the ODIHR that aims at making alternative punitive measures work more effectively, thus ultimately decreasing the high prison population in Belarus. Several training seminars for probation officers and roundtable meetings for judges and prosecutors were organized by the Office and the Interior Ministry's Department for Punishment Execution. The initiative also included two study tours for judges and probation officers to Poland and Latvia, where they were able to gain an insight into the countries' community service. Following these visits, the participants prepared a set of recommendations for the Interior Ministry and local authorities in Belarus, outlining concrete steps to make community service more effective and broaden its use.

The Office also held a competition on alternative sentencing for experts to encourage a scientific discussion and introduce practical recommendations on the use of non-custodial measures. Out of ten participants, three winners were selected and received a monetary prize.

Promoting tolerance and non-discrimination. In an effort to strengthen contacts between national minorities and religious communities and their relationship to the Belarusian authorities, the Office and the Committee on Religions and Nationalities under the Council of Ministers prepared two books promoting tolerance and non-discrimination.

The first publication provides information on the customs and culture of national minorities in Belarus. The other is a compilation of active religious organizations in the country, covering their work and history as well as the regulations that apply to religious activities. Both publications are due to be published in early 2005 and distributed among repre-

sentatives of national minorities and religious organizations, besides government officials working in these fields.

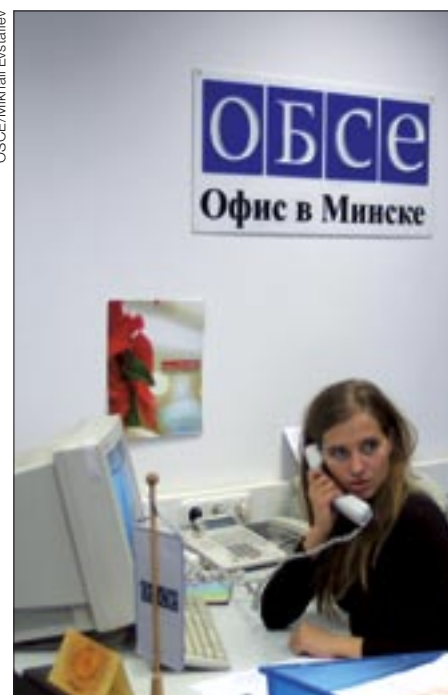
Development of the media. The Office organized a study-tour for Belarusian journalists to the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna, where they also attended the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference. In addition, the journalists visited Austrian TV and radio stations and interviewed a number of OSCE representatives. Their reports were published in the Belarusian independent press.

Fighting domestic violence. A two-day conference in July, sponsored by the Office, generated fresh attention in the media and among the Belarusian public about the problem of domestic violence against women and children. More than 70 local and international participants discussed a variety of topics linked to the prevention and fight against domestic violence, including a draft law on the issue that had recently been reviewed by a parliamentary commission. The event proved to be a good example for successful co-operation between Belarusian governmental agencies, parliamentarians and NGOs to jointly address this particular problem. The conference participants adopted a set of recommendations and pledged to continue their work with the parliamentarians towards the adoption of the draft law.

Human rights monitoring. The Office supported the ODIHR election observation mission for the Belarusian parliamentary elections in October. Parallel to these elections, a referendum on the extension of the presidential term was held in Belarus. The elections and the referendum were followed by protests and subsequent arrests by the police, including of senior opposition politicians. All these events were closely monitored by the Office.

The Office also followed the situation of several prominent persons, such as Professor Yuri Bandazhevsky, former Minister of Foreign Economic Relations Mikhail Marinich, and the chairman of a market vendors strike committee, Valery Levonevsky as well as his deputy Alexander Vasilyev, and expressed its concern publicly about the cases.

OSCE/Mikhail Evstafiev



Dealing with individual complaints. The Office received approximately 200 individual complaints of alleged human rights violations, mainly regarding the actions of law enforcement agencies. Complaints included both civil and criminal cases, many related to alleged violations of the right to a fair trial and the treatment of prisoners. The Office's findings and concerns were regularly brought to the attention of the Belarusian authorities. Prompt replies were generally offered. On several occasions, the relevant body took remedial action in response to the intervention by the Office.

Head of Office:
Ambassador Eberhard Heyken
Revised Budget: €942,100
www.osce.org/belarus

OSCE Mission to Moldova

During the first half of 2004, the OSCE Mission to Moldova worked to re-energize the political settlement negotiation process between the Moldovan Government and the Transnistrian authorities. The second half of the year was dominated by efforts to contain the crisis in relations between the two sides, precipitated by the July closure of Moldovan Latin script schools operating in Transnistria.

Political settlement negotiations were deadlocked at the beginning of the year after a last-minute decision in November 2003 by Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin not to sign the so-called 'Kozak Memorandum', a settlement document brokered by the Russian Federation. With the active participation of the OSCE Chairmanship and Russian and Ukrainian co-mediators, the Mission joined in intensive diplomatic efforts to restart the negotiation process. Formal political settlement negotiations resumed in May.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Political negotiations. The political settlement negotiation process was disrupted by a series of, at times potentially explosive, disputes between Chisinau and Tiraspol over competing powers or overlapping jurisdictions of local administrations. For example, the presence of Moldovan government institutions in the Transnistrian-controlled right bank city of Bendery remained a constant source of friction.

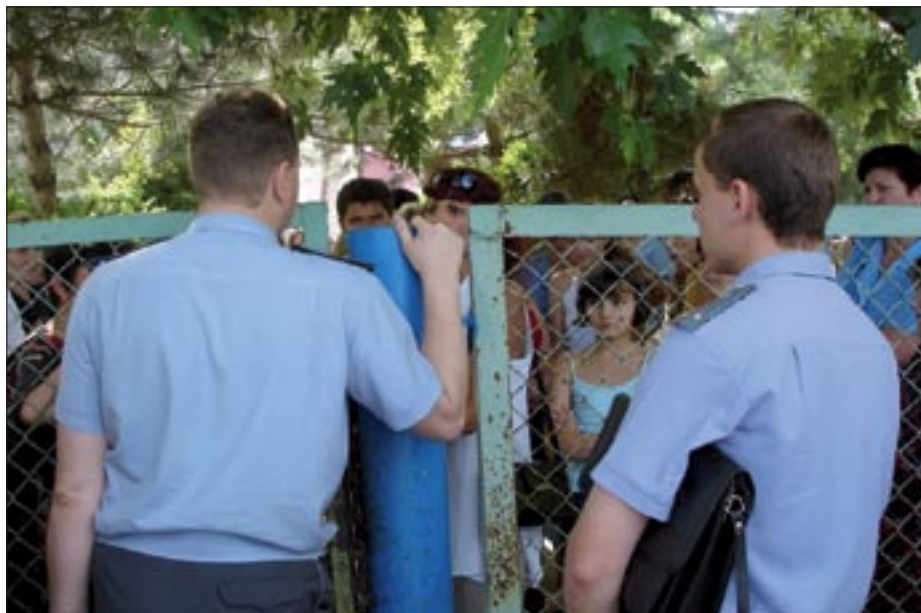
In February, Transnistrian authorities attempted to eject Moldovan police from the building they share in Bendery with Transnistrian militia. City authorities also pressed for the removal of Moldovan penitentiary facilities located in Bendery. From July to September, Transnistrian authorities prevented Moldovan farmers from harvesting their fields situated in Transnistrian-controlled territory. A number of new Transnistrian 'border,' 'customs,' and 'migration service' posts in the Security Zone (a narrow strip along the Nistru River separating the two sides) were also established and, in September, Transnistrian militia confiscated the assets of Moldova Railways in Bendery and other points in Transnistrian-controlled territory.

The most disruptive development, however, was the Transnistrian decision in

Unfortunately and without warning, in mid-July the Transnistrian authorities forcibly closed several Moldovan Latin-script schools in Transnistrian-controlled territory. This triggered a fresh crisis in relations between Chisinau and Tiraspol and prompted Moldovan negotiators to suspend their participation in the settlement talks. A number of other contentious issues exacerbated by the school crisis also disrupted the political settlement process.

The Mission, the Chairmanship, and the co-mediators made major efforts during the latter part of the year to resume a dialogue between Chisinau and Tiraspol to address these unresolved practical disputes. By late autumn, the situation stabilized sufficiently for the Bulgarian Chairmanship to invite both sides to send representatives for consultations with the three mediators. However, at the end of the year, the political settlement talks remained stalled and the conflict still deeply frozen.

Henk Wenker



In mid-July, the Transnistrian authorities closed down the Moldovan schools on its territory that teach in Latin script.

mid-July to close the Moldovan schools in Transnistrian territory teaching in Latin script. In response, the Moldovan side suspended its participation in the five-sided political settlement negotiations.

Together with co-mediators from the Russian Federation and Ukraine, the Mission went to extraordinary lengths from mid-July well into autumn to ameliorate the school crisis and to find and implement a solution. The Mission also sought to defuse tensions between the sides concerning freedom of movement, farmlands,

and railways. Bulgarian First Deputy Foreign Minister Petko Draganov made an emergency visit to Moldova in late July to bolster these efforts. In September, former Bulgarian President Petar Stoyanov was appointed Special Envoy for Moldova of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and entered discussions with the leadership of both sides to help ease the tensions.

The Mission's activities resulted in an agreement by Chisinau and Tiraspol to accept the invitation of the Bulgarian Chairmanship to political consultations in Varna in early

November. These consultations, however, failed to produce agreement on further action. Meanwhile, the Mission continued its efforts aimed at resolving a number of specific disputes between the two sides.

The Joint Control Commission. As the body responsible for implementing the July 1992 Ceasefire Agreement and supervising the Joint Peacekeeping Forces in the Security Zone, the Joint Control Commission (JCC) spent much of the year seeking to avert incidents and mitigate possible effects of the disputes over schools, railroads, access to farmlands, freedom of movement, and the police in Bendery. Mission military members participated in all JCC meetings and supported the Commission's activities to avert clashes and decrease tensions.

Withdrawal of Russian Federation arms and equipment. Only one train containing approximately 1,000 tons of ammunition was removed from the Operative Group of Russian Forces depots in Transnistria in 2004. Approximately 21,000 metric tons of ammunition remain to be removed, together with more than 40,000 small arms and light weapons and approximately ten trainloads of miscellaneous military equipment. The Mission continued to co-ordinate technical and financial assistance to the Russian Federation for these activities.

Strengthening confidence-building. For many years, the Mission has been participating in discussions on promoting military transparency and increasing trust between the parties to the conflict. During the first half of the year, Mission experts drafted a set of 14 proposed agreements on confidence-building and security measures. These were presented to the Moldovan and Transnistrian leaders by the Chairman-in-Office in June.

The proposals feature draft agreements on possible reductions in military forces and armaments. The package also included proposals for increased contacts, monitoring of weapons manufacturing facilities, joint training on peace-support operations, joint disaster relief operations, and common procedures for eliminating surplus ammunition and small arms. The initiative met with interest from both parties and preliminary consultations have been held with experts from the co-mediators, Russia and Ukraine.

Human Dimension Activities

Protecting language rights. The Transnistrian action to close the Moldovan Latin script schools came despite agreements on local registration and operation of these schools brokered in 2003 by the Mission and the office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (see also section on the High Commissioner on National Minorities on page 113). Tiraspol's action enraged authorities and public opinion on the right bank of the Nistru River, posing the threat of a confrontation. Along with its co-mediators, the OSCE Mission intervened to stave off an even greater crisis. Mission members maintained an almost round-the-clock presence at key locations on the left bank, and through constant contact urged restraint and conciliation.

While seeking to ensure that cooler heads prevailed on the spot, the Mission also redoubled efforts to mediate a solution between education authorities from both sides that would allow the six Moldovan schools to operate normally. Transnistrian authorities eventually permitted temporary registration of the schools with local authorities, which enabled most of the schools to begin the new academic year, albeit with up to a month's delay. By the end of 2004, only the school in Tiraspol had failed to re-open; many of its 550 pupils had to travel to Moldovan-controlled areas to take lessons.

Monitoring human rights and freedom of religion. The Mission continued to receive and respond to a large number of individual human rights complaints from both sides of the Nistru. Complainants either received advice on the appropriate local institutions to approach, or the Mission directly addressed the respective authorities requesting clarification or redress of violations. In selected cases, the Mission monitored court sessions.

Special attention was paid to the remaining members of the Ilascu group convicted by Transnistrian authorities of alleged crimes during the 1992 conflict. In particular, the Mission intervened successfully for Andrei Ivantoc, who conducted a hunger strike in January to protest conditions of

his detention. In co-operation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Mission convinced Transnistrian authorities to improve the conditions of Mr. Ivantoc's incarceration, which persuaded him to give up his hunger strike.

Capacity-building through promoting human rights. The Mission supported a variety of small-scale projects to promote human rights and tolerance among the population on both sides of the Nistru and in particular among national minorities. Another target group was the NGO community from both sides, which participated in OSCE human rights seminars. For example, the project 'Young envoys of peace creating a common future' aimed at increasing mutual trust by involving youth and students from both sides of the Nistru River in a dialogue on creating a future common state.

Combating human trafficking and promoting gender issues. The Mission's Anti-Trafficking Unit continued to liaise between local and international anti-trafficking efforts in Moldova. It organized and hosted monthly technical co-ordination meetings and maintained a database of ongoing projects to improve links and help funding efforts. The Mission also provided



La Strada, which produced this handbook, is a key partner of the OSCE Mission in the fight against human trafficking in Moldova.

advice and assistance to the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and co-chaired the sub-group on legislation, which initiated and supported the drafting process for the new anti trafficking law.

In co-operation with international partners, the Mission supported the Moldovan Ministry of Interior in developing anti-trafficking training courses for police officers. The Mission also conducted training seminars for Moldovan consular officials, judges, and prosecutors. A series of workshops aimed at strengthening the professional capacity of social workers to assist trafficked persons was particularly successful and resulted in a best practices guide for social workers engaged in the fight against human trafficking.

The Mission played a key role in the formalizing and launching of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). The basic aims of NRMs are to ensure observance of the fundamental rights of trafficked persons and provide effective ways of referring victims to services. To support reintegration of trafficking victims, the Mission provided university and vocational scholarships in addition to direct assistance to trafficked persons. Close to 130 victims benefited from the programme this year.

Promoting equal opportunities in Moldova, the Mission supported the drafting of the Gender Equality Law and lobbied for its adoption. The drafting process was led by UNIFEM under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. In October, the Mission facilitated a visit of the Chairperson of the Stability Pact Gender Task Force, Sonja Lokar. The Mission also helped organize a series of meetings with the board of the project 'Women Can Do It' and with party leaders, at which Ms. Lokar advocated the inclusion of more women in the party lists for the upcoming parliamentary elections.

Freedom of the media. The Mission actively promoted freedom of the media on both sides of the Nistru. The year began with a bitter dispute over temporary closure of the municipal broadcasters Antena-C radio and Euro-TV, whose licences were suspended in February. The Mission, the Special Representative

OSCE Mission to Moldova



Demonstration on World Press Freedom Day, 3 May, in Moldova

of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe (SRSG-CoE), and many of the diplomatic missions accredited in Moldova made considerable efforts to convince the authorities to retract this suspension, with the result that both stations resumed broadcasting in April.

In March, the Mission and the SRSG-CoE presented a set of generally-accepted guidelines for public broadcasters to Moldovan state broadcasting officials. These guidelines were subsequently endorsed by Moldovan President Voronin and incorporated in the statute of the national broadcaster Teleradio Moldova (TRM), while it was in the process of being transformed into a public broadcasting institution.

This transformation did not go smoothly, as a number of journalists formerly employed at TRM charged political interference in the process. In addition, an independent monitoring project asserted that TRM broadcasts favoured the ruling party. For several weeks in late summer and early autumn, the disgruntled employees staged protests inside and around the main TRM facility. The Mission and the SRSG-CoE tried to mediate the dispute between the

former TRM journalists and the company administration. Eventually a dialogue was established and protests abated. However, not all of the issues raised were successfully resolved by the end of the year.

The Mission also continued to monitor closely the media situation in the Transnistrian region, where independent journalists face continuous threats, repression, and reprisals from security forces, police, and judicial authorities. Mission members attended court proceedings in cases brought against independent journalists. The Mission also intervened and protested in several cases involving actions by Transnistrian authorities against independent journalists and NGOs.

Head of Mission:
Ambassador William H. Hill
Revised Budget: €1,389,200
www.osce.org/moldova

OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine

The mandate of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine is to plan, implement and monitor projects in co-operation with relevant Ukrainian authorities and the OSCE and its Institutions. In 2004, projects in all three OSCE dimensions were supported or implemented.

In preparation for the 31 October presidential election, the Central Election Commission (CEC) and the office of the Ombudsman for Human Rights of Ukraine, in co-operation with the Co-ordinator's office, launched a project that aimed at further strengthening the electoral process in Ukraine. The project included co-ordination of election-related activities of numerous actors with Ukrainian officials and activities such as training for journalists and judges, voter education and awareness-raising for out-of-country voters.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Helping demobilized soldiers adapt to civilian life. To assist former military personnel affected by the downsizing of the country's armed forces in their transition to civilian life, the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine helped the Ministry of Defence organize seminars that provide the participants with much-needed information on their rights and entitlements. In 2004, some 300 former officers took part in these events, which covered issues ranging from housing and pension questions to civilian rights and employment opportunities. During the sessions, representatives of regional employment centres discussed possibilities for re-training and re-qualification. Using the 'train-the-trainers' scheme, the seminars encouraged the participants to convey the information they learned to others in their regions of origin.

The Co-ordinator's office also supported an initiative that focused on the re-education of former military staff to equip them with the skills needed to more easily find employment outside the military. The Co-ordinator's office – in co-operation with the Ministry of Defence and the National Co-ordination Council on Resettlement and Conversion Issues – organized specialized training courses for senior officers recently discharged or due for discharge in the near future. Topics covered in these courses included business management, economics, strategy, marketing and sales,

Other important activities cut across the human and the politico-military dimensions and included efforts to assist Ukraine in the fight against human trafficking through prevention as well as victims assistance programmes. These projects dovetailed with projects to help recently demobilized military personnel in their transition into civilian life, in particular with regard to education and employment.

The office also implemented comprehensive programmes in the field of rule of law and in the economic and environmental dimension. It supported economic development programmes aimed at attracting foreign direct investment and helping entrepreneurs starting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

human resources, and business accounting. An important component of the initiative was also helping the participants find civilian employment. A total of 165 persons had completed the training sessions by the end of December, and three-quarters of them had found employment by the end of the year.

Helping the authorities improve the electoral process and democratic institutions. In preparation for the presidential election on 31 October, the Project Co-ordinator developed a programme to assist the Ukrainian authorities with the improvement of the electoral process. (For more on the OSCE's engagement in the 2004

presidential election in Ukraine, see page 22.) In co-operation with government agencies on both national and local levels, and especially the Central Election Commission and the Ombudsman for Human Rights of Ukraine, a comprehensive action plan was drawn up, addressing among other things the role of the mass media during elections, electoral procedures and the rule of law. The action plan gave the Project Co-ordinator a leading role in all these areas. The project involved the co-ordination of activities in all of the country's regions between and among the relevant government agencies, the international community and civil society.



Demonstration in Kyiv following the 31 October presidential election

In addition, the Project Co-ordinator supported a number of concrete activities in support of the elections, such as:

- assisting local authorities in updating voters lists;
- assisting the CEC in elaborating and producing the official manual for polling station procedures;
- organizing training sessions for election commission members;
- helping develop training sessions for journalists;
- training media lawyers;
- assisting the preparation of a manual for judges to help resolve electoral disputes;
- informing citizens about their legal rights as voters;
- co-ordinating voter education campaigns; and
- supporting the out-of-country voting process.

In September, the Project Co-ordinator began elaborating a one-year long follow-up assistance programme, which includes civic education efforts, initiatives to improve the access of citizens to information services of government agencies and a project to increase public participation in the decision-making process.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Supporting local business development.

To improve conditions for entrepreneurs and assist small business development at

the regional level, the Project Co-ordinator initiated a local economic development project, which is being implemented with the Eurasia Foundation in co-ordination with state-run employment agencies of the three Ukrainian *oblasts* (regions) of Rivne, Dnipropetrovsk and Chernihiv. In 2004, the project trained 525 unemployed people in business skills, how to gain access to vital information, and financing for SMEs. Some 1,150 individual entrepreneurs received free advisory and information services to help them with business-related issues. In addition, the initiative provided 295 businesses with one-time start-up payments of roughly €405 per person. Since the beginning of the project, a total of €120,000 from local budgets was spent on start-up entrepreneurs under the aegis of this project.

Stimulating the economy through progressive development models. Modern development models such as industrial clusters were at the core of a new project initiated by the Project Co-ordinator in 2004. Recognizing that such models can stimulate local economic growth by creating new market linkages, increasing employment opportunities and improving competitiveness in the market place, the Project Co-ordinator's office and the Ukrainian International Market Support Foundation commissioned and financed a comprehensive study on the economic potential of ten Ukrainian regions. The goal of the survey was to highlight potential high-growth sectors and identify comparative advantages where industrial clusters

or other progressive development models could be used. The report was published in December and distributed to the Ukrainian authorities, NGOs involved in economic development and the international donor community.

Community development. With the help of the Project Co-ordinator, the city of Rivne in the central northern part of the country conducted a detailed study on the reform of its public utilities sector. Based on this study, a reform project was formulated, for which Rivne received a grant equivalent to approximately €125,000 from Ukraine's Foundation for Local Self-Government. The office also assisted Rivne in creating an Investment Promotion Agency to help the region attract direct foreign investment through the development of its infrastructure and promotional activities.

Another community development project carried out by the Project Co-ordinator was to help the former military base of Zherebkovo in southern Ukraine to be converted into a civilian community. The goal of the initiative was to foster the socio-economic development of the Zherebkovo community by supporting the improvement of the infrastructure for SMEs, establishing a dialogue between the local business community and the authorities and designing a long-term local economic development strategy. The office organized training seminars for local leaders on NGO management practices and helped create a credit union that gives local entrepreneurs access to financing.

Human Dimension Activities

Preventing and fighting trafficking in human beings. This activity is a top priority of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. The office assists the Ukrainian Government in implementing a comprehensive national programme to combat human trafficking. The programme includes protection and reintegration of victims, training the country's law enforcement personnel and judicial authorities to help the prosecution of the criminals, and prevention through the spread of information.



Street vendors in Kyiv

Among many important activities is the support of anti-trafficking NGOs, which provide hotline services all over Ukraine and conduct information campaigns. Between January and August, more than 10,000 persons used the hotline services, receiving information about trips, work and study abroad in the context of trafficking awareness. Together with the Ministry of Family, Youth and Children's Affairs, UNICEF, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and the British Council, the Project Co-ordinator conducted an assessment study on human trafficking. The study, which was finalized in October, gives a comprehensive overview on the current situation relative to trafficking to, through and from Ukraine, and evaluates current anti-trafficking programmes and projects in the country.

In November, the Project Co-ordinator hosted 60 NGOs from 35 countries to a training seminar on the role of hotlines in the fight against trafficking in human beings in Ukraine and best practices in this context. The event, which was funded by the European Commission and the ODHR, concluded with the establishment of an NGO network in countries of origin, transit and destination of trafficked persons. These NGOs are using their new contacts in their daily work in fighting trafficking and assisting victims.

Helping Ukraine's courts to enforce European human rights convention. One of the Project Co-ordinator's projects in the field of rule of law was the production of a guide containing and analysing the case law of the Strasbourg Court as well as relevant constitutional and doctrinal developments in the sphere of human rights. The guide was distributed to representatives of the judiciary during a series of seminars and is used to help the Ukrainian courts enforce the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Sharing legal expertise on human rights standards. In partnership with the Committee for European Integration of the *Verkhovna Rada* of Ukraine (Parliament), the Project Co-ordinator supported a team of legal experts that renders opinions concerning proposed legislation at the request of Ukrainian legislators. The team

considered its conformity with international human rights, standards of the Council of Europe, the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, OSCE principles, legal requirements of the European Union's Second and Third Pillars and the Copenhagen criteria on EU accession. The team also responded to requests for recommendations for improving legislation.



Human rights film festival

A programme on human rights awareness and education due to be carried out in 2005 throughout Ukraine began with a human rights film festival that took place in December in Kyiv. The festival organizers and their partners included the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine as well as the UN organizations in Ukraine, the NGO *Transparency International*, the British Council, and the IOM.

The Kyiv film festival took place from 9 to 13 December and was attended by some 7,000 persons. In total, 33 films were shown, related to the themes of women, children, HIV/AIDS, and vulnerable groups in 18 different countries. The same event is scheduled to take place in L'viv, Donetsk, Kharkiv and Odessa in spring 2005.

Helping implement the new Civil and Commercial Codes. These Codes entered into force in January 2004. To reconcile inconsistencies between the Codes and ensure uniform application, the Project Co-ordinator undertook a project that

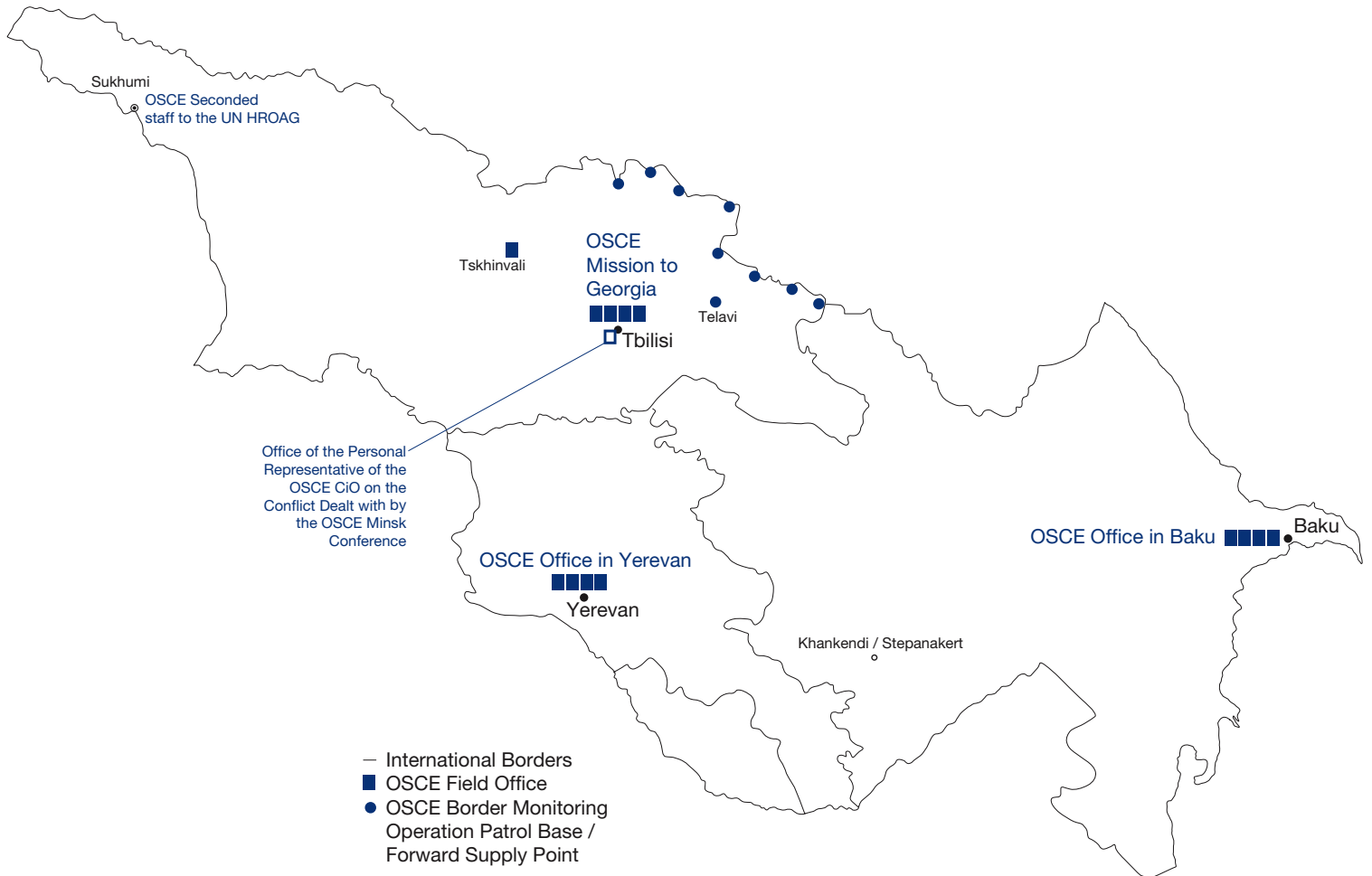
assists judges, law enforcement personnel and practitioners with the implementation of the new legislation. The project included the preparation of a document that highlights the contradicting legal provisions and includes practical guidelines. The initiative also comprised information seminars for judges in appellate courts. It was carried out in co-operation with the Ukrainian judiciary, in particular the Supreme Court.

Establishing fair selection procedures for judges. At the request of the Judicial Academy of the State Judicial Administration, the Project Co-ordinator supported the development of evaluation tools to test the qualifications, knowledge, and skills of judges applying for positions in administrative courts. After the Judicial Academy approved the proposed methodology, which includes examination questions, case studies, and tasks in legal writing, the Co-ordinator's office also drafted a study guide for the judges in administrative courts.

Another project in this field, devised and implemented by the office, focused on assisting the Ukrainian authorities in developing and introducing courses on the rule of law courses to law faculties throughout the country. Partners in this effort were the Ministry of Education and the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

Project Co-ordinator:
Ambassador David Nicholas
Revised budget: €1,085,000
www.osce.org/ukraine

CAUCASUS



Office of the Personal Representative of the OSCE CiO on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference

The boundaries and names on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the OSCE.

OSCE offices in Georgia as of December 2004

OSCE Office in Baku

2004 saw a considerable increase in the activities of the Office in Baku. Addressing many of the challenges Azerbaijan faces in its development, the Office's tasks stretched from anti-terrorism efforts across small business support and law enforcement training to media development and human rights.

The Office assisted Azerbaijan's Government in drafting legislation against trafficking in human beings and corruption. It

expanded awareness-raising projects on human rights and civil society development to the country's rural areas. Responding to the OSCE's focus on education in 2004, the Office also offered legal training to lawyers and environmental education to young Azerbaijanis.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Preparing for Police Assistance Programme. The Office's police-related activities, in preparation for the introduction of the Police Assistance Programme due to begin in 2005, made significant progress. The newly-renovated police school in Baku was provided with more than 2,000 books, computers and other equipment, and the Office assisted with the drafting of a curriculum based on modern principles of community policing. The school is scheduled to open in late 2005.

To enable police officers to efficiently register and research crimes, the Office helped the city of Baku with the set-up of a website, where the public can find information about the country's police services and the rights of individuals. An internal local crime database, accessible to police officers on duty throughout the city, was established.

The Office also contributed to the training of the Azerbaijan Pipeline Protection Service (a branch of the army) by introducing human rights observance based on local law and principles of community policing into their training programmes. These human rights elements were provided by the Human Rights and Police Training Consultancy, *Equity International*, contracted to the pipeline consortium leader, British Petroleum (BP). More work on this theme was provided by the Office in the form of seminars in municipalities which introduced police, civil society and the municipal authorities to the mutual benefits of co-operation and the principles of community policing. A major programme on 'Civic Education for Police and NGOs', which took place in the 13 rural districts that abut

the pipeline, sought to encourage increased interaction and meaningful co-operation between police officers, municipal authorities, NGOs and the community at large.

Supporting the fight against terrorism. Together with the UNODC and the Azerbaijan Government, which has now become party to 12 international anti-terrorism instruments, the Office held a series of seminars in order to address the implementation of government legislation reflecting the obligations imposed by these instruments. Seminars looked at the legislative implications of the adoption of such instruments and offered an insight into the methodology that might be employed in implementing legislative change. The Office will play a role in developing practical solutions to the obstacles identified and in providing support to implement them in the coming year.

Free legal service for military servicemen and conscripts. During the draft months of April, June and October, the Office and the NGO, *Lawyers of the 21st Century*, offered free legal assistance to military servicemen, conscripts and their family members. The service was provided by law students and recent law school graduates in the offices of the legal aid clinics in Baku and Ganja, established with the Office's support. On request, the clinic's lawyers also acted as legal representatives before state institutions and courts.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Supporting economic development. Outside Baku, practical business resources for entrepreneurs are scarce. To help remedy this problem, the Office organized

training courses for entrepreneurs in the country's rural areas. In co-operation with the German development agency, *GTZ*, the Office continued its Youth Entrepreneurship Seminars programme, teaching more than 250 young people about business fundamentals. Special courses on legal registration, taxes, business plan development and micro-credit opportunities were held for female entrepreneurs.

In May, the Office and the International Finance Corporation sponsored a conference to promote financial leasing among leaders from the governmental, banking and commercial sectors. Earlier in the year, the Government had modified legislation to encourage the development of the leasing industry to make capital investment more accessible to Azerbaijani entrepreneurs.

To support the development of tourism in Azerbaijan, the OSCE sponsored an assessment report on the tourism industry prepared by the US-based *Citizen Development Corps*. Together with the British Council, it also held a conference on tourism to encourage inter-agency co-operation and best practices in sustainable economic development.

Good governance and anti-corruption.

As part of its good governance programme, the Office organized a management training course for members of the Secretariat of the State Programme for Poverty Reduction Strategy, the key government agency dealing with economic development.

Before the entering into force of the State Programme on Combating Corruption on 1 January 2005, the Office and the Azerbaijani Young Lawyers Union organized a series of roundtable meetings and a public awareness-raising campaign on anti-corruption strategies.

The Aarhus Convention: helping citizens participate in environmental issues

On 25 June 1998, the UN Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters was adopted in the Danish city of Aarhus. Known as the Aarhus Convention, this document represents an entirely new kind of environmental agreement, linking environmental rights and human rights.

The Convention, which entered into force on 30 October 2001, establishes the relationship between people and governments in environmental matters. The Convention is not only an environmental agreement but also addresses government accountability, transparency and responsiveness. Implementation of the Convention's provisions takes place through five working groups, which cover the topics of compliance, pollutant release and transfer registers, genetically modified organisms, electronic information tools and access to justice.

The OSCE has advocated the ratification and implementation of the Aarhus Convention by its participating States since 1999, organizing awareness-raising campaigns, national and regional seminars and supporting the establishment, registration and operation of environmental NGOs. Since 2002, the OSCE has been supporting the development of Aarhus Centres in participating States. The role of an Aarhus Centre is to provide a meeting place and a link between the government and civil society and assist governments in fulfilling their requirements under the Aarhus Convention.

Informing the public about environmental issues.

The Office and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources opened an Aarhus Centre in Baku during September 2003, which now draws more than 200 visitors a month. It houses a library and computers, which citizens can use free of charge to consult the Internet on environmental issues. In 2004, some 60 public meetings on environmental topics were held in the Centre, including several public hearings on draft laws and environmental education programmes for children sponsored by the Office in Baku.

Promoting renewable energy sources.

Although rich in oil and gas, Azerbaijan faces serious energy shortages outside Baku. This not only prevents the country's balanced economic development but also threatens its environment, since people

often resort to cutting down trees for fuel. To promote the use of renewable energy sources, the Office initiated a new outreach project known as the 'Energy Bus'. The 'Bus' is a mobile education tool that uses models and other information tools to demonstrate how affordable and easily attainable renewable energy technologies such as bio-gas, bio-mass and saw-dust burners can be adapted to provide the rural communities with much-needed energy. It is envisaged to travel to more than 150 villages in Azerbaijan in 2005.

International co-operation on environmental issues. Within the framework of the NATO Science for Peace Programme, the Office continued to assist the Project on South Caucasus River Monitoring aimed at assessing the quality and quantity of the waters of the Kura and Araks river basin. The Project is now in its third year of implementation.

In line with its efforts to assess environmental and security challenges and to promote sustainable development, the Office provided support to the OSCE-UN Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC). Together with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, the Office and the OCEEA organized national consultations on the ENVSEC report on the southern Caucasus involving governments,

academia, and civil society. The initiative led to the preparation of a preliminary work programme by the Azerbaijani authorities addressing such issues as water management, public environmental awareness, and community environmental projects.

Human Dimension Activities

Supporting the Constitutional Court. To help the staff of the Constitutional Court handle the increasing number of individual complaints, the Office organized a consultancy visit by the former Director of the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany. It also held training seminars for practicing lawyers and civil society representatives on Constitutional Court proceedings and the requirements for submissions to the Court.

Monitoring of trials following the 15 October 2003 incidents. Together with the ODIHR, the Office continued its Trial Monitoring Programme in Azerbaijan, which was created in summer 2003 to provide a tool to foster fair trial and enhance the capacity of the judiciary in administering the law. Under the Programme, the Office observed the trials of all 125 persons that came under criminal charges after the clashes between protesters and police that occurred in the immediate aftermath of the 15 October 2003 presidential election. The trials were monitored from the perspective of their compliance with national and international standards and the right to a fair trial.

By October, the OSCE had trained 20 local monitors and co-ordinated their subsequent trial monitoring and reporting of all post-election trial procedures. This first phase of the programme ended with the compilation of a Trial Monitoring Report based on the findings of the monitors and of a foreign barrister. The Report contains recommendations for the Government regarding the accessibility of trials to the public, legal representation of the accused during the proceedings, allegations of torture and ill-treatment, and the independence and impartiality of the tribunals. The Office and the ODIHR plan to discuss the findings of this document with the Government to address perceived needs in the judicial system and to provide a platform for future co-operation in the development of the judiciary.



Demonstrating alternative energy sources: the 'Energy Bus'

Assessing local elections. With assistance from the ODIHR, the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) and representatives of the participating States

Providing free legal support to vulnerable groups

Shirzad Qarabagli, a pensioner, is involved in a legal dispute over housing. His first impulse was to hire a lawyer, but he had second thoughts when he found out how high the costs were. A brief meeting with a lawyer can cost him one-fifth of his pension, and the cost of a single day's representation in court can easily exceed it. Many other Azerbaijanis face a similar predicament – a lack of legal knowledge and means to pay for such advice puts them at a disadvantage, limiting their access to the judicial system.

OSCE Office in Baku



To address this imbalance, the OSCE Office in Baku and the Azerbaijani Young Lawyers Union established a legal aid clinic, which offers free legal advice and representation to the most vulnerable groups of the population, including single parent families, households with many dependent children, pensioners, unemployed and asylum seekers, among others. Close to 120 individuals have already found help at the legal clinic since it was opened in June. In addition to housing and property issues, the clinic has helped clients handle problems related to family law, resolve labour disputes and settle claims to social benefits.

The legal aid project has helped Shirzad to effectively protect his property rights in court. "I had no money to hire a professional lawyer. Then I decided to ask the clinic for help. Well, I had some doubts that they will be able to help me, since there were so young. I'm glad that I was wrong, they did a great job helping me."

in Azerbaijan, the Office co-ordinated the observation of the December 2004 municipal elections and carried out an assessment of the electoral process. A week prior to election day, the Office produced a series of public service announcements, which were aired on most popular radio networks throughout the country. Several stations ran live programmes on polling day encouraging people to participate live on the radio after they had voted.

Rapid reaction on human rights violations. The Office supported the establishment and operation of a 'rapid reaction group' within the Ombudsman Institute, responsible for immediate response to each reported complaint of human rights violation in detention facilities. The group is expected to respond to calls within a few hours, the objective being the reduction of the number of human rights violations and law infringements at preliminary detention facilities. The initiative is aimed at buttressing the rule of law among law enforcement agencies by following up each confirmed case.

Combating human trafficking. On 6 May, the Azerbaijani President adopted a National Action Plan for the fight against human trafficking. The plan had been prepared by the Office, together with the IOM and the Council of Europe. As a follow-up to this landmark decision, the Office developed projects with local NGOs to raise public awareness and to provide protection for potential victims. It also helped establish two NGOs that are in charge of running a national toll-free helpline and the country's first shelter for victims.

Monitoring of NGO registration status. While the Law on Registration of Legal Entities and State Register of Legal Entities, adopted in January, was a step forward towards ensuring freedom of association, NGO registration remained difficult in 2004. Following consultations with the Ministry of Justice, the Office monitored the implementation of the new law with special regard to NGO registration. A group of legal advisers was hired to observe the registration process at the Ministry and to render free consultations to applicant NGOs.

Supporting the media. As part of its activities to support a free and independent

media, the Office co-hosted a conference on mass media, the judiciary and the rule of law. In addition, it held a seminar on lessons learned from elections held in the area of the CIS, aimed at identifying ways to better protect reporters against beatings and harassment during demonstrations and pickets. The event was attended by journalists from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

The Office, together with the Interior Ministry and the local NGO, *Press Council*, began distributing special vests to reporters who regularly cover political demonstrations and street clashes. It is expected that the vests, which are brightly coloured and carry the word 'Press' on the back, will help distinguish journalists from the crowd during street protests.

In the field of media legislation, the Office was very active in lobbying for the adoption of two important laws pertaining to free and independent media, the Law on Public Television and on Freedom of Information. To promote changes to the law governing the protection of reputation, which had been the source of numerous libel cases against the print media during the year, the Office organized several roundtable meetings.

Raising political interest among school children

Over 50,000 Azerbaijani schoolchildren showed off their knowledge of political affairs at a nationwide competition sponsored by the Office in Baku. This 'Olympiad', which was organized together with the local NGO, *Kainat* (Universe), encouraged the pupils to find out more about the activities of international organizations – including the OSCE – and to learn about the importance of civil society and democratic institutions. In the second phase of this project, the competition finals were televised on state TV, which helped bring the discussion before a wider audience.

Head of Office:
Ambassador Maurizio Pavesi
Revised budget: €1,512,600
www.osce.org/baku

OSCE Mission to Georgia

Overall, events in 2004, notably in Ajara and the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, moved at a rapid pace, impacting directly on the work of the Mission and requiring it to respond quickly to events on the ground. The Mission completed two phases of the Georgia Elections Assistance Programme (GEAP), implementing a comprehensive package of technical assistance in time for the 4 January presidential election and 28 March parliamentary elections.

Following the elections, the Mission actively engaged in assisting the new Government in various aspects of its democratic reform programme, involving the Mission's economic-environmental and human dimension staff in further substantial work with their governmental and civil society counterparts.

Throughout April and the early days of May, the confrontation between the Government in Tbilisi and the authorities in Batumi became the main focus for the Mission's political and human dimension teams. The Mission followed the developments on the ground closely by rotating mission members regularly to Ajara. Following the successful resolution of the

crisis, the Mission was able to increase its human dimension activities in the region.

Promoting the peace process during the heightened Georgian-Ossetian crisis also required increased attention from the Mission. In May, the Georgian Government deployed Interior Ministry troops into the zone of conflict to close down contraband routes. The South Ossetian side declared mass mobilization. Both sides introduced additional armed forces into the zone of conflict and established illegal checkpoints. In August, the two sides engaged in offensive operations and the situation deteriorated further resulting in hostage-taking and casualties on both sides.

The Mission, as a participant in the Joint Control Commission (JCC), met regularly with the JCC Co-chairmen, and focused on the reaffirmation of the need to resolve the conflict through exclusively peaceful means as well as on the urgency of removing unauthorized units from the zone of conflict. Throughout the year, Mission Monitoring Officers observed the Joint Peacekeeping Forces (JPKF) activities and helped improve their control and communications structures.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

THE GEORGIAN-OSSETIAN CONFLICT

Rapid response for peaceful resolution.

In responding rapidly to events on the ground, the Mission was active in the JCC, which is co-chaired by Georgia, the Russian Federation, North Ossetia and South Ossetia. With regard to its monitoring role, the Mission deepened co-operation with the JPKF, which consist of a Georgian, a Russian and a North Ossetian battalion.

In particular, the Mission succeeded in:

- promoting, in co-operation with the JPKF, the cease-fire brokered in mid-August by the JCC;
- engaging actively in a series of JCC meetings aimed at injecting impetus to the political process for a peaceful resolution and at preventing renewed violence;
- promoting confidence between the sides in order to defuse tension;
- producing, with the four sides, a number of concept papers that propose ways of moving the political process forward;
- co-ordinating preparations to implement a project for the rehabilitation of



OSCE Mission monitors with an Ossetian officer, a Georgian officer and a Russian officer of the JPKF on patrol in the zone of conflict (from left to right)

the zone of conflict and for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) funded by the European Commission with a grant of €2.5 million to re-build confidence and foster transparency and market economy practices; and

- facilitating the launch of the official JCC newsletter, aimed at promoting objective and transparent accounts of the JCC's work.

The Mission participated in the 5 November meeting of the Georgian Prime Minister, Zurab Zhvania, and the South Ossetian leader, Eduard Kokoity, which marked a key political event in the peace process. They reaffirmed their commitment to the peaceful settlement of the conflict and set a timetable for the urgent demilitarization of the zone of conflict.

The Field Office in Tskhinvali – a focal point for dialogue and monitoring operations

The Mission's Field Office in Tskhinvali continued facilitating the Mission's efforts to maintain the negotiation process between the sides to the conflict by organizing and hosting meetings and consultations at different levels, including those connected with JCC activities and the Steering Committee on economic rehabilitation.

The Office provided an operational base for the Mission's monitoring activities and support to the JPKF. This became particularly important with the resumption of active military confrontation during the summer crisis, to which the Mission reacted by increasing its monitoring capacities. The Field Office also served as a focal point for diplomats and foreign journalists.

Transparency and military monitoring.

The Mission continued monitoring the JPKF in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. OSCE Mission Monitoring Officers accompanied JPKF monitoring patrols in the zone of conflict, but also patrolled independently and liaised with local military and civilian authorities.

Following the August cease-fire, the Mission increased the number of Monitoring Officers and set up a permanent observation post at the junction of strategic roads in the zone of conflict. From the so-called *Pauk* (Russian for 'Spider'), the Monitoring Officers observed and reported on developments on the ground. This verification of developments by an independent presence served as an important confidence-building measure.

Voluntary handover and transparent destruction of weapons. The Mission has supported the JPKF programme of voluntary handover of arms and ammunition since it began in 2000. Within the framework of this initiative, communities that hand over weapons to the JPKF benefit from small-scale projects to improve the local infrastructure. Projects running until summer 2004 included the refurbishment of an out-patients' centre, road and canal

repair, furnishing schools with computers and providing nursery facilities.

At the end of April, engineers of the Russian battalion of the JPKF destroyed all the weapons and ammunition that had been collected, in the presence of representatives of the Georgian and South Ossetian sides and representatives of accredited embassies and the media. OSCE Monitoring Officers were present throughout the whole process to confirm the total destruction of all the collected weapons and ammunition.

From May, the security situation grew steadily worse in the zone of conflict, and the programme eventually had to be put on hold.

THE GEORGIAN-ABKHAZ CONFLICT

In July, the peace process led by the UN almost came to a standstill after a maritime incident occurred near Sukhumi.

The Abkhaz side stepped back from an agreement to let the UN Observer Mission to Georgia deploy international civilian police officers to train and equip law enforcement bodies in the conflict zone, resulting in only a partial deployment of the police officers to the conflict zone in the Georgian-administered Samegrelo region. Still lacking consent by the Abkhaz side, there was no progress in 2004 regarding the opening, in Gali, of a branch office of the UN Human Rights Office Abkhazia, Georgia, with the participation of an additional, seconded OSCE officer.

THE BORDER MONITORING OPERATION

In 2004, the Border Monitoring Operation (BMO) continued to help build confidence and security in its area of operation. Building on experience gained over previous years, the Mission carried out its mandate more comprehensively and efficiently.



OSCE/Cliff Volpe

To fulfil the mandate, the BMO had eight primary patrol bases along the border, one permanent border patrol in Assa Valley and one forward supply point at Telavi airfield. In May, 11 permanent observation posts were established at key points along the observed 280 km border. During 2004, monitors reported over 800 cases of individual or group border crossings and movements into and out of the non-delineated area. This figure includes aircraft and groups of people with pack animals.

Increased flexibility. The BMO injected increased flexibility into its operations by creating a Mobile Reserve Team and by widening the areas in which patrols, both static and mobile, operated. This Team provided a rapid deployment patrol, capable of moving to any location and setting up operations at short notice. Static and mobile patrols often overlapped their areas of operations to give better coverage. This promoted the effectiveness of the operation by giving monitors an increased knowledge of the ground where they worked. Rapid relocation to observation posts was mainly done by helicopter.

Increased efficiency. To help increase their efficiency, border monitors were equipped with and extensively trained on high-resolution day and night photographic and observation equipment. The BMO continued to improve its equipment handling techniques, which, when combined with increased knowledge of the ground, added to its overall effectiveness. Patrols used up-to-date portable modem communications with increased performance capability, enabling them to send reports and photographs from remote mountain locations.

As a result of lack of consensus on the extension of the BMO, all observing and reporting ceased on 31 December 2004.

DESTRUCTION OF SURPLUS MILITARY STOCKPILES

Stockpiles of munitions, in whatever condition, are a lethal hazard and might become a source of materials for terrorists. The Mission's involvement with these projects is in line with the OSCE participating States' commitment to combat terrorism as well as to address environmental threats to security.

Further improvements were made to equipment and buildings at the Recycling and Destruction Centre, which was established in 2004. By July, large quantities of munitions were being transported to the Centre from other bases. Several hundred tons of unstable and damaged bombs, missiles, cluster bomb packs and shells were destroyed.

Neutralizing dangerous chemicals. Further stages were completed in the Mission's project to reduce the toxic waste pollution

caused by the dumping of petrol, oil and lubricants, and remains of spent munitions contaminating the land of former Soviet bases. The Mission oversaw the neutralization of approximately 60 tons of collected dangerous and other unwanted chemicals including the solidified remains of napalm.

After assessing the extent and nature of contamination on designated sites and drawing up a works schedule, the Mission cleared the sites of remains of exploded ordnance and chemical debris. By year's end, the process of decontaminating the land had begun.



Recycling and destroying tons of unviable munitions left on former Soviet bases

This live shell from the obsolete 100mm KC-19 anti-aircraft artillery system is one of approximately 10,000 shells to be dismantled in 2005. Some 23,000 shells of this type have been successfully dismantled so far. Several OSCE participating States responded to calls from the Georgian Government to assist by funding the programme.

ACTION AGAINST TERRORISM

In response to the OSCE Chairmanship's wish to prioritize anti-terrorism measures, the Mission assists the Government in implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1373 and the universal conven-

tions and protocols on anti-terrorism. In November, together with the Secretariat's Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) and the UNODC, the Mission organized a workshop in Tbilisi on ratification and implementation of these Conventions and Protocols.

Mission assistance during 2004 related to counter-terrorist capacity-building aimed at strengthening the co-operation between anti-terrorism departments of different Georgian state agencies and relevant international and regional organizations. Georgian specialized departments were encouraged to develop a common system of information gathering, analysis, storage and retrieval relating to convicted or suspected terrorists and criminals.

The Mission assisted the Georgian efforts to counter terrorism by offering a document of best practice compiled from the experience of OSCE participating States.

The Mission facilitated the participation of Georgian officials in a series of workshops and conferences on issues such as travel document security, border management and security as well as strategies to combat illicit trafficking and criminal use of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear substances and weapons.

The Mission provided assistance to the Georgian State Border Defence, with information about new machine-readable passport technology.

POLICE DEVELOPMENT

Offering new impetus for police reform.

After a series of visits by the Secretariat's Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU), the Government and the OSCE signed a Memorandum of Understanding in October. In addition, the so-called 'Needs Assessment and Formulation of an OSCE Police Assistance Programme for Georgia' was launched.

The Mission also appointed a Police Adviser, whose main responsibility is to assist the Interior Ministry in formulating a vision, values and objectives for the reform of policing in Georgia and creating a strategic plan to deliver these aims. The Adviser helps

strengthen the Ministry's personnel management system and develop a new concept and model for basic police training. It is also planned to introduce modern community policing concepts as the foundations of the reform of the police force.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Focusing on economic security. The main focus of the Mission in the economic and environmental dimension was the fight against corruption, the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, and assistance to the Government to develop economic strategies. The results of the Mission's efforts included the following:

- To promote the Government's fight against money-laundering, the Mission organized a workshop on effective analysis of financial data that brought together experts from the UNODC, the World Bank and Interpol as well as relevant officials from ministries and the banking community.
- Through its Young Entrepreneur Seminar (YES) Programme, the Mission provided business training for 100 young people in Gardabani and Marneuli, which is home to large minority populations and suffering from high unemployment.
- The Mission began to assist the National Security Council in an analysis of the country's privatization plan. Sound economic growth and political security will be the focus of an extensive review to be carried out in 2005.

Addressing issues of environmental security. The Mission conducted training seminars for government officials on the Aarhus Convention, ratified by Georgia in 2003. It continued to support the development of an Aarhus Centre, which is aimed at building partnership and trust between the Government and civil society sectors working on environmental matters.

The Mission also worked on identifying environmental problems that can result in instability and potentially in conflict. Assisted by the OCEEA, the Mission supported the OSCE-UN Environment and Security (ENVSEC) initiative in develop-

ing a preliminary work programme that identifies geographic and thematic areas of environmental concerns for Georgia.



Natelia Grigalashvili

Scientists from Tbilisi State University take river samples for the NATO Science for Peace Programme. The Mission continued to support the programme to monitor water quality at ten stations along the Kura river, testing samples for contamination by heavy metals, physio-chemical properties, and organic compounds. The project has created baseline environmental data that is essential for constructive international dialogue on the environmental risks.

Human Dimension Activities

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Integrating human rights principles into society and legislation. The Mission continued to promote international standards of human rights, focusing this year on law enforcement bodies, national human rights institutions, and communities in potential conflict areas.

In the area of law enforcement, the Mission helped the Government implement the National Action Plan against Torture 2003–2005. The Mission set up a procedure to combat torture and ill-treatment by:

- conducting, with relevant state bodies, unannounced monitoring visits to police stations and prisons;

- organizing training sessions for law enforcement staff on international anti-torture standards;
- building up a network of both state and civil human rights advocates; and
- increasing its anti-torture activities with the Public Defender's Office.

To support the Government in implementing its OSCE commitments, the Mission strengthened the national human rights institutions and dealt with individual human rights complaints. In addition, the Mission trained the staff of all six regional branches of the Public Defender's Office and arranged roundtables on current key human rights issues. It also supported the Public Defender in drafting a law on the rights of internally displaced persons.

Human rights activities in areas of potential tension. The Mission arranged training for ethnic Armenian and Azerbaijani teachers on how to teach human rights in those regions of Georgia that have large ethnic minority populations. Following the end of the Ajara crisis, the Mission started comprehensive human rights training, advocacy and awareness-raising activities in all of Ajara.

To further promote human rights and to build up confidence in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, the Mission established a human rights Sunday-school, arranged weekly joint human rights sessions for Georgian and Ossetian children, and trained human rights teachers. Another project aimed at training Ossetian law professionals and Georgian and Ossetian law students had to be suspended due to the security situation in the zone of conflict during the summer. In Abkhazia, Georgia, the Mission supported human rights television programmes and civil society organizations.

Strengthening the fight against trafficking in human beings. In order to improve the local capacity to combat human trafficking, the Mission worked with government officials and NGOs. This work included support in drafting a law to fight trafficking, expected to be passed by Parliament in 2005, and the redrafting of a national action plan against human trafficking. These two drafts were drawn up

by local experts, guided by the OSCE and international expertise.

Promoting gender equality. The Mission helped a coalition of women's NGOs and government representatives develop a national action plan on gender equality. To increase awareness among police, teachers, and doctors, the Mission financed a series of training courses on domestic violence.

RULE OF LAW

Together with the ODIHR, the Mission financed training for 20 prison security staff to improve the professionalism of prison officers. This was organized with the help of international and local experts.

The Mission supported the initiative of the Justice Ministry in setting up a legislative basis for the draft execution code. It also began looking at ways of assisting the practice of using alternative sentences as a means of reducing the number of prisoners.

To raise awareness of the need for Georgian legislation to comply with international standards, a Legal Discussion Forum was held twice a month with the support of the Mission. Legal professionals taking part in this Forum submitted their recommendations to the Justice Ministry.

When the Ministry gave consideration to amending the constitution, the Mission provided expert opinion on the draft amendments, in co-operation with the Venice Commission to the Council of Europe.

DEMOCRATIZATION

The Georgia Elections Assistance Programme. Following a meeting at the margins of the Maastricht Ministerial Council, at which States pledged funds for elections assistance to Georgia in December 2003, the Mission laid the groundwork for and administered the Georgia Elections Assistance Programme (GEAP). It was set up to facilitate the provision of funds pledged by participating States to various implementing partners for a comprehensive package of technical assistance activities in time for both the presidential and parliamentary elections.

The first phase of the GEAP – the 4 January presidential election – focused on setting up an adequate mechanism for managing and monitoring project implementation with maximum transparency for donors and other interested parties.

In its second phase – the 28 March parliamentary elections – the Programme further strengthened the assistance provided for the presidential election and focused on building capacity within Georgian electoral institutions.

Strengthening Georgia's democratic institutions. After the elections in early 2004, the Mission focused on helping strengthen democratic institutions, assisting the Government in efforts to ensure that:

- Parliament can represent the voters effectively. The Mission actively supported the formation of a new code of ethics for Members of Parliament to guarantee they are publicly accountable.
- local government can meet the demands of the local population. The Mission supported the Council of Europe in developing a national association of local councils to provide them with a discussion forum. It also supported the publication of the Tbilisi city budget to make sure that the budgeting process is transparent.
- the media is free to provide unbiased information. The Mission implemented a media development project with Ajara state TV. In addition, it raised awareness among Georgian media professionals of national media legislation and international standards of freedom of expression and provided training for media professionals in Abkhazia, Georgia.

In October, media professionals contributed to the declaration of the First South Caucasus Conference on Freedom of the Media. This gathering of Georgian, Azerbaijani and Armenian journalists and international experts was organized in Tbilisi by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Mission. In total, some 50 participants, including journalists from the three South Caucasus countries, international experts, and NGO representatives, attended the event.

Involving communities in peace-building processes. To reach beyond the divisions in Georgia's conflict areas, the Mission encouraged local NGOs and the media to become more active in community development activities. The Mission created a small grants programme for NGOs that work for the benefit of both the Ossetian and Georgian communities living in the zone of conflict. To further increase the flow of information between the communities across the conflict line, the Mission also worked to establish a joint Georgian-Ossetian newspaper and Internet site.

After completing an assessment of NGOs in Abkhazia, Georgia, the Mission provided a training programme to strengthen their longer-term planning capacity. In Sukhumi and Tbilisi, teams of disabled youth from both sides received financial support to develop jointly their training skills to raise public awareness of the problems facing the disabled in their communities, through civic advocacy and public education activities.

Head of Mission:
Ambassador Roy Reeve
Revised Budget: €20,688,900
www.osce.org/georgia

OSCE Office in Yerevan

In 2004, the OSCE Office in Yerevan continued to increase its activities in the politico-military and the economic-environmental dimensions, while maintaining its work in the human dimension.

Important new initiatives undertaken by the Office included promoting freedom of assembly in Armenia – an area where the Office has taken the lead role – and a programme to strengthen the country's Parliament. Support for electoral reform and media

development also continued to be high on the Office's agenda. The Office further bolstered its efforts to promote foreign investment in Armenia and continued to support activities combating money laundering and promoting local economic development. The Office continued with a large-scale Police Assistance Programme and initiated another major programme aimed at recycling/disposal of rocket fuel component (*Melange*) stocks.

HIGHLIGHTS

Combating corruption. The Office continued to assist the Armenian authorities and civil society in their efforts to improve and implement the National Anti-Corruption Strategy. It co-ordinated an international working group on anti-corruption and represented the international community in the Anti-Corruption Monitoring Commission, created by Presidential decree on 1 June to monitor the implementation of the Strategy. To mobilize civil society in the fight against corruption, the Office also supported the creation of an anti-corruption NGO coalition and held a conference in September on the role of mass media in combating corruption. The conference was attended by some 30 journalists and representatives of the presidential administration, the National Assembly, the Prosecutor's office, and civil society.

Promoting electoral reform. Together with the ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission, the Office provided recommendations for amending the Armenian Electoral Code and facilitated public discussion on the issue. Throughout the year, the Office continued to promote the improvement of electoral standards in

line with key recommendations made by experts from the ODIHR and the Council of Europe.

The Office continued to chair the International Working Group on Elections, which promotes the exchange of information, better co-ordination of activities and co-operation among international agencies in providing election-related assistance.

Supporting the National Assembly. To strengthen the professional capacity of parliamentary staff, the Office carried out this new programme with the assistance of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. This initiative was implemented in two phases, the first one consisting of a comprehensive training course for 24 expert staff from three Standing Committees and two Departments followed by a week-long exchange visit to study the work of the Hungarian National Assembly. By strengthening the skills and knowledge of the expert staff, the project contributed to facilitating a more effective law-making process in Parliament.

Promoting freedom of assembly. The most important activity of the Office in this field was the promotion of legislation to ensure the right to freedom of assembly. In this regard, the adoption of the Law on the Procedure of Conducting Public Gatherings, Rallies, Demonstrations and Marches by the Armenian Parliament in April was a major breakthrough. The Office continued its work to promote further improvements to the law and its effective implementation to guarantee that the right to freedom of assembly is fully respected.

Recycling/disposal of rocket fuel component (*Melange*). Following the request of the Armenian Government for

technical and financial assistance for the recycling/disposal of rocket fuel component (*Melange*) stocks, the Office supported the elaboration of an independent scoping study by an international group of experts. The study identified the quantity and characteristics of the *Melange*, the processing technology for its ecologically sound transformation into liquid fertilizer, the human and technical resources available in-country, and provided a preliminary cost and time-frame for the project's implementation. The project is implemented across both the economic and environmental and politico-military dimensions.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Reforming the police forces. Building on a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2003, the Office pursued its efforts to develop the Police Assistance Programme for Armenia, which was officially approved by the Armenian Government in September. Its goal is to strengthen trust and confidence between the police and society and to contribute to the development of community-oriented policing. Under the Programme, the following areas of policing will be supported by the OSCE: strengthening the Police Training Centre for induction training, the development and introduction of a community policing model in the Arabkir District Police Department, and the implementation of a modern emergency response system in the Yerevan City Police Department.

In co-operation with the OSCE Secretariat's Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU), the Office helped organize an in-depth needs assessment study, which included visits by expert teams from Russia, Sweden



Participants at one of the OSCE-initiated parliamentary training courses in Yerevan

and the Netherlands. In addition, study tours for two senior Armenian police commanders to Moscow, Hamburg and Malmö were arranged to assess different modern command- and control-systems.

Parliamentary oversight of the armed forces. Together with the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF) and the Armenian National Assembly, the Office organized a workshop to launch and promote a handbook on 'Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector'. The handbook, which was published in March 2003 by the DCAF and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, is designed to help parliamentarians, parliamentary staff experts, government officials, military and police officers improve their knowledge of the oversight role and authority that parliaments exert over the security sector. The Office sponsored the translation and printing of 1,000 copies of the handbook.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Combating money laundering and suppressing financing of terrorism. The Office continued to facilitate the process of developing a legal framework to combat money laundering and the establishment of a Financial Intelligence Unit under the Central Bank of Armenia by providing professional expertise and financial support.

As a result of the activities of an interdisciplinary working group supported by the Office, a draft law on this issue was elaborated with the help of European experts. The Law was adopted by the National Assembly in December. The Office in Yerevan and the OCEEA organized a study tour for national experts to Vienna in December to strengthen co-operation and improve co-ordination among international actors in the fight against financing of terrorism, corruption and money laundering.

Promoting local economic development. The Office supported the elaboration of a strategic document on the socio-economic development of the Syunik province, one of the remotest border provinces of Armenia. It was prepared by a national consultancy group hired by the Office, while local

authorities and public stakeholders took an active part in the discussion and clarification of the priority issues of the document. The final document as well as the local 'Yellow Pages', issued with the support of the Office, were presented to the public in Syunik for their comments in December.

Attracting foreign investment. Several projects were undertaken to assist the Armenian authorities in their efforts to attract foreign investment to the country. The Office supported the Ministry of Trade and Economic Development in organizing an International Investment Forum in London in March, where Armenia's Zangezur Copper-Molybdenum Combine was presented to international investors. It also sponsored the participation of one member of the Armenian delegation at the CIS Economic Forum in St. Petersburg in June.

Showcasing journalists' excellence

For the second time since 2003, the Armenian Aarhus Centre and the OSCE Office in Yerevan organized a competition for journalists working on environmental and human rights issues. On the occasion of Human Rights Day on 10 December, 11 journalists from different regions of Armenia received financial awards for their outstanding reporting on these issues in TV and print media.

"The main objective of the 2004 competition was to raise public awareness about the universal right to a safe environment," said Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin, Head of the OSCE Office after handing out the awards.

In the 'Press' category, the first prize was awarded to a journalist working for the newspaper, *Business*, from Syunik province. His article covered the problem of illegally cut trees in the forests in his region and contained an analysis of the causes and consequences of an unprofessional approach to forest utilization.

Supporting the Aarhus Centre. The Office continued its support for the Aarhus Centre, a public environmental information office in Yerevan. Established in 2002 in the premises of the Nature Protection Ministry with the Office's assistance, the Centre

moved to a new location in October. The Office also helped the Centre maintain its official website (www.armaarhus.am) and implement several environmental initiatives in Armenia. These included projects on environmental education for schoolchildren, raising awareness among the public about sustainable development, environment and security issues, as well as relevant international conventions and the implementation of national legislation.

International co-operation on environmental issues. The Office continued its support for several international environmental projects in the region, such as the OSCE-NATO Project on South Caucasus River Monitoring, an initiative that assesses the quality and quantity of the waters of the Kura and Araks river basin, which is now in its third year of implementation.

An important new initiative supported by the Office in 2004 was the OSCE-UN Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC). In co-operation with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Nature Protection, the Office and the Secretariat's OCEEA helped the Armenian authorities prepare a preliminary work programme that addresses some of the environmental security threats identified in an ENVSEC report on the southern Caucasus. These include water management issues, problems related to rapid urban growth and pollution through uncontrolled industrial activity.

Human Dimension Activities

Supporting reform of the penitentiary system. Capacity-building and training seminars were the main elements of the Office's efforts to assist the Armenian authorities in reforming the country's penitentiary system. Special training classes were sponsored by the Office, the ODIHR and the international NGO, *Penal Reform International*, to help members of a newly-created monitoring board increase transparency in the running of penitentiary institutions.

The Office and the ODIHR also organized a study tour to Croatia for senior prison officials to give them a first-hand insight into the country's social rehabilitation and staff training techniques. As the institu-

tional framework for the implementation of alternative sanctions in Armenia is undergoing comprehensive review and reform, the Office contracted a local NGO, *Advanced Social Technologies*, to carry out an analysis. The report focused on the implementation of alternative sanctions such as community service and correctional labour.

Providing information on alternatives to military service. The Office continued its assistance to the Ministry of Defence, which after the adoption of the Law on Alternative Service, worked on the implementation of the Law, including preparing the required by-laws. At the Ministry's request, the Office provided it with an expert paper on alternative service options and liability issues for those selecting alternative service, based on the experience of other OSCE countries.

Handling individual human rights complaints. In close co-operation with the Armenian authorities, the Office continued to handle individual complaints of alleged human rights violations, as it has done since 2000. Through a defined procedure of receiving complaints and processing them in a database, the Office also obtained a better overview of the human rights situation in the country and assisted the authorities in tackling some of the identified problems.

Campaigning for human rights awareness. Continuing a project begun in 2002, the Office sponsored a human rights awareness-raising campaign, which targets the general public in the capital and remote regions. In 2004, the campaign focused on mechanisms for human rights protection at the domestic and international levels corresponding to the main areas of the OSCE's human dimension activities. In 32 TV presentations, the project presented subjects such as combating trafficking of human beings, the judiciary, fair trial issues, children rights and freedom of belief. The coverage of the project was wider than in 2003 because the format of live TV talk shows offered the possibility for people to phone in questions to experts. On average, 20 calls per broadcast were received in the TV studios.

OSCE Office in Yerevan



Gender training in Yerevan

The fight against trafficking in human beings. As one of the three co-chairs of the International Working Group on Anti-Trafficking – together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UNDP – the Office played a central role in the co-ordination of efforts to fight human trafficking in Armenia. The Group exchanged information on anti-trafficking activities and monitored the implementation of Armenia's National Plan of Action on the fight against human trafficking.

The Office implemented a project that analysed gaps in the legal framework and developed recommendations to introduce a consistent legal framework for the effective criminalization of trafficking and victim and witness protection. In addition, two local NGOs received technical assistance for a survey on the extent of trafficking in the country.

Addressing gender issues. Together with the ODIHR, the Office continued its efforts to further the role of women in Armenia's society. This included assisting the Government in developing a National Plan of Action on Women's Advancement and support for a 'train-the-trainers' project on women's rights and leadership. Another joint initiative focused on the introduction of academic courses on gender issues at secondary and higher education levels and promoted the institutionalization of gender studies as an academic subject.

Supporting freedom of the media and freedom of information. The distribution of broadcast frequencies and alleged

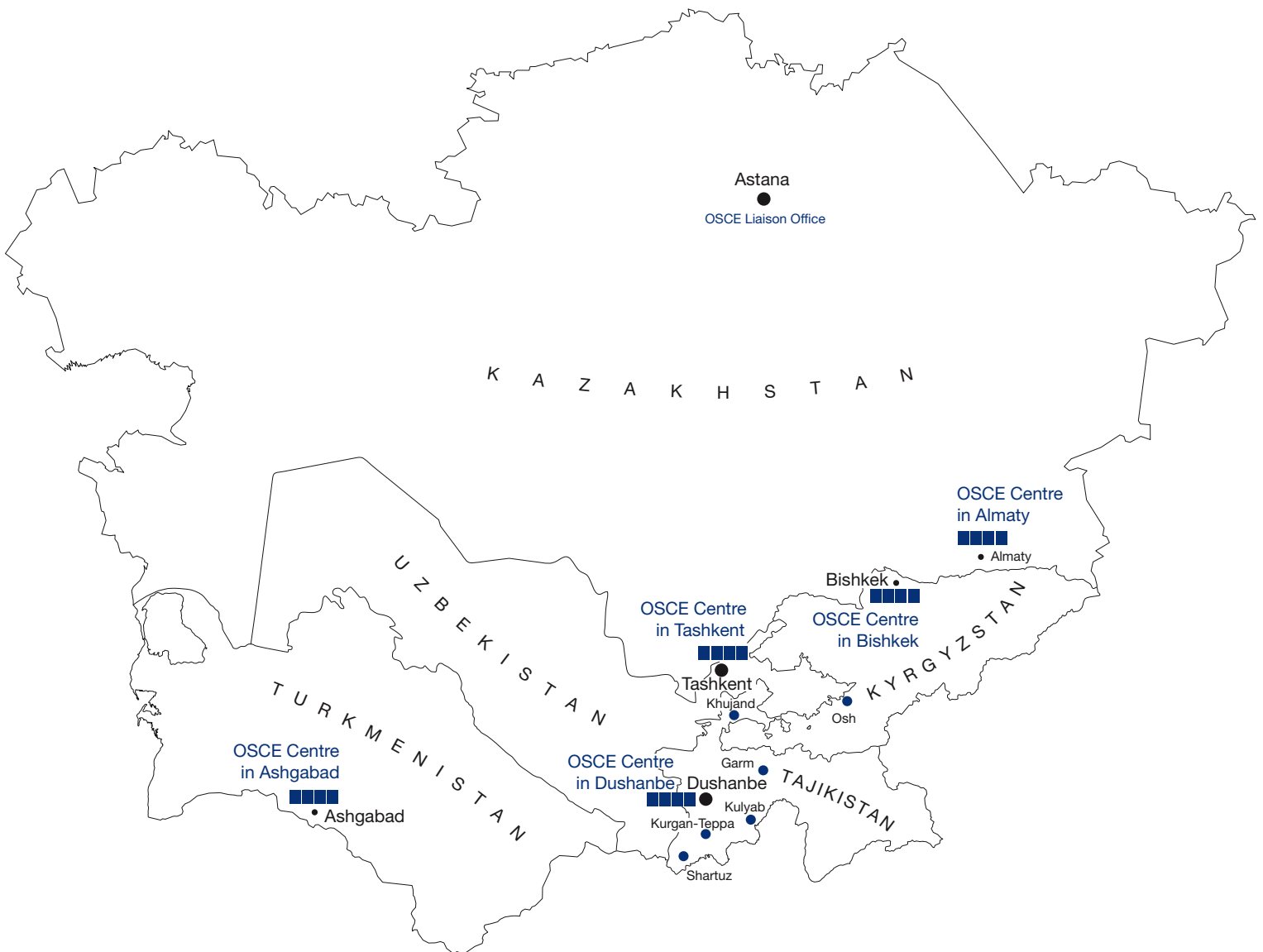
violations of the rights of journalists and media outlets were the most important media-related issues the Office dealt with in 2004. In co-operation with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the Office continued to follow and report on the state of media in the country.

To observe the implementation of the Law on Freedom of Information adopted in 2003, the Office launched a project under which a network of monitors was established in three regions of Armenia. A total of 219 complaints were received from citizens concerning their right to receive information and, after intervention by the local Freedom of Information Centres, information was received in 134 cases. The monitors' role was also to raise awareness among officials and the public about the provisions of the Law.

With regard to media legislation, an informal working group chaired by the Office met regularly to exchange information and develop recommendations on legislation related to media and freedom of information. The Office also supported a joint project by the OSCE and the American Bar Association/Central and East European Law Initiative to train advocates and reporters on media legislation.

Head of Office:
Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin
Revised Budget: €1,227,700
www.osce.org/yerevan

CENTRAL ASIA



- International Borders
- OSCE Field Office

The boundaries and names on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the OSCE.

OSCE Centre in Almaty

Responding to new challenges in 2004, the OSCE Centre in Almaty increasingly focused on long-term activities that cut across all three OSCE dimensions. However, promoting security and stability in the region as well as furthering democratization and improving respect for human rights remained at the core of the Centre's work.

Combating extremism was tackled with an emphasis on respect for human rights. Acknowledging that freedom of the media is crucial to democratic development, the Centre expanded its training programme for journalists, including a focus on young regional journalists, gender issues, and environmental reporting. As part of its activities to address threats that undermine democratic development and the rule of law, the Centre offered workshops and

training seminars for judges, prosecutors, lawyers and government officials. Topics discussed ranged from international treaties to best practices on combating corruption, money-laundering and terrorism-financing.

The Centre continued its efforts in the field of environmental protection by promoting an awareness-raising campaign on radioactive hazards near the former Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. It also worked towards raising public participation on environmental issues in the Caspian Sea area. A one-year programme for Kazakhstani teachers was launched to help them better educate their pupils on environmental issues.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Combating terrorism and extremism. To promote best practices in the fight against terrorism and extremism, the Centre held several roundtables on combating the emerging threat of extremism while emphasizing respect for human rights. These events were organized with the support of the ODIHR and the OSCE Secretariat's Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU). The Centre also helped organize an exchange of law enforcement officials among all the Central Asian States in close co-operation with other OSCE Centres in the region. Together with international experts, they exchanged views on best practices to control the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Another of the Centre's projects focused on Kazakhstani police officers who were trained on how to protect human rights during counter-terrorism actions.

Courtesy Mikhail Pak



Some 400 young journalists from all corners of Kazakhstan attended master classes in journalism, which the Centre organized in 2004 in 15 regional cities. Among the participants, 11 were selected for a two-week professional internship in Poland. One of them was a young reporter from *Teks* radio station, Aliya Syzdykova. "Polish journalism is among the best in Europe and what we learned is indispensable for our future work. Being in Poland on the eve of its accession to the European Union was a historic event and a challenge for any journalist", said Ms. Syzdykova.

Developing the media

Access to information and a professional media sector are key elements of developing democracies and thriving civil societies. In 2004, the Centre continued giving support to the independent media by training young journalists from Kazakhstan's regions on how to cover economic, social, and environmental issues. This included specific issues such as human trafficking and gender stereotyping, topics which otherwise might have remained unreported. In order to provide regional journalists with easier access to the Internet, the Centre helped establish two Internet cafés in Pavlodar and Taraz.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Despite rapid economic growth over recent years, there remains a considerable gap between economic progress and overall living conditions in Kazakhstan, particularly in rural areas. In addition, economic hardship among Kazakhstanis is compounded in certain areas by ecological damage, affecting the health and livelihood of the population.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

In 2004, combating corruption and money-laundering became top priorities for the Centre. To introduce judges, prosecutors and defence lawyers to international legal standards, the Centre organized a number of training seminars. It also continued work



Training of Kazakhstani police officers

Zahkar Sviridenko



Kazakhstan's oil industry: loading facilities on the Caspian Sea

on trans-boundary water issues and its support for projects that aim at stimulating SMEs, with a special focus on female entrepreneurs.

Water management. Water represents an increasingly important strategic commodity and potential source of conflict in Central Asia. Efforts in joint water management are thus of crucial importance to the stability of the region. In 2004, the Centre in Almaty continued to assist an interstate working group whose task it is to establish a joint Kazakhstani-Kyrgyzstani water commission. This commission, which will deal with the joint management of the Chu and Talas rivers flowing from Kyrgyzstan to Kazakhstan, is expected to begin its work in January 2005.

Information campaign on the Land

Code. Bringing a combined approach to rule of law issues and the support of small enterprises, the Centre facilitated a broad information campaign in all regions on key provisions of the new Land Code adopted in 2003. The initiative included a series of information meetings, which were attended by several thousand farmers who came to learn how to acquire land in accordance with the Land Code.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

Kazakhstan is suffering from environmental damage, which in many areas reduces the quality of life in the country's regions and represents a danger to individuals. Preventing oil spills in the Caspian Sea near Atyrau, Kazakhstan's oil industry centre, is a particular challenge for policy-makers. In this context, one of the Centre's key activities continued to be the further promotion of the Aarhus Convention in close co-operation with both the Government and civil society.

Public hearing on oil spills. In order to increase public participation and engage NGOs in the decision-making process on environmental issues, the Centre held a public hearing in Atyrau on the clearing up of oil spills in the Caspian Sea. As a result, the participants forwarded several policy recommendations to the relevant environmental authorities, addressing the deteriorating state of the environment in and near the Caspian Sea.

Information campaign on radiological safety. In August, the Centre and the Almaty-based NGO, *National Forum for Radiation Protection and Ecology*, launched an information campaign on basic radiological safety and personal conduct in contaminated areas near the former Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. The campaign included lectures and the distribution of videos,

posters, and brochures to the inhabitants of 28 remote villages.

"Nuclear scientists and researchers in large numbers – yes, they have all been here, but this is the first campaign directed at those of us who live in remote areas. This goes to the core issue: how to behave rationally and how to live next to contaminated areas."

Sarzhai villager at a lecture on radiological safety rules

Environmental education for secondary schools. The Centre sponsored a year-long programme to promote environmental education in Kazakhstani secondary schools. This included a study of the country's present environmental legislation, which was presented in November at a conference in Almaty attended by 47 secondary school teachers from all the five Central Asian States.

Human Dimension Activities

Combating trafficking in human beings. Kazakhstan adopted an action plan on the combat and prevention of trafficking in human beings in February and ratified several key conventions to improve national legislation and raise public awareness on trafficking. The Centre is a member of

the Inter-Departmental Commission on Anti-trafficking chaired by the Minister of Justice. The Commission provides expertise on the development of Kazakhstan's anti-trafficking legislation.

A series of training seminars organized by the Centre in Shymkent and Petropavlovsk provided civil servants and journalists with basic training on the fight against human trafficking, drawing on action plans put together by regional authorities earlier in the year.

Strengthening the rule of law. In close co-operation with the ODIHR, the Centre held a number of events to help improve the professionalism among law officials and institutions in Kazakhstan. Through workshops and training seminars, it promoted discussions on how to ensure fair trials through forensic expertise and on the introduction of jury trials.

Human rights training for law enforcement officials. To help police officials better fulfil their tasks taking into account international human rights standards and practices, the Centre conducted a pilot training course for officers and teaching personnel. It is planned that the participants will become training focal points in their respective police stations.

Reforming the penitentiary system. Following an OSCE roundtable on the public monitoring of penitentiary institutions held in September 2003, a working group was formed to develop legislation regulat-

Strengthening democratic election processes

In September, Kazakhstan held elections to the *Majilis* (lower house of Parliament). Working closely with the country's Central Electoral Commission, political parties and civil society representatives, the Centre focused its attention on promoting OSCE standards as part of the process to amend Kazakhstan's election law. In the regions, the Centre helped open five advisory centres that provide voters with practical assistance, legal advice and information on the elections and the political candidates.



An election official shows voters in Astana how to use the electronic voting system.

Awareness-raising for the elections

Civil society and youth activities used to be rare in southern Kazakhstan. In recent years, the Centre co-operated with *Elections 2000*, an NGO from the Zhambyl region, to address this issue. From 2003 to 2004, the Centre supported training courses to promote electoral education and civic awareness among young voters. The initiative envisaged a long-term impact and was implemented with success. While only 40 students participated in local election observation in 1999 in this region, a total of 300 went to observe polls during the 2004 parliamentary elections.

ing this issue. It includes government representatives, local NGOs, the Centre and the ODIHR. The initiative is part of the Centre's increasing focus on improved protection of the constitutional rights of prisoners sentenced to death, life or long-term imprisonment and follows up on Kazakhstan's decision in 2003 to introduce a moratorium on the death penalty.

The Centre also addressed the issue of alternative prison sentencing in the country, which itself represents a major contribution towards humanizing the prison system and has led to a significant drop in the prison population. To obtain first-hand impressions on the state of the implementation of penitentiary reform, the Centre undertook several visits to penitentiary institutions.

Raising gender awareness. To raise the public's awareness of gender issues, the Centre held several seminars for journalists on the rights of women. The training sessions were followed by an essay

competition among participants on the participation of women in the decision-making process. Together with NGOs and the Government, the Centre also developed a strategy for increasing women's participation in politics.

Head of Centre:
Ambassador Ivar Vikki
Revised budget: €1,497,000
www.osce.org/almaty

OSCE Centre in Ashgabad

2004 saw a number of high-profile visits by OSCE representatives to Turkmenistan, including the Chairman-in-Office, his Personal Envoy for Central Asia, Martti Ahtisaari, and his Special Envoy to Turkmenistan, Younal Loutfi. In addition, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and a group of OSCE ambassadors travelled to the country. The Centre in Ashgabad considers that these visits contributed significantly to “melting the ice” between the host country and the Organization.

Some positive steps on the part of the Turkmen government were taken in 2004. Turkmenistan revoked its exit visa regime, which had been re-introduced following the assassination attempt on the President in 2002. The country also eased the registration of religious groups, continued with its legislative reform process, and rescinded criminal liability for involvement with non-registered civic organizations.

Promoting the rule of law, democratic and market reforms, basic human rights and freedoms, however, continue to remain challenging tasks. Further involvement of Turkmenistan in the OSCE’s activities would be appreciated.

The Centre’s priorities in 2004 remained focused on its conflict prevention role, promoting stability, democracy, good govern-

ance, socio-economic development, environmental awareness and human rights in the country. In co-operation with Turkmenistan’s authorities, the Centre intensified its efforts to strengthen the dialogue and implement its programmatic activities, while closely following developments in the country.

Co-operation with the international donor community expanded considerably. The Centre participated in joint projects in all three dimensions with the European Union’s TACIS programme, which provides technical assistance to countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Other joint initiatives were implemented together with the UNDP, the IOM, USAID, and the UNHCR. More joint projects are planned for 2005.

Defining the OSCE’s role in the region

Since 2001, the Centre in Ashgabad has been holding seminars on the role of the OSCE in the region. These events, which run under the title “What is the OSCE?”, are held throughout the country and contribute to a better understanding of the Organization’s mandate and its underlying principles, structures, and institutions. Particular attention is being given to the Centre’s activities and projects.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Training border and customs officials.

As a means to share international experience and practice with Turkmenistan’s border and customs officials, the Centre organized a series of two-day training seminars in 2004. These events focused on the fight against trafficking in drugs, small arms and light weapons and human beings. They also touched upon the legal framework for border and customs control and co-operation with other ministries and agencies at home and abroad as well as on specific problems concerning procedures at border and customs posts.

In co-operation with the country’s State Customs Service and the EU TACIS programme, the Centre held three-month training sessions for customs officials to improve their English language skills and knowledge of computers. This helps them improve their communication skills with foreign visitors and maintain a computerized database.

Combating terrorism. In July, a two-day seminar organized by the Centre focused on the global fight against terrorism. The meeting, which was held in co-operation with the Foreign Ministry and the Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU), looked at the political, economic and social aspects of terrorism and the relevant UN and OSCE principles, documents and bodies that deal with the fight against terrorism. The presentations emphasized regional and international co-operation.

Controlling the flow of small arms and light weapons. To familiarize law enforcement officials and military representatives

from the region with the ‘OSCE Handbook of Best Practices on Small Arms and Light Weapons’ and its recommendations, the Centre organized a workshop in Ashgabad. The event, which was prepared with the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) and Turkmenistan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, brought together participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Media development

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day on 3 May, the Centre participated in an Internet chat with members of the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX). A total of 11 journalists and alumni from the IREX Internet Access and Training Programme (IATP) gathered at IATP access sites in three cities in Turkmenistan and discussed issues related to freedom of the press. The interest in the chat and the questions from the participants encouraged the Centre to look at follow-up activities in coming years.



Head of Centre Ambassador Badescu (right) hands over a certificate to a participant at an OSCE small arms workshop.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

As in previous years, the Centre's main activity in this dimension was in the field of developing SMEs and raising public awareness of environmental issues.



A farmer in Turkmenistan's Ahal region signs for a micro-credit provided as part of an OSCE project.

Supporting economic development.

Turkmenistan's economy continued to grow at the macro level in 2004. To further stimulate job creation and promote the development of private entrepreneurship, the Centre supported several training courses for small business representatives organized by Turkmenistan's Union of Entrepreneurs. The courses included seminars for businesswomen to help them improve their practical business skills and a programme specifically catering for young entrepreneurs. The Centre envisages further co-operation with the Union, but considers that it needs to undergo a reform process before new initiatives can be envisaged. An external consultant was engaged to provide a thorough review and analysis of the Union's work as well as recommendations on how to reform and improve it.

As part of a cost-sharing initiative with the EU TACIS programme, the Centre supported a small micro-credit fund for

four pilot Voluntary Farmers' Associations. The selected farmers were trained in basic business skills, including business planning and loan management. The Centre also provided office equipment and supplies to the four associations. The project was warmly welcomed and appreciated by the farmers, who would otherwise not have had any access to credit facilities.

Raising public awareness of environmental concerns. To make Turkmenistan's public, and in particular its pupils and students, more aware of environmental issues, the Centre supported a project undertaken by the country's Ministry of Nature Protection, which included the drafting and publishing of textbooks and guide books for teachers on the implementation of the National Environmental Action Plan. The Ministry's centre dealing with the implementation of this Action Plan received training material, and a training seminar was arranged for the Action Plan's national co-ordinator. The Centre also funded the design, publication and distribution of desk and wall calendars advocating environmental values, which were distributed to civil servants and politicians throughout the country. In addition, the Centre supported the production of a series of TV spots on the issue.

Human Dimension Activities

Supporting legislative reform. The Centre continued to offer OSCE legal expertise and advice on best practices for the country's legislative reform. In co-operation with the National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, it prepared a collection of Turkmen legislative acts on human rights subjects, which it planned to publish in Turkmen, English and Russian.

Democratization and civil society

activity. To help develop a new strategy on further civil society participation in the country's public life, the Centre organized meetings with representatives of the international donor community and the emerging civil society. It also provided local NGOs with advice on how to deal with the country's new legislation on public organizations.

Dealing with human rights cases. The Centre continued to receive a significant number of individual complaints, particularly on the demolition of houses due to the construction of new buildings. A number of cases were brought to the attention of Turkmenistan's authorities. The Centre also gave legal advice in cases related to the rights of other vulnerable people.

In February, the Centre hosted a launching ceremony of the Russian translation of the report 'Human Security Now', the English original of which was published by the New York-based Commission on Human Security.

Gender issues. Women's rights and gender issues at large remained high on the Centre's agenda. As part of its activities in this field, the Centre helped Turkmen citizens to participate in conferences that focused on gender issues and provided legal expertise on the topic.

Promoting capacity-building in Turkmenistan

To support the work of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, the Centre in Ashgabad contributed to the Academy's master programme with presentations on its activities in Turkmenistan. It also facilitated the participation of Turkmen officials and citizens in a number of important OSCE events and supported the Central Asian Youth Network (CAYN). (For more on this, see sections on the OSCE Centres in Bishkek and in Tashkent.)

Head of Centre:
vacant (until July 2004):
Ambassador Paraschiva Badescu;
as of 10 January 2005:
Ambassador Ibrahim Đikić)
Revised budget: €979,500
www.osce.org/ashgabad

OSCE Centre in Bishkek

Bringing about positive change to people's daily lives by protecting individual rights, facilitating access to justice and supporting democratic transformation processes remained the overarching goal of the Centre in 2004. To improve its efficiency, the Centre further harmonized its activities with the policies and programmes of the Kyrgyz Government, the country's civil society organizations, and the UN offices present in Kyrgyzstan. Striking a balance between the interests of the Government and civil society continued to be a challenging task.

Priorities in 2004 included supporting election processes, addressing the issues of rule of law and good governance and fostering media development. High on the Centre's agenda were also the fight against corruption, reform of the police structures, and activities in the economic and environmental dimension. In addition, the Centre continued to implement three important extra-budgetary

projects: the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, the Police Assistance Programme and the Election Support Programme.

The OSCE field office in Osh

Located in the south of Kyrgyzstan, the OSCE Centre's field office in Osh engages mainly in activities falling under its conflict prevention mandate. In 2004, it advocated the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, with a particular emphasis on addressing torture and mistreatment in detention as well as trafficking in human beings. There was also a focus on border management and on the monitoring of inter-ethnic relations and the situation of uranium waste sites in the region. In the period prior to the local elections on 10 October, the office co-operated closely with local election commissions and political parties and hosted a number of election co-ordination meetings.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

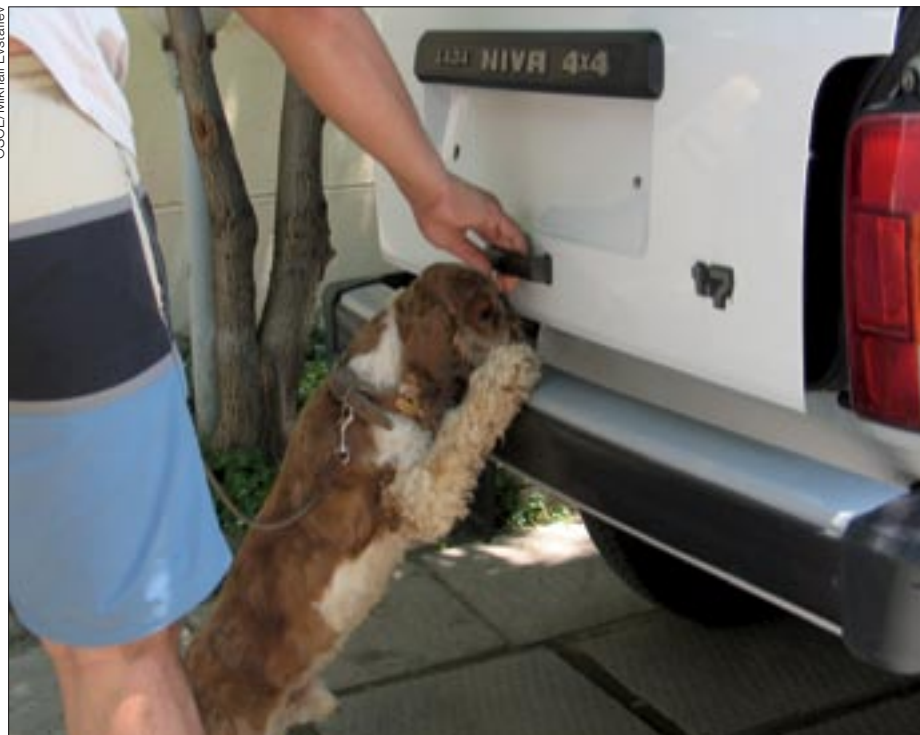
Reforming Kyrgyzstan's police forces.

In its first, 18-month-long phase, the OSCE's Police Assistance Programme in Kyrgyzstan focused mainly on improving professionalism and operational capacity among Kyrgyzstan's police forces. With the support of the OSCE Secretariat's Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU), the Centre began preparations for a second phase, covering issues such as

legislation, professionalism, management, organization, human rights, community policing and training. It is expected that the programme will serve as a basis for the comprehensive reform of the Kyrgyz police over the next years.

Border management activities. In cooperation with provincial authorities, the field office in Osh closely monitored the border situation and the on-going border demarcation process between Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, including the

de-mining process in the region. A pilot project initiated together with the French NGO, *Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement* (ACTED), began identifying and addressing cross-border issues between Jalal-Abad province in Kyrgyzstan and Andijon province in neighbouring Uzbekistan. In order to strengthen the dialogue across borders, the field office sought to work border management components into various other project initiatives.



Sniffer dog 'Boy' helps fight against drug trafficking

Kyrgyzstan's new mobile police groups, created under the OSCE Police Assistance Programme, were joined by new team members: sniffer dogs such as 'Boy' are specially trained to assist the police to find heroin and other illegal substances. In April, a sniffer dog helped find 44 kilograms of heroin in a passenger train near Osh in southern Kyrgyzstan. The heroin was being transported to Bishkek and was destined to reach the Russian Federation via Kazakhstan. This was the second heroin seizure made with the help of dogs trained under the Assistance Programme.

Strengthening media development

Both on a national and regional level, the Centre continued its efforts to support the development of Kyrgyzstan's media. It worked towards involving civil society more broadly in this field by encouraging citizens to participate in projects that promote democracy and good electoral practices on radio and TV. The Centre also set up a media project, which includes observation of coverage of election-related issues in the Kyrgyz media. Other initiatives in the field of media development included providing rural media representatives with information on how to establish a radio company and giving support to the Osh TV company, an independent outlet in southern Kyrgyzstan. A series of training seminars for journalists in all regions helped raise awareness of Kyrgyz media legislation and the rights of journalists.

for small businesses. The findings were thoroughly analysed and resulted in a set of recommendations to improve the legal framework, which was presented to the Kyrgyz Government, local business community representatives and international donor agencies. In particular, there were specific recommendations to improve enforcement of certain business licensing regulations, which will help spur robust growth of SMEs. It is also expected that the Kyrgyz Government will take these survey findings into account when formulating and implementing an action plan to attract foreign direct investment.

Promoting female entrepreneurship was another important part of the Centre's work in the economic dimension. In cooperation with local NGOs, the Centre hosted a series of nation-wide seminars that looked at how to create more jobs for women in the country's rural areas.

Legal reforms in the economic field. To create a safe environment for economic development, the Centre supported project activities to speed up legal reforms in the field of good governance and the fight against corruption. In cooperation with the UNDP and USAID, the Centre provided the Kyrgyz Government with international experts to assist it in identifying key directions for developing an efficient anti-corruption strategy and an action plan.

Together with the Secretariat of the Consultative Council on Good Governance, the Centre held a workshop on national and international legal instruments and best practices to raise public awareness on the technical and legislative requirements for the ratification of the UN Convention against Corruption.

Strengthening environmental security: Managing the Mailuu-Suu nuclear waste dumps. Co-operating closely with the World Bank, the Centre supported project activities to handle the environmental threat created by the unsecured radioactive waste site in Mailuu-Suu. This included helping arrange a visit by experts from the International Atomic Energy

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Developing small business. The Centre implemented several projects aimed at stimulating the growth of SMEs in Kyrgyzstan, which are a crucial factor for the country's socio-economic progress. Together with a national partner, *PROMA Agency*, the Centre surveyed local companies about the operational environment



A stall at Bishkek's central food market



A resident of Mailuu-Suu speaks up during an OSCE awareness-raising event.

Agency (IAEA), who collected firsthand information on the risk for the local population. Another of the Centre's projects in this field targeted residents of the area, who were made aware of the hazards resulting from exposure to radiation, as well as local environmental NGOs who took part in an advocacy-training workshop.

Promoting protection of the environment. To further advance national and regional strategies for sustainable environmental protection, the Centre organized a series of seminars that sought to improve the understanding of both authorities and civil society of the Aarhus Convention provisions. In October, an Aarhus Information Centre was opened in Osh to increase public awareness of the Convention and to facilitate access to environmental information for local citizens.

Human Dimension Activities

Fostering political awareness among the young. To encourage young persons to be politically more conscious and active, the Centre supported several activities, such as a national forum where pupils and students could debate election-related topics. Together with partners from several governmental offices and national and international NGOs, the Centre supported the publication of civic education textbooks and teachers' manuals in Kyrgyz, Russian and Uzbek, which helped raise awareness for political processes among the young.

Promoting human rights. Addressing the issue of human rights in the mental health sector, the Centre organized two intensive training seminars on basic human rights for 60 professionals working in psychiatric facilities throughout Kyrgyzstan. Young NGO activists were the focus group of another of the Centre's initiatives, which supported regional summer and winter

schools on human rights monitoring and reporting. In the southern part of the country, the Centre, together with local NGOs, organized events on advocacy and human rights awareness, such as a human rights festival in Osh.

Strengthening the rule of law. As part of the OSCE's efforts to assist Kyrgyzstan with the reform of its criminal executive system, the Centre and the ODIHR held a number of conferences and regional training seminars. These events focused on topics such as the reform of the criminal legislation, the decriminalization of certain offences, public monitoring of the penitentiary system and the introduction of alternative means of punishment in order to reduce the number of prisoners. The field office in Osh also organized workshops and training seminars for NGOs and members of law enforcement agencies on monitoring techniques for detention facilities and on how to lobby local judicial and police authorities to grant NGOs access to detention facilities.

Supporting democratic election processes

The Centre supported the Kyrgyz Government in its preparation for the 10 October local elections and the parliamentary vote due on 27 February 2005. It focused on assisting the country's Central Election Commission (CEC) and supporting and monitoring the work of civil society organizations and the media. Together with the UNDP, which was in charge of the election support programme, the Centre initiated a mechanism by which all election-related support activities are systematically co-ordinated. Special emphasis was put on voter education, legal advice, logistic support to the CEC, codes on electoral ethics, and the training of election commissions, judges and attorneys. Promoting the participation of women and young people was given high priority.



OSCE Academy in Bishkek

The OSCE Academy in Bishkek

Founded in December 2002, the OSCE Academy in Bishkek is a study and research institute that provides training programmes for experts and scientific research on regional security issues with a focus on Central Asia. Following the graduation of 25 students who participated in a six-month long pilot master course, the Academy began a one-year master programme in political science in September. In total, 30 students from all five OSCE Central Asian participating States as well as several other countries enrolled in the programme.

www.osce-academy.net

Head of Centre:

Ambassador Markus Mueller

Revised Annual Budget: €1,831,300

www.osce.org/bishkek

OSCE Centre in Dushanbe

One of the top priorities of the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe in 2004 was its de-mining programme. Under the Mine Action Programme, created in 2003 in response to a request by the Tajik Government, a total of 6.2 hectares of land have been cleared in central, southern and eastern Tajikistan. A major achievement was the hand-over of the first plot of cleared land to a local community near the country's border with Afghanistan, representing a significant improvement in the lives of more than 30,000 people.

The Centre also expanded its activities in the economic dimension, with the priority on assisting the Tajik Government in its land

reform programme. Other important initiatives were aimed at economic development, fostering of political dialogue and security, media development, human rights and democratization issues, and gender awareness and environmental protection.

The parliamentary elections scheduled for February 2005 provided the background for many of the Centre's activities in the politico-military and human dimensions. These included projects to modernize Tajikistan's electoral legislation, public debates between government officials and civil society representatives, and training seminars on election reporting for journalists.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Contributing to the fight against terrorism. As part of its anti-terrorism activities, the Centre supported the participation of three Tajik officials from the Foreign Affairs and the Interior Ministries in a regional workshop on the financing of terrorism. The workshop was held in Turkey in February by the UNODC as part of its Global Programme against Terrorism, under which it delivers technical and legal assistance

to help counter terrorism. The workshop presented best practices in the field of preventing the financing of terrorism.

Another four mid-management officials from the Tajikistan State Border Protection Committee and the Interior Ministry participated in a two-day workshop on travel documents and border control in Tashkent, as envisaged by the OSCE's Bucharest Plan of Action and Bishkek Programme of Action on preventing and combating terrorism.

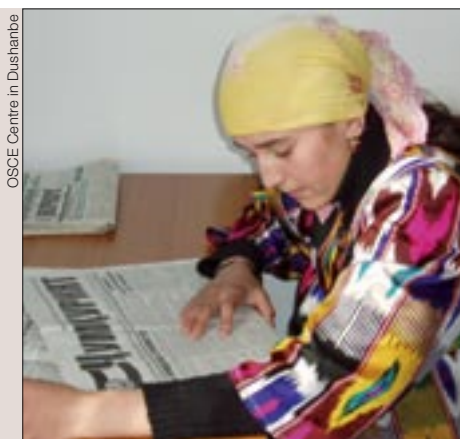
The Centre also continued to assist Tajikistan's Foreign Ministry in preparing the ratification and implementation of the 12 UN conventions and protocols on anti-terrorism, as called for by the 2001 OSCE Ministerial Council. In July, the Centre sent a legal expert from the Foreign Ministry to Vienna for the juridical preparation of the document for ratification.

Fostering political dialogue and democratic processes. To provide a forum for open political discussion, the Centre

Supporting media development and improving access to information

Several of the Centre's initiatives in 2004 were directed towards improving journalists' access to information, particularly in view of the 2005 elections. The Centre funded the establishment of a resource centre in Dushanbe, which provides free access to the Internet and specialized literature, legal support, and computer and language classes. It opened its doors in October and hosts a constantly increasing number of journalists, averaging 130 per month.

Other media initiatives sponsored by the Centre included training seminars for journalists in election reporting and the publication of the OSCE *Biblioteka Zhurnalista* (Journalist's Library), a series of professional books for journalists specialized in investigative reporting, election coverage, journalists' rights and media legislation. In addition, the Centre helped create a number of independent newspapers and magazines in Russian, Tajik, and Uzbek, including



OSCE Centre in Dushanbe

Nafosat, which was set up to support the Uzbek minority's journalists. To give the inhabitants of 57 remote districts in Tajikistan better access to the news, the Centre helped several NGOs install notice boards carrying copies of state and non-state newspapers and government information.

Following the closure of the independent printing house *Jionhon* on 19 August for alleged tax evasion, the Centre took a public position with regard to the

situation of freedom of the media in the country. In a press release, the Head of Centre, Ambassador Yves Bargain, said that "the closure made impossible the publication of several newspapers which used the services of this company, thereby hindering the development of freedom of the media in Tajikistan". He also said that "the repeated and varied difficulties faced by some of [the newspapers] can be seen as a worrying backward step in the field of freedom of the media in Tajikistan".

In September, the Centre assisted the Representative on Freedom of the Media to organize the Sixth Central Asia Media Conference in Dushanbe. It attracted more than 130 journalists from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and concluded with the adoption of a declaration on the decriminalization of libel. (For more on this conference, see the section on the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.)

supported the Social Partnership Club, a body that brings together representatives from government, political parties and civil society. The Centre also facilitated a series of seminars on law and religion to encourage dialogue between religious leaders and local authorities and helped produce two guidebooks in Tajik, Russian and English on the work and role of political parties, institutions, and civil society.

Harvesting the first results of the Centre's de-mining efforts

In September, the OSCE-initiated Mine Action Programme handed over the first plot of land cleared of landmines and unexploded ordnance. The cleared land was turned over to the local community of Dusti-Kumsangir district near the Tajik border with Afghanistan, allowing for the rehabilitation of the Kumsangir water pipeline. This will provide more than 30,000 inhabitants with clean water and help boost the local economy, for example through the renewed cultivation of cotton fields.

The beginning of Phase II of the Centre's Mine Action Programme was marked by a dramatic budget increase, which rose from €500,000 in 2003 to more than €1.9 million. Of this sum, a total of €560,000 was allocated by the OSCE for both years, and the remainder by other donors. The implementation partner, the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action, trained a total of 85 operational personnel in surveying, marking and demining land in central, southern and eastern Tajikistan. Apart from the Centre in Dushanbe, the governments of Canada, Japan, Norway, Sweden and Belgium gave financial support to the programme.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

Supporting Tajikistan's land reform.

The Centre's most ambitious economic project in 2004 was its programme to assist the Tajik Government in its land reform process. Since 1996, Tajikistan has reorganized most large state and collective farms, covering altogether about 433,900 hectares, converting them into some 20,750 cooperatives known as *dehkan*

farms. These farms cover 61 per cent of all the arable land in Tajikistan. A total of 62 state and collective farms are scheduled for reorganization in 2005.

The goal of the Centre is to improve the transparency in Tajikistan's land reform efforts. The Centre is an active participant in two working groups on land reform and organizes training seminars for farmers on their rights and obligations in the reorganization process. To study the reform programme from a human rights perspective, it commissioned an analytical study on the issue, which is expected to result in recommendations to the Government on how to prevent violations of farmers' legal rights to obtain and cultivate land.

The Centre also initiated two pilot projects in five districts in central and southern Tajikistan – Fayzobod, Rudaki, Vakhsh, Bokhtar, and Dangara – where information material in Tajik was distributed to the local population. It is hoped that such efforts will bring about fairness and transparency in the reorganization process.

Improving public participation in environmental matters.

Implementing the provisions of the Aarhus Convention continued to be an important goal of the Centre's activities in the environmental field. Projects in this area included providing international legal expertise to the local authorities, initiating campaigns to raise public awareness on the issue, and promoting public participation in the decision-making process both on national and district level. Through the Dushanbe Aarhus Information Resource Centre, journalists were able to gain easier access to information on environmental issues. Together with the Tajik State Committee on Environment and Forestry, the Centre also organized two regional workshops on the implementation of the Aarhus Convention, attended by more than 100 participants.

Addressing the danger of radioactive waste.

Radioactive pollution is affecting some 10 million people living in the basin of the Syr-Darya River, an area in northern Tajikistan with a dramatically higher cancer rate than the national average. In November, the Centre in Dushanbe organized the first international conference that openly

addressed the problem of radioactive waste and its effects on the health of the population in this region. The Centre also gave financial support to a project that included the drafting of a map of highly radioactive sites in northern Tajikistan, the installation of warning signs and several awareness-raising campaigns.



OSCE Centre in Dushanbe

Promoting economic development in rural areas

Farmers in the remote mountain village of Nurabod in central Tajikistan were full of praise for a project initiated by the Centre in Dushanbe, which taught them how to market their produce more effectively, gave them technical advice on how to improve the health of their livestock and orchards and showed them better techniques for drying fruit and preserving vegetables.

"We had to walk for two hours through difficult terrain to reach the school where the course was held, but we were glad we did it, because it was the first time such an opportunity was offered to us," said one of the 120 farmers who profited from the programme.

In addition, the Centre actively promoted the OSCE-UN Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), which evaluates environmental problems to help prevent their turning into security threats. In Tajikistan, the initiative focused on the monitoring of radioactive dumps and other sources of radioactive wastes.

Human Dimension Activities

Promoting human rights. To further raise awareness and respect for human rights, the Centre sponsored the publication of a Tajik Human Rights Dictionary and a booklet covering human rights in pre-trial

detention and dealing with the prevention of and remedies for ill-treatment and torture. The publications were distributed to a wide range of NGOs, academic circles, and government offices. The Centre also opened a legal consultation centre in the southern Tajik town of Shaartuz to provide public information on human rights and support advocacy activities in this remote area of the country.

Helping reform the prison system. In support of Tajikistan's efforts to reform its prison management, the Centre conducted a variety of activities focusing on alternative sentencing and co-operation between civil society and prison administration. An important achievement of these efforts was an agreement between prison administration and Tajik NGOs to draft a standard co-operation agreement on the rights and obligations of all parties.

Supporting legal and judicial reform. In April, Tajikistan's Parliament enforced amendments to the Criminal Code and a moratorium on the death penalty was signed by the Tajik President in July. The Centre welcomed this move and focused its activities on reinforcing the role of lawyers and the independence of the judiciary in the country. Together with the Tajik National Bar Association and the Association of Judges, the Centre organized two conferences on these topics, attracting more than 200 participants from throughout Tajikistan. In addition, the Centre held several training seminars on human rights in pre-trial detention centres and during investigative processes, which were attended by a total of 250 officials from the General Prosecutor's Office and the Interior Ministry.

Assistance for labour migrants. Every year, some 350,000 Tajik nationals migrate in search of seasonal work to support their families. As most have very little knowledge of their rights and obligations, the Centre and the IOM set up a resource centre in Dushanbe to help labour migrants obtain the information they need to make informed decisions. In the southern Tajik town of Vakhsh, an information point was opened as a pilot project for rural areas. The resource centre provided direct advice to more than 5,000 people, organized five

training seminars for government officials and civil society representatives throughout the country, and published a total of 170,000 information brochures. In addition, it successfully lobbied for the introduction of labour migration lectures in secondary school curricula.

Training journalists on anti-trafficking issues. Trafficking in human beings is a growing problem for Tajikistan. In particular women, desperate to find work abroad, become victims of criminal groups, who forcibly bring their victims to work in countries in the Middle East, Asia or Europe. To improve the media coverage of human trafficking issues, the Centre organized training seminars on sexual exploitation and forced migration for journalists from different regions of Tajikistan. It is hoped that the initiative will improve professionalism among journalists and motivate them to cover and investigate trafficking cases.

Striving towards gender equality. The Centre continued its lobbying efforts for the adoption of a Law on Equal Opportunities and helped improve the text of the Bill. Its adoption represents a major step towards fulfilling Tajikistan's international commitments and implementing the 2001 to 2010 State Programme on Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women in Tajikistan.

Capacity-building through local resource centres for women. An important initiative in the field of capacity-building was the establishment of six resource centres for women throughout the country through financial support given by the OSCE Centre. The resource centres organized seminars on human rights and gender issues and small businesses run by women. They also provided women with free legal, medical and psychological consultations.

A series of 30 seminars on women's rights in Islam, which were held by the Centre's field office in Khujand, proved to be highly popular. Discrimination against girls and women under the pretence of Islamic values resurfaced in Tajikistan after the collapse of the Soviet Union. By analysing and interpreting the *Sharia* (Islamic law) and comparing it to provisions of the secular

Supporting the election process

In preparation for the parliamentary elections scheduled for February 2005, the Centre focused its attention on modernizing the electoral legal framework, in compliance with OSCE principles and commitments.

On the basis of recommendations made in 2000, the Centre and the ODIHR helped the Tajik Government organize a conference on election matters in April 2003, which resulted in the drafting of two alternative laws on parliamentary elections. The final text of the law on election was approved by Parliament and signed by the President in July 2004.

The Centre funded a number of publications carrying analytical data on the parliamentary elections and information on the state institutions, political parties and other election-related issues. To encourage the electorate to go to the polls, a number of TV and radio advertisement were sponsored. The Centre also supported countrywide activities to promote the participation of women in the political decision-making process and trained potential female candidates on electoral campaigning and political work.

legislation, the seminars offered hundreds of women and men a balanced perspective on the rights of women in Tajikistan and showed them the difference between customs based on tradition and those that are part of religious law. As the project launched a fruitful debate on this issue all over northern Tajikistan, the Centre decided to expand the project to the south of the country.

Head of Centre:
until October 2004:
Ambassador Yves Bargain
as of February 2005:
Ambassador Alain Couanon
Revised budget: €3,829,200
www.osce.org/tajikistan

OSCE Centre in Tashkent

In 2004, the Centre's priorities included the fight against terrorism and the promotion of border security, strengthening the development of civil society, the rule of law and human rights, fighting human trafficking and supporting education, establishing a framework for restructuring the Uzbek economy towards a market-oriented system, and raising public awareness of environmental issues.

Politico-Military Dimension Activities

Security issues in the politico-military field remained a priority for the OSCE and Uzbekistan. In 2004, security concerns raised by the Uzbek authorities, including the fight against terrorism, combating arms trafficking and strengthening border security, became key issues of the Centre's politico-military dimension activities.

Preventing and combating terrorism. The Centre developed a long-term programme to assist Uzbekistan in preventing and combating terrorism. Together with the OSCE Secretariat's Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU), it conducted a regional workshop on travel document security that focused on effective measures to prevent terrorists from passing undetected through border controls.

Central Asian Youth Network

In order to increase tolerance and understanding among young people in Central Asia, the Centre in Tashkent, together with the other OSCE Centres in the region, established the Central Asian Youth Network (CAYN). Students affiliated with the Network can study OSCE principles and commitments, write research papers about the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and participate in discussion groups on the CAYN webpage (www.cayn.net). Papers produced by the different groups were presented and discussed at a conference, and best papers received awards. The project will continue in 2005.

Promoting border security. The Centre organized several training sessions for Uzbek customs officials and border guards in Uzbekistan and Austria. This was part of a border management capacity-building programme that followed up on a previous initiative in Termez-Hayraton in 2002 and 2003. The main goal was to improve the professional competence of mid-level border guards and customs officials in seizing illegal small arms and light weapons and in identifying falsified travel and customs documents.

Vienna Document. Following the acknowledgement by the Uzbek Ministry of Defence in late 2003 that the country needed to meet its obligations under the Vienna Document, the OSCE Centre was asked to help strengthen Uzbekistan's Arms Control Department. Its assistance included sending Uzbek officers to military training sessions at the German Arms Control Centre in Geilenkirchen, Germany, as well as on an inspection visit to Austria.

Media development

The Centre provided legal expertise on media-related legislation to advocate and promote Uzbekistan's full compliance with OSCE principles and commitments on freedom of expression and of media. The Centre organized meetings and seminars to further public debate on these issues between the government and journalists. It also maintained a Tashkent-based Internet café that provides journalists with free access to the Internet and other information resources and supported a legal clinic for journalists, which offers media professionals free legal consultations and representation in court.

Economic and Environmental Dimension Activities

In 2004, the Centre significantly increased its activities in the economic and environmental dimension in Uzbekistan, addressing issues such as SME development, migration and ecology.

Migration. To facilitate the development of a legal framework regulating migration-processes within Uzbekistan, the Centre in Tashkent supported a Working Group on Migration Issues. The Working Group conducted research about Uzbekistan's internal migration, identified objectives and priorities of migration policy applicable to Uzbekistan, studied the official migration policies in other CIS countries and analysed main international documents regulating international migration processes. The group elaborated a concept paper on migration and drafted a law on migration.



OSCE/Helmut Gram

Uzbek border guards and customs officials verifying travel documents

Training of arbitrators. In order to promote the development of an economic arbitration system in Uzbekistan, the OSCE Centre and the *Legal Problems Research Centre*, an NGO, trained lawyers and NGO representatives as arbitrators. The aim is to ensure the efficient and timely review of commercial disputes among entrepreneurs, to encourage the development of small businesses and to increase the confidence of foreign investors in Uzbekistan's legal system.

TV shows for business people

Under the title 'Entrepreneurs and the Law', a new series of TV shows provided up-to-date information about the country's business legislation and the rights of entrepreneurs. The shows were launched by the OSCE Centre and Uzbekistan's Supreme Economic Court.

Encouraging development of small business. The Centre continued its work to assist the development of sustainable SMEs. It conducted a series of training seminars and established an SME Information Centre to promote entrepreneurial skills among young people and in particular women. Together with the Uzbek Chamber of Trade and Industry, the Centre produced a handbook on Modern Trends of Business Development in Uzbekistan to give business people easier access to information on SME legislation.

Raising environmental awareness.

As part of its work to strengthen public participation in environmental decision-making in Uzbekistan, the Centre and the UNDP helped set up an Environmental Information Centre in the premises of the State Committee for Nature Protection. Reaching out to Uzbekistan's regions, the Centre conducted meetings in *Mahallas* (local neighbourhoods) all over the country to raise environmental awareness and improve legal education and social development among the local population.

Teaching schoolchildren about water protection. A new initiative by the OSCE Centre and the Interstate Co-ordination Water Commission for Central Asia focused on how to protect Uzbekistan's scarcest resource: water. The Centre drafted

a curriculum for secondary schools and held workshops on water management issues.

An integrated approach towards environmental protection. Through the environmental NGO, *Armon*, the Centre conducted seminars on environmental issues, identified potential local leaders for grassroots environmental initiatives, created a database of environmental information, conducted media campaigns to increase public participation in environmental protection and provided free legal consultations.

Human Dimension Activities

The Centre worked closely with state agencies and NGOs to promote the country's human dimension commitments. It supported the parliamentary reform process, which culminated in December 2004 in the election of a bi-cameral parliament. The Centre also contributed substantially to media development in Uzbekistan and addressed key issues such as access to information.

Prison reform. Following recommendations made by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture on the country's prison system, the Uzbek authorities authorized NGOs to monitor places of detention. With the OSCE's support, prison staff was trained in international prison standards and the prison administration established a training centre.

Promoting education. Education being a key priority for the 2004 Bulgarian OSCE Chairmanship, the Centre trained representatives of government agencies, educational institutions and NGOs on international human rights standards and protection mechanisms as well as on

Elections

In preparation for the 26 December 2004 parliamentary elections, the Centre trained registered political parties in election campaign techniques, educated domestic long-term election observers and introduced journalists to media coverage techniques. It also ran a training programme for young voters to increase their legal knowledge about elections.



Participants at an OSCE women empowerment workshop in Uzbekistan

monitoring women's rights. Special attention was given to educating national human rights trainers. The Centre and Uzbekistan's law faculties also developed a programme to support legal education at law schools.

Empowering women. In line with the OSCE's new Gender Action Plan, the Centre developed a gender programme aimed at increasing women's participation in public and political life. A series of leadership training courses informed women about their rights and improved their communication and advocacy skills.

Preventing and combating trafficking in human beings

In line with the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, the Centre launched a comprehensive anti-trafficking programme. To raise awareness, it trained law enforcement officials, NGOs and journalists and supported the establishment of an inter-agency working group to prevent and combat trafficking.

Head of Centre:
until May 2004:
Ambassador Ahmet Erozan
as of 1 February 2005:
Ambassador Miroslav Jenca
Revised budget: €1,543,100
www.osce.org/tashkent

OSCE Representative to the Estonian Expert Commission on Military Pensioners

The main task of the OSCE Representative is to participate in the work of the Estonian Expert Commission on Military Pensioners, which makes recommendations to the Government on the issuance of residence permits to former military personnel in Estonia.

Activities and developments

Review of applications for temporary residence permits. The Commission was successful in further reducing the number of short-term residence permits (from one to three years) to about 300. The number of longer-term (from four to five years) residence permits reached 9,600. This meant there were now approximately 9,900 holders of valid temporary residence permits. Since the Commission took up its work in 1994, a total of 285 requests have been rejected. There was only one refusal in 2004. Many more applicants were granted permits on the basis of humanitarian exception than had previously been refused.

Permanent residence permits. The revised Aliens' Act excludes the issuance of permanent residence permits to military pensioners as of 1 January 2004. On the basis of the previous law, which permitted the granting of permanent residence permits, several hundred pensioners had applied, 193 of whom have so far been

refused. Fifteen of them went to court, and their cases were pending. An additional 196 requests have not yet been decided upon.

All of the military pensioners who asked for a permanent residence permit and were refused were given five-year permits. Permanent residence permits were granted to 531 people on contractual lists, who no longer figured as dependents. A total of 1,339 persons were transferred to civilian status.

Problem cases. The Commission continued to try to solve a number of complex cases of residence claims. In most cases, these concerned military pensioners not on contractual lists, with foreign passports and Estonian spouses, and who received US resettlement vouchers and had not left Estonia as they had pledged to do. Out of 1,817 former US voucher recipients, the great majority had left the country. There were 212 people remaining with a valid residence permit.

In total, 23 participants of US voucher programmes were refused residence, while a further 18 were given notice to leave the country. These decisions were appealed to court by 12 people, whose cases were pending. Resolving this issue is time consuming and will only be done on a case-by-case basis.

OSCE Representative: Uwe Mahrenholtz | Revised budget: €123,300

OSCE Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint Commission on Military Pensioners

As in previous years, the OSCE Representative provided assistance in the implementation of the 1994 Agreement between the Latvian and the Russian Governments on social guarantees for military pensioners of the Russian Federation and their families residing in Latvia.

In accordance with Article 2 of this Agreement, the OSCE Representative's tasks are:

- to consider, together with the Latvian and Russian parties, appeals on matters involving the rights of military pensioners;
- to participate in the adoption of recommendations and decisions on the basis of consensus; and
- to consider, at the request of either party, questions relating to the application of the Agreement's provisions.

In 2004, a total of 17,876 people were eligible under the Agreement, 562 less than in 2003. At the time of the Agreement in 1994, a total of 22,320 people were eligible.

OSCE Representative: Helmut Napiontek | Revised budget: €12,200

Activities and developments

Focus on the individual. To a large extent, military pensioners' recent appeals related to social questions were resolved by the respective Latvian local administrative bodies in co-operation with the relevant Russian authorities. Long-pending individual cases, which were brought to the attention of the Commission and were mostly related to the status of residence, were solved to the extent possible.

Interpretation of the Agreement's provisions. Differing legal interpretations on some of the Agreement's provisions on housing issues have become increasingly important as this issue affects military pensioners and their families more frequently. Based on a legal examination, the Commission is considering a common approach for further handling problems related to housing issues. Changes in the application procedures for social benefits, such as those adopted by the Riga City Council, may soften potential hardship situations for affected pensioners in the future.

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Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights | OSCE High Commissioner
on National Minorities | OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

Originally established by the Charter of Paris in 1990, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is the principal OSCE institution responsible for the Organization's human dimension activities. Its mandate comprises four main tasks:

- promoting democratic elections, particularly by monitoring election processes;
- providing practical support in consolidating democratic institutions and human rights, while strengthening civil society and the rule of law;
- contributing to early warning and conflict prevention, in particular by monitoring the implementation of human dimension commitments; and
- serving as the OSCE Contact Point for Roma and Sinti issues.

The Office is located in Warsaw, Poland, but the most visible part of the ODIHR's activities takes place in the field: observing elections and running a large number of assistance projects in participating States to address shortcomings in the rule of law and democratic institutions, human rights, and election processes.

The ODIHR has been headed since March 2003 by an Austrian diplomat, Ambassador Christian Strohal, and is staffed by a total of 116 employees.

The year 2004 was a time of reform for the ODIHR. Confronted in 2003 with new tasks and the need for more consistent, long-term engagement and a programme-oriented approach to its work, the Office began a review and consolidation process with the goal of ensuring more continuity and sustainability of results. In 2004, this process was followed by an in-house assessment of all ongoing activities, projects, and programmes, based on the participating States' needs and requirements. The result of these reforms is a comprehensive and long-term programming process to help ensure effective implementation by the participating States of their OSCE commitments in the human dimension.

The reform programme helped the Office strengthen its position in meeting the long-term needs of participating States and in responding to them in an effective and timely manner, while at the same time retaining the flexibility to react to new challenges that threaten security and the individual rights and freedoms of human beings.

Racism, discrimination, and intolerance make up one such challenge that the OSCE recognized as a threat to human security in its region. In response to this new priority, the Office developed a programme focusing on tolerance and non-discrimination. In implementing the results of three international conferences held by the OSCE in 2004 on issues in this field, the ODIHR began to collect information, gather examples of good practices, and work actively with other international partners in this regard.

The Office also enhanced its capacity for legislative support. Its *Legislationline* project developed into a full-fledged legislative support programme that assists participating States in drafting legislation in line with human dimension commitments.

The Office continued its broad range of activities towards fostering democracy and the rule of law, promoting and protecting human rights, addressing pertinent shortcomings, and assisting participating States in the implementation of their commitments.

As Europe's leading election observation agency, the Office had one of its busiest years ever, with a schedule of 15 observation missions. In addition to monitoring elections in new democracies in the OSCE region, it continued to follow elections in the Organization's long-standing democracies. Among others, the Office conducted observation missions in Georgia, Russia, Belarus, the United States, and Ukraine as well as assessment visits to elections in Spain, Romania, and Slovakia.

Elections

Recognizing that a democratic election process provides the foundation for democratic governance, the Office continued its efforts to promote the integrity of election processes. The Office's election observation and assistance efforts continued to improve the legislative and administrative framework for elections in the OSCE region.

The ODIHR deployed more than 5,300 observers to observe and assess a total of 15 elections. In addition, some 225 short-term and 14 long-term observers were funded through the ODIHR's Fund for the Diversification of Observation Missions. This voluntary fund was established to ensure more active participation of nationals from participating States that do not regularly second individuals for ODIHR observation missions.



A voter in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

ODIHR Election Observation and Assessment Mission Schedule 2004

Country	Type of election	Date
Georgia	presidential	4 January
Russian Federation	presidential	14 March
Spain	parliamentary	14 March
Georgia	repeat parliamentary	28 March
Slovak Republic	presidential	3 April
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	presidential	14 April
Serbia, Serbia and Montenegro	presidential	13 June/27 June
Kazakhstan	parliamentary	19 September/ 3 October
Bosnia and Herzegovina	municipal	2 October
Belarus	parliamentary	17 October
Ukraine	presidential	31 October/ 21 November/ 26 December
United States of America	presidential/ congressional	2 November
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	referendum	7 November
Romania	presidential/ parliamentary	28 November
Uzbekistan	parliamentary	26 December

The Office followed elections in some of the long-standing democracies among the OSCE participating States, including a targeted observation of the November election in the United States (see also page 17) and an assessment of parliamentary elections in Spain. In anticipation of the European Parliament elections, a pre-election assessment was conducted, leading to the publication of a pre-election report on EU-wide electoral issues.

Supporting Afghanistan's first presidential election

In close co-operation with the OSCE Secretariat, the Office responded rapidly to the unfolding preparations for elections in Afghanistan by deploying an Election Support Team. Applying a unique and exceptional methodology different from that used for traditional observation missions, the Office was able to support the electoral process in Afghanistan without holding it accountable to stringent OSCE commitments at this decisive stage in its transition towards democracy. Afghanistan became a Partner for Co-operation of the OSCE in 2003. (For more on the OSCE's role in the Afghan election, see page 25.)

When an observation mission was not deployed, the Office provided support to OSCE field missions in conducting election assessments. In 2004, ODIHR experts were deployed for the

municipal elections in Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan and for regional assembly elections in Ajara, Georgia.

Election law reform and reviews. The Office continued to provide assistance to participating States in meeting their commitments through the Electoral Legislation Alert and Assistance Programme. This enables expert advice on election law reform to be offered on the basis of a voluntary fund. The ODIHR issued joint recommendations with the Council of Europe's Venice Commission on the electoral law and electoral administration in Albania and joint preliminary comments on draft amendments of the Armenian Electoral Code. The ODIHR also issued comments on draft amendments proposed by political parties to the Tajik Election Law and an assessment of the Constitutional Law on Elections of Kazakhstan, and it prepared assessments of the election legislation of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Follow-up and implementation of recommendations. In addition to preparing legislative reviews, the Office actively followed up on the recommendations in Albania and Armenia. A long-term follow-up exercise begun prior to the last round of elections in Kazakhstan in 2000 was completed with a review of the country's Constitutional Law on Elections.

Despite significant improvements in the conduct of elections in a number of participating States, OSCE election-related commitments were frequently challenged in 2004, and corresponding ODIHR recommendations remain to be implemented. In a number of participating States, further advancement towards genuine democratic elections requires a commensurate level of political will. Without the active engagement of participating States, follow-up and implementation of ODIHR recommendations will not be easily accomplished.

The ODIHR identified a number of worrying trends over recent years, including:

- obstacles to candidate registration, limiting civil and political rights and restricting pluralism and competition;
- inadequate voter registration, undermining overall confidence in universal suffrage;
- non-inclusive election commissions, undermining transparency and confidence;
- bias in state-controlled media in favour of incumbents, preventing candidates from having equitable opportunities to convey their messages to the electorate;
- lack of access for observers (including non-partisan domestic observers), diminishing transparency;
- ill-defined or inaccessible complaints processes, obstructing the rights of appeal; and
- non-transparent tabulation of the votes cast, resulting in lack of confidence in the outcome.

Additional or emerging challenges include issues such as guaranteeing the participation of women, access for disabled voters, the inclusion of national minorities, electronic voting, vote-count scanners and other new voting technologies as well as referenda and recall elections.

Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting. The second OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting of 2004 was devoted to electoral standards and commitments. Prior to the meeting, the Office distributed a paper entitled ‘Election Principles and Existing OSCE Commitments for Democratic Elections’ which served as a basis for substantial discussion. Recognizing that fundamental principles of transparency, accountability, and universal suffrage are necessary to instil confidence in any electoral process, the meeting identified possible areas for supplementing existing OSCE commitments.

Ensuring women’s participation. The Office published the Handbook for Monitoring Women’s Participation in Elections, which sets out practical steps that each election observation mission can take to integrate a gender perspective into its work. When drawing conclusions about the extent to which an election process meets OSCE commitments and reflects universal principles, each election observation mission should take fully into account how the process affects both women and men.

DEMOCRATIZATION

The ODIHR brings people together across borders on a professional level to discuss issues and develop capacities necessary for the consolidation of a democratic culture. These efforts create otherwise non-existent discussion fora, bridging government and civil society and enabling a constructive debate on topics that are often potentially divisive. The Office regards local ownership and the use of relevant experiences and expertise from other participating States in similar situations as critical to success. This is reflected in its methodological commitment to East-East consultancy and, as the Organization’s institutional memory for the human dimension, to a sharing of experiences from south-eastern Europe with the wider OSCE community.

The ODIHR’s democratization activities are primarily conducted in the areas of:

- democratic governance and participation of women in public life;
- rule of law and legislative support;
- migration and freedom of movement; and
- the fight against human trafficking.

In response to priorities of participating States, the Democratization Section spearheaded an office-wide refocusing of its work in participating States and OSCE field operations in 2004. It also further developed its capacity to provide specific and targeted expertise, primarily in the legal field.

Rule of law

The concept of the rule of law is rooted in the just and equitable treatment of all human beings and forms a cornerstone in the OSCE’s human rights framework. The ODIHR’s work in this area, which is to assist participating States in upholding this essential principle, is guided by the provisions of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.

Preventing torture. Torture remains a prevalent problem in the OSCE region. In many countries, torture and other forms of degrading and inhuman treatment are still considered an everyday part of law enforcement. In some States, the easiest way of solving a criminal case is through a confession, which encourages a culture of extracting statements and confessions under torture. All too often, judges and prosecutors contribute to this by not stopping the use of these statements as evidence in court.

Pursuant to recommendations made at the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on the Prevention of Torture in 2003, the ODIHR appointed an Anti-Torture Focal Point in 2004. The Focal Point is responsible for ensuring that torture-prevention work is co-ordinated internally within the OSCE, with participating States, and with other international actors.

Promoting penal reform. The Office’s assistance in the area of penal reform supports momentum for change in several participating States and furthers the reform process. In a number of countries, this has led to the jurisdiction of prison facilities being transferred from interior ministries to justice ministries.

One of the ODIHR’s primary objectives is the creation of mechanisms for public monitoring of places of detention. The Office organized and supported roundtable meetings on monitoring places of detention in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. In Armenia, it helped set up a Prison Monitoring Board and provided training courses for its members.



A prison reform workshop in Tajikistan

The ODIHR also rendered assistance in the capacity-building of prison staff, paying particular attention to the training needs of penitentiary officers who deal with non-custodial measures. At the request of the Kazakh authorities, the Office continued its street-law (legal literacy) programme at the Pavlodar Prison Staff College, which teaches the cadets basic human rights.

To help prison officers handling non-standard situations develop their skills, the Office launched a conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution programme for prison staff in Kazakhstan. In Georgia, senior prison staff working at the Justice Ministry's training centre received security training.

Strengthening the defence bar. Ensuring the right to a fair trial is dependent on the availability of competent and professional legal counsel and procedural guarantees that enable defence lawyers to do their job properly. In Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Kyrgyzstan, the ODIHR engaged in defence-bar (*advokatura*) reform efforts, sharing international standards and best practices from other OSCE States. Working with the OSCE Office in Baku and other partners, the ODIHR promoted discussions on the new law on advocates and its future implementation within Azerbaijan's legal community.

Complementing these activities, the Office developed programmes to enhance the capacity of individual lawyers. These included training seminars for defence lawyers in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on issues such as legal skills and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Kyrgyz lawyers are already making use of the knowledge acquired in the seminars: the first individual complaints filed by a programme participant from Kyrgyzstan were registered by the UN Human Rights Committee in March and August.

Legislative support. Responding to increased requests from participating States for a review of draft laws, the Office established a Legislative Support Programme in May. Emphasizing the importance of local ownership, the Programme's primary function is to assist States in the development of legislation that is in line with OSCE human dimension commitments and that fosters inclusive and transparent legislative processes.

Continuing the trend in previous years, the ODIHR's *Legislation-line* website (www.legislationline.org) further increased the amount of legal information, expertise and thematic areas covered by its database. The database highlights good practices and shows legal options used in other countries in the OSCE region. The activities involved in maintaining the database not only benefit lawmakers but also permit ODIHR experts to observe patterns in legislative activity, identify best practices, and monitor the application of international standards.

ODIHR experts commented on numerous legislative acts, mainly in the areas of human trafficking, anti-terrorism, fair trials, and freedom of assembly. In Moldova, for example, the Office supported a locally-driven process for drafting a new law on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings with recommendations

that clarified specific questions of compatibility with international standards.

The Office also developed guidelines to support the drafting of legislation on a number of human rights issues. In addition, it contributed to the formulation and development of standards contained in human rights instruments. For example, ODIHR experts took part in the drafting of the new Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

Migration and freedom of movement. Increased population mobility and changing migration patterns in the OSCE region in recent years have revealed shortcomings in policy and legal frameworks for the protection of migrants. Both government officials and the general public face information gaps about changes in migration policy and regulations, leading to numerous violations of the rights of migrants and a rise in anti-migrant sentiments. Policy options that strengthen cross-border co-operation are therefore crucial to addressing these phenomena effectively.

The Office assisted countries with a legacy of restrictions on internal movement. To share knowledge of existing registration systems and to facilitate discussion on potential reform efforts, the Office conducted roundtable meetings and organized training visits to Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, and Ukraine.

Pilot research projects were launched in the Russian Federation and Kyrgyzstan to assess regional co-operation on labour migration and protecting the rights of migrants. The results will serve as a basis for helping participating States develop more efficient labour-migration policies and improve the situation of migrant workers.

Together with the IOM, the Office promoted international co-operation and exchange of migration information by assisting in the elaboration of data-sharing mechanisms. A two-day workshop in Chisinau in September enabled policy-makers, statisticians, and researchers from Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine to discuss new migration-related issues resulting from the expansion of the European Union.

The Office provided assistance to the Belarusian authorities regarding the draft law regulating the rights of Belarusian citizens to enter and leave their country. This comprised training visits of Belarusian officials to Slovakia and Lithuania, whose experiences were incorporated into a draft document presented at a roundtable meeting in Minsk.

In November, a Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting discussed practical solutions to alleviate the plight of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the OSCE area. It called on participating States to develop laws and policies to protect IDPs and to end their displacement using the UN Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement as a framework. OSCE institutions were urged to 'mainstream' IDP issues into their respective activities.

Strengthening civil society and democratic governance. The primary objective of the ODIHR's efforts in this field has become to find ways to strengthen democratic practices and processes rather than merely increasing the capacity of institutions themselves. The Office therefore broadened the scope of its civil society programme by including the fostering of democratic governance in its activities.

In 2004, the Office also completed its project on 'civic diplomacy' in Georgia, which created channels of communication among NGOs throughout Georgia and its separatist regions. A final element of this project involved the training of NGOs in monitoring techniques, networking, negotiating, and reconciliation skills. The project formed the foundation for the continued work of the UN Observer Mission in Georgia and the OSCE Mission to Georgia.

In May, the Office hosted a Human Dimension Seminar on Democratic Institutions and Democratic Governance. Highlighting deficits of democracy in institutional terms as well as the danger of increasing cynicism towards politics, the meeting called for increased OSCE involvement in strengthening democratic culture and practices, specifically through work on transparency and the participation of citizens in the legislative process and increased work with political parties.

The Office also continued to help the NGO community participate in human dimension events. The five main human dimension meetings held in 2004 saw increased participation by NGOs compared with previous years, including an all-time high of 222 NGOs from 38 countries at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in October.

The ODIHR provided financial support to a number of NGOs, thereby facilitating the participation of the most relevant and expert organizations within the OSCE region that would otherwise not have been able to afford the travel. This also resulted in a more balanced representation of NGOs from OSCE participating States.

Participation of women in democratic processes. The ODIHR conducts country-specific programmes in the southern caucasus and Central Asia that are aimed at increasing women's participation in democratic processes. In 2004, programmes were carried out in five main areas: the development of women's leadership skills; building and strengthening of local expertise on gender issues; gender education for a younger generation; integration of gender aspects into the work of government structures; and preventing and combating violence against women, especially in the home.

To assist countries in promoting equal rights and opportunities for women and men and to increase the role of women at all levels of decision-making, the Office helped establish NGO networks in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan.

In Georgia, for example, the ODIHR programme has helped create an NGO coalition that promotes gender equality. Established in 2000, it brings together more than 50 NGOs and 22 local experts



Taking action for women's rights: a participant at an OSCE gender seminar in Armenia

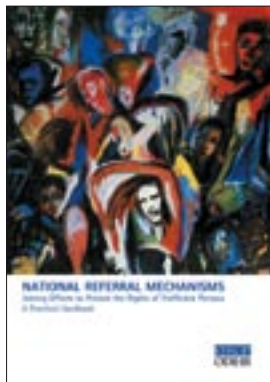
from 11 regions of Georgia. The coalition is recognized by state structures as an official partner in carrying out gender policy and in developing a national action plan on gender issues. In 2004, it developed and presented to the Government a strategy for lobbying for women's rights, promoting equal opportunities between women and men, and increasing the role of women at all levels of decision-making. The coalition also works with the Government on the economic empowerment of women and on education and health issues.

Another focus of the NGO coalition is the promotion of women's leadership role and gender equality through the mass media. Together with the ODIHR, the members of the coalition's media working group organized a regional conference on 'Southern Caucasus Mass Media for Gender Equality', which initiated effective co-operation networks in the region.

Fighting human trafficking. Building on previous initiatives to prevent trafficking in human beings and to assist victims of this scourge, the Office continued its anti-trafficking activities in co-operation with participating States, NGOs, and other international organizations. A Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings was appointed and an Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit was created in the OSCE Secretariat (see also page 19). To strengthen participating States' compliance with OSCE commitments, the ODIHR will contribute its expertise to, and co-ordinate closely with, the work of this new mechanism.

Compiling a handbook on National Referral Mechanisms.

In order to strengthen national capacities to prevent trafficking and better protect victims, the Office published a handbook on National Referral Mechanisms (NRMs) based on concrete field experience. An NRM is a co-operative framework through which state officials fulfil their obligations to protect and promote the human rights of trafficked persons, co-ordinating their efforts in a strategic partnership with civil society. In developing the handbook, the ODIHR supported field missions in creating NRMs in Armenia, Moldova, and Georgia.



Activities financed by the Anti-Trafficking Project Fund. In 2001, the ODIHR established an Anti-Trafficking Project Fund to encourage the development and implementation of activities that address trafficking in human beings. Projects in 2004 included training on human-trafficking reporting for journalists in Tajikistan, supporting SOS information lines for victims of trafficking in Serbia and Montenegro, a study tour in Ukraine for government officials and NGOs from Georgia to learn about the country's anti-trafficking policies, and a review of the Georgian National Plan of Action against human trafficking.

Protecting victims of trafficking in countries of destination.

The 2001 Berlin conference, 'Europe against Trafficking in Persons', addressed the situation of trafficked persons in countries of destination and concluded with a comprehensive list of recommendations for participating States to counter this problem. There still exist, however, a number of gaps in States' efforts to protect the human rights of trafficked persons. In 2004, to address these gaps on the basis of the OSCE Action Plan, the ODIHR and the Finnish Foreign Ministry organized a follow-up conference entitled 'Ensuring Human Rights Protection in Countries of Destination: Breaking the Cycle of Trafficking'. Held in Helsinki in September, the event resulted in concrete and operational recommendations, which will also serve as guidance for the new mechanism in Vienna.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In the field of protecting and promoting human rights, the ODIHR carries out two major functions. The first is a role the Office has performed for a long time: monitoring, and reporting on, compliance by participating States with their human dimension commitments, particularly in the areas of freedom of assembly and association, the right to liberty and to a fair trial, and in the use of the death penalty. In addition, the Office has taken a proactive approach to other human rights-related issues, offering training and education, and responding to specific concerns such as the protection of human rights in the global fight against terrorism and combating racism, discrimination, and intolerance.

Anti-terrorism activities. The ODIHR focused in 2004 in particular on dealing with the rising level of political and religious extremism within the context of human rights. The Office's activities included, for example, a roundtable meeting in Central Asia in July that highlighted the importance of freedom of religion or belief and the role of education in combating extremism and also produced several recommendations for the Kazakh authorities on a new draft law on extremism.

In March, the Office organized a two-day workshop in Copenhagen on the protection of human rights while countering terrorism. Organized as a follow-up event to a seminar on human rights and terrorism held in The Hague in 2003, the workshop provided a technical framework for the discussion of counter-terrorism measures that need to be in line with the human rights commitments of OSCE participating States.

Tolerance and non-discrimination. The ODIHR further expanded its role in the fight against racism and intolerance in 2004. In April, June and September, the OSCE held three major international conferences that focused on anti-Semitism (Berlin), racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic propaganda on the Internet (Paris), and tolerance and the fight against racism, xenophobia and discrimination (Brussels). Based on the results of these events, the Office focused on building capacity to serve as a collection point for information, statistics, and legislation on hate crimes and violent manifestations of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and discrimination. Other priorities were to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination with international organizations and to conduct activities in key thematic areas, including freedom of religion or belief and anti-Semitism.

Following a reform process, the ODIHR's Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief was enlarged in 2004 to include more than 50 experts from across the OSCE region. In association with the Council of Europe's Venice Commission, the Panel members drafted a set of 'Guidelines for Review of Legislation Pertaining to Religion or Belief', which were subsequently published by the ODIHR.

The Office also published Polish and English editions of a compilation of essays by Polish experts entitled 'Why Teach About the Holocaust?', and funded the development of a 'Website Guide to Tolerance Education' (<http://tolerance.research.uj.edu.pl/en>). Together with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, panel members developed a training module on international standards and jurisprudence relating to freedom of religion or belief.

A newly appointed Adviser on anti-Semitism Issues started building a network of key NGOs in the OSCE region in order to initiate co-operation on monitoring activities and to compile good practices in areas such as Holocaust education and tolerance education.

Death penalty. At the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in October, the ODIHR released its annual background paper on the use of the death penalty in the OSCE region. The paper provides participating States with a means to publicize information about their use of the death penalty.

A roundtable meeting in Kazakhstan on the rights of people sentenced to capital punishment brought together 26 participants, representing the Kazakh Government and civil society as well as international experts. The meeting focused in particular on the rights of those subjected to the moratorium on the death penalty in Kazakhstan.

To promote an informed discussion on the death penalty and its abolition, the Office developed a series of radio programmes which were broadcast throughout Central Asia in December. The project was set up in co-operation with the European Commission and the BBC.

Human rights training. Human rights education and training was the focus of the first Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting of 2004, held in March. Participants shared best practices and discussed such topics as formal and informal human rights education, human rights education in school curricula, and human rights education and training for public officials. The meeting resulted in practical suggestions on how to improve the quality of such education and training.

Following a request made at the Human Dimension Forum in Vienna in November 2003, the Office conducted four training courses for new Human Dimension Officers in the field. The training took place in Warsaw, with participants from the field operations in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Serbia and Montenegro, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Trial monitoring. Following up on training sessions in 2003, the Office carried out a pilot trial-monitoring project in Azerbaijan. The training covered trial-monitoring techniques and principles, national and international fair-trial standards, and reporting skills. From January to October, the 19 participants – lawyers and NGO representatives – applied their newly-acquired skills by participating in the monitoring of 125 cases of individuals charged with crimes following the 2003 presidential election. This included preliminary hearings, first-instance trials and appeals.

In June, an international trial-monitoring expert was sent to Azerbaijan to accompany the monitors at trials and to provide mentoring and expertise in the course of the trial-monitoring. It is planned to publish a report reflecting the monitors' findings from the perspective of the trials' compliance with national and international standards and obligations.



The ODIHR conducted several training seminars to politically empower Roma and Sinti.

CONTACT POINT FOR ROMA AND SINTI ISSUES

Racism and discrimination continue to impede the ability of Roma, Sinti, and related populations to become fully integrated members of society in the OSCE area. Acting within the framework of the 'Action Plan to Improve the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area', the ODIHR is attempting to overcome such discrimination by opening channels of communication between Roma and Sinti and other actors, such as national and local authorities, journalists, and heads of trade unions. The Office also initiates and supports debates on issues that are sensitive for Roma and Sinti populations.

A number of participating States made progress in implementing their commitments in this area in 2004, in particular through the adoption of legislation to combat discrimination and the establishment of institutional ways to enforce such legislation. However, not all States took full advantage of the Action Plan to Improve the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area.

The Office's activities in this field focused on reporting on the implementation of the Action Plan. It also began work on developing means of monitoring implementation without creating a new OSCE mechanism.

The Office provided fora for discussions and exchange of information on Roma-related issues by helping Roma and other groups participate in human dimension events and relevant side events at OSCE meetings. For example, a regional roundtable meeting was held in Belgrade on awareness-raising on trafficking in human beings, which provided an opportunity to discuss cultural practices specific to Roma and Sinti groups. The Office also conducted a series of training sessions on the political participation of Roma and Sinti, with a particular focus on Roma women.

High Commissioner on National Minorities

In recent years, defusing tensions between national majority and minority populations and preventing them from erupting into conflict has become one of the most challenging tasks of the international community. In 1992, the participating States of what was then the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe decided to respond to this challenge by establishing the post of High Commissioner on National Minorities.

The High Commissioner's function is to identify and help resolve tensions based on ethnic or other differences that might endanger peace, stability and security between and within the OSCE participating States. This function includes two distinct tasks:

- to address and de-escalate tensions at the earliest possible stage, before they ignite, and
- to act as a 'tripwire', in that he is responsible for alerting the OSCE States whenever such tensions threaten to develop to a level at which he cannot alleviate them with the means at his disposal.

Rolf Ekéus, of Sweden, has been the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities since July 2001.

In conformity with his mandate, the High Commissioner continued in 2004 to provide an early warning function and, as appropriate, to take early action regarding tensions that involve national minority questions. When necessary, he also took concrete action to stabilize situations of potential conflict.

In addition, he sought to contribute to OSCE objectives in other minority-related areas such as racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Special attention was given to minority education, including the use of minority languages.

In accordance with the OSCE's Gender Action Plan, the High Commissioner paid particular attention to the status of women in developing his policy recommendations and projects concerning national minorities, with a view to avoiding situations of double discrimination. For example, he supported a number of projects that target the situation of Roma women.

To support his political activities, the High Commissioner strengthened his involvement in various programmes and projects such as his social integration policy for the region of Samtskhe-Javakheti in Georgia through the implementation of a Conflict Prevention and Integration Programme.

As in previous years, the High Commissioner was active in participating States across the OSCE region.

Moldova. In the Transnistrian region, the High Commissioner has been engaged in long-standing efforts to resolve the dispute

over the registration of schools that teach in the Moldovan language using the Latin script. In July, he visited the country to discuss the issue with government representatives and to urge the leadership of the Transnistrian breakaway regime to provide the conditions necessary for these schools to operate normally. While some progress was made in autumn, the High Commissioner continues to be concerned about the future of these schools.

Protesting against forced school closures in Transnistria

In July, the Transnistrian authorities began closing several schools on its territory that teach in the Moldovan language using the Latin script, arguing that these had not been properly registered. These closures took place by force, armed police and militia having surrounded the premises. Equipment and furniture were removed from the buildings, which parents and teachers were prevented from entering.

In an official statement, the High Commissioner called the events "linguistic cleansing". "I am deeply disappointed by this illegal and inhuman action today in Tiraspol," he said. "This ... is damaging to thousands of children who are being used by the Transnistrian authorities as pawns in a political game."

The authorities eventually permitted the temporary registration of the schools, but the schools continue to face problems. Roughly 40 per cent of Transnistria's population have Moldovan/Romanian as a mother tongue, with some 5,000 pupils studying in the Latin script. (For more on this issue, see section on the OSCE Mission to Moldova.)

During his visit to Moldova, the High Commissioner also explored the conditions for new educational projects, particularly in the field of teaching Moldovan/Romanian as a second language. A four-year project initiated by the High Commissioner to support the teaching of the state language in minority schools successfully ended in 2004. Over 1,200 teachers were trained, new teaching methodologies were developed, and four resource centres for the teachers were established. The High Commissioner is studying the possibility of expanding this language project to other target groups.

Hungary and Romania. State policies regarding kin minorities living abroad were at the centre of the High Commissioner's attention in Hungary and Romania. He closely followed developments in this field and kept in close contacts with the Governments of both countries on new initiatives.

Estonia. Visiting the country in March, the High Commissioner continued his dialogue with both authorities and minorities on the social integration of national minorities in Estonia. In his discussions, he focused on the country's upcoming minority education reform and offered his support for efforts aimed at further

integrating national minorities. The High Commissioner continued support for initiatives that promote the naturalization process.

Latvia. Pursuing his dialogue with all interested parties on the situation of the country's national minorities, the High Commissioner paid two visits to Latvia in 2004. In his meetings with the country's authorities, minority representatives, parents and pupils, he discussed issues ranging from the process of social integration to the naturalization process and the ratification of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Special attention was paid to the introduction of minority education reform in secondary schools. The High Commissioner stressed the need for continued dialogue during the implementation period of the reform and emphasized that it was essential to focus on the quality of education.

During the year, the High Commissioner also finalized a project to identify complementary and additional means for the promotion of the social integration process in Latvia and elaborated guidelines for the State Language Inspectorate on how to apply the State Language Law in a liberal and fair manner.

Ukraine. In close co-operation with the Council of Europe, the High Commissioner offered his advice to the Ukrainian authorities and the Parliament on their elaboration of a draft law on national minorities. During his visit in September, he stressed the need for continued international support to facilitate the integration process of formerly deported people and offered his support in areas where his office can provide specific expertise such as in the field of minority education.

Croatia. During a visit to the country in February, the High Commissioner met government representatives and members of national minorities to discuss questions related to minority rights and the return of refugees. The talks focused on the repossession of property and reconstruction assistance, reform of the judiciary, prosecution of war crimes, and the implementation of the Constitutional Law on National Minorities (CLNM). The High Commissioner was encouraged by the improved atmosphere in Croatia, and by the hope expressed by most interlocutors that the accession process to the European institutions would hasten progress on those questions covered by his mandate.

In October, the High Commissioner's experts discussed further assistance in the implementation of the CLNM, in particular provisions regarding education and proportional representation of minorities in administration and judiciary.

Serbia and Montenegro. In April, the High Commissioner paid a visit to Belgrade and Podgorica, where he discussed the status of implementation of the Law on National Minorities as well as education issues. He raised his concern about the amendments to the Serbian Law on the Foundation of the Educational System, adopted in May 2004, and their impact on the educational rights of persons belonging to national minorities. The subject was later followed up by correspondence with the Serbian Minister of Education.

Following his first visit to southern Serbia in May, a region that includes a significant minority population of ethnic Albanians, the High Commissioner helped establish a commission in charge of developing a history curriculum for the region's Albanian language schools. Representatives of the Serbian Ministry of Education and members of the local Albanian community participated in implementing this initiative.

In Montenegro, the High Commissioner continued to advise on the drafting of the law on national minorities. The draft law aims at harmonizing Montenegrin legislation with the legal provisions of the State Union, in particular the Constitutional Charter, as well as with international and national standards for minority rights protection. In May, the High Commissioner provided his recommendations on the final draft.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. During a visit to the country in May, the High Commissioner pursued a number of inter-ethnic issues in the context of the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, in particular regarding education and the use of languages and symbols.

He also continued to support the South East European University in Tetovo, praised for its academic standards and for acting as a role model for inter-ethnic integration. With a total of 5,000 students enrolled in 2004 (25 per cent of non-Albanian origin), the University has significantly improved Albanian representation in the country's higher education system.

In January, the Macedonian Parliament adopted a new law establishing a third state university in Tetovo, a decision that gave rise to concerns that this institution could potentially become a new centre of radical nationalism in the Balkans. At the invitation of the Minister of Education, the High Commissioner provided an expert to the commission responsible for founding the university. The expert will support the commission in creating a university that fully conforms with international standards and adopts a multi-ethnic and multilingual approach to education that fully complements the principles of the South East European University.

Another initiative supported by the High Commissioner is the Transition Year Programme, which seeks to increase the number of ethnic Albanians admitted to state universities in Skopje and Bitola. As in previous years, the programme provided Albanian-speaking students with intensive courses in the Macedonian language during the fourth year of secondary school, in preparation for the university entrance examination.

Georgia. Following the political change in Georgia at the end of 2003, the High Commissioner took steps to establish a good working relationship with the country's new leadership. During visits to Tbilisi in March and October, he laid the foundation for future co-operation between his office and the new Government. The High Commissioner closely monitored the impact of the political landscape on inter-ethnic relations in Georgia, focusing particularly on the policy of the new leadership towards minorities. Together with the Georgian Parliament, he conducted a seminar to assist the

Government in elaborating a Strategy for Civic Integration, which aims at social integration of minorities. He also provided advice and technical assistance to the Ministry of Education on reforming the Georgian education system.

To provide support to the integration process in Samtskhe-Javakheti, the High Commissioner initiated a Conflict Prevention and Integration Programme. An economically underdeveloped region bordering Armenia and Turkey, Samtskhe-Javakheti is mainly populated by members of Georgia's Armenian minority. The High Commissioner's Programme includes teaching the state language to civil servants, helping Armenian high-school graduates to gain entry to universities by improving their Georgian language skills, and translating Georgian television programmes into Armenian. This latter initiative had an important impact on local understanding and participation in the 2004 parliamentary and presidential elections.

An important step in the High Commissioner's efforts to ensure the right of Georgian students in Abkhazia's Gali district to receive education in their mother tongue was the launching of the new project 'Teachers for understanding'. The initiative, which also aimed at building confidence between the two communities, included the training of teachers in the districts of Gali, Tkvarcheli and Ochamchira to improve their skills in the Georgian and Abkhaz languages.

Russian Federation. The High Commissioner visited Moscow twice in 2004. During his March visit, he focused his attention on inter-ethnic relations and the situation of national minorities in several States of the former Soviet Union. This included the issue of the Meskhetian Turk minority population living in Russia's Krasnodar region, especially in light of the US programme to grant refugee status to those eligible within this community.

These issues were followed up during the High Commissioner's November visit, during which he also discussed the implications of plans by the Russian Government to reform the federation for inter-ethnic relations.

Kazakhstan. In view of the many language difficulties Uzbek students face when taking the state examination prior to entering one of Kazakhstan's universities – held in Kazakh and Russian – the High Commissioner supported a pilot project that helps Uzbek schools in southern Kazakhstan to organize supplementary language classes. Another project that received the High Commissioner's assistance aimed at monitoring inter-ethnic relations in the country, providing both the Kazakhstani Government and the OSCE with information and analytical data on this issue.

Kyrgyzstan. The publication of the Report and Recommendations in July by the Working Group on Integration through Education represented a key event in the High Commissioner's engagement in Kyrgyzstan. Throughout the first half of 2004, the High Commissioner supported the activities of the Working Group. Its recommendations became the basis for further initiatives by the country's Ministry of Education and the High



Integrating minorities through education: a school in Kyrgyzstan

Commissioner to further promote integrated education in Kyrgyzstan, for instance in the field of multilingual teaching.

Another important event was the hiring of two police experts to produce a report on multi-ethnic policing in the country, an initiative also supported by the High Commissioner. The aim of this experts' report was to prepare the groundwork for building closer links to the different ethnic communities in Kyrgyzstan and to thereby strengthen their conflict prevention capacity.

In southern Kyrgyzstan, the High Commissioner's activities focused on the monitoring of inter-ethnic relations and a project for training government officials in managing inter-ethnic relations and minority issues.

Tajikistan. During a visit to the country in November, the High Commissioner discussed with officials and representatives of national minorities and NGOs questions affecting Central Asia's national minority communities, such as education and language teaching.

Turkmenistan. The High Commissioner visited Turkmenistan in December 2004 and met the President as well as other senior officials. The visit formed part of the High Commissioner's efforts to develop a dialogue with Turkmenistan on minority-related issues.

Uzbekistan. Building on a visit in February, during which he met government officials, representatives of national minority communities, and NGOs, the High Commissioner held a conference in September on the modernization of education and the promotion of social integration in multi-ethnic societies. The event, which was organized with the Ministry of Public Education in Bukhara, explored the question of how to reform education while ensuring the full participation of national minorities.

Representative on Freedom of the Media

The youngest of the three specialized OSCE Institutions, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media was formally established in 1997 following a decision taken at the 1996 Lisbon Summit. Recognizing freedom of expression as a basic human right, the Representative's mandate is to ensure free, independent and pluralistic media in the participating States. His primary tasks are:

- observing relevant media developments in OSCE participating States to provide early warning on violations of freedom of expression; and
- in close co-operation with the Chairman-in-Office, assisting participating States by advocating and promoting full compliance with OSCE principles and commitments regarding freedom of expression and free media.

The second OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Miklós Haraszti, took up his position in March 2004. A writer and former dissident, Mr. Haraszti was one of the founders of the Hungarian Democratic Opposition Movement.

His predecessor, Freimut Duve, of Germany, held the position from January 1998 to December 2003. The Representative's office in Vienna consists of 11 international staff members.

Selected country-related activities

First assessment visit to Ukraine. In April, the newly-appointed Representative embarked on his first assessment visit to Ukraine. At the invitation of the Ukrainian Government, the Representative went to Kyiv to examine the media situation in the country. In his subsequent report to the participating States, the Representative emphasized that, overall, media pluralism was present in Ukraine. Different views were represented and politicians at all levels were regularly criticized in the media, although the media did not yet provide for a dialogue between different sides and views.

The Representative acknowledged the existence of several laws that could be recommended to all OSCE participating States, including some of the older democracies:

- Ukraine was one of the few OSCE participating States that had taken the bold move to decriminalize libel.
- Amendments to the Law on Television and Radio, passed in 2003, lifted limits on advertising revenues, thus allowing the media to become more independent of different 'sponsors'.
- A law that defined and banned censorship had been signed in 2003.
- This law also prohibited state and local government agencies from filing for defamation claiming 'moral damages', a practice that often drove media outlets into financial ruin.

Nevertheless, according to the Representative, certain developments were worrying, raising questions about the authorities' active commitment to freedom of expression:

- The broadcasting media was heavily tilted towards the Government, often representing only one view out of several that were prevalent in the country.
- The practice of sending out so-called *temniki* – coverage guidelines for editors – should be abolished and replaced by a transparent public relations strategy with clearly defined goals and objectives.
- The ending of the re-broadcasting of Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe and other quality western programmes in Ukraine, although ostensibly done for commercial and legal reasons, nevertheless raised questions regarding its timing during an election year.
- While frequency allocation is supervised by a non-independent government agency, the actual licensing is done by the National Broadcasting Council. This 'two-headed' licensing procedure was not only complicated but also left room for political favouritism.
- The case of the journalist Georgiy Gongadze, who was murdered in 2000 and whose killers are still at large, continued to be under investigation although a new Prosecutor-General has been appointed for the third time since the case was brought forward.

Returning to the themes of his April assessment visit, the Representative noted in a press release on 30 November: "At this time of post-election turmoil in Ukraine, I am impressed by recent changes in the general openness and objectivity being demonstrated by Ukrainian media in covering the events. This is something I did not see when I visited Ukraine on my first assessment visit in April 2004."

Violent unrest in Kosovo: the role of the Media. In April, the Representative presented his report on the role of the media in the tragic events that shook Kosovo in mid-March. He offered several ideas on preventing similar situations from occurring in the future



In mid-March 2004, Kosovo was the scene of serious inter-ethnic violence.

by creating conditions for free, fair and balanced media in Kosovo. First among his recommendations was to strengthen Kosovo's public radio and television so that it would become a "bulwark of objectivity, fairness and built-in pluralism".

In his report, the Representative identified three main problems that plagued the coverage of the March events: biased reporting, lack of plurality, and the failure of public service broadcasting. According to his report to the Permanent Council on 22 April, all of these elements, and especially their combination, contributed to a practical – even if temporary – loss of Kosovo's media freedom and did a great disservice to Kosovo's ethnic peace and democracy. His core finding was that the most powerful broadcasters had provided biased coverage on two counts. On 16 and 17 March, they had portrayed the death of two Kosovo Albanian children as a cruel, criminal, ethnically-motivated killing. But when – in the wake of their own previous reporting – actual inter-ethnic violence occurred, the TV media in particular followed up with justifying, almost supportive coverage.

The report also stated that the Public Broadcasting System of Kosovo had failed in providing a firm, reliable infrastructure that produced objective news, counterbalancing any irrational and irresponsible disinformation.

The tragic events in Beslan and the media. The Representative commissioned a report on how the media covered the school hostage crisis that took place in the northern Ossetian town of Beslan in September. The report concluded that the coverage of the events proved that media freedom had taken hold in Russia. However, several worrying developments in the relationship between the Government and the media drew the attention of local and international experts and human rights activists.

The report stated that cases of detention and harassment of journalists had occurred, seriously impeding their work. It also stressed that the Government did not provide in a timely manner truthful information on the handling of the crisis, including details of the number of hostages and hostage-takers, as well as the hostage-takers' identities and demands. As a result, some journalists were physically attacked in Beslan for allegedly misinforming the public.

According to the report, a triple credibility gap arose in Beslan: between the Government and the media, between the media and the people, and between the people and the Government. The three nationwide broadcasters – the main sources of information for the Russian people – did not provide accurate and up-to-date information, and in the end, the print media and Internet news sites stepped in, filling the information void as much as they could.

Assessing the media situation in Moldova. The Representative's second assessment visit took place in October, this time to Moldova, following invitations by both the Government and the OSCE Mission to Moldova. His findings were presented to the Permanent Council in a special report.



Browsing the news in Chisinau

In the view of the Representative, media pluralism was highly developed in Moldova, both in terms of quantity of media outlets and of different views that were represented. He reported that politicians of all ranks were regularly criticized in the media, and that the independent press was very outspoken in its comments on the authorities. The report also detailed an open debate regarding the development of the media itself, which was described to the Representative by the Foreign Minister as "transparent."

The main issue discussed was the situation of the state broadcaster, Tele-Radio Moldova (TRM). In his report, the Representative praised Moldova for being one of the first countries in the region to transform its state broadcaster into a public service. However, the quality of news coverage and its overwhelming tilt towards the ruling party was of concern as was a labour dispute that was taking on political overtones. The Representative issued a list of recommendations that could improve the media situation in the country:

- TRM is the only domestically produced nationwide channel. There can be no true pluralism when there are no competing domestic nationwide channels. In this situation, a transparent tender is needed for another nationwide frequency.
- The number of government-owned newspapers should not grow, and there should be no administrative or advertising discrimination against the non-governmental print press. There is no need to re-establish the so-called '*rayonnie gazetii*', that is, the district newspapers paid for by local government.
- Civil defamation penalties remain high and are often misused by public officials. A reasonable ceiling could be introduced for such penalties. Courts should hold public figures to a higher degree of criticism, as endorsed by relevant rulings of the European Court of Human Rights.
- The Transnistrian media are under severe pressure and international organizations should find ways to try to help independent journalists in the region.

Special projects

Decriminalizing libel

Prosecuting libel under criminal law is inappropriate and even detrimental to a modern democracy, where freedom of the press and uninhibited discussion of public issues could be diminished by the impact of a criminal libel sentence against journalists performing their work.

For several years, the Office has been actively lobbying for the decriminalization of libel. So far, five OSCE participating States have abolished libel as a criminal offence, turning such cases over to civil law institutions:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Georgia
- Moldova
- Ukraine
- United States (although 17 individual states still retain criminal libel provisions)

There is wide understanding of the need to provide journalists with a certain privilege when discussing issues of public importance. As with the protection of sources, journalists should not be liable to criminal prosecution or frivolous lawsuits even when the information that they disseminate might be false or derogatory. Weighed against the potential 'chilling' effect, this privilege should not be allowed to erode.



In general, the Office is looking into several possible lobbying strategies regarding libel:

- encouraging parliamentarians to table proposals to repeal criminal libel legislation;
- encouraging government officials through public information campaigns to refrain from using existing criminal laws to sue the media and journalists; and
- in countries where criminal libel exists, encouraging judicial bodies to impose a moratorium on issuing prison terms, even suspended ones, until the necessary reform takes place.

In 2004, the Representative's office began developing a database matrix on libel legislation in the OSCE region, to be accompanied by a legal analysis explaining the findings. This will help define the best ways to resolve the problem. The matrix was due to be presented in early 2005.

Preserving freedom of expression on the Internet. In August, the Representative's office organized its second Internet Conference in Amsterdam. Topics discussed included legislation and jurisdiction for digital networks, hate speech on the Internet, education and the development of Internet literacy, access to information and networks, and the problems of self-regulation, blocking and filtering of Internet sites. Among the more than 100 participants were international experts and representatives from the OSCE, the Council of Europe, UNESCO, academia, the media, and NGOs. At the two-day event, the participants emphasized that regulation should be limited to fields where it was absolutely inevitable, since regulatory action – even with the best of intentions – could potentially have serious consequences for media freedom on the Internet.

Results from the discussions at the Conference and recommendations by the participants were included in the 'Media Freedom Internet Cookbook' published by the Representative in December. In the tradition of other similar publications on software and programming, this 'Cookbook' is a collection of best practices on a broad range of Internet issues and also provides valuable guidelines to OSCE participating States on dealing with this medium.

The Representative's office organized several side-events on the same issue at various OSCE conferences and meetings, including at the June meeting in Paris on the Relationship between Racist, Xenophobic and Anti-Semitic Propaganda on the Internet and Hate Crimes, the Brussels Conference on Tolerance and the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, and at the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting held by the ODIHR in Warsaw in October.

Joint Declaration on Access to Information. In December, the Representative issued a Joint Declaration on Access to Information, together with the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression and the Media and the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression of the Organization of American States. The principles and recommendations in the document are of great relevance to the OSCE community, as they recognize that there can be no free press without the citizens' right to access information held by public authorities.

The Declaration states that access to information is a fundamental human right, which should be given effect at the national level through comprehensive legislation such as through the adoption of Freedom of Information laws. It also states that the principle of maximum disclosure should be established in modern classification rules, which are based on the presumption that all information is accessible and subject only to a narrow system of exceptions.

The document points out that the sole responsibility for protecting the confidentiality of legitimately secret information lies with the public authorities and their staff whose official task is to hold this information. Other individuals, including journalists and civil society representatives, should thus never be subject to liability for publishing or further disseminating this information, regardless of whether or not it has been provided to them, unless they committed fraud or another crime to obtain the information.

The Representative and the Special Rapporteurs recommended a reform of the penal codes, to the effect that criminal law provisions, not restricting liability for the dissemination of state secrets to those entitled to handle this information, should be repealed or amended.

Sixth Central Asian Media Conference in Tajikistan.

In September, the Representative organized the Sixth Central Asian Media Conference in Dushanbe. The event provided Central Asian journalists with a forum to discuss libel and freedom of information from the viewpoint of their own experiences. The more than 100 journalists attending the Conference agreed that the obsolete libel laws existing in Central Asian countries are detrimental to freedom of the press. Several individual cases were discussed by the participants, some of whom had personal experiences of being prosecuted for libel.

The event highlighted the fact that substantial problems remain in the region regarding freedom of information. None of the countries in the region has laws that meet international standards on access to information, and state-secrets acts that undermine the right to access to information are often used and abused. Significant efforts are required to ensure that the region joins the rest of the OSCE in recognizing the right of the public and the media to access to information.

Libel and media freedom in the southern Caucasus. Similar topics were discussed at the first South Caucasus Media Conference, which was held in Tbilisi in October. Discussions dealt with the developments regarding libel legislation in the three countries of the region – Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Earlier in 2004, Georgia had decriminalized libel, and Armenia took an important step forward by reducing criminal penalties for libel. In Azerbaijan, the process of elaborating a new law regulating defamation, libel issues and protection of honour and dignity has begun.

A report commissioned by the Representative and research by the media NGO, Article 19, analysed the linkages between media freedom and freedom of information. The report includes dozens of cases in 2004 in which media outlets and journalists in the three southern Caucasus countries were denied access to information.

Baku roundtable meeting. In October, the Representative and the Council of Europe organized a roundtable meeting in Baku, which brought together parliamentarians, judges and international and local experts on legislative processes related to libel and freedom of information.

Since Azerbaijan was in the process of amending and adopting legislation on these issues, the main focus of discussion were the two legal reviews commissioned by the two organizations in autumn. As a participating State in both the OSCE and Council of Europe, Azerbaijan is bringing its legislation into line with international commitments and standards. Therefore, the exchange of views between local and international experts was an important element in this process.

Legal reviews. At the request of the Albanian Prime Minister, the Parliamentary Media Committee and the National Council of Radio and Television, the OSCE-established Veronica Guerin Legal Defence Fund prepared seven legal reviews for Albania. Of these, two were commissioned jointly with the Council of Europe.

The Fund, which was created in 2003 by Freimut Duve, the first Representative on Freedom of the Media, provides legal defence for journalists in need. It is being financed through voluntary contributions from participating States, human rights organizations and individuals. In total, the Fund presented 18 legal reviews in 2004.

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The Representative on Freedom of the Media, Miklos Haraszti, briefing the press on the South Caucasus Media Conference in Tbilisi

Access to official information continued to be a major problem area for the media in the southern Caucasus. Some of the main obstacles highlighted by journalists at the Conference were similar with those in Central Asia: poor implementation of existing laws on access to information, excessive state-secrets laws and criminal penalties for their violation, lack of public awareness of legal rights to access to information, and a low level of professionalism among the media.

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Activities of the Secretariat | Partnerships for Security and Co-operation

ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT

Based in Vienna, the Secretariat provides crucial support to participating States, the Chairmanship and the Organization's Fund Managers. About 330 staff members work in the Secretariat's different units. Despite considerable challenges in 2004, the Secretariat was able to fulfil its supporting role. The bold management reform started by the Secretary General in 2001 was completed. Thanks to the reform, the Organization improved its ability to implement and operationalize the political decisions taken by the participating States with speed and flexibility. However, the reform process needs to go further. The OSCE requires continuity, coherence and co-ordination, all of which have been advanced by strengthening the role of the Secretary General at the Sofia Ministerial Council.

Ensuring staff security. OSCE staff members often work under difficult conditions. Following the steps taken by the Secretary General, security awareness has increased across the Organization, along with visibly improved management of day-to-day security-related activities and respective monitoring. All security issues have been placed under the Secretary General's direct supervision, and a Security Management Unit was established in the Office of the Secretary General. A new Security Management System was brought into force in December to enable the effective and efficient conduct of the Organization's activities while ensuring the security, safety and well-being of the staff.

Conflict Prevention Centre. Providing advice to the Chairmanship and active support to all OSCE field operations are at the core of the Conflict Prevention Centre's (CPC) work. The Centre helped the Chairmanship monitor, among others, developments in Transnistria, Moldova and in the southern Caucasus with a view to strengthening efforts in the negotiations towards peaceful settlements of the conflicts there. Additional contributions were devoted to supporting the Chairmanship's specific initiatives, such as promoting education as a tool for conflict prevention. The CPC also remained a key pillar of the OSCE's politico-military dimension of security, providing its expertise to the Forum for Security Co-operation. It assisted participating States with field projects and assessment visits of small arms and light weapons and conventional ammunition. In the field of border management and security issues, a team of experts successfully conducted the first phase of the OSCE South Eastern Europe Cross-border Co-operation Programme.

Combating terrorism. Serving as the focal point for OSCE counter-terrorism activities, the Action against Terrorism Unit contributed significantly to the implementation of respective decisions taken by participating States, complementing the work of the UN in this top priority area. The Unit is leading OSCE efforts to support the ratification and implementation of the 12 universal counter-terrorism conventions and protocols through workshops and conferences. At the end of 2004, 33 participating States were parties to all 12 instruments.

Combating trafficking in human beings. The Secretariat strongly supports the Organization's approach in the fight against human trafficking, covering all three OSCE dimensions. Following the appointment of Helga Konrad as the Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in May, the Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit was established within the Secretariat. Serving as the focal point for co-ordination with other relevant organizations, the Unit's task is to render support to the participating States, the Special Representative, the Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General in the effective fight against human trafficking (see also page 19).

Policing. The Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU) further improved the capacity of participating States to address threats posed by criminal activity and assisted States in upholding the rule of law. Its Police Assistance Programme for Kyrgyzstan, for example, is due for completion in July 2005. Needs Assessment Missions were carried out in Armenia and Azerbaijan, with one planned for Georgia. The Unit also continued to contribute substantially to the follow-up work of the Ohrid Process regarding border-policing issues in south-eastern Europe. In addition, the SPMU sought to complement the work already being undertaken by the OSCE to combat trafficking in human beings.

Economic and environmental dimension. In 2004, following the adoption of the Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension at the Sofia Ministerial Council, the OSCE considerably increased its involvement in the economic and environmental dimension. It assessed the recommendations made at the 12th Economic Forum in Prague and suggested concrete follow-up measures in the areas of small business development, investment, human capacity-building, economic integration and anti-corruption. Since the 2004 Economic Forum, the OSCE has also been reviewing the economic and environmental commitments made by the participating States. A key partner in this effort is the UN Economic Commission for Europe, with whom the Secretary General signed a Memorandum of Understanding at the Sofia Ministerial Council. In addition, the OCEEA launched a manual on 'Best Practices in Combating Corruption', and the combat of money laundering and the financing of terrorism was strengthened. Following an initial assessment, the OSCE-UN Environmental and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) identified a number of specific environmental issues warranting international action. In July, NATO associated itself with the Initiative.

Raising the OSCE's public profile. The Press and Public Information Section launched the new full-colour 'OSCE Magazine', replacing the nine-year old 'OSCE Newsletter'. Featuring a substantial upgrade in form and content, the publication is available in English and Russian in printed and online versions. The OSCE website was redesigned and is scheduled to be re-launched in early 2005. Both measures aimed at attracting a wider target audience and making information about OSCE activities more easily available. Traditional and online media continued to be targeted

and serviced by PPIS press officers, while those with a close professional or academic interest were supported via an expanded visitors programme.

Finalizing the management reform. Initiated by the Secretary General in 2001, the bold management reform is approaching completion. The reform leaves the OSCE better prepared and equipped to support participating States, the Chairmanship and its fund managers in dealing with day-to-day operational issues and to turn political decisions into action. At the heart of the reform is the unified budget process, which is a key tool for the Permanent Council in directing and controlling the OSCE's work. It outlines concrete annual objectives and outputs for OSCE programmes.

To deliver best practice in the management processes, the OSCE has introduced a modern management system based on the latest information and communication technology, the Integrated Resources Management System (IRMA). This new system calls for assigning clear individual responsibilities, corresponding approval authorities and lines of accountability. The investment into IRMA – and its document management system, *DOC.In* – amounts to a total of €7.4 million, with substantial savings to be achieved through streamlined management processes. IRMA has received praise from the OSCE's external auditors and has drawn considerable attention from other international organizations.

Human resources management. The Department of Human Resources was actively involved in the development and implementation of IRMA components related to human resources activities. The primary mechanism for recruitment of seconded staff for field operations – the Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams (REACT) – was successfully linked to IRMA. For contracted posts in the Secretariat, Institutions and field operations, a web-based recruitment system was implemented, allowing candidates to apply online and speeding up the recruitment process. In addition, training increased in quantity and quality. The lack of legal capacity and privileges and immunities in most participating States continued to be a source of difficulties for the smooth operation of OSCE activities.

Gender issues. The main activity in the area of gender issues was the revision of the existing Action Plan for Gender Issues. The Senior Adviser on Gender Issues continuously assisted the informal Working Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking in the process, which resulted in the adoption of PC Decision No. 638 on the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. In addition, the guide for OSCE Staff on Gender Aspects in Post-Conflict Situations from 2001 was updated to ensure its use as a reference document for mission members in their gender-related work. The Secretariat also continued to promote and monitor compliance with the professional working environment policy by its own staff.

Internal oversight. In the past year, great strides were made in re-engineering and professionalizing the Office of Internal Oversight. Staffed with certified auditors, Internal Oversight has become an important tool in monitoring compliance with the regulatory framework and in providing assurance on the adequacy of internal controls throughout the Organization. The function of oversight, both internal and external, will be strengthened by the Audit Committee, established by the Permanent Council in December 2004. In using best practices, Internal Oversight relies on risk assessment methodologies to develop its audit workplan. The 2005 plan takes into account risks associated with activities and operations and also considers the priorities of the Organization as well as the need to balance the audit work among field presences, the Institutions, and the Secretariat. While audit work for adequacy of controls and compliance will continue to underpin the Internal Oversight programme, the Office will expand its activities to pursue the conduct of management audits and inspections, programme evaluations, and investigations. In addition, previous audit recommendations will be followed up to ensure compliance by management.

Co-operation with other international organizations. The Secretariat continued to strengthen links with partner organizations at all levels. The OSCE played an active role in the UN Security Council meeting with regional organizations on co-operation in the stabilization processes. Relations between the Secretariat and the EU were also further strengthened. Working ties with the Council of Europe were especially dynamic, and consultations with NATO continued at all levels.

Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. In co-operation with the OSCE Troika, the Secretariat continued to intensify relations with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. Mongolia was welcomed as a new Asian Partner for Co-operation, following the adoption of a Permanent Council Decision on 2 December 2004. For the first time, the OSCE reached out to a Partner State in election monitoring. In October, an OSCE Election Support Team of close to 50 election experts was sent to Afghanistan for the country's first-ever presidential election – a milestone for both Afghanistan and the OSCE.

Report of the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre

“The CPC combines direct support to field operations with a strong expertise in the politico-military dimension of security – it has thus become a unique model of successful interaction between geographical and thematic units. Partner States and organizations have demonstrated vivid interest in our conflict prevention model. The CPC’s experiences and expertise have been very much in demand this year.”

Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre

The Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) plays a key role in supporting the OSCE’s activities in the field, co-ordinating the activities of the field operations and assisting in the implementation of their mandates. It is also the focal point in the Secretariat for developing the OSCE’s role in the politico-military dimension. In particular, the CPC is responsible for supporting the Chairmanship, the Secretary General and the decision-making bodies in implementing OSCE tasks in the areas of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation.

The CPC comprises:

- the Mission Programme Section, which acts as the primary point of co-ordination and liaison with the OSCE field operations;
- the Project Co-ordination Cell, which provides support to field operations in the planning, development, and evaluation of extra-budgetary projects;
- the Operations Planning Unit, which plans future operations and identifies potential crisis areas by providing early warning and analysis;
- the Situation/Communication Room, which monitors developments in the OSCE regions and serves as an emergency crisis cell;
- the Forum for Security Co-operation Support Unit, which provides advice and expertise to the politico-military dimension of security.

In 2004, the CPC was at the centre of the OSCE’s efforts to improve the overall coherence of the Organization’s programmatic activities, to ensure adequate balance across the three OSCE dimensions and appropriate co-ordination with other international and sub-regional organizations. With its role of providing direct support to the organization’s field operations, the CPC was well placed to bring the field perspective into first dimension events it organized and co-chaired, such as the Annual Security Review Conference, the OSCE-UNODC Conference on Border Security and Management, a special meeting on de-mining and the Conference on the Implementation of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition. Conversely, the CPC had the opportunity to inject inputs from these events into the field through regular meetings with Heads of field operations.



CPC Director Ambassador Lamberto Zannier (right) and OSCE Secretary General Ambassador Ján Kubiš at a seminar of the South Eastern Europe Cross-Border Co-operation Programme in Vienna

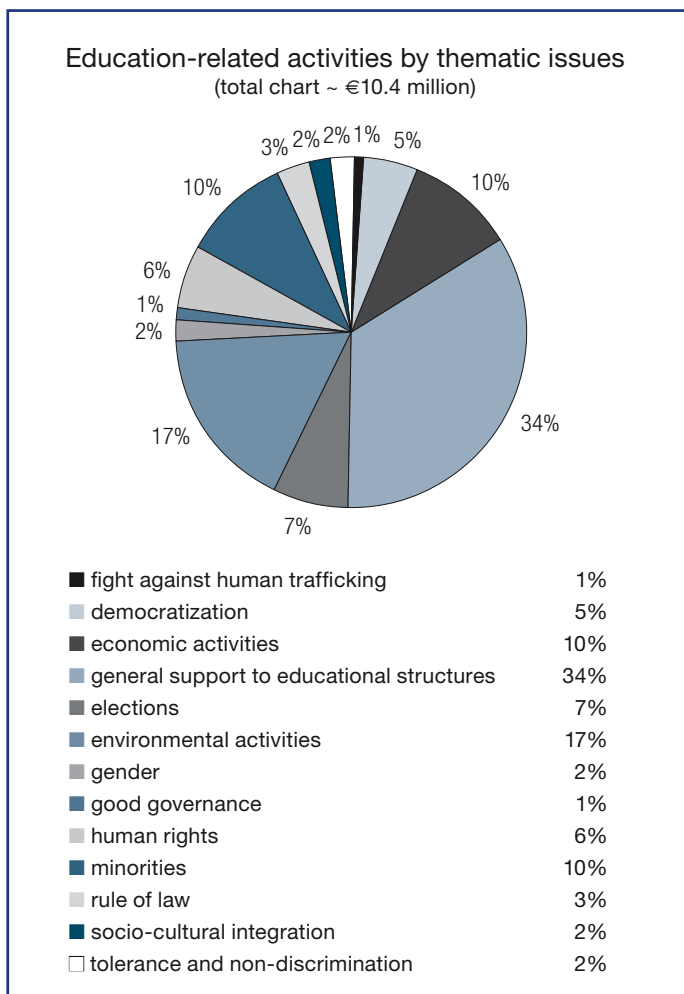
Liaising with OSCE field operations: the Mission Programme Section. The Mission Programme Section is the primary point of co-ordination between the OSCE field operations, the Secretariat and the Chairmanship. It consists of four regional desks, covering south-eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The Mission Programme Officers responsible for these areas provided advice to field operations on programmatic areas as well as policy and management issues and helped prepare visits by the Chairman-in-Office and other OSCE officials to the field. In several instances, early warning signals on developments in the field were issued to the Chairmanship and the delegations of the OSCE participating States.

A number of issues required specific attention by the Mission Programme Section in 2004. These included:

- co-ordination by the south-eastern Europe Desk of joint efforts by the OSCE field operations, the Institutions and the Chairmanship to hold a first meeting of local practitioners on witness issues related to war crimes proceedings, which took place in Serbia and Montenegro in November;
- monitoring by the Eastern Europe Desk of the crisis in Transdnistria following the closure of Latin-script schools and supporting the Chairmanship’s efforts in the negotiations to find a peaceful settlement;

- preparation by the Caucasus Desk of proposals for the Chairmanship for future action on conflicts; and
- together with the Operations Planning Unit, advice to the Chairmanship on education issues and assistance by the Central Asia Desk with the organization of a ministerial conference on 'Education as an Investment into the Future' held in Tashkent in April.



Co-ordinating extra-budgetary activities: Project Co-ordination

Cell. The OSCE field operations are increasingly implementing projects that are funded through extra-budgetary resources. The role of the Project Co-ordination Cell is to support the field operations in the planning, development and evaluation of these extra-budgetary activities. During the planning phase, co-ordination with OSCE Institutions and the Secretariat is especially important. In 2004, the Cell assessed a total of 121 extra-budgetary projects planned by field operations, representing a total value of more than €18.7 million (www.osce.org/osceprojects).

Based on a resource manual developed with the Department of Human Resources in 2003, the Cell contributed to training classes for all new staff, thus consolidating the OSCE's approach to management. In partnership with the OCEEA and the ODIHR, the Cell also organized a joint workshop to plan future activities in

Uzbekistan. The CPC thereby reinforced the co-operation among field operations, Institutions and the Secretariat.

In light of the Bulgarian Chairmanship's priority of promoting education as a tool for conflict prevention, the Cell produced a comprehensive review of all OSCE education projects by systematically pooling and analysing information on all initiatives in this area.

Expert advice for the Chairmanship: Operations Planning

Unit. The Operations Planning Unit is a key tool to support the Chairmanship and delegations in planning for future field operations and identifying potential crisis areas by providing early warning and analysis. The Unit also has a small analytical team, which prepared background papers and analysis. The team also played a major role in assisting the Chairmanship with the preparations for and follow-up to the Annual Security Review Conference held in June.

To further develop operational links with partner organizations, the Unit participated in the NATO Crisis Management Exercise (CMX 04) in March and the EU Crisis Management Exercise (CME 04) in May. It also observed the first NATO-Russia Procedural Exercise in September. The Unit actively shared its experiences with other international organizations such as the UN, which resulted in further improvement of operational liaison structures and will help respond more quickly and efficiently to developments in the field.

Dealing with border security and management. In 2004, the CPC established in the Operations Planning Unit a team of three experts to deal with border management and security issues. One of their main responsibilities was to conduct the first phase of the OSCE South Eastern Europe Cross-border Co-operation Programme. The Programme consists of a series of six seminars and workshops held in the region to promote cross-border management agreements on such issues as transition to border policing, joint training exercises, co-operation of law enforcement agencies, and 'blue border' (sea, rivers and lakes) issues. The seminars were well attended by senior members from south-eastern European border police authorities. The second phase of the programme, scheduled to begin in 2005, focuses on the more operational aspects of the agreements developed in the first phase.

Responding to requests from participating States, the team conducted assessment visits to Georgia and Central Asia to identify areas where the OSCE could assist in enhancing border management and security. In addition, the CPC gave active support to the informal OSCE Working Group on Borders and played a major role in the preparation and holding of a joint OSCE-UNODC Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security Issues in September.

Providing service 24 hours, seven days a week: the SitRoom.

The team of duty officers in the Situation/Communication Room (SitRoom) continued to provide round-the-clock information service and served as a vital point of contact for the Organization,

especially outside normal working hours. The SitRoom ensures timely dissemination of information during times of crisis, supports medical evacuation of staff if and when necessary, and provides an early warning function to the Secretary General through its continuous monitoring of electronic media and the Internet.

Forum for Security and Co-operation Support Unit. The Unit continued to support the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Chairmanship by providing expertise and detailed monthly and quarterly surveys regarding the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures by participating States. It also prepared and drafted substantive background material for important meetings in the politico-military dimension including the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting, the Annual Security Review Conference, and a special FSC meeting on the Implementation of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition.

In support of the FSC's activities in the field of small arms and light weapons, the FSC Support Unit produced a comprehensive overview of the destruction and export and import of all categories of these weapons in the OSCE area. Continuing a project begun in 2003, the Unit published the 'Handbook of Best Practices on Small Arms and Light Weapons' in all six OSCE working languages. A wide dissemination of the Handbook's provisions was accomplished through two regional seminars – in Ashgabad in May and in Skopje in July. The representatives of the Unit headed the OSCE team of experts to Belarus and Tajikistan for assessment visits, the first concrete steps towards the improvement of stockpile security and destruction of surplus small arms and ammunition in the OSCE area, which will be continued in 2005.

Improving information exchange: the Communications

Network. The OSCE Communications Network, which provides direct communication links between the capitals of participating States, was further upgraded in 2004. The body responsible for oversight of the network, the OSCE Communications Group, continued to improve the system's efficiency, reliability, and usability, by beginning the transition to a new operating system and a simplified network architecture. Another new participating State, Malta, joined the Network, bringing the total number of connected OSCE States to 48. The upgraded Communications Network joins a number of initiatives to enhance the Organization's competitive edge and value in the challenge of conflict prevention.

www.osce.org/cpc



Inspecting surplus ammunition during an assessment visit to Tajikistan

To increase awareness of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security among parliamentarians from OSCE States, the CPC organized a conference on parliamentary oversight of armed forces. The event, which focused on the development of national practices in implementing parliamentary oversight of armed forces in a changing security environment, was attended by more than 100 parliamentarians and government officials from the 55 participating States.

Action against Terrorism Unit

Established in 2002, the Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) co-ordinates all OSCE activities in the field of countering and preventing terrorism. The Unit works closely with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (UNCTC), UNODC, and other international organizations. Its work includes providing capacity-building assistance to OSCE participating States in addressing current and emerging terrorist threats.

In co-operation with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the ATU organized the first large-scale international meeting on the threat of shoulder-fired missiles to civil aviation in 2004. As a result, several governments introduced concrete measures to strengthen airport security. The Unit and the ICAO also held the first-ever international conference to further the implementation of ICAO travel document standards.

Unprotected stockpiles of radioactive material represent another serious potential terrorist threat. Together with the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Unit explored areas where the OSCE might complement efforts to strengthen the safety and security of such material.

In direct support of the UN's global counter-terrorism efforts, the ATU co-hosted the Vienna follow-up conference to the UNCTC special meeting with international, regional and sub-regional organizations in March.

The Unit continued to support the ratification and implementation of the 12 UN anti-terrorism instruments. Workshops and bilateral consultations organized together with the UN and the ODIHR resulted in a five per cent rise in the ratification rate within the OSCE region in 2004, bringing it up to 88 per cent.

One of the ATU's key functions is to provide counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to participating States. With financial support from Germany and the United States, the ATU organized four sub-regional workshops on ways of preventing the forgery of travel documents. The workshops involved 99 experts from 26 OSCE capitals and international organizations.

To foster timely information exchange among counter-terrorism practitioners, the OSCE established a Counter-Terrorism Network'. The ATU maintains the Network and circulates a monthly electronic newsletter providing practical training and capacity-building information to all participating States.

The ATU co-operates closely with the OSCE informal Group of Friends on Combating Terrorism, which has become a useful medium for interaction between the Secretariat and participating States as well as a major forum for reviewing implementation of anti-terrorism commitments and developing the OSCE's response to emerging terrorist threats.

To avoid duplication of efforts, the ATU maintains an up-to-date inventory of all OSCE and non-OSCE counter-terrorism, border security and law enforcement programmes in the region. The ATU provides this information to OSCE programme planners and holds workshops to guide them on activities related to counter-terrorism in the region.

www.osce.org/atu

Reuters/Bogdan Cristel



Unprotected stockpiles of radioactive material represent a serious potential terrorist threat for OSCE States.

Strategic Police Matters Unit

“Policing is in some respects the perfect OSCE issue, bringing together security and human rights. An efficient, accountable police force that is trusted by the population it serves does not have to resort to brutality or torture to obtain information needed to solve crimes. ... When there is effective, democratically controlled policing, societies will be more stable and more integrated. We should not wait until crises deteriorate to the point where peace-keeping is required. We should do more to strengthen policing within States, where necessary with the support of the international community.”

Solomon Passy

The OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century adopted at the Maastricht Ministerial Council in December 2003 emphasizes the role of the Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU) in improving the capacity of participating States to address threats posed by criminal activity and to assist States in upholding the rule of law.

The Police Assistance Programme for Kyrgyzstan, comprising eight technical and community projects, began implementation in July 2003. It has progressed well and is due for completion by July 2005. The Kyrgyz presidential administration continued to relate the outputs of the programme to its long-term police reform plans. In Kazakhstan, the SPMU provided technical assistance to support the Kazakh Ministry of Internal Affairs' transition to intelligence-led policing and started discussions on developing new initiatives focusing on community-based policing and basic recruit training. In Armenia and Azerbaijan, the SPMU completed Needs Assessment Missions, which resulted in the design of specific Police Assistance Programmes for each of the two countries. In Georgia, the SPMU prepared to launch a Needs Assessment Mission in order to determine the basis for a future Police Assistance Programme.

The SPMU continued to contribute substantially to the follow-up work of the ‘Ohrid Process on Border Management and Security’ with regard to border-policing needs in the States of south-eastern Europe. One of the recommendations under Phase I of the OSCE South-Eastern Europe Cross-Border Co-operation Programme was the wish for assistance by the States to implement the different agreements drafted during this period. Phase II will focus on the operational level of the seven-State Border Police, and assistance from the SPMU is foreseen in criminal intelligence, criminal investigations and development of risk analysis.

Fight against human trafficking. The SPMU sought to complement the work already undertaken by the OSCE to combat trafficking in human beings by starting to develop a range of investigative strategies for police agencies, which will focus on offenders and evidence-gathering, as an alternative to relying on victim testimony alone. Trafficking in human beings involves a range of other serious offences, such as illegal immigration, forgery, corruption, and money laundering, all of which provide other opportunities to gather intelligence, initiate investigations and corroborate testimonies in order to prosecute traffickers. (For more on the OSCE's role in the fight against human trafficking, see page 19.)

In Moldova, the SPMU assisted with a Needs Assessment on the means to strengthen the capacity of the police to combat human trafficking. The project was developed based on the work begun by the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje.

In July, the SPMU organized a two-day workshop in Vienna for police experts on the subject of investigating sexual crime. The event represented a valuable opportunity to share acquired knowledge in the handling of sexual crimes and was the first of a planned series of workshops throughout the OSCE region. More than 60 police investigators from over 20 European and Central Asian countries and a panel of distinguished experts participated in the workshop.

More activities of the SPMU are presented in the Field Operations section.



Graduates of Kyrgyzstan's Police Academy at a ceremony in Bishkek in June

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

At the Maastricht Ministerial Council in December 2003, OSCE Foreign Ministers adopted a new Strategy Document for the OSCE Economic and Environmental Dimension. The document provides recommendations and commitments by the participating States aimed at addressing economic and environmental threats to security and stability in the OSCE region in the 21st century.

In 2004, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) focused on implementing the new Strategy Document while continuing its activities in several important areas, such as:

- preventing human trafficking through co-operation between the public and private sector;
- developing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);
- combating corruption;
- fighting money-laundering and financing of terrorism; and
- fostering co-operation on environmental issues.

Implementing the OSCE Strategy Document. The development of a business-friendly environment and the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises remained a key element of the Office's activities in 2004. At the same time, it extended its efforts in the field of human capital development in the areas of higher education and vocational training.

In the environmental field, the Office continued to promote the implementation of international environmental conventions. The Environment and Security Initiative, a three-year programme created by the OSCE, UNEP and the UNDP in November 2003, launched several new projects in the OSCE region. The Initiative's main focus is on risk assessment, policy development and institution- and capacity-building.

Economic activities

12th Economic Forum 2004. Education and institution-building were a top priority at the 12th Economic Forum held in Prague from 31 May to 4 June, which was entitled 'New Challenges for Building-up Institutional and Human Capacity for Economic Development and Co-operation'. Participants concentrated mainly on investment strategies and the requirements for developing market economies, above all professional skills.

In preparation for the Forum, the Office organized two seminars which focused on how to stimulate foreign and domestic investment and on the professional skills needed for developing a market economy.



Courtesy Czech Foreign Ministry

Chairman-in-Office Passy and Czech Foreign Minister Cyril Svoboda at the OSCE Economic Forum in Prague

After assessing the recommendations made at the Forum, the Office launched several activities in the areas of SME development, investment, human capacity-building, economic integration and good governance. Together with the 2005 Slovenian OSCE Chairmanship, it also began preparations for the 13th Economic Forum, which will be on 'Demographic Trends, Migration and Integrating Persons belonging to National Minorities: Ensuring Security and Sustainable Development in the OSCE Area'.

Preventing trafficking in human beings. The Office continued its anti-trafficking programme, which targets both the demand and supply side of trafficking in human beings by promoting self-regulation of the private sector and raising awareness in so-called countries of destination, in particular in the West. The programme also includes an initiative to create economic empowerment opportunities for potential victims of trafficking.

"The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities is currently implementing a Code of Conduct for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism in Romania and Bulgaria. This Code was recognized by Western countries, NGOs and tourism operators as a valuable preventive and awareness raising tool to mitigate against the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children."

Marcin Świącicki, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Developing and strengthening small business. Small and medium-sized businesses are at the heart of job creation in market economies and in countries of transition. In 2004, the Co-ordinator's Office paid special attention to supporting the education of young people in the fundamentals of entrepreneurship in post-conflict regions and transitional economies. A particularly successful project is the Youth Entrepreneurship Seminar (YES) Programme, which is currently being implemented in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Uzbekistan.

Sharing best practices in combating corruption. The Office published a 'Manual on Best Practices in Combating Corruption', compiling the latest experience from around the world. The Manual serves as a resource tool for legislators, public officials, media organizations, NGOs and all those concerned about corruption.

Combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. The fight against money-laundering and the suppression of terrorist financing remained an important priority of the Co-ordinator's Office. In November 2004, the Office and the UNODC's 'Global Programme against Money-Laundering' organized a workshop on the issue in Georgia. The event was attended by representatives from national institutions, government ministries, the Central Bank, the office of the prosecutor-general, customs, the judiciary, parliamentary committees and the banking sector. Experts from the UN, the Council of Europe and the OSCE contributed to the event.

Environmental activities

Progress on the Environment and Security Initiative. After the signing of the OSCE-UNEP-UNDP Memorandum of Understanding in November 2003, the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) moved from the planning stage to implementation. Significant progress was achieved with regard to the ENVSEC methodology for identification of hot spots. In Central Asia, south-eastern Europe and the Caucasus, more than 40 projects were launched, tailored to deal with the identified environmental threats to security and encourage opportunities for co-operation (www.envsec.org).

In close co-operation with local experts and international partners, the organizations prepared reports on environment-related security concerns in south-eastern Europe and the southern Caucasus. In Central Asia, the regional assessment carried out during 2003 had identified the Ferghana valley as an environment and security 'hot spot'. During 2004, the second phase of the Initiative concluded with an in-depth assessment of the area, the creation of an environment and security monitoring system and the elaboration of a specific work programme for this sensitive region.

In July 2004, NATO agreed to associate itself with the Initiative.



Assistance with water resource management is an important element of the OSCE's activities in the economic-environmental dimension.

Fostering co-operation on transboundary river basins. The Co-ordinator's Office supported co-operation agreements on the Chu and Talas Rivers between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and on the Sava River between Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia and Montenegro. In the southern Caucasus, the Office worked together with the NATO Science for Peace Programme and OSCE field operations to re-establish a regional water monitoring system.

In Eastern Europe, the Office worked with the Environment and Human Settlements Division of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) to help bring about a co-operation agreement between Ukraine and Moldova (including the Transdnestrrian region) on integrated water resource management in the Dniestr river basin.

Further details on the OSCE's economic and environmental activities are described in the Field Operations section.

www.osce.org/eea

Senior Adviser on Gender Issues

The year 2004 was marked by the revision of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality complemented by continued efforts in gender mainstreaming, staff training on gender issues, and safeguarding a professional working environment free from any form of harassment and discrimination.

Recognizing a number of shortcomings in the implementation of the 2000 Action Plan for Gender Issues, especially in the fields of training, management, and recruitment, the Senior Adviser put the revision of the Plan at the top of her agenda in 2004. The informal Working Group on Gender Equality and anti-Trafficking, comprising representatives of the OSCE delegations, received substantial assistance from the Senior Adviser in revising the document. In December, the Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 638 on the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, followed by Decision No. 14/04 adopted at the Sofia Ministerial Council.

The new Action Plan stresses that gender mainstreaming – the process of taking into account both women’s and men’s concerns and experiences in the decision-making process – requires consistent, systematic attention to a gender perspective in all activities of the Organization. It also emphasizes that gender equality contributes to comprehensive security, which is a goal of OSCE activities in all its three dimensions.

In order to raise awareness of and build capacity in the integration of gender aspects into the work of the field operations, the Senior Adviser continued to train field staff on gender mainstreaming, women’s human rights, women and leadership, trafficking in human beings and the OSCE Code of Conduct. Training seminars were carried out for a total of 300 staff members in the Presence in Albania, the Missions to Serbia and Montenegro and to Moldova, and the Centres in Bishkek and in Almaty.

Making mission members aware of gender issues and human trafficking

The Code of Conduct for OSCE Mission Members is part of the Organization’s staff regulations and covers behaviour of staff members with regard to human trafficking. It refers to staff members’ relations with national authorities and underlines the importance of integrity, loyalty, impartiality and compliance with accepted human rights standards. In 2000, the Code was amended to take into account the problem of human trafficking in countries with a large international field presence. Field staff are made aware that using the services of a trafficking victim contributes to the profits of traffickers and the harm done to victims.

To help make gender mainstreaming a continuous and sustainable process, the Senior Adviser developed a questionnaire on gender analysis for field staff, outlining various gender-related components for project development. In addition, the 2001 Guide for OSCE Staff on Gender Aspects in Post-Conflict Situations was updated. Showcasing best practices, examples of lessons learned and



Women play a central role in conflict prevention and peace reconstruction processes.

relevant norms, the Guide serves as a reference tool for gender-related work in the field, highlighting the role of women in conflict prevention and peace reconstruction processes.

Working as a consultative network, the Focal Points for Gender Issues in field operations, the Senior Adviser and the ODIHR’s Gender Unit continued to share information and best practices. In co-operation with the ODIHR, the Senior Adviser organized an annual workshop for the Focal Points, which focused on practical experience, progress in women-oriented activities and operational needs.

Another priority for the Senior Adviser was the revision of the OSCE Policy on a Professional Working Environment. In response to individual requests for guidance and advice with regard to actual cases of policy violation, the Senior Adviser also provided expert assistance and support.

To further promote a professional and gender-sensitive management culture and working environment, the Senior Adviser focused in particular on the Mediators appointed in the OSCE field operations. A roundtable meeting resulted in a set of suggestions to change the OSCE professional working environment policy, which will be considered in the revision process.

Report of the Director for Management and Finance

A management revolution

With the launching of the completed Integrated Resource Management System (IRMA) on 1 January 2005, the OSCE will start to benefit from a profound management revolution. Simply put, IRMA relocates managerial power, placing it in the hands of the fund managers of OSCE field missions and Institutions. It accomplishes this by taking full advantage of an information system completely integrated with management tasks, empowering just two persons – the Fund Manager or designee and the Chief of Fund Administration – to mount operational programmes, budget for and authorize expenditures, evaluate progress and close out their operations once their programmatic goals are met.

Why the need for change? As it evolved from the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe into an organization with large field operations and Institutions, the demands made on the OSCE outstripped the original management mechanisms – so much so that, in 2000, the external auditors refused to certify the OSCE accounts without reservation. After a comprehensive review, in mid-2002, the Secretary General called for radical management reform. Taking into account the fact that the Permanent Council's political decisions found concrete expression in the Organization's operational and programmatic work, the Secretary General directed that a completely new management system needed to be constructed. It would be:

- speedy, to meet new political challenges;
- flexible, to adapt to rapidly changing environments; and
- transparent, to establish clear lines of authority throughout the OSCE system and ensure accountability.

And all this, while bringing a reduction in administrative support costs.

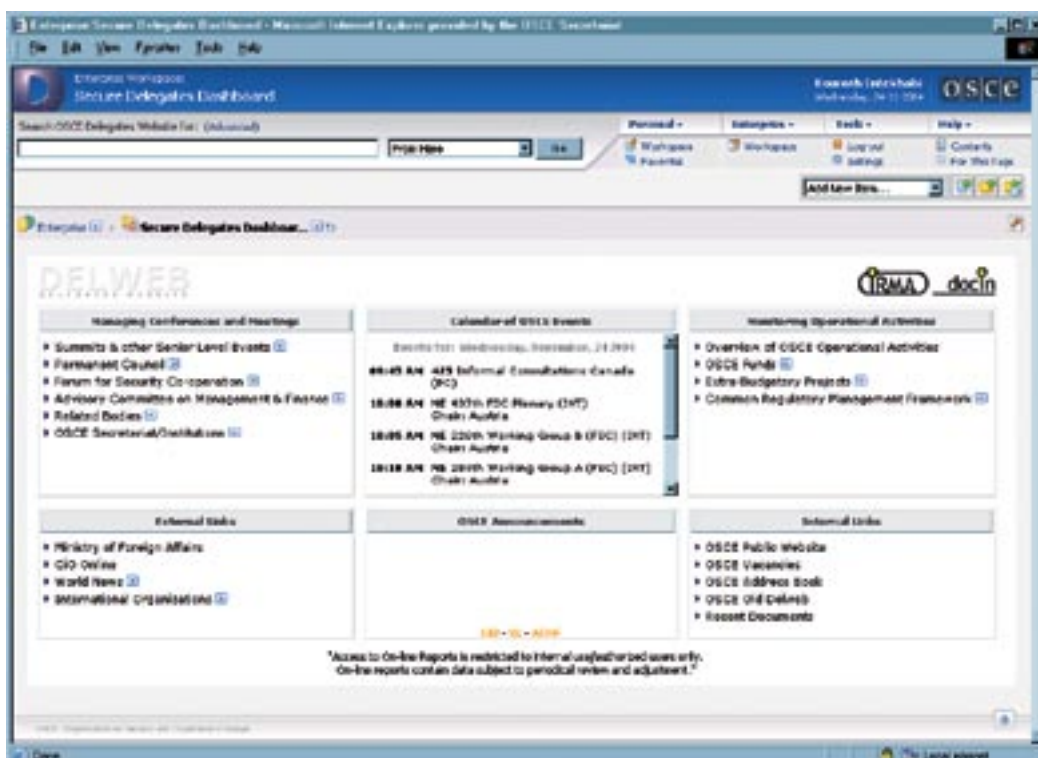
IRMA – A powerful tool for all elements of the Organization.

As IRMA, and its document management system, *DOC.In*, are based on off-the-shelf software applications, the total investment costs amounted to some €7.4 million. Annual administrative support cost savings should be running at an annual rate of some €15 to €18 million by 2006 – thus fulfilling the Secretary General's financial goal.

The approved Unified Budget, embodying the political priorities of the Permanent Council, represents the core tool by which the participating States direct and control the OSCE's work. IRMA will allow the Fund Managers, Heads of Missions and Institutions – working with their budgetary allocations – to implement fully the political will of the Permanent Council.

As part of the management reform process – and pending approval of the Financial Regulations by participating States – a new common regulatory framework will soon be introduced throughout the Organization. The new Financial Regulations and Rules are written in more concise language. Furthermore, some 220 instructions, circulars and directives have been replaced by 12 clear and tightly-drafted Financial/Administrative Instructions.

Gaining a Driver's Licence for the 'IRMA Dashboard' Prior to IRMA's launch, administrative and programme staff received extensive training. By 1 January 2005, some 3,500 person/training days had been dedicated to these sessions. Some 800 staff members



The Delegates Website/*Dashboard* is a new secure information service designed to assist OSCE Delegates in their decision-making. A key communication tool between participating States, the Secretariat, Institutions and Field Operations, it provides easy access to organization-wide information in an easy and transparent manner.



Baptism of Fire for IRMA: the 'Yellow Laptop' in Kabul, Afghanistan, as OSCE Communications Officer Victor Kryshevich logs on via satellite during the October 2004 presidential election.

can now perform all managerial and administrative tasks from an on-screen control-panel known as the *'IRMA Dashboard'*.

The *Dashboard* gives OSCE managers real-time information on the resources available. But just as car drivers do not need a sophisticated understanding of automotive engineering to control their vehicles, so project managers need only rely on the *Dashboard* to implement their programmes. For example, it includes easy-to-use recruitment and procurement applications. However, unlike most vehicles, the *Dashboard* also allows the 'driver's' progress to be monitored on a real-time basis by others in the Secretariat and in delegations, particularly those that have contributed extra-budgetary funds.

To ensure accountability to participating States and allow OSCE delegations access to reliable and up-to-date information on operational activities and management issues, the Delegates' Website was also improved and linked to a specially developed *'Dashboard for Delegations'*. It provides a common and secure platform that connects participating States with the Secretariat, Institutions and field operations.

The Yellow Laptop – a civilian rapid deployment capability.

IRMA is a powerful tool in the hands of a trained fund manager and a chief of fund administration. But the system is also inde-

pendent of location. Through a simple laptop with GPS capabilities, a small team could open a field operation from little more than a tent in any emergency.

The OSCE will soon be issuing laptops – identified with a bright yellow label – offering this possibility, with the purchasing power of a credit card that is limited only by the operation's fund. Yellow Laptops are thus a symbol of IRMA – responsive and adaptable to all contingencies. The success of the OSCE's management reforms will provide it with a civilian rapid deployment capacity, allowing participating States to react quickly to new political challenges.

Approval and kudos. OSCE external auditors from Sweden as well as the UK's National Audit Office have commended the management reforms culminating in IRMA. Interest in learning from the management reform experience of IRMA has also come from a number of the OSCE's partner organizations. Despite tight timeframes and ambitious goals, the implementation of the IRMA project began six months ahead of the three-year schedule. IRMA has responded, point by point, to the challenges set by the Secretary General in 2002. Starting with its implementation in January 2005, the Organization's efforts in the field of management and finance will concentrate on consolidating the reforms, increasing their acceptance among staff and making sure that the new management philosophy firmly takes root.

Prague Office

As the initial home of the CSCE Secretariat (1991), the Prague Office inherited the historical and archive collections of CSCE/OSCE conference documents and is today the oldest institutional unit of the Organization.

The core task of the Prague Office – also known as the Research and Documentation Centre – is to preserve, maintain and make available the physical non-current OSCE records and archives as required by the Organization. It has also become the depository of documents generated and gathered by OSCE Missions that have been closed down have or completed their mandates.

During 2004, the Office worked in very close contact with the OSCE Secretariat's Central Record and Document Management Unit (CRDMU), part of the Department of Management and Finance. As in previous years, the Office disseminated the 'OSCE Magazine' and other publications to almost 3,000 subscribers on the official mailing list. Prague Office staff also converted and posted large numbers of journals and decisions as well as statements on the public website (www.osce.org/docs/new_releases) in co-operation with the Press and Public Information Section as well as with the Documents Control Unit of the Conference Services Section. The Office offered these publications together with an average of 40 selected documents in both paper and digital format to 66 OSCE depository libraries worldwide.

Researchers. Seven years ago, the Researcher-in-Residence Programme was created within the Prague Office to give academics an opportunity to consult and study relevant OSCE conference or policy documents. In 2004, 14 researchers used the OSCE archives to conduct short- and long-term research projects. In addition to conference documents, researchers have access to an extensive CSCE/OSCE reference library which has recently been re-organized. This library includes over 30 masteral and doctoral theses based on research performed under the Research Programme.

International gatherings. The Prague Office supported the Office of the OSCE Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities in every preparatory and service phase of the 12th Economic Forum held from 31 May to 4 June, which was attended by a record number of almost 500 delegates.

On three occasions in 2004, meetings of the Minsk Group took place in Prague, and the Prague Office provided logistical support and practical assistance to participants.

Report of the Director for Human Resources

The streamlining of work processes and the strengthening of existing capacities guided the work of the Department of Human Resources in 2004. The Department was actively involved in further developing and implementing IRMA components that relate to human resources activities.

REACT – the primary mechanism for recruitment of seconded staff for field operations – was successfully linked to IRMA, while preserving the complete functionality of the original system and ensuring the rapid deployment of personnel for possible future large-scale operations.

For contracted posts in the OSCE Secretariat, Institutions and field operations, a web-based recruitment system under IRMA was introduced, enabling candidates to apply online and helping speed up the recruitment process. In total, 96 vacancy notices for contracted positions were issued in 2004, attracting 8,000 applications. Out of these, 374 candidates were invited for 61 interview rounds. Special consideration was given to including candidates from under-represented countries in the interview lists. Within the same period, 3,800 nominations for 560 seconded field positions were received and screened.

The implementation of the IRMA human resources module allowed the streamlining of personnel administration. All employee data is now stored in one system. In addition, an interim automated payroll system was implemented throughout the OSCE.

The Personnel Section continued to work on the classification of posts, which is part of an effort by the OSCE to make its human resources processes more transparent and equitable across the Organization. In total, more than 450 posts have so far been reviewed and classified. The Section also undertook initial classification of local positions in Croatia, Albania, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

Some changes and developments occurred in the OSCE's training activities. The regular, two-day induction programme to introduce new missions members to the Organization was expanded into a five-day general orientation programme, consisting of general induction and function-specific segments.

A new OSCE Training Strategy, approved in 2004 for the years covering 2005 to 2007, tasks the Training Section with increasing its support to pre-mission training programmes and institutions in participating States. In line with these requirements, the Section intensified its work with those States that are implementing the training dimension of REACT and organized a conference on training and recruitment in November. Among other issues, the meeting aimed at receiving feedback on how the OSCE can maximize its support to pre-mission training programmes and at updating the participating States' recruitment experts on OSCE field requirements.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION

Interaction between Organizations and Institutions in the OSCE Area

The OSCE's interaction with partner organizations and institutions is based on the Platform for Co-operative Security adopted at the Istanbul Summit in 1999, the relevant decisions of the Bucharest (2001) and Porto (2002) Ministerial Councils, and the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century, adopted at the Maastricht Ministerial Council in 2003. In all these documents, the OSCE participating States pledge to seek the development of political and operational coherence among all European bodies dealing with security threats and challenges.

In line with these decisions, the OSCE continued to strengthen political dialogue and information exchange with partner organizations in 2004. Development of synergies with the UN, the EU, NATO, the Council of Europe, and other regional and sub-regional organizations concerned with the promotion of security and stability in their regions was an important priority of the Organization. Its Secretariat, Institutions and field operations actively worked with their partners in pursuing this goal.

The Secretariat's Section for External Co-operation continued to be the focal point for fostering relations with partner organizations and institutions and the OSCE Partners for Co-operation. The Section conceptualized and organized high-level and expert meetings and seminars. It briefed and advised the OSCE Secretary General, the Chairmanship, the Troika, and the participating States on external co-operation matters and provided analytical support.

The Organization hosted the annual High-level Tripartite Meeting in Vienna in February between the OSCE, the UN, and the Council of Europe. The agenda of the meeting focused on ways to address threats to security and stability in the 21st century. As in previous years, the event was also attended by the European Commission, the Secretariat of the EU Council, the ICRC, and the IOM. The meeting was preceded by a working-level Target-Oriented Meeting, which concentrated on issues related to the southern Caucasus.

The Annual Security Review Conference held by the OSCE in Vienna in June provided a fruitful exchange of views and information on current major security issues, in particular anti-terrorism and border security and management. A number of organizations with security-related mandates participated in the two-day event, including the UNODC, NATO, the Council of Europe, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The OSCE also deepened its ties with international, regional and sub-regional organizations in the context of the international fight against terrorism. In co-operation with the UNODC, the Or-

ganization hosted the Follow-up Conference to the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Special Meeting in Vienna in March, an event attended by the EU, the Council of Europe, NATO, the CIS Anti-Terrorism Centre, the G8, and Interpol.

Highlighting the OSCE's co-operation with partners in security-related issues, a Joint OSCE-UNODC Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security was convened in September. The event underlined the participants' ability to provide assistance in capacity-building on border control and management issues. Representatives from 16 international organizations and institutions attended the conference in Vienna, including the UN agencies, the EU, the Council of Europe, NATO, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the CIS, the Shanghai Co-operation Organization, Europol, Interpol, the IOM, the World Customs Organization, and the Southeast Europe Co-operation Initiative (SECI).

In the area of good governance, the Office of the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities closely co-operated with the OECD, the UNDP, the Council of Europe, and the UNODC. The OSCE is also an observer in the International Network for Small and Medium Enterprises and has continued to strengthen its co-operation with the World Tourism Organization and the World Bank's South East European Enterprise Development to foster small business development.

On the parliamentary level, the OSCE's Parliamentary Assembly continued to co-operate with international parliamentary institutions such as the European Parliament and the Council of Europe's and NATO's Parliamentary Assemblies. Co-operation between 'Parliamentary Troikas', comprising both the OSCE's and the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assemblies and the European Parliament, was further strengthened in 2004. A Parliamentary Troika, which included the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Belarus, was engaged in an effort to promote dialogue and democratic development in Belarus. In south-eastern Europe, the parliamentary bodies joined efforts to establish a parliamentary dimension within the Stability Pact.

United Nations. The UN Secretary-General noted in his address to a UN Security Council meeting on co-operation between the UN and regional organizations in the processes of stabilization, held in New York in July, that the creation of "more institutionalized channels of co-operation would help ensure more efficiency and effectiveness, and perhaps even economies of scale." In pursuit of this goal, the UN intensified its dialogue with international and regional organizations.

The OSCE participated in this Security Council Meeting and in a number of other UN meetings. It also provided input to the UN High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. As a regional organization under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, the OSCE is an active participant in the follow-up process to the Fifth High-Level Meeting between the UN and regional organizations and the preparations for the Sixth Meeting.

Throughout 2004, the OSCE Secretary General held regular consultations with senior officials of various parts of the UN system. High-level contacts were extended to the respective inter-governmental bodies, the UN General Assembly and the OSCE Permanent Council. The OSCE Chairmanship addressed the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly on 'Co-operation between the UN and the OSCE'. The Special Representatives of the UN Secretary-General in Georgia, the UNHCR Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Executive Director of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, and the UNODC's Executive Director addressed the Permanent Council. Co-operation was further strengthened through regular working level contacts between Secretariat staff and their UN counterparts, such as the OSCE-UN staff level meeting that took place in New York in May.

In the context of its anti-terrorism co-operation with the UN, the OSCE held a Technical Experts Workshop on 'Countering the MANPADS (Man Portable Air Defence Systems) Threat to Civil

In the politico-military dimension, the Conflict Prevention Centre's FSC Support Unit worked closely with the UN Department on Disarmament Affairs on small arms and light weapons issues. The CPC participated in a number of events held by the UN Department on Disarmament Affairs, including a regional conference in May on the implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. In February, the implementation of the UN Register on Conventional Arms Transfers was discussed in the framework of the FSC.

The co-operation between the OCEEA and the UN Economic Commission for Europe on economic and environmental threats to security and early warning was further intensified with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding at the Sofia Ministerial Council meeting. In co-operation with the UNODC's Global Programme against Money Laundering, the OCEEA continued to run national workshops in interested participating States on combating money laundering and suppressing the financing of terrorism. Joint workshops were held in Albania and Georgia.

Under the auspices of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings¹, the ODIHR closely co-operated with UNICEF and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) on monitoring and assessing responses to trafficking in a follow-up project to the 2002 report on 'Trafficking in Human Beings in South-Eastern Europe'. The resulting project, the South-

"We are all vulnerable to new security threats, and to old threats that are evolving in complex and unpredictable ways. Either we allow this array of threats, and our responses to them, to divide us, or we come together to take effective action to meet all of them on the basis of a shared commitment to collective security."

Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General

Aviation Security at Airports' in Vienna, which was organized in co-operation with the International Civil Aviation Organization. The OSCE also promoted ratification and implementation of the 12 Universal Counter-Terrorism instruments and encouraged participating States to draft anti-terrorism legislation.

Daily consultations continued between the UNHCR Liaison Unit in Vienna and the OSCE Chairmanship, participating States, and the Secretariat. The UNHCR offered regular contributions to OSCE informal working groups, various high-level meetings and the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Sofia. For the first time, the UNHCR Representative and the OSCE Head of Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina jointly addressed the Permanent Council on the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

Other important activities were the preparations for the review meeting of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This work resulted in increased co-operation between the OSCE's Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, the UN Development Fund for Women, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), and the UNHCR.

Eastern European Regional Initiative against Human Trafficking (SEE RIGHTS), entered its final phase in 2004.

The ODIHR also worked with a number of other UN bodies, in particular the UNECE and the UNDP, on gender equality and co-operated with the UNHCHR in the field of human rights and anti-terrorism.

The High Commissioner on National Minorities continued to maintain regular contacts with relevant UN departments and co-operated with specialized UN agencies. For example, in the region of Samtskhe-Javakheti in Georgia, he joined forces with the UNDP on a project aimed at the social integration of the Armenian-speaking population. In Kyrgyzstan, he co-operated with UNESCO and the UNDP on education matters.

The partnership between the OSCE field operations and the UN is particularly strong in **south-eastern Europe**. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo is the institution-building pillar of the UN Mission in Kosovo and co-operates through inter-institutional working groups, task forces and principals' boards which meet regularly to co-ordinate policy, elaborate 'road maps', and decide on the division of labour. A large number of joint projects were implemented

¹ The Task Force ended its work on 30 October 2004. For more on the OSCE's work in the fight against human trafficking, see page 19.

throughout south-eastern Europe in each of the OSCE's three dimensions. For example, the Organization co-operated with the UNDP in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Serbia and Montenegro on the control and destruction of small arms and light weapons, and continued to support – together with the UN – inter-State co-operation regarding refugee return, anti-trafficking and co-operation with the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

In the **southern Caucasus**, the Mission to Georgia continued its support to the UN-led peace process in Abkhazia, Georgia. As in previous years, it seconded a staff member to the UN Human Rights Office in Abkhazia, Georgia. The Office in Yerevan closely co-operated with the UNDP on areas covering several dimensions, including on anti-corruption, the Ombudsman, elections, anti-trafficking and gender issues. The OSCE Office in Baku regularly discussed human rights issues with the UNHCHR, the ICRC, the Council of Europe, the IOM and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

The OSCE field operations in all three States provided support to the OSCE-UN Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) and organized together with the OCEEA and the national authorities consultations on the ENVSEC's southern Caucasus report. In October, the report was launched in Tbilisi under the title, 'Environment and Security: Transforming Risks into Co-operation – The Case of the Southern Caucasus'. The next step will be the preparation of preliminary work programmes by the authorities of the three countries. In July, NATO associated itself with the Initiative.

The OSCE Mission to Georgia co-operated closely with several international actors, in particular the UNDP, on the presidential and parliamentary elections held in Georgia in early 2004. The Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference maintained close contact with the UNHCR on the situation of refugees and internally displaced persons in the zone of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Additional synergies were also created between the OSCE and UN field operations in **eastern Europe**. In Ukraine, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator, together with UNICEF, USAID, and the British Council, helped arrange for an assessment on human trafficking issues. As in previous years, the Mission to Moldova was one of the principal co-ordinators of international efforts to strengthen local responses against human trafficking in the country. It hosted monthly technical co-ordination meetings, which were attended by UNICEF, UNIFEM, the IOM, the ILO, and the UNDP. The Mission also worked closely with UNICEF during the school crisis in the Transnistrian region of Moldova.

In **Central Asia**, the field operations established close relations with UN agencies to assist the five participating States in the region in complying with their commitments in all three OSCE dimensions. The co-operation also covered several regional projects such as the ENVSEC Initiative.

European Union. Strengthening co-operation between the OSCE and the EU was one of the Bulgarian Chairmanship's priorities. At the political level, both the Irish and the Netherlands Foreign Ministers and the EU Commissioner in charge of External Relations addressed the Permanent Council. Other speakers from the EU at the Permanent Council were the Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Head of the European Commission's Delegation to Croatia.

In addition, meetings of the respective Ministerial Troikas and the OSCE and EU Political and Security Committee Troikas took place. The OSCE Secretary General also participated in these Troika meetings. The Director of the OSCE Secretary General's Office addressed the EU's Working Group on the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The European Commission (EC) contributed to the work of the OSCE bodies through its delegation in Vienna. At the working level, the EU hosted the second EU-OSCE staff meeting in November.

In 2004, the European Commission and the ODIHR initiated a new programme in Central Asia, which included professional skills training for defence lawyers in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan conducted by the ODIHR under the programme's fair trials component. The OSCE is part of the steering board of the EC's Central Asian Border Service Initiative Group, set up under the framework of the TACIS Border Management for Central Asia programme. The Organization was also engaged in the review of implementation of the commitments made in the Way Forward Document signed by all participants in the Ohrid Border Process at the Ohrid Conference in May 2003.

An ODIHR expert took part in the EC's European Experts Group on Trafficking in Human Beings, which led to the introduction of National Referral Mechanisms in EU Member States. Together with the HCNM, the ODIHR undertook efforts to increase co-operation with the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.

The European Parliament participated in the ODIHR observation missions covering the presidential election in Georgia and Ukraine. The ODIHR continued its co-operation with the EC on the development of guidelines for media monitoring during election observation missions.

In **south-eastern Europe**, the OSCE missions worked closely with the EU representatives on issues of mutual concern, including judicial and police reform, democratization, institution-building, human rights and refugee return. In this region, both organizations have successfully contributed to fostering a climate that is conducive to stabilization, normalization and ultimately integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures.

In Albania, the OSCE Presence and the EU channelled technical and material assistance to the Albanian Ministry of Local Government and the Central Election Commission to improve the voters' register. Other areas of co-operation included prison reform and parliamentary support.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the OSCE Mission co-operated closely with the EU on reform-related issues, including education, public administration, human rights and the creation of a state-level Ombudsman institution. In addition, the organizations co-operated in establishing judicial and prosecutorial training centres in both Entities, enabling sustainable transfer of return-related issues to the local authorities, and supporting the country's Parliamentary Assembly Constitutional-Legal Committees. The Mission also worked closely with the EU Police Mission on anti-trafficking issues and via the Defence and Security Steering Group chaired by the Mission and SFOR.

In 2004, Croatia was granted candidate status by the EU. The mandate of the OSCE Mission to Croatia closely parallels the political tasks that Croatia must address for EU membership. Against this background, the OSCE has become an essential partner for Croatia in realizing this agenda. Co-operation between the EU and the

originally by the OSCE Mission to Georgia. Throughout 2004, the Mission worked on the finalization of agreements on the implementation of its EC-funded programme for refugee return and rehabilitation of structures in the zone of conflict. The programme is carried out in co-operation with the UNDP and the UNHCR. In the economic and environmental dimension, the Mission provided technical expertise to the EC-established Georgian European Policy and Legal Advice Centre to help the Government advance the labour code legislation.

In Armenia, the OSCE further strengthened co-operation with the EU, including through an anti-corruption working group of which the EC is a member. The working group is chaired by the OSCE Office. The OSCE Office in Baku regularly exchanged information with the various persons and structures representing the EU/EC, including the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus. The EU and EC representatives in Baku participated actively in

"I am committed to strengthening EU-OSCE complementarity. The European Commission will continue to work with and through the OSCE to strengthen security from innovative angles and to seek synergies, for instance regarding energy security, border management, good governance, and institution-building."

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy

OSCE also included joint efforts by the heads of the EC and the OSCE Mission together with the ICTY to promote strengthening of the monitoring of domestic and international war crimes prosecutions and the search for missing persons.

In Serbia and Montenegro, the OSCE Mission and the EU together devised a regional policy on refugees. In addition, a partnership was developed between the Mission and the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) on legal and judicial reform, media development and law enforcement activities.

In Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro, the OSCE Mission received funding by the EAR for a project that aims at enhancing the legal knowledge and professional skills of judges and prosecutors. Support was also given for other initiatives, such as the Bar Exam Training Project and the Out-of-Kosovo Voting Programme as well as for Radio Television Kosovo and the Kosovo Judicial Institute. The Mission also worked closely with the EC on legislation for the establishment of an Independent Media Commission.

The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje continued to foster its relationship in all security dimensions with the offices of the EU Special Representative (EUSR) and the EU Police Mission, *Proxima*. Co-operation with the EU was particularly close in police reform and the fight against organized crime as well as integrated border management strategies in the western Balkans.

In the **southern Caucasus**, field operations worked closely with the EU Special Representative. The EC continued to participate in the Joint Control Commission (JCC) on the settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, a co-operation which was initiated

meetings organized by the Office to discuss post-election developments. The two organizations also held regular information-sharing meetings on their respective project-based activities.

The Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference was in frequent contact with the EU Special Representative during 2004. He also briefed in Brussels various EU structures on the current situation with regard to the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

In **eastern Europe**, EU-OSCE co-operation was determined by developments in the region, with particular focus on Moldova and Ukraine. The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine and the EU collaborated on a number of thematic areas, such as judiciary reform and border issues as well as the fight against human trafficking. A project on 'Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Ukraine 2004–2005', funded by the EU, is being implemented by the IOM and the OSCE. The Co-ordinator and the EU also jointly organized election-related activities, including seminars for judges of first instance and appellate courts and training seminars for polling station officials.

The OSCE Mission in Moldova maintained regular contacts with the EU in support of the negotiation process for a political settlement of the Transdniestrian issue. It also co-operated closely with the EC, in particular on border management.

In Belarus, the OSCE Office participated in a number of ad hoc meetings with representatives of the EC delegation to Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus, based in Kyiv.

In **Central Asia**, co-operation between the OSCE and the EU was further strengthened. The OSCE Centre in Almaty organized several events with the EC delegation to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which included a joint roundtable on the draft media law and two research projects on illegal markets in Central Asia and on religious extremism. Together with the EU and the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, the OSCE Centres in Almaty and Bishkek organized a roundtable on comparative electoral processes in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Areas of co-operation between the OSCE Centre in Ashgabad and the EC included border management, small and medium-sized enterprise development and assistance to farmers' associations. Furthermore, the Centre developed and financed an English language and computer training course for Turkmen State Customs officials, complementing the TACIS Unit Support Programme for the State Customs Service of Turkmenistan.

In Kyrgyzstan, the EU funded the second phase of the OSCE's Police Assistance Programme.

Council of Europe. Relations with the Council of Europe featured prominently on the OSCE's external co-operation agenda in 2004. They were discussed in Sofia on 13 October at the meeting between the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the Norwegian Foreign Minister, who chaired the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers. The OSCE Chairmanship responded positively to an initiative by the Norwegian Chairmanship to strengthen synergy between the two organizations. In December, the OSCE Permanent Council adopted a decision to enhance co-operation with the Council, following which the OSCE-Council of Europe Co-ordination Group was established.

On 14 July, the seventh '3+3' meeting of Council of Europe and OSCE senior officials took place in Vienna. Participants discussed the fight against terrorism, trafficking in human beings and election observation as well as a number of countries and regions in which both organizations are active.

"Building Europe and spreading Europe's message implies developing partnerships, dialogue and complementarity between international actors, and notably the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations."

Walter Schwimmer, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

In their addresses to the OSCE Permanent and Ministerial Councils and the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, the two Secretaries General paid special attention to the pragmatic and open way in which the organizations co-operated during the year. The Council also participated actively in the three special OSCE events on tolerance and discrimination held in 2004.

The High Commissioner on National Minorities worked closely with the Council with regard to existing and draft legislation on national minorities in a number of OSCE countries. The ODIHR continued to participate on behalf of the OSCE in the ad hoc

Committee on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The ODIHR and the Council established an informal framework for the co-ordination of future activities on issues related to gender equality and women's participation in democratic processes. In addition, the ODIHR participated regularly in meetings of the Council's Committee of Experts on Terrorism. Co-operation on Roma and Sinti issues was also strengthened.

The Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities participated in a number of ODIHR election observation missions in 2004. These included:

- the presidential elections in Georgia, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, and Ukraine;
- parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan;
- municipal elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and
- the referendum in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Building on each other's specific strengths, the OSCE and the Council of Europe also engaged in concerted efforts in the field.

In **south-eastern Europe**, co-operation covered three main areas: education, democratization, and human rights and the rule of law. For example, the Council participated with both long- and short-term observers in the OSCE-supported 2004 Kosovo Assembly Election organized by the Central Election Commission Secretariat. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo and the Council jointly supported the UNMIK-PISG working group on local government reform and were active participants of the working group to pursue the development of a decentralization framework. The Mission also provided expert trainers to a Council of Europe 'training-of-trainers' programme for judges and prosecutors in Kosovo.

Both organizations focused strongly on the **southern Caucasus** and intensified their co-operation in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, with an emphasis on legislative reform, human rights and freedom of information. The OSCE Mission in Georgia co-operated closely with the Venice Commission in providing expertise

on draft constitutional amendments. The OSCE Office in Yerevan co-ordinated and co-operated with the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission on a number of issues in Armenia, including electoral legislation reform, constitutional reform, freedom of assembly, and police-related activities. The OSCE Office in Baku co-ordinated its work regularly with the Council of Europe's Special Representative in Baku on activities related, among other issues, to the Bar Association and legislative reforms.

In **eastern Europe**, co-operation was also strengthened in 2004. The OSCE Mission to Moldova and the Council of Europe worked

with education authorities on both sides of the Dniestr river to continue negotiations on the functioning of the Moldovan schools in Transdnistria. Following the suspension of the licence for the municipal broadcasting institutions, Antena-C and Euro-TV, both organizations worked hand-in-hand to address these issues and publish joint recommendations on the functioning of public broadcasting institutions in Moldova.

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. In his address to the North Atlantic Council on 21 January, the Chairman-in-Office reiterated that practical interaction in the field was a basic driving force behind NATO-OSCE co-operation. He also emphasized that efforts of the two organizations were complementary in conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation as well as in arms control verification, de-mining, the disposal of ammunition stocks and security sector reform.

Regular meetings between staff from the OSCE and NATO headquarters continued to strengthen inter-institutional dialogue in areas ranging from multi-dimensional issues such as counter-terrorism, small arms and light weapons and economic and environmental activities, to regional concerns such as co-operation in the Mediterranean dimension.

“Minister Passy and I myself have stressed the need for close co-operation between NATO and the OSCE. We have seen good examples lately, for instance in Afghanistan, and under present circumstances and in the present-day world and on the basis of the present-day threats, I think it is of essence that organizations such as the OSCE and NATO work closely together.”

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Secretary General of NATO

To further improve the operational knowledge of the decision-making process and crisis management procedures of both organizations, the OSCE was represented at the NATO Crisis Management Exercise in March and observed the first NATO-Russia Procedural Exercise in November.

In the political-military dimension, the OSCE provided expert briefings on its activities in the field of small arms and light weapons to the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Wassenaar Arrangement. The Secretariat fostered co-ordination with NATO on the implementation of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition and continued to actively participate in the Ohrid process on border management and security in south-eastern Europe, together with the Stability Pact, NATO and the EU.

In the economic and environmental dimension, co-operation between the two organizations continued on the ENVSEC Initiative, which NATO joined in July.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly took part in the ODIHR's election observation mission to the 2004 presidential election in Ukraine.

In **south-eastern Europe**, the two organizations worked together to promote the stabilization and the integration of countries in the region. This included supporting these countries in fulfilling the criteria for membership in the Partnership for Peace programme. Both organizations took part in regular meetings at principal level about inter-agency co-ordination and information exchange on developments on the ground. NATO's support of OSCE activities in the region extended in some cases to the provision of security and possible medical evacuation to OSCE field personnel.

Under the auspices of the Defence Reform Commission, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina led the implementation of the country's reform of the defence sector. The Mission and SFOR co-operated on issues related to the implementation of laws on export and import of arms and ammunition, visits to storage sites, destruction of arms and ammunition surplus stocks, support towards the restructuring of the armed forces and support in developing the country's defence budgets. Awareness-raising projects on anti-trafficking were also undertaken in co-ordination with SFOR.

In Serbia and Montenegro, OSCE-NATO co-operation focused on supporting defence reform and strengthening democratic control

of the defence and security sector. Concrete areas of co-operation included parliamentary oversight and border security issues. Following its involvement in the Ohrid process, the Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje participated in the NATO Rose-Roth seminar in Ohrid in September.

In **eastern Europe**, the Mission to Moldova continued to closely co-ordinate the monitoring of the removal of Russian military equipment from Transdnistria with the NATO Conventional Arms Control Co-ordination Section and the arms-control verification agencies of OSCE participating States. The OSCE Secretariat's Project Co-ordination Unit (PCU) co-operated with NATO in the field of social adaptation of ex-military personnel.

In the **southern Caucasus**, the OSCE field operations continued to participate in the South Caucasus River Monitoring Project, funded by the NATO Science for Peace Programme, the OSCE Office in Yerevan and OCEEA. The project is now in its third year of implementation. Following the decisions made at NATO's Istanbul Summit in June 2004, NATO appointed in autumn a Special Representative of the Secretary General for the Caucasus and Central Asia, whose mandate includes co-ordination of activities with other international organizations.

Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. OSCE field operations and Institutions continued to take active part in a number of initiatives conducted under the auspices of the Stability Pact. The Missions to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro, including in Kosovo, and the ODIHR, provided substantive contributions to the work of the Pact's Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings. Other areas of co-operation included small arms control and destruction, Roma and Sinti issues, media development, gender issues and women's participation in politics, human rights, economic co-operation and development, and defence and security issues.

The CPC co-operated closely with the Stability Pact, NATO and the EU in implementing the commitments made in the Ohrid Way Forward Document in the field of border management and security. It also participated in the Stability Pact's regular regional steering group meetings.

International Organization for Migration. Co-operation between the OSCE and the IOM continued at headquarters and field level. The IOM participated in the High-level and target-oriented Tripartite Meetings between the UN, Council of Europe and the OSCE in Vienna in February and in the Sofia Ministerial Council as well as a number of other OSCE conferences and events.

Both organizations worked hand-in-hand in the Caucasus and south-eastern Europe to combat human trafficking. In the Caucasus and Central Asia, co-operation focused on developing common approaches to migration policy. The OSCE Presence in Albania worked with the IOM and the NGO, *Save the Children*, within the Witness Protection Task Force. In Ukraine, the Project Co-ordinator worked in partnership with the IOM to implement a project on the fight against human trafficking funded by the EU. The Co-ordinator and the IOM as well as other international partners also worked together on a joint programme on human rights awareness and education. Together with the IOM, the PCU implemented the TACIS-funded project, 'Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2004–2005'. Activities carried out included awareness-raising campaigns, victims assistance and re-integration, training for law enforcement officials and the review of existing legislation.

International Committee of the Red Cross. At the headquarters level, the ICRC participated in the High-level and target-oriented Tripartite Meetings and a number of other OSCE conferences and events. This included the three OSCE events on tolerance and anti-discrimination held in 2004, the Sofia Ministerial Council meeting, and the annual OSCE Human Dimension Meeting in Warsaw.

The OSCE's field operations continued their interaction with the ICRC regional offices in Ashgabad, Baku and Tashkent. A good example of effective co-operation was the co-ordinated response of the OSCE Mission to Moldova and the ICRC office in Kyiv to the hunger strike of Andrei Ivantoc, a member of the 'Ilascu group' detained in Moldova's Transdniestrian region.

The Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference maintained close contacts with the ICRC with regard to the issue of the release of prisoners of war and other persons detained as a result of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Co-operation with other regional and sub-regional organizations and initiatives. The OSCE also serves as a forum for engaging other partners within its region. In 2004, there was continued interaction and co-operation with regional and sub-regional organizations such as the Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC), the Central Asian Co-operation Organization (CACO), the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Central European Initiative (CEI), the CIS, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), GUUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova), SECI, the South East European Co-operation Process (SEEC), and others. This included OSCE participation in a number of high-level events, including summit and ministerial meetings such as the CEI summit meeting in Portoroz in November. Regional and sub-regional organizations were also invited to participate in a number of relevant OSCE events and meetings. For example, the BSEC, the CIS and GUUAM participated in the Tripartite target-oriented meeting, while the CSTO, the CIS and GUUAM took part in the Annual Security Review Conference in June. The CIS and SECI attended the joint OSCE-UNODC Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security in September. The BSEC, the CACO, the CBSS, the CIS, the CSTO, GUUAM, SECI, and the SEEC also participated in the CTC-OSCE-UNODC meeting on counter-terrorism in March.

Accompanying the Chairman-in-Office on his Moscow visit in February, the Secretary General also met the CIS Executive Secretary and the CSTO Secretary General.

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Interaction with Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation and Organizations and Institutions outside the OSCE Area

Together with the OSCE Troika, the Secretariat continued to strengthen relations with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. Within the framework of dialogue and joint activities with the Partners for Co-operation, the External Co-operation Section continued to advise and support the Secretary General, the Chairmanship and the Troika members responsible for presiding over the respective meetings of the Mediterranean and Asian Contact Groups (see the Report of the Chairman-in-Office and the Reports of the Chairmen of the respective Contact Groups with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and Asian Partners for Co-operation). The Section represented the Secretariat through active participation in the meetings. Relations with regional organizations beyond the OSCE region continued to be pursued and developed in 2004.

Co-operation between the OSCE and the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation. The need to enhance co-operation with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners was recognized in the 2003 OSCE Strategy on Addressing Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century. Based on this document, PC Decision No. 571¹ calls for further dialogue and co-operation with the Partner States. The participating States were tasked to identify additional fields of co-operation and interaction with the Partner States to enhance mutual security and encourage them to voluntarily implement OSCE norms, principles and commitments as a means to strengthen interaction with the OSCE. As part of this process, the Section for External Co-operation provided support to the Ambassador of Finland in his role as Chairman of the informal Group of Friends on the Implementation of PC Decision No. 571. A report containing concrete recommendations from the informal Group was presented to the Sofia Ministerial Council meeting. As a result, a Ministerial Council decision was adopted that underscored the importance of the report. It will provide a basis for further work with Partner States in 2005.

Two major events took place in Partner States. On 15 and 16 March, the **OSCE-Japan Conference** was held in Tokyo, focusing on the 'Search for Conflict Prevention in the New Security Circumstances – European Security Mechanisms and Security in Asia'. Participants discussed issues of common interest pertaining to security in Europe and Asia, combating international terrorism and addressing challenges to security stemming from trafficking in drugs, human beings and small arms.

The Secretary General and the Japanese Government's Special Envoy co-chaired the conference. In their conclusions, they highlighted many OSCE activities that could serve as useful models for Asia in enhancing preventive diplomacy. They also said that there was

scope for collaboration on the efforts undertaken by the OSCE and the **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)** in tackling transnational and non-traditional security challenges. The conference also proposed arranging joint events between interested partners in Asia and the OSCE related to trafficking in human beings and in small arms and light weapons.

The **Annual OSCE Mediterranean Seminar** took place in Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt, on 18 and 19 November. It discussed co-operative security, tolerance and migration against the backdrop of deeper interaction between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners. The Secretary General stressed that the multifaceted and cross-dimensional nature of threats prompted the OSCE to work closer with the Mediterranean Partners, acknowledging that all parties shared the same democratic values and principles. The seminar concluded with concrete proposals, including the provision of support to the Palestinian presidential election on 9 January 2005. The proposals serve as a solid foundation for the work programme with the Mediterranean Partners in 2005.

Prior to this event, the OSCE Secretary General was invited to address the **second Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean**, organized by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Rhodes on 1 October. The event brought together parliamentarians from the participating States and the Mediterranean Partner States. In his statement, the Secretary General stressed that the future of the Mediterranean and the Middle East was a concern that was shared with the Partners. He further acknowledged the importance of the Mediterranean dimension to European security. It was also stressed that maintaining a constantly open channel of communication was paramount to the success of the partnership.

In December, the OSCE welcomed **Mongolia** as a new Asian Partner for Co-operation. The Mongolian Foreign Minister's first-ever participation at a Ministerial Council meeting in Sofia confirmed the importance his country places on forging relations with the Organization. The Secretariat will work to deepen relations with Mongolia and to share expertise and experience on issues of mutual interest.

A highlight of the Organization's outreach activities in 2004 was the deployment of an **Election Support Team to Afghanistan**. For the first time in its history, the OSCE was actively involved in elections in a non-participating State. Following the invitation of Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai, the OSCE swiftly sent more than 40 people to the country. Working in a challenging environment, they carried out an effective and highly-praised operation while ensuring staff security.

¹ On Further Dialogue and Co-operation with the Partners for Co-operation and Exploring the Scope for Wider Sharing of OSCE Norms, Principles and Commitments with Others

Co-operation with Organizations and Institutions outside the OSCE Area. Relations between the OSCE and regional organizations and institutions outside the OSCE area gained further dynamism during 2004. There was vivid interest among regional organizations to learn more about the OSCE and its norms and principles. Exchange took place within the conceptual framework for co-operation between the UN and regional organizations and on a bilateral level with the OSCE and regional organizations.

The Secretary General was invited to the inauguration of the Secretariat of the **Shanghai Co-operation Organization (SCO)** Secretariat on 15 January in Beijing. He met the SCO Executive Secretary, Ambassador Zhang Deguang, to discuss possible areas of co-operation. The OSCE was also present at the opening ceremony of the Executive Committee of the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure in Tashkent in June. An SCO representative participated in the July roundtable on extremism in Kazakhstan organized by the OSCE Centre in Almaty and the ODIHR.

In response to an invitation, the Chairman-in-Office participated in the Arab Summit held in Tunisia on 22 and 23 May. Representatives of the **League of Arab States** visited the OSCE Secretariat in May to familiarize themselves with the Organization's work on small arms and light weapons and on counter-terrorism. As a result of this visit and the expressed interest of the League of Arab States, the OSCE is translating the OSCE Handbook on Small Arms and Light Weapons into Arabic. A representative of the Arab League participated in the Sofia Ministerial Council meeting.

The Secretary General represented the OSCE at the 31st Session of the **Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)** of Foreign Ministers in Istanbul. An OIC representative participated in the 12th OSCE Economic Forum in Prague and at the Sofia Ministerial Council.

Responding to an invitation to participate as an observer in the Fifth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council and the Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the **African Union** in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in June-July, the OSCE was represented by a Troika representative, the Netherlands Ambassador based in Addis Ababa.

To further co-operate with the **ARF**, participants in the OSCE-Japan Conference were invited to come to an informal meeting on 16 March with the participants of the ARF Workshop on Preventive Diplomacy. During the meeting, the Secretary General shared his views on the outcome of the OSCE-Japan Conference, and the CPC Director presented an overview of preventive diplomacy tools in the OSCE.

At the working level, the OSCE and the **Organization of America States (OAS)** shared best practices and lessons learned on counter-terrorism. One concrete result of these efforts was the establishment of the OSCE Counter-Terrorism Network to replicate the OAS Inter-American Committee against Terrorism Network. For its part, the OSCE shared its experience, best practices and lessons learned while pursuing practical efforts in protecting human rights in the fight against terrorism. The Secretariat's ATU and the OAS Network co-operate through active information-sharing and co-ordination of meetings. The OAS also participated in the Joint OSCE-UNODC Technical Experts Conference on Border Management and Security.

A representative of the **Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia** participated in the Follow-up Conference to the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Special Meeting with international, regional, and sub-regional organizations, hosted by the OSCE in co-operation with the UNODC in Vienna.

Annex Statistics of OSCE staff

International staff in Missions/Centres/Offices

Nationality	OSCE Mission in Kosovo	OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina	OSCE Mission to Croatia	OSCE Mission to Georgia	OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje	OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro	OSCE Mission to Moldova	OSCE Presence in Albania	OSCE Centre in Almaty	OSCE Centre in Ashgabad	OSCE Centre in Bishkek	OSCE Centre in Dushanbe	OSCE Centre in Tashkent	OSCE Office in Baku	OSCE Office in Minsk	OSCE Office in Yerevan	The Pers. Rep. of the CiO on Conflict Dealt with by the Minsk Conference	OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine	Total for Missions/Centres/Offices
Albania	1	1																	2
Armenia	1													1					2
Austria	6	6	5	4	7	1		2							1		1	1	33
Azerbaijan	1			1	1														3
Belarus				3	2		1	2				1							9
Belgium	2	1				1													4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5			1	1	2													9
Bulgaria	16	1		6		1					1	2			1				28
Canada	10	4	1			1													16
Croatia				1	2			1											4
Czech Republic	1	1	1	5	1			2								1	1		13
Denmark	1	1																	2
Estonia	2		1	4		1													8
Finland			1	2	2			2		1									8
France	15	9	6	9	4	4		1		1	1	1				1			52
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia				1															1
Georgia	2	2	1		2														7
Germany	31	15	5	1	5	6	2	3	1	1	1		1	2	1	1		1	77
Greece	5		1			3													9
Hungary	1	2		7	1			1				2					1		15
Iceland																			0
Ireland	1	4	1	6	4	2		2											20
Italy	12	10	4		4	6								1					37
Japan					1			1											2
Kazakhstan																			0
Kyrgyzstan	1													1					2
Latvia		1				1						1							3
Liechtenstein						1													1
Lithuania	2	1		1								1							5
Luxemburg																			0
Malta																			0
Moldova	3		1	2						1	1		1						9
Netherlands	2	2	1		1	3	1					1							11
Norway		1	1		1	5	1		1			1							11
Poland	9	1	3	8	2		2										1		26
Portugal	3				2	1													6
Romania	10		1	6	1			1			1								20
Russian Federation	1	4		6	1						2	3				1			18
Serbia and Montenegro																			0
Slovakia			1	3		1													5
Slovenia		2			2														4
Spain	5	3	1		4														13
Sweden	11	3	2	1	2	3		2	1		1		1		1				28
Switzerland					2						1								3
Tajikistan	1				1														2
Turkey	8	1		4	12	3					1								29
Ukraine	2			4	3											1	1		11
United Kingdom	21	12	6	9	15	8	2	2		1	1			1	1		1		80
United States	34	18	4	7	9	9	1	5	1			1	1	1		1		1	93
Uzbekistan																			0
Total	226	106	48	102	95	63	10	27	4	5	11	14	4	6	5	7	5	3	741

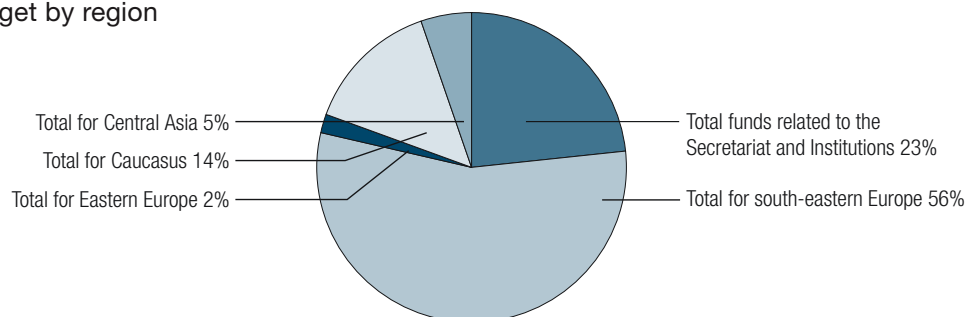
Total numbers of internationally recruited staff in Missions, Secretariat and Institutions

Nationality	Missions	%	Secretariat and Institutions	%	GRAND TOTAL	%
Albania	2	0.3	0	0.0	2	0.2
Armenia	2	0.3	2	0.9	4	0.4
Austria	33	4.5	17	7.5	50	5.2
Azerbaijan	3	0.4	1	0.4	4	0.4
Belarus	9	1.2	5	2.2	14	1.4
Belgium	4	0.5	2	0.9	6	0.6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	9	1.2	2	0.9	11	1.1
Bulgaria	28	3.8	8	3.5	36	3.7
Canada	16	2.2	10	4.4	26	2.7
Croatia	4	0.5	2	0.9	6	0.6
Czech Republic	13	1.8	1	0.4	14	1.4
Denmark	2	0.3	3	1.3	5	0.5
Estonia	8	1.1	1	0.4	9	0.9
Finland	8	1.1	4	1.8	12	1.2
France	52	7.0	9	4.0	61	6.3
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.1
Georgia	7	0.9	1	0.4	8	0.8
Germany	77	10.4	21	9.3	98	10.1
Greece	9	1.2	1	0.4	10	1.0
Hungary	15	2.0	2	0.9	17	1.8
Iceland	0	0.0	1	0.4	1	0.1
Ireland	20	2.7	2	0.9	22	2.3
Italy	37	5.0	10	4.4	47	4.9
Japan	2	0.3	0	0.0	2	0.2
Kazakhstan	0	0.0	2	0.9	2	0.2
Kyrgyzstan	2	0.3	3	1.3	5	0.5
Latvia	3	0.4	2	0.9	5	0.5
Liechtenstein	1	0.1	1	0.4	2	0.2
Lithuania	5	0.7	0	0.0	5	0.5
Luxemburg	0	0.0	1	0.4	1	0.1
Malta	0	0.0	1	0.4	1	0.1
Moldova	9	1.2	5	2.2	14	1.4
Netherlands	11	1.5	5	2.2	16	1.7
Norway	11	1.5	2	0.9	13	1.3
Poland	26	3.5	10	4.4	36	3.7
Portugal	6	0.8	0	0.0	6	0.6
Romania	20	2.7	6	2.6	26	2.7
Russian Federation	18	2.4	15	6.6	33	3.4
Serbia and Montenegro	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Slovakia	5	0.7	4	1.8	9	0.9
Slovenia	4	0.5	0	0.0	4	0.4
Spain	13	1.8	5	2.2	18	1.9
Sweden	28	3.8	9	4.0	37	3.8
Switzerland	3	0.4	5	2.2	8	0.8
Tajikistan	2	0.3	0	0.0	2	0.2
Turkey	29	3.9	4	1.8	33	3.4
Ukraine	11	1.5	2	0.9	13	1.3
United Kingdom	80	10.8	18	7.9	98	10.1
United States	93	12.6	19	8.4	112	11.6
Uzbekistan	0	0.0	3	1.3	3	0.3
Total	741	100.0	227	100.0	968	100.0

2004 Unified Budget

Fund	2004 Unified Budget in Euro	% of total
I. FUNDS RELATED TO THE SECRETARIAT AND INSTITUTIONS		
The Secretariat	27,245,600	15.07%
Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)	11,529,200	6.38%
High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM)	2,564,900	1.42%
Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM)	978,800	0.54%
Total funds related to the Secretariat and Institutions	42,318,500	23.40%
II. FUNDS RELATED TO OSCE FIELD OPERATIONS		
South-eastern Europe		
Mission in Kosovo	42,607,700	23.56%
Tasks in Bosnia and Herzegovina	19,465,300	10.76%
Mission to Croatia	10,404,300	5.75%
Mission to Serbia and Montenegro	9,834,300	5.44%
Presence in Albania	3,740,900	2.07%
Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje	13,745,600	7.60%
Total for south-eastern Europe	99,798,100	55.19%
Eastern Europe		
Mission to Moldova	1,389,200	0.77%
Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine	1,085,300	0.60%
Office in Minsk	942,100	0.52%
Representative to the Estonian Expert Commission on Military Pensioners	123,300	0.07%
Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint Commission on Military Pensioners	12,200	0.01%
Total for Eastern Europe	3,552,100	1.96%
Caucasus		
Mission to Georgia	20,688,900	11.44%
Office in Yerevan	1,227,700	0.68%
Office in Baku	1,512,600	0.84%
High-Level Planning Group	211,400	0.12%
The Minsk Process	953,300	0.53%
Personal Representative of the CiO on Conflict Dealt with by the Minsk Conference	890,000	0.49%
Total for Caucasus	25,483,900	14.09%
Central Asia		
Centre in Almaty	1,497,000	0.83%
Centre in Ashgabad	979,500	0.54%
Centre in Bishkek	1,831,300	1.01%
Centre in Dushanbe	3,829,200	2.12%
Centre in Tashkent	1,543,100	0.85%
Total for Central Asia	9,680,100	5.35%
Total for funds related to the OSCE field operations	138,514,200	76.60%
TOTAL BUDGET	180,832,700	100.00%

2004 Unified Budget by region



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Abbreviations

ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum	KPS	Kosovo Police Service
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	MANPADS	man-portable air defence systems
ASRC	Annual Security Review Conference	MP	Member of Parliament
ATAU	Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
ATU	Action against Terrorism Unit	NGO	non-governmental organization
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina	NRM	National Referral Mechanism
BMO	Border Monitoring Operation	OAS	Organization of American States
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Co-operation	OCEEA	Office of the OSCE Co-ordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities
CACO	Central Asian Co-operation Organization	ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
CAYN	Central Asian Youth Network	OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
CBSS	Council of Baltic Sea States	OIC	Organization of the Islamic Conference
CEC	Central Election Commission	PA	Parliamentary Assembly
CECS	Central Election Commission Secretariat	PACE	Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly
CEDAW	UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	PC	Permanent Council
CEI	Central European Initiative	PCU	Project Co-ordination Unit
CiO	Chairman-in-Office	PISG	Kosovo's Provisional Institutions of Self-Government
CFE Treaty	Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty	REACT	Rapid Expert Assistance and Co-operation Teams
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	ALW	small arms and light weapons
CPC	Conflict Prevention Centre	SCO	Shanghai Co-operation Organization
CSBMs	confidence- and security-building measures	SECI	Southeast Europe Co-operation Initiative
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe	SEE RIGHTS	South-Eastern European Regional Initiative in South-Eastern Europe
CSEEC	South East European Co-operation Process	SFOR	NATO-led Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization	SHDM	Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting
EAR	European Agency for Reconstruction	SMEs	small and medium-sized enterprises
EC	European Commission	SPMU	Strategic Police Matters Unit
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights	SPTF	Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe
ENVSEC	OSCE-UNDP-UNEP Environment and Security Initiative	SRCC	Sub-Regional Consultative Commission
EU	European Union	TACIS	Technical Assistance for the Cities of the Independent States, a programme sponsored by the European Commission
EUSR	EU Special Representative	UN	United Nations
FSC	Forum for Security Co-operation	UNCTC	UN Counter-Terrorism Committee
GUUAM	Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova	UNECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe
HCMN	High Commissioner on National Minorities	UNHCHR	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
HLPG	High-Level Planning Group	UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency	UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization	UNIFEM	UN Development Fund for Women
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross	UNMIK	UN Mission in Kosovo
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia	UNODC	UN Office on Drugs and Crime
IDPs	internally displaced persons	UNOHCHR	UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
IFES	International Foundation for Election Systems	USAID	US Agency for International Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration	YES	Young Entrepreneur Seminar
IRMA	Integrated Resource Management System		
JCC	Joint Control Commission		
JPKF	Joint Peacekeeping Forces		
KFOR	NATO-led Kosovo Force		

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