

OSCE Moves Back into Kosovo



The OSCE Assessment Team on the way to Priština

On 14 June, 48 hours after KFOR entered Kosovo, an OSCE Assessment Team of 13 members and 5 vehicles arrived in Priština. The Assessment Team was part of the OSCE Transitional Task Force for Kosovo, established to prepare for a new OSCE mission in Kosovo. The principal goal of the Assessment Team was to assess the situation on the ground, and particularly the damage to buildings previously occupied by the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission and whether or not these could be used for a new mission.

From the Kosovo Verification Mission to the OSCE Transitional Task Force for Kosovo

On 9 June, at a special session, the OSCE Permanent Council decided to establish

a Transitional Task Force for Kosovo, to focus on the preparations for a new OSCE mission. The Task Force replaced the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), which was withdrawn from Kosovo on 19 March. After its withdrawal, the KVM was located in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM), where it focused on providing assistance to refugees from Kosovo in Albania and fYROM, collecting information about human rights violations against the population of Kosovo and planning for the establishment of a new OSCE mission.

The Transitional Task Force, based in Skopje, was mandated to take over the work of the KVM, and particularly:

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- to prepare for the deployment to Kosovo of available and relevant OSCE assets as soon as this may be required;
- to assist in planning and preparing for new tasks which the OSCE may take on as part of a new international presence in Kosovo; and
- to carry out preparatory visits and activities in Kosovo in order to facilitate the entry of a future OSCE mission in Kosovo as soon as conditions allow.

The Task Force was also mandated to cooperate, as required, with the United Nations and other international organizations in activities relevant to possible future OSCE tasks in Kosovo, in particular the registration and documentation of refugees, and to continue assessing the human rights situation in Kosovo. Am-

bassador Tore Bøgh of Norway was appointed to Head of the Transitional Task Force.

The OSCE Assessment Team in Priština

On arrival in Priština, the Assessment Team immediately visited the KVM headquarters. The building was externally undamaged. The offices, however, had been comprehensively looted and all furniture and computer hardware had been removed. The telephone lines were still in place and water and electricity were available. The team immediately began negotiations with the owner of the building, with a view to leasing it for a new OSCE mission. Also, the Assessment Team found accommodation for OSCE personnel and parking for OSCE vehicles and established contacts with other key international organizations present in Priština.

The team conducted reconnaissance trips to former KVM Regional Centres in Peć,

Kosovska Mitrovica, Prizren and Gnjilane. The aim of the trips was to evaluate the condition of the buildings previously used by the KVM and to secure accommodation and office space for a future OSCE mission.

Despite problems with accommodation and shortages of food and water, by the end of the month the OSCE had 42 staff persons working in Kosovo, and field teams were deployed in the five political districts of Kosovo.

A number of Kosovo citizens visited the OSCE office in Priština in order to file reports about human rights violations and to report missing family members. The OSCE Assessment Team is working together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to establish a mechanism for the transfer of information about missing persons to the ICRC.

The Assessment Team has been asked to assist the United Nations in identifying personnel among the Kosovo Albanian

population who would be suitable for civil structures in the legal, medical, engineering, administration, police and education fields. The OSCE provided the necessary assistance, i.e. through selection among the refugee population in Macedonian and Albanian camps.

Planning for the OSCE Mission in Kosovo

The tasks of a future OSCE mission in Kosovo were outlined in United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 of 10 June and in a report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations dated 12 June. According to these documents, the new OSCE mission in Kosovo will constitute a distinct component within the framework of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The OSCE Mission in Kosovo will, within this framework, play a key role in matters relating to institution- and democracy-building and human rights. The OSCE's tasks will consist of:

- human resources capacity-building, including the training of a new Kosovo police service within a Kosovo Police School which it will establish and operate, the training of judicial personnel and the training of civil administrators;
- democratization and governance, including the development of a civil society, non-governmental organizations;
- the organization and supervision of elections;
- the monitoring and protection of human rights.



Assessment Team members in front of a warehouse previously used by the Kosovo Verification Mission

For up-to-date information regarding the new OSCE Mission in Kosovo please visit the OSCE Website at www.osce.org

Ambassador Daan Everts to Lead New OSCE Mission in Kosovo

The Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk of Norway, has designated Ambassador Daan Everts to lead the new OSCE Mission to Kosovo. As agreed between the United Nations Secretary-General and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Ambassador Everts will also be appointed Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for Institution Building.

Ambassador Everts, a Dutch national, has been serving as Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania since December 1997. The work of the OSCE in Albania has been considered pivotal in fostering democracy and greater stability in the country. Previous to that, from January to December 1997, he was Head of the European Community Monitoring Mission in the former Yugoslavia. Ambassador Everts has also held various senior

positions at United Nations Agencies, including at the World Food Program and the UN Development Programme.

In designating Ambassador Everts, the Chairman-in-Office emphasized the need for both the OSCE and other international organizations to become operational as soon as possible in order to help assure all parts of the population a secure future in Kosovo.

Chairman-in-Office visits Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia

From 2 to 4 June the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Norwegian Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk, visited Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. The trip was part of an effort of the Norwegian Chairmanship to visit all the countries in which the OSCE is involved.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Chairman-in-Office visited the OSCE Mission and met with key Bosnian political figures and international representatives. Discussions centred on the status of implementation of the Dayton Agreement and the still unresolved political situation in the Republika Srpska.

Mr. Vollebæk began his visit in Sarajevo where he met with members of the Bosnian Joint Presidency and Ambassador Robert Barry, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In his meetings, Mr. Vollebæk urged all the Bosnian parties to work together in implementing the Dayton agreement. He stated: "At this time of increased tensions, it is very important to de-block the



Mr. Knut Vollebæk (right) with Croatian President, Mr. Franjo Tudjman (left)

joint institutions, and for the parties to participate fully and advance the work towards the fulfilment of the goals of the Dayton Peace Accords".

Mr. Vollebæk also met with Ambassador Carlos Westendorp, the High Represent-

tative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and senior SFOR officials. In a statement to the press following his meetings, he emphasized the need to adopt a regional approach to the return of refugees, democratization and military stabilization: "As we prepare for peace in Kosovo,

we need to restructure the international community's effort. Refugee return, elections, economic restructuring, institution-building – all must be carried out on a regional basis," he said, "Since the OSCE is the only international body that now has a mandate throughout the region, it should logically fall to the OSCE to provide this desperately needed regional dimension." Mr. Vollebæk also emphasized the fact that the OSCE's experience in the region would be a valuable asset in building a stable environment in Kosovo.

After Sarajevo, Mr. Vollebæk visited Banja Luka, where he met with Repub-

lika Srpska politicians and discussed the unresolved political situation in the entity.

In Croatia, Mr. Vollebæk met with President Franjo Tudjman, Prime Minister Zlatko Mateša and Foreign Minister Mate Granić, as well as representatives of Serb parties. Discussions focused on the forthcoming parliamentary elections, return of refugees and democratization of the media. Mr. Vollebæk said that Croatia had achieved much in the reconstruction of society after the war and has made progress in numerous areas, but that in some important areas – particularly the return of refugees and democratization of the media – further progress

needed to be made. He welcomed the agreement reached by Croatian political parties on the electoral law and on amendments to the law on Croatian radio and television, but pointed out that a key issue was that of implementation, so that the upcoming elections would be free and fair.

Mr. Vollebæk reiterated the fact that the role of the OSCE Mission to Croatia was to assist and advise authorities on how to achieve conformity with European and international standards in areas such as human rights, minority rights and the rule of law, so that Croatia's ambition of integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures could be realized.

Tragic events in Bajram Curri, Albania

The Bajram Curri Field Office of the OSCE Presence in Albania was closed until further notice on 15 June because of a tragic incident in which one local OSCE staff member, Hazir Kuca, a driver, and a local telephone engineer, Ram Braha, were killed.

The OSCE driver, Hazir Kuca, was returning to the Bajram Curri Field Office in an OSCE vehicle together with two other staff members, the telephone engineer, and a local policeman when it was ambushed. Rocks were blocking the road, and as the vehicle slowed, shots were fired from two different positions. Mr. Kuca was hit immediately in the body and the head, and the telephone engineer who was sitting behind him was mortally wounded. An employee of the OSCE Headquarters in Tirana, who was also travelling in the vehicle, was injured. The local policeman returned fire and caused the bandits to flee, prob-



OSCE border monitors in northern Albania

ably saving the lives of the remaining passengers. The fifth passenger of the car, also from the Headquarters of the Presence in Albania, suffered from shock.

This fatal incident came as a shock to all OSCE employees. Hazir Kuca had been working for the OSCE Office as a driver for eleven months. He lived in a simple two-bedroom flat in Bajram Curri with his wife, with whom he had been mar-

ried to for ten years. International OSCE Monitors who worked closely with him during this period could find only positive words to describe Mr. Kuca. He was seen as very reliable and loyal, and was respected as a good mechanic. Brian Hansen, OSCE Officer, said "Working for the OSCE was a matter of pride for him, and he considered himself very fortunate to have his position."

The Head of Mission, Ambassador Daan Everts, attended the funerals together with OSCE colleagues. He delivered a statement condemning this particular act of violence and the whole senseless chain of violence in the area. The Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Norwegian Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk, joined in condemning the murder and said the incident illustrated the need for urgent measures to strengthen the security situation in Albania. Everyone expressed their heart-felt condolences with the families of the two who had been murdered.

Bajram Curri Field Office Closed

The decision to close the Field Office in Bajram Curri, taken on 15 June, was received with great regret by the international staff members and the local community. The field office played a vital role during the refugee emergency as the only permanent international presence in north-eastern Albania, and it was seen as the local community's main link

to the outside world. However, it was deemed necessary to withdraw the international staff from the area and close the office because of the paramount concern for OSCE personnel and property. The decision included a recommendation that the Field Office should be reinstated as soon as circumstances permit.

The Field Office in Bajram Curri was opened on 28 March 1998 to assess conditions in the border region that runs between Albania and Kosovo. The frequent reports from the Bajram Curri Field Office, together with other field offices in the region, were often the only source of reliable information for the international community from the volatile and inaccessible region.

Permanent Council decisions 218 and 220, taken in March 1998, provided the foundation for the new border monitoring activities in Albania. The increasing tensions in the neighbouring Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, especially in bordering Kosovo, caused deep concern within the OSCE and led to a decision to extend the monitoring capabilities of the OSCE Presence in Albania. This task came in addition to the work already being carried out by the field offices in Albania in the areas of human rights and the rule of law, democratization and civil rights, media monitoring and institution building. The Field Office in Bajram Curri was dedicated to border monitor-

ing and was joined by several other offices in the summer of 1998.

The OSCE monitoring teams in Bajram Curri conducted daily monitoring of the border region, which included the use of foot patrols where feasible. The teams kept precise records of the area covered and maintained regular contact with local army personnel and border police. The reports compiled by the teams described whatever activity they had observed during the patrol, which was of vital importance to the OSCE and the international community.

The conditions in which this border monitoring is carried out are tough. The border area is barren and rugged, the roads unpaved and steep in the mountainous areas. The security situation in the District of Tropoje is unpredictable. Several groups of bandits are known to operate in the area, and hijacking of vehicles is always a threat. For these reasons, monitors are usually accompanied by police escorts.

The murder of Hazir Kuca was the first incident of its kind in the history of the OSCE. It has raised concern for other OSCE staff members in the area and drawn greater attention to the serious security situation of the Bajram Curri Field Office. The seven international OSCE monitors from Bajram Curri have been relocated.

Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office Ensures Central Asian Views are Taken into Account

At the Oslo Ministerial Council the OSCE participating States underlined the importance they attach to OSCE involvement in Central Asia. As a fol-

low-up to that decision, a report on the enhancement of OSCE's activities in Central Asia is currently being prepared. The Chairman-in-Office had planned to

visit the five OSCE States in June, with a view to contributing to the preparation of the report, but his visit unfortunately had to be postponed. In order to ensure

timely implementation of the Ministerial Decision, the Chairman-in-Office asked Ambassador Willhelm Höynck, his Personal Representative in charge of the work on the report, to visit the area.

The purpose of Ambassador Höynck's visit, which took place on 17-26 June, was to collect the views of the Central Asian participating States on enhancing OSCE activities in their area. During his visit, Ambassador Höynck had intensive discussions in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, in the course of which his inter-

locutors, at all levels, stressed the broad and varying spectrum of challenges facing the Central Asian countries. They highlighted risks stemming from outside their region as well as issues related to unresolved problems within the region. It was suggested that the OSCE's awareness of security risks originating outside its area – for example, drug trafficking and terrorism – needed to be increased, and also that the Organization's political potential could usefully be brought to bear on issues like water and energy. There was general agreement on the necessity of increasing OSCE efforts to support all

dimensions of the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security in Central Asia. The views expressed will form the basis of suggestions to be made in the report.

Ambassador Höynck also met with representatives of major international organizations active in the area. Various possibilities for strengthening co-operation and co-ordination were discussed. Response to OSCE's interest in raising its profile as a co-operative partner in key areas of its broad mandate was very favourable, and this, too, generated suggestions for the report.

Spotlight: Gender Issues at the OSCE

In 1998 gender issues began to figure prominently on the agenda of the OSCE. Several initiatives and projects related to gender issues were initiated, both at the OSCE Secretariat and at the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). This month the participating States held a special meeting on gender issues in Vienna. The meeting provided an occasion to look at the key issues facing women in the OSCE area, to judge what has been done so far in this respect, and to put forward recommendations for the future.

Supplementary Human Dimension Implementation Meeting on Gender Issues, Vienna 14-15 June

A total of 210 participants, including representatives of 100 women's organizations, attended the Supplementary Human Dimension Implementation Meeting which was organized by the ODIHR. The Meeting opened with an address by Ambassador Kai Eide of Norway, Chairman of the OSCE Permanent

Council, followed by an address by Martina Vandenberg of Human Rights Watch, who identified the key problems facing women in the OSCE area. After this opening session, participants attended one of three working groups, each focused on one of the primary areas of OSCE activity.

Some of the key problems identified in the working groups were: discrimination in the labour market; trauma, in particular rape, sexual violence and increased domestic violence during and after conflict; failure to take women's needs into account in reconstruction efforts, including the problem of unequal access to loans; under-representation in national, regional and local decision-making bodies; and under-representation of women within the OSCE itself.

The principal aim of the meeting, once the key problems and obstacles facing women had been discussed, was to produce concrete recommendations on which the OSCE could act in future. These rec-

ommendations, directed at all OSCE institutions and at participating States, included:

- A call for the Chairman-in-Office to produce an Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming for the OSCE;
- Calls for greater networking and support for women's organizations;
- Calls for all OSCE institutions to deal with gender issues and the human rights of women through projects, monitoring and reporting.
- Expressions of support for permanent Gender Adviser posts in relevant OSCE Institutions;

A summary of the meeting is available from the ODIHR's website at:

www.osce.odihr.org

The challenge now lies in the implementation of key recommendations, and in monitoring and evaluating current developments. Below is an outline of projects and efforts currently being carried out by the ODIHR and the OSCE Secretariat:

Gender Projects and Activities at the ODIHR and in the Field

The ODIHR has been engaged in a wide variety of projects related to gender issues and the human rights of women for over a year, beginning with the appointment of an Adviser on Gender Mainstreaming and the Human Rights of Women seconded by the United Kingdom. The Adviser has been working throughout the past year to bring gender issues to the forefront of OSCE work, also in the field. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for instance, the ODIHR is supporting a campaign against violence against women. In Estonia, a language training programme was set up for widows and divorcees of former Soviet military officers, while "Women in Politics" is the focus of efforts in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In Ukraine and Poland the ODIHR has tackled the issue of trafficking in women and in Uzbekistan a civic and political education programme for women has been initiated. Other missions have also engaged in small scale programmes to address gender issues and promote the status of women. The OSCE field offices in Tajikistan for instance have formed several women's groups who meet regularly to develop awareness and strategies for dealing with their specific problems. Furthermore, gender issues have been integrated in other OSCE field activities.

The Adviser has also been endeavouring to incorporate gender issues into the mainstream of ODIHR activities, such as election observation and human rights monitoring. For example, a new ODIHR human rights monitoring system will also focus on the human rights of women. This approach has already been successful in connection with refugees and inter-

nally displaced persons from Kosovo. A gender perspective is also to be included in the ODIHR's Anti-Torture Handbook. The ODIHR has also been working with OSCE Missions and field activities in compiling a database on women's organizations, which is to be part of an NGO database maintained at the ODIHR.

Gender Issues at the OSCE Secretariat

Within the OSCE Secretariat special attention has been given to gender issues since May 1998 when the Secretary General appointed the Senior Diplomatic Adviser to act as the Focal Point for Gender Issues with the tasks of enhancing awareness of gender issues in the Secretariat and in OSCE field operations, monitoring the opportunities of women in the OSCE, and serving as a contact person on gender issues for other international organizations and for NGOs. Since April 1999 the Focal Point has

been assisted by a Gender Adviser seconded by Switzerland. There are regular contacts with other international organizations to exchange information about internal structures and policies regulating the equal treatment of women and men, as well as information about other aspects of a professional work environment, such as the prevention of discrimination and harassment.

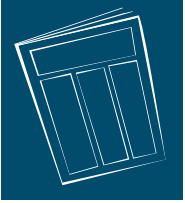
One of the main tools for raising gender awareness within the OSCE is the training for new mission staff members. In the bi-weekly training course given by the Secretariat in Vienna a special section is devoted to gender issues. Since many OSCE field activities are deployed in post-conflict situations, the Gender Adviser is currently preparing guidelines on gender issues for field staff working in such situations, where gender roles are particularly visible and often subject to change, and therefore need to be analysed with special care. This project is supported by the Canadian International Development Agency. Its long-term aim is to improve the field missions' capacity to work with the host societies on gender issues and thus further contribute to the sustainable development of civil society in the host countries.

Apart from these external aspects of the OSCE's work, the Secretariat will continue to monitor opportunities for women within the OSCE. The Organization's structure should reflect external standards and thus gradually show an improved gender balance in staffing. Today 24% of the OSCE's staff are women. Particular attention will have to be given to this issue by seconding States, because in the past, out of 4023 staff deployed in the field, 568 were women (14%).



Women in Tajikistan

PRESS PROFILE



International Herald Tribune, 2 June

“The Balkans will remain an unstable danger to security unless Europe and America adopt a comprehensive long-term strategy... In this context, the

United States should work with its allies to devolve leadership and day-to-day management of the Balkans to European institutions, freeing American leadership and resources for global challenges. The European Union should take the lead in developing a multi-billion-euro regional economic reconstruction effort, while the European-led OSCE could handle the political and civil aspects of rebuilding stricken states.”

DPA, 2 June

“Even if the end of the Kosovo conflict is not yet in sight, planning for the rehabilitation of the Serbian crisis province is already in high gear at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). After a peace agreement for Kosovo, the OSCE could be entrusted with the sensitive

task of rebuilding the police force, the judiciary system and the media. The OSCE, with 55 participating States from Europe, Central Asia and North America, is – in the eyes of observers – in the best position to take on this role in Kosovo.”

New York Times, 11 June

“Another organization, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, a 55-member transatlantic body based in Vienna, would also play a central role in rebuilding Kosovo, officials said. In particular, the group would organize elections for a time yet to be set and could assist in forming a police force.”

Der Standard, 17 June

“With each finding the tragic realization is growing that the stories of the refugees in the Macedonian and Albanian camps have not been overstated. For weeks now, officials from the Hague Tribunal and the OSCE have been going through the camps collecting statements for later indictments against those responsible.”

IN BRIEF



The annual **OSCE Heads of Mission Meeting** took place in Vienna from 15 to 16 June. Participants discussed several issues including the Missions’ reporting activities and how they could be improved, co-operation between OSCE Missions and Institutions, and

the role of parliamentarians in promoting OSCE principles. Discussion also focused on questions relating to promoting a regional approach to OSCE activities in the field and to the opportunities offered by the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. Participants described the Pact as a historical opportunity to open a new chapter in the development of the region.

The **Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Jean Chrétien**, addressed representatives of the Austrian Parliament and the OSCE at the Hofburg Congress Centre in Vienna on 17 June. In his address, Mr. Chrétien outlined the general goals of Canadian foreign policy and spoke about the Kosovo crisis. Mr. Chrétien underlined the important role that the OSCE played in Canada’s relationship with Europe, stating that “the OSCE symbolizes our hopes for Europe, a completely

free Europe, free of dividing lines, where every region is headed for prosperity and stability.” Mr. Chrétien also emphasized the importance that Canada attached to the concept of human security, that is the security of individuals. The campaign to eliminate anti-personnel mines and the creation an International Criminal Court were examples of efforts designed to, in Mr. Chrétien’s words, “put more focus in foreign policy where it belongs – on people.”

Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), addressed the OSCE Permanent Council on 17 June. Mr. Sommaruga expressed his satisfaction at the gradual strengthening of the relations between the two organizations, both in the field and at the diplomatic level. He stated that the relations between the ICRC and the OSCE were characterized by transparency, communication, trust and absence of competition. Mr. Sommaruga pointed out that the co-operation in addressing the refugee crisis in and around Kosovo showed that the organizations’ understanding of and respect for each others mandate could lead to complementarity and synergy.



OSCE Troika (from left to right): Dr. Jutta Stefan-Bastl of Austria, Polish Foreign Minister Bronislaw Geremek and Norwegian Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk.

The **OSCE Ministerial Troika** – the current, past and incoming OSCE Chairman-in-Office – met in Oslo on 24 June 1999, under Norwegian chairmanship. The newly appointed Secretary General of the OSCE, Ján Kubiš, also took part in the meeting, as did the newly designated head of the future OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Ambassador Daan Everts. The Ministers expressed satisfaction that the OSCE would assume a large area of responsibility as part of the international effort in Kosovo. The Ministers noted that the OSCE had well-developed plans for the tasks it would take on: the promotion and monitoring of human rights; democratization; preparation and supervision of elections; and institution-building support, including the training of police, judges and public administrators. The Ministers also emphasized the need for creating a safe and secure environment for all inhabitants of the province and welcomed the adoption of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe.

On the occasion of the **United Nations Day in Support of Victims of Torture**, on 26 June, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Norwegian Foreign Minister Mr. Knut Vollebæk, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Mary Robinson, called on governments to take concrete measures to prevent all forms of torture and ill-treatment. They called on those countries that had not yet ratified the United Nations Convention against Torture to do so, and on

those countries that had ratified the Convention to ensure that prevention of torture was a priority. Governments should ensure that their legislation was in line with international standards for the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, and that national legislation was fully implemented.

The **Second Follow-up Conference on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security** took place in Vienna from 29 to 30 June 1999. At the conference, OSCE participating States discussed the implementation and further development of the Code. The document, which took stock of OSCE commitments relating to political and military aspects of security, was adopted at the 1994 Budapest Summit. The participating States discussed ways of improving co-operation in the full implementation of the Code. Delegations also identified areas for further work on establishing national legislation necessary for the democratic control of armed forces. One of the key points of discussion was international humanitarian law and the use of armed forces in internal security situations. In conclusion, the participating States outlined several measures for ensuring more effective implementation, including OSCE Missions providing operational support for the implementation of the Code and regular discussions on this subject being established in the Forum for Security Co-operation and its bodies.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Third "SUMMER SCHOOL ON OSCE"

Under the patronage of the OSCE

JULY 5 - 17, 1999

Organised by :

Austrian Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution

Constitutional and Legal Policy Institute/Open Society Institute

Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management

Netherlands Helsinki Committee

With the active and financial support of a number of OSCE participating states

From 5-17 July 1999 the third consecutive Summer School on OSCE will take place at the Peace Center Burg Schlaining, Austria. Almost all of the 26 participants will be diplomats from OSCE participating States and represent 21 countries. Participants from countries in transition were particularly targeted and provided with grants. Lecturers will be experts from the different OSCE Institutions as well as researchers and professionals specialised on OSCE matters.

The purpose of the Summer School is to expand and to deepen knowledge about history, functioning, and current activities of the OSCE as well as to provide training in working more effectively within the OSCE diplomatic and OSCE-NGO milieu. It is also aimed at exploring ways for the OSCE to enhance its capabilities in preventive diplomacy, peace-making, peace-keeping, and peace-building.

The curriculum provides a mix of lectures on the historical and political background of the OSCE, on structural and institutional issues, on Security, Economy/Ecology, the Human Dimension, and on relations with IGOs and NGOs. In the working groups, several subjects dealt with in the lectures will be consolidated. Workshops will also be held on concepts and strategies for conflict transformation.

The participants will have the opportunity to attend the Permanent Council Meeting in Vienna on 8 July and to meet with the Director of the Conflict Prevention Center and other OSCE staff.



News from the Field

The OSCE currently has Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kosovo (FRY), Latvia, Skopje (fYROM), Moldova, and Tajikistan as well as an Assistance Group to Chechnya, a Presence in Albania and an Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus. The following are highlights from the work of some of the field operations during the past month.

Elections Postponed in Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 24 June the Provisional Election Commission (PEC), the OSCE-administered body responsible for election rules and regulation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, announced the new dates for the municipal elections – April 8, 2000. Originally the elections were scheduled for the fall of 1999, however after extensive consultations with election officials, international representatives and Bosnian political parties, the PEC decided that the elections could be conducted more effectively on the new date. The announcement was made now in order to allow all political parties to plan their activities in an organized fashion for the spring election date. New dates were also announced for voter and political party registration. The upcoming general elections are still scheduled to take place in the fall of 2000.

Update from Belarus

The OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group (AMG) in Belarus continued to pursue efforts to reach a dialogue between the Government and the opposition. These efforts are continuing despite the Government's decline to take part in a meeting in Bucharest arranged by the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE (see section on the Parliamentary Assembly). The OSCE ad hoc Working Group on Belarus, led by Mr. Adrian Severin (MP-Romania), will visit Minsk again between 14 and 19 July. The goal

is to continue and enlarge the informal talks started in Bucharest. The government has agreed to such talks in Minsk and the AMG is in dialogue with important public figures in preparation of a platform for further discussions.

In other developments, the OSCE AMG has been following the consequences of the presidential decree according to which all public associations have to re-register by 30 June. By mid-June, only 471 out of 2,554 registered associations had applied for re-registration. Several political parties as well as NGOs consider the decree illegal. The AMG also continued monitoring of prisons as well as a number of court cases.

Mission to Croatia Establishes Website

For information on the OSCE Mission to Croatia please visit the homepages of the Mission at the OSCE Website www.org/missions/croatia. The site includes information on the Mission's mandate, structures, a "who's who" section as well as a description of the various activities of the Mission.

OSCE Assists in Dialogue between Government and Opposition in Tajikistan

In May and June 1999 the implementation of the General Agreement went through a critical period. A joint effort of the (at that time) United Nations Special Repre-

sentative of the Secretary General Ambassador Jan Kubiš, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan, Ambassador Marin Buhoara, and the Contact Group made it possible to overcome the stalemate and restart the negotiations. A Working Group was established, which prepared a meeting between the President and the leader of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO). At this meeting several key issues were agreed upon, including proposals for amendments to the Constitution, the appointment of a number of UTO nominees to government posts, a timetable for the demobilization of the UTO's armed units and a procedure for lifting the ban on opposition political parties. These developments were a significant step forward in the process of political reconciliation in Tajikistan.

CiO Representative Monitors the Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh

On 15 June Azerbaijani, Armenian and Nagorno Karabakh (NK) authorities and media reported that a shoot-out of extraordinary proportions had taken place between the Azerbaijani and Nagorno Karabakh military forces. The parties called upon the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict dealt with by the Minsk Conference, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, to inspect the site of the incident. The OSCE teams confirmed the heavy shoot-out but received contradicting reports as to what actually happened. The incident was not isolated, however the intensity and duration of this particular one was more severe

than usual. The Personal Representative intends to conduct a further monitoring mission in July, in the proximity of the area in which the latest incident took place.

The Personal Representative was appointed in 1995 with the aim of representing the Chairman-in-Office in issues relate to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and assisting him in achieving and agree-

ment on the cessation of the conflict. The Personal Representative is assisted by five Field Assistants who conducts visits to different regions of the conflict area.

REPORT from the High Commissioner on National Minorities

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Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

On 1 and 2 June the High Commissioner visited the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in order to update his view of the situation in the country after having issued an “early warning” in mid-May. He met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Aleksandar Dimitrov, leaders of the main political parties and representatives of the international community.

On 3 June, he briefed the Permanent Council on the situation. He said that the potential for an acute crisis remained. He again outlined the difficulties that the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was facing in coping with the refugee crisis and the danger of inter-ethnic tension as a result of the significant increase in the number of ethnic Albanians in the country. He highlighted the humanitarian situation and repeated that the national economic crisis caused by the conflict in south-eastern Europe increased the risk of social discontent and inter-ethnic tension. He reiterated his early warning and emphasized the need for the international community to share the responsibilities associated with the refugee crisis.

Croatia

From 3 to 6 June, the High Commissioner visited Croatia. On 3 and 4 June, he visited the Danube area and met with local OSCE representatives, members of the Joint Council of Municipalities (an organ set up under the Erdut Agreement to protect Serb interests in the region), the deputy prefect of Vukovar-Srijem county, and the prefect of Osijek-Baranja. The High Commissioner noted a hostile climate towards Serbs in Eastern Slavonia and a continued lack of ethnic integration.

On 5 June, the High Commissioner attended a seminar on “Linguistic and Educational Rights of National Minorities”, organized at his request by the Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations (the Hague), in co-operation with the Croatian Law Centre and the OSCE Mission to Croatia.

Slovakia

On 14 June, the High Commissioner hosted a meeting in the Hague to offer comments on a draft law on minority languages, which had been a bone of contention between the Hungarian Coalition Party and the other three parties within the Slovak Government. The High Com-

missioner, with the assistance of experts from the Council of Europe and the European Commission (EU), made a series of recommendations on accommodating the views of all parties while keeping the law in line with international standards.

At the meeting on 14 June, representatives of the High Commissioner's Office, the EC and the Council of Europe met with a Slovak Government delegation led by Mr. Knazko, Minister of Culture, and Mr. Figel, State Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office. The representatives of the three organizations commented on the law with a view to clarifying the rights of persons belonging to national minorities to use their languages, and to increasing legal certainty about those entitlements, in accordance with the Slovak Constitution and relevant international standards. The comments of the international experts were regarded favourably by the Slovak delegation and incorporated into a new draft of the law to be discussed at the beginning of July.

Estonia

On 10 and 11 June, the High Commissioner visited Estonia. In meetings with Prime Minister Laar and Foreign Minis-

ter Ilves he discussed the question of the Language Law.

The recent unrest in north-eastern Estonia, mainly populated by Russians, was also discussed. The tensions were characterized as being social rather than inter-ethnic. The subject of the future of the OSCE Mission was also raised.

One of the High Commissioner's purposes for travelling to Tallinn was to attend a one-day seminar on "Integration, Education and Language". The conference was organized by the Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations together with the OSCE Mission and the Office of the High Commissioner.

Romania

From 15 to 18 June, the High Commissioner visited Romania. The main focus of his trip was the question of minority education in Romania.

A draft law on minority education had been debated in Parliament for several months. Related to this debate was the contentious issue of an independent Hungarian university.

The High Commissioner began his visit in Bucharest with a meeting with Bela Marko, President of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR), in order to discuss the Hungarian minority's views on the draft law on minority education. The High Commissioner then met with the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Mr. Ion Diaconescu, to be informed on the position of the Government coalition on the draft law. Mr. Diaconescu said that agreement on the law had been reached within the coalition. Indeed, the law was passed by the Chamber of Deputies later that afternoon. In a press briefing the next day, the High Commissioner praised the Parliament's decision and encouraged the Senate to approve the law. This was done, with an amendment, on 30 June.

On his visit to Romania, the High Commissioner also met with Foreign Minister Andrei Plesu, the Minister of Education, Mr. Andrei Marga, Minister and Head of the Department for the Protection of National Minorities, Mr. Eckstein-Kovacs, and Roma representatives. On 17 and 18 June, the High Commissioner visited Cluj together with an expert on education and law, Professor Jan de Groof of the University of Ghent. Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj has been the focus of considerable debate in connection with minority education and multiculturalism. At the university, the High Commissioner met with the rector, vice-rectors and members of the faculty in order to assess the academic programme and the impact that a law on minority education would have on the future of the university, particularly as regards Hungarian studies.

REPORT of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

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Duve and Petritsch Proposal on the European Perspective

In early June, Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, and Wolfgang Petritsch, the European Union Representative, had proposed to focus on the civil and cultural dimensions of the Stability Pact for South-East Europe. In the view of Freimut Duve and Wolfgang Petritsch, the Stability Pact must become the starting point for peaceful neighbourly relations in the future and for the continuing

development of civil structures throughout South-East Europe. The European Perspective had its cultural and civil dimensions and they should be developed from the start. Freimut Duve and Wolfgang Petritsch suggested that human and financial resources for the cultural dimension be provided at the outset of the Stability Pact. The cultural dimension could help to direct the gaze of citizens and politicians to the future and at the same time stimulate initiative. Freimut Duve and Wolfgang Petritsch established three major targets:

- A reorientation in the minds of citizens of the region towards future tasks and away from the dangerous and fixed focus on the past.
- A commitment to a State for all citizens irrespective of their ethnic origin.
- A willingness to work peacefully together in a spirit of political, economic and cultural neighbourliness.

Freimut Duve and Wolfgang Petritsch believed that this cultural dimension, as

part of the Stability Pact, would rapidly bear fruit and contribute to peaceful prospects for the future members of the European Perspective. They stressed that the European Perspective must also be opened up in the medium term to a democratic Yugoslavia. This included its return to the OSCE as soon as the civil and democratic requirements were met.

A 'Sign of Protection' for Journalists

On 14 June, Freimut Duve issued a statement on the deaths of three journalists in Kosovo. Over the last decade many journalists in former Yugoslavia had paid with their lives for trying to do their job professionally. In 1998 fifty journalists were killed around the world, according to the *International Press Institute/International Federation of Journalists*. Nine of these lived in countries that are members of the OSCE and one person lived and worked in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a suspended member of the OSCE. Now more names had to be added to this tragic list, noted Duve. In his view, it was imperative for the international community to try to ensure as much as possible the safety and security of journalists in conflict areas. The OSCE, its member-states, could take the lead on this matter. One of the ways to protect journalists was by clearly identifying them as media professionals. A symbol could be developed that would act as a

'sign of protection' for journalists, just as the red cross signifies to the military a medical facility. Duve urged the OSCE member-states, together with national and international journalists' unions, to develop such an emblem that should be accepted by all countries as a bona-fide 'sign of protection' for all journalists.

Repeal the Serbian Press Law

On 28 June, Freimut Duve called for a concerted effort from OSCE Foreign Ministers, Parliaments and non-governmental organisations to bring about repeal of the Serbian Public Information Law which had been enacted on October 20, 1998. This law, he said, was a "declaration of war" against the independent journalists of Serbia. That media war must now be stopped.

In a letter to Foreign Ministers, Duve urged them to actively use their influence to demand the repeal of the Serbian Law through whatever means they deemed appropriate. He also called on non-governmental organisations and parliamentarians throughout Europe to lend their voices demanding a repeal of this law as a vital component in bringing about democracy in Serbia.

Duve noted that a small courageous group of Serbian Parliamentarians voted last year against this law, and that there

was an initiative by a number of Serbian politicians to try to repeal this draconian edict. He concluded his letter to the OSCE Foreign Ministers with his belief that a strong international consensus for the repeal of this law would provide valuable support to Serbian politicians striving to bring their country into the community of democracies in Europe.

Diversity in Journalism

From 24 to 25 June 1999, Alexander Ivanko, Adviser to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, took part in the Conference on Conflict Reporting and the Media sponsored by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and held in Ohrid, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Three main themes were discussed: diversity in journalism, the coverage of the Kosovo crisis and the safety and security of journalists in conflict zones. The conference was attended by journalists from the countries of the former Yugoslavia and Europe, NGOs, EC and the OSCE.

Interventions by Duve

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media intervened during June on behalf of journalists in Turkey, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Belarus.

UPDATE from the ODIHR

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

ELECTIONS



Armenian Parliamentary Elections

The OSCE Election Observation Mission to the 30 May parliamentary elections in Armenia issued on 31 May a preliminary statement with its findings. It concluded that the elections had represented a significant step towards full compliance with OSCE commitments and congratulated the Armenian authorities on having respected the freedom of association and assembly and on the fact that no cases of political repression had been reported to the Mission. Previously banned political parties were readmitted to the political arena and, in contrast to what had happened in Armenia in the past, the legal framework was not used to prohibit electoral participation.

There remained, however, a number of concerns which the ODIHR had raised prior to the elections and which proved during the pre-election period and on election day to be justified. They included concerns about the accuracy of the voter lists, the formation of election commissions, the presence of unauthorized persons in polling stations, numerous technical and organizational shortcomings that prevented election commissions from meeting important deadlines and carrying out their work, refugee registration and the late definition and poor implementation of military voting procedures.

A full report by the Election Observation Mission will be published during July.

Presidential Elections in Slovakia

A full report by the OSCE Election Observation Mission to the 15/29 May presidential elections in Slovakia was published at the end of June and is available on the ODIHR's website at www.osce.odihr.org.

Kazakhstan Voter Education

A script competition was organized during June by the ODIHR and the BBC World Service as part of an ODIHR project for using television to educate voters. The project was launched in April 1999, pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding between the ODIHR and the Government of Kazakhstan. Ten short programmes produced by the BBC World Service will focus on different aspects of the electoral process.

Of the almost one hundred scripts submitted to the BBC, focusing on eight main groups of voters, eleven were selected. The programmes will be produced in Kazakh and Russian on the basis of these scripts. Production is due to start during July.

Kazakhstan Election and Media Workshop

The ODIHR sent a media expert from the Polish Press Freedom Monitoring Centre to participate in a workshop on "Elections and the Print Media" in Almaty on 28-29 June and Karaganda on 1-2 July. The purpose of the workshop, run by the United States Information Service and the Soros Foundation, was to provide for

a discussion on the role and impact of the press during elections with a selection of young local journalists.

Election Law Comments

The ODIHR provided comments to the Governments of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan on their election laws in preparation for the upcoming elections in the region. The ODIHR's comments will probably be discussed with the Governments of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan during July.

DEMOCRATIZATION



Police Training in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The ODIHR held in co-operation with the Constitutional and Legal Policy Institute (COLPI) a second training workshop for police commanders of refugee camps and border stations at Mavrovo Lake on 22-23 June. The workshop, which followed one held on 25-26 May, was conducted by police trainers from Sweden, the German border police and representatives from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The training focused on stress management, human rights and refugee protection, and it was well received by the 18 police commanders who attended. A follow-up mission is planned for the near future to assess the need for further training of this kind.

Azerbaijan Presidential Decree on Memorandum of Understanding

On 17 June, following a visit by representatives of the ODIHR to Azerbaijan to discuss the implementation of projects covered by the Memorandum of Understanding between the ODIHR and the Government of Azerbaijan, the President of Azerbaijan signed a decree appointing a Co-ordinator for Implementation. The Co-ordinator, Mr. Ramiz Anvaroglu Mekhdiyev, will be supported by a working group which will assist with the implementation of ODIHR projects in Azerbaijan.

Georgia Ombudsman Assistance

An ODIHR expert, Dr. Andrzej Malanowski, Director of the Group for Constitutional Rights and Civil Liberties of Poland, was sent to Tbilisi in June to train the staff of the Public Office of the Defender in handling and investigating human rights complaints. He will endeavour to help establish a good working relationship between the Office of the Public Defender and the Constitutional Court of Georgia and to help introduce mechanisms for regular consultations between the Public Defender and the Georgian Parliament on human rights recommendations relevant to the law-making process.

The expert will also assist with the introduction of mechanisms for the investigation - through, inter alia, contacts with local administrations bodies - of human rights complaints reaching the Office of the Public Defender from regions of Georgia remote from the capital, Tbilisi. In addition, the expert will endeavour to make the Supreme Court, the General Prosecutor and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other law enforcement bod-

ies more aware of the mandate and competence of the Public Defender and will suggest ways for them to establish a good working relationship with the Office of the Public Defender.

Uzbekistan NGO-Government Meeting

An NGO-Government meeting took place in Kokand, Uzbekistan, on 25 June as part of an ODIHR civic diplomacy project which has been under way in Uzbekistan since 1997. The meeting, organized by the OSCE Central Asia Liaison Office and the National Human Rights Centre of Uzbekistan, was attended by representatives of NGOs and local authorities. The topic of the meeting was NGO-Government communications and relations.

Roma and Sinti

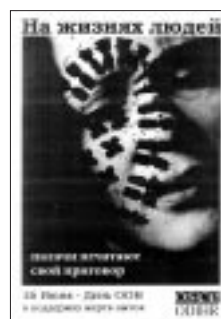
In June, the ODIHR's Adviser on Roma and Sinti Issues, Mr. Nicolae Gheorghie, began a working tour of Central European capitals in Bratislava, Slovakia, where he attended seminars and other meetings on Roma and Sinti issues. Roma women activists were encouraged to attend the OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Gender Issues held in Vienna on 14 and 15 June.

Torture Prevention Campaign

On 26 June, UN Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the ODIHR, following recommendations from the OSCE Expert Panel for the Prevention of Torture, launched a number of initiatives directed towards enhancing torture prevention in the OSCE area.

The ODIHR organized, with extensive support from OSCE missions and field

offices, a national and local press advertising campaign on the issue of torture and impunity. An advertising agency, Scholz and Friends (Warsaw), designed a hard-hitting public-awareness-raising advertisement, which was placed by missions in newspapers in Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine. In Tajikistan, there was almost blanket coverage of the Russian and Tajik press. With the assistance of the British Embassy in Moscow, the advertisement was also placed in Izvestia.



Torture prevention advertisement in Russian

The ODIHR arranged for literature relating to torture prevention to be translated into Russian and posted to OSCE missions for distribution to the public. The literature included the ODIHR report

“Combating Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment: The Role of the OSCE” and a publication of the Association for the Prevention of Torture entitled “Prevention of Torture in Europe”. In addition, the text of a one-page flier on torture prevention and impunity was sent to missions for distribution to the public. The ODIHR made arrangements with the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) for the distribution of the latter’s materials to missions and field offices.

The ODIHR sent an expert, Mr. Arno Adamsoo, Director of IRCT Estonia, to Tajikistan to participate in a series of seminars and other meetings on torture prevention arranged by the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan.

REPORT from the Parliamentary Assembly

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Presidential Activities

President Degn addresses the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, 21 June 1999

On 21 June 1999, Helle Degn, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, addressed the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. Ms. Degn paid tribute to that Assembly, which is now in its fiftieth year. She spoke about the role of the OSCE in the new European security architecture and the relative importance of that role due to the Organization's broad geographical scope and comprehensive concept of security, which combined responsibilities for the maintenance of peace with respect for human rights and economic and environmental co-operation.

Ms. Degn welcomed the agreements and decisions that had brought an end to the military hostilities in Kosovo, but stressed the challenges which lay ahead for the OSCE in that province. She mentioned the preparatory work that was already underway in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to create and deploy a "Democracy Team" for Kosovo. Such a Team, she explained, would consist of a group of Parliamentarians who would periodically visit Kosovo, meet with leaders, parties and authorities and advise on matters concerning civil society, democracy and the rule of law. It was her hope that this work would offer scope for co-operation with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. She also reported that two Democracy Teams of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

were already assisting the Organization in its efforts to resolve the crises in Belarus and Moldova

A further issue by Ms. Degn was what she called the "democratic deficit" in the OSCE. Speaking of the important role of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in several areas, she drew attention to the fact that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly did not have any formal status in the OSCE's decision-making processes. That was decidedly a democratic deficit which needed to be corrected.

President Helle Degn Visits the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

On 28 June, President Helle Degn visited the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), Mr. Max van der Stoep, in The Hague. Ms. Degn is the first OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President to visit the HCNM's Office. The purpose of the visit was to receive a briefing by the High Commissioner on the functioning of his Office and to discuss the possibility of increased co-operation between the Office and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. During the meeting, Ms. Degn expressed the Assembly's strong support for the High Commissioner's work and his quiet preventive diplomacy in countries where conflict appeared to be brewing.

She stressed how important a regular flow of information was for effective co-operation and co-ordination between different OSCE Institutions, adding that Parliamentary Assembly greatly appre-

ciated the High Commissioner's reports on his activities during its annual sessions in July and during the Standing Committee meetings in January and February. She also discussed plans for the forthcoming elections and the planned Antalya Seminar on minorities, to be held between 27 September and 2 October.

Other Activities

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Democracy Team on Belarus

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Democracy Team on Belarus held a meeting from 11 to 13 June in Bucharest regarding forthcoming elections for members of Belarusian political parties, non-governmental organizations and trade unions in conjunction with the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group (AMG) in Minsk. The meeting launched a call for all political forces in Belarus to recognize and participate in. "We have started a discussion on common denominators that could bring together a consensus for political participation in democratic elections," said the former Foreign Minister of Romania, Mr. Adrian Severin (MP-Romania), who is the Head of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Democracy Team on Belarus. Representatives of official Belarusian institutions were invited to attend the Bucharest meeting but declined to participate at the last moment.

The Bucharest Meeting involved a three-day series of talks designed to promote coordinated efforts on the part of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and gov-

ernment representatives bring the various Belarusian political factions together for discussions on free and fair elections in the transitional Republic. Although the participants were divided on some subjects, a number of areas of agreement were noted. Foremost among the concerns of all participants was the question of gaining access to the State-run media,

particularly television. Another concern was the foaming of an election law which would be consistent with OSCE commitments.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Democracy Team has already made a number of visits to Minsk in order to meet with various individuals and orga-

nizations. The Working Group and the AMG are now trying to broaden the "Bucharest Process" by enlisting the participation of official Belarusian institutions. Working Group members plan to visit Minsk again shortly after the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Annual Session in St. Petersburg.



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