

Politico-Military Dimension

Travel Document Security

Experts from the Border Guard, Interior and Foreign Ministries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan took part in a workshop on travel document security in Tashkent on 15 and 16 December. The event, organized by the Government of Uzbekistan, the OSCE Action against Terrorism Unit and the OSCE Centre in Tashkent, focused on key issues of cross-border and regional co-operation and addressed regional concerns on terrorism, organized crime and trafficking in drugs and human beings. Participants exchanged experience on detecting falsified, fraudulent or lost travel documents and security features built into travel documents and agreed on the need to enhance co-operation in areas such as training, sharing of information and technical needs. Experts from Interpol, the International Organization for Migration, the Japan International Co-operation Agency, the Shanghai Co-operation Organization's Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure and the National Bureau of Documents of the Netherlands also attended the workshop. Representatives from Afghanistan, an OSCE partner for Co-operation, also participated in the event.



Border Management

From 25 October to 22 November OSCE Centre in Tashkent held training courses aimed at improving Uzbekistan's border management. The main objective of the four-week programme was to enhance the professional abilities of mid-level border guards and customs officials. Participants received training in searching, tracing and seizing illegally-trafficked small arms and light weapons (SALW) in the region, as well as in examining falsified travel and customs documents. The sessions expected to help to combat illicit trafficking in SALW between Uzbekistan and neighbouring countries, and to ultimately reduce the destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of these weapons in Central Asia. The programme was also aimed at raising the law enforcers' awareness of internationally accepted rules and regulations on border management. A team of two experienced trainers conducted the sessions for customs officials and border guards in three regions of Uzbekistan - Nukus, Bukhara and Tashkent.



Economic and Environmental Dimension

SME Development

On 20 October, the OSCE Centre in Tashkent held an event devoted to the challenges and opportunities of developing tourism in the region. It took place on the margins of the Tashkent International Tourism Fair, which was held on 21-23 October. The meeting was a follow-up to the "Central Asia Workshop on Income Generation through the Promotion of SME (Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises) Development in the Tourism Sector". The latter took place in Almaty in July, at the initiative of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and the OSCE Centre in Almaty. Along with two representatives from each Central Asian country - one from the government and another from the private sector, the event brought together participants from OSCE field presences, representatives of international organizations and the business community.

Anti-corruption

The OSCE Centre in Tashkent and the Regional Office for Central Asia of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime held a workshop entitled "Anti-corruption Legal Instruments and Best Practices" in Tashkent on 17 December. National anti-corruption legislation, strengthening good governance and the rule of law and promoting the UN Convention against Corruption were the focus of the workshop. It brought together some 35 participants representing the General Prosecutor's Office, the Justice, Foreign and Interior Ministries, the State Tax Committee, the National Security Service, as well as NGOs and international organizations. Practical recommendations were elaborated to develop co-operation with local agencies and increase the activities of the OSCE and other international organizations in promoting good governance. Participants received copies of the OSCE handbook - "Best Practices for Combating Corruption". The publication is designed to help legislators, public officials, media, NGOs and businesspeople better understand the methods to fight corruption.

Human Dimension

Media and Elections

From 6 to 10 September the OSCE Centre in Tashkent organized a four day training course for media representatives willing to serve as election observers during the 26 December parliamentary elections. During the training 24 journalists from nine regions of Uzbekistan discussed issues such as the rights and responsibilities of journalists under Uzbek legislation, including their right to serve as observers, as well as international standards in this regard. According to Article 6 of the "Law on elections to the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) of the Republic of Uzbekistan" of 29 August 2003, representatives of the print press, television and radio can be present at all events related to the preparation and holding of elections, as well as polling stations on election day and during vote counting process.



Penitentiary System



Senior staff of Uzbekistan prison system paid a study visit to Poland from 1 to 10 November as an important step towards implementing a comprehensive prison reform in Uzbekistan. The study tour to Poland's Kalisz prison training centre was organized by the OSCE Centre in Tashkent and Uzbekistan's Central Prison Administration. The visitors were representatives from the Presidential Administration, the Interior Ministry and the Central Prison Administration of Uzbekistan. The Polish Association on Legal Education, which assisted with the programme, arranged visits to Poland's prison administration, the Justice Ministry, the Ombudsman's Office and several prisons.

Legal Education Support

As part of its efforts to support legal education in Uzbekistan, the OSCE Centre in Tashkent organized a study visit for 12 academics from law faculties and institutes to Britain's Essex University. The delegation, which visited Essex from 13 to 21 November, was composed of deans of faculties and teachers of different legal disciplines. The study trip was a follow-up activity to training courses organized last summer by the OSCE Centre in Tashkent. Participants attended lectures, met their British colleagues, observed projects in action and visited the United Kingdom Parliament, Crown Court in Chelmsford and the Central Criminal Court in London. The OSCE Centre will continue the programme in 2005.

Cross Dimensional Activities

Preventing Human Trafficking

Learning from international and local best practices of government-civil society co-operation in preventing human trafficking was the focus of a workshop, organized jointly by the OSCE Centre in Tashkent and the U.S. Embassy in Uzbekistan and held on 8-9 November. The workshop was opened by the U.S. Ambassador to Uzbekistan, Jon R. Purnell, who underscored the importance of prevention in combating the threat of human trafficking. Seventy participants representing government, civil society and the media discussed issues such as international and local best practices, better co-operation between the media, official structures and public organizations, and developing joint strategies to combat trafficking.

Youth Education

The five OSCE Centres in Central Asia ended the first year's activities of the OSCE Central Asian Youth Network (CAYN) with a five-day international conference, which was held from 1 to 5 November. More than 50 students from all over Central Asia attended the event. Guest speakers from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Office for Central Asia, the OSCE Secretariat, and the Swedish Institute of International Affairs conducted sessions on the general security situation, terrorism issues, drugs and crime threats, and economic-environmental issues and policies in the region. The CAYN is part of the OSCE Centres' Education for Young People Programme in Central Asia. Its aim is to contribute to international co-operation, conflict prevention, and democratization by promoting good relations and friendly cross-border contacts among students in the region. More information about the CAYN can be obtained from the web site of the Network: www.cayn.net

