

MARCH 2004

OSCE
MAGA
ZINE

Roses and reforms: Picking up the pieces in Georgia

The MANPADS menace: Taking aim at the shoulder-fired missile threat

When an institution builds an institution: Freimut Duve and freedom of the media





The *OSCE Magazine* is published in English and Russian by the Press and Public Information Section of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the OSCE and its participating States.

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The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe is a pan-European security body whose 55 participating States span the geographical area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

OSCE Chairmanship 2004: Bulgaria

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Message from the Secretary General

I am pleased to share with you the first issue of the *OSCE Magazine*, which is replacing the nine-year-old *OSCE Newsletter*.



All periodicals must occasionally renew themselves to remain fresh, interesting and relevant. This year, as the OSCE celebrates its tenth anniversary as an Organization, we thought it fitting to relaunch our main regular publication.

Our intention is to go beyond cosmetic improvements. Our goal is to publish more thoughtful pieces that explore some of the complexities and reflect the full richness of this unique Organization's activities.

The *OSCE Magazine* is intended to have a longer "shelf life" and is targeted towards a broader readership than its predecessor. There will be less emphasis on rounding up fast-paced news developments and keeping track of constantly unfolding events in Vienna, Copenhagen, The Hague and Warsaw, and in the field. That is the task of our popular website, **www.osce.org**, which, incidentally, is also gearing up to adopt a new format later in the year.

I hope you enjoy the *Magazine* and find it a good read. We welcome your feedback and invite you to submit topics that you would like to see covered in depth. The OSCE has earned a reputation for its flexibility and we will do our utmost to respond to your information needs.

Ján Kubiš
Vienna
March 2004

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Cover: A scene in Tbilisi on the eve of Georgia's presidential elections in early January. AFP/Supinsky photo

Roses and reforms: Picking up the pieces in Georgia

Eyewitness accounts:
Nino Burjanadze and
Bruce George

Still reeling from the historic events in Georgia, parliamentarian colleagues Nino Burjanadze and Bruce George recently relived the emotionally charged days in Tbilisi in November 2003, leading up to the snap presidential elections of 4 January 2004. They echoed the same sentiments: the changes were brought about by the collective will of Georgians themselves, the new round of elections were made possible only through the quick response of the international community, and the challenges of transition had only just begun. The following are excerpts from separate interviews the two MPs had with Martha Freeman, Editor of the OSCE Annual Report, during the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Winter Meeting in Vienna on 19 and 20 February.

"Rose revolution" scenes: OSCE/Cliff Volpe

Bruce George: The story of Georgia's "rose revolution" has yet to be written, but once the different actors and a whole network of formal and informal contacts divulge what took place, it will read like a sensational Jeffrey Archer novel. If I had the time and if I knew the Georgian language, I would tackle the project as a study of peaceful regime change.

We [the International Election Observation Mission] were not a group that came for the parliamentary elections of 2 November with the objective of changing the regime. Our sole intention was to monitor the elections and to report, hopefully, that they were run better than previous ones. But when the international community gave its "thumbs down", Georgians clearly saw that, at long last, the outside world recognized what they and the domestic opposition had known for a long time.

On the day before the second round of parliamentary elections, scheduled for 23 November, the members of the Observation Mission were in the quarters of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), mapping out deployment assignments. We were

reviewing what had happened since the first round held 20 days earlier, on 2 November.

I escaped for a few minutes to catch the exciting ending of the Rugby World Cup on television — although I'm Welsh, I was rooting for England. I rushed back to the meeting and saw the crowds outside, waving what I thought were British flags. And I thought to myself: "I know that Georgians play rugby but I didn't think they were quite so committed to England beating Australia."

It turned out they were celebrating their own victory, which was indeed a very significant historical event in the South Caucasus. As everyone in the world knows by now, the scheduled elections didn't take place, although I heard that there was one polling station somewhere that hadn't realized they had been cancelled and went ahead and produced results anyway.

A change of regime without elections is not ideal, but President Eduard Shevardnadze left with dignity, and there was no bloodshed — truly remarkable for a region that has seen a lot of it.

MAASTRICHT

One of the proudest, most memorable and privileged moments of my life took place in a small room in Maastricht [at the OSCE's annual Ministerial Council Meeting in December 2003], when the then Chairman-in-Office Jaap de Hoop Scheffer opened what was a "givers' auction" to raise funds to enable Georgia to hold presidential and

Bruce George, Special Co-ordinator of the short-term OSCE Observation Mission, in front of the Georgian parliament building during the protests in Tbilisi.



repeat parliamentary elections.

The Canadian Foreign Minister made a statement and pledged half a million Canadian dollars, and everyone applauded. And then somebody else got up and made another pledge, to more applause. And so it continued.

The CiO said: "I'm now speaking as Dutch Foreign Minister: the Netherlands is pledging half a million euros." And by the end, about 6 million euros had been pledged. This was the international community saying: "We want to help you." They also specified that the allocation of the money would be co-ordinated by the OSCE Mission to Georgia [through the Georgia Elections Assistance Programme].

UNIVERSITIES OF DEMOCRATIZATION

We should remember that two of the main characters in this story have been immersed in the democratization process intellectually and politically for quite some time, and don't need any advice. They have attended countless seminars and hold advanced degrees in democratic studies from the finest universities in the world.

Nino Burjanadze has been a member of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for several years. At the same time, she serves as one of the Assembly's Vice-Presidents. That link was very important, because it meant that her friends could cut through the bureaucracy and get straight through to her as her country's Acting President.

Mikheil Saakashvili was also part of his country's delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly many years ago although he spent more time with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. So you see how parliamentary assemblies are quite important in this kind of process and how they can also serve as universities of democratization.

Then of course the constellation of OSCE people and institutions — the OSCE Mission, ODIHR, the OSCE itself — has been superb.

In Georgia, one of the amazing things that I saw was how professional and sophisticated some of the non-governmental organizations were. The Director of the domestic election watchdog organization simply moved over to the Central Elections Commission (CEC) as Chairman [after his overwhelming election by parliament on 30 November], bringing all his expertise with him.

MARCH PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Georgians are getting an enormous amount of assistance and they have had a lot of tutoring. I think they can be proud

of what they have achieved so far. Their presidential elections in January almost met international standards. The metamorphosis from an old system to the beginning of a new one within 45 days was truly phenomenal.

They have the laws more or less in place, and the CEC is functioning well. They have political leaders who won power because of their democratic credentials, and who will retain this power if they prove these credentials.

I told the parliamentarians at the PA Winter Meeting that we in the election observation team will be as ruthless and objective in our analysis of the election on 28 March as we were at the November election. If we weren't, we would be derelict in our duties. There are people who would know what was going on and if we failed to reflect reality, then we would quite rightly be condemned.

When I return to Georgia, again as the Special Co-ordinator of the short-term observers, I would like to be able to comment after the elections: "Hey, I've seen something majestic. I've seen something truly sensational." I desperately hope that is what we will find.

It is now up to Georgia to deliver free and fair elections in line with international standards. And if they can do it, then they will have demonstrated to governments and parliaments: "It can be done! It can be done!"

2 November 2003, parliamentary elections: "Systematic and widespread fraud"
4 January 2004, presidential polls: "Notable progress"
28 March 2004, parliamentary elections: "More genuine indicator"

"The 4 January 2004 extraordinary presidential election in Georgia demonstrated notable progress over previous elections, and in several respects brought the country closer to meeting OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections.

"In contrast to the 2 November 2003 parliamentary elections that were characterized by systematic and widespread fraud, the authorities generally displayed the collective political will to conduct a more genuine democratic election process. The establishment of a new voter register was particularly significant for contributing to enhanced public confidence in the election process.

"Nevertheless, in view of the exceptional circumstances that led up to the 4 January extraordinary presidential election, the lack of a truly competitive political environment, and the short election timeframe, the 28 March repeat parliamentary elections will be a more genuine indicator of Georgia's commitment to a democratic election."

From OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission's Final Report on Georgia's Extraordinary Presidential Election





Two MPs meet the press on 24 November: OSCE PA President Bruce George and Speaker of the Georgian Parliament, Nino Burjanadze, shortly after she assumed the post of Acting President of Georgia.

Nino Burjanadze: Long before 2 November 2003, the OSCE had been working closely with us in Georgia, especially on how to improve the Election Code. Unfortunately, we had very serious problems — economic, social and political — so the impact of the assistance was limited. The level of corruption was very high, and opinion polls indicated that the opposition had a very good chance of winning.

I can tell you in all honesty that no country, no international organization forced the events that were about to take place in Georgia. The whole thing came about because people wanted major changes in their living conditions. All we wanted was for President Shevardnadze to hold repeat parliamentary elections, which would have been in order under the Constitution.

It was absolutely amazing. Just two days after the elections, when we asked our supporters to come to the Central Philharmonic Hall at three o'clock to protest against the irregularities, 5,000 people gathered in two hours' time. Then the crowds grew to 12,000. People were angry.

I went home, took out a suitcase and packed everything I would need for a few days. Nobody knew what was going to

happen. I wanted to give people the feeling that they were not alone. I was watching out in case someone might want to provoke the crowds. I was nervous for the young students who were there, many of whom were about the same age as my two sons.

I was shocked



when, about a week before the President's resignation, there were about 50,000 people in front of the parliament building. That is a lot for a small country with a population of not quite five million! Many of them stood there day and night in the cold and rain.

On 22 November, I announced that, until new parliamentary elections were held, I would act as Head of State as provided for in the Constitution. On Sunday, 23 November, we were informed that the President had decided to resign, the day after people had entered the parliament building.

I am very grateful that the international community, including the OSCE, issued very clear statements of support, which gave people hope and assured them that they were not alone. We also received e-mails and telephone calls from all over the world, especially from within Europe. I was very proud of the way it all ended.

MAASTRICHT: 1 AND 2 DECEMBER 2003

As the Speaker of the Georgian Parliament and as Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, I had planned — even before the dramatic events took place — to be in Maastricht for the OSCE Ministerial Council at the beginning of December. I was quite nervous about leaving the country in the middle of a difficult period, but everyone decided that my presence at the meeting would send a serious message.

In Maastricht, everyone was speaking only about us, only about Georgia — which I had not expected at all. Each speaker would start by voicing support for Georgia. OSCE PA President Bruce George delivered a very good, very warm and strong statement, making a plea for OSCE participating States to assist Georgia in its fight for democracy.

Dutch Foreign Minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the Chairman-in-Office at the time, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy, currently the OSCE CiO, and U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell also delivered powerful messages. Then the OSCE called for financial pledges to enable elections to be held; without the funds pledged, without OSCE support, it would not have been possible for us to hold the presidential elections on 4 January 2004.

Since the developments in November, Georgian society has become highly politicized. In many countries, people don't even know who the speaker of their parliament is; they don't find it relevant to their lives. But in Georgia, people have taken an interest in United Nations resolutions and

Ambassador Christian Strohal, Director of ODIHR (right), and Craig Jenness, Head of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission, discuss the initial findings of the conduct of Georgia's presidential elections on 4 January. For about eight weeks, 38 election experts and long-term observers followed all aspects of the election preparations, the campaign, election day, and the post-election processes in Tbilisi and ten other regions. The OSCE/ODIHR Mission was joined by representatives of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and the European Parliament to form the International Election Observation Mission. Some 450 short-term observers from 38 OSCE participating States were deployed on polling day itself.



what politicians are promising concerning Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Even when we have a *supra* — our traditional special celebrations where friends and guests sit around a table and offer toasts — the main topic is politics and politicians. Now people are, unfortunately, depending on politicians for everything — for the availability of electricity and gas and pensions and salaries.

The OSCE Ministerial Council in Maastricht was shown on all the television channels. Everyone in Georgia was watching and waiting for the international reaction to the events in our country. Even ordinary people in Georgian villages knew what the OSCE was and what Secretary Powell said at the meeting. And they were incredibly happy about what they saw and heard.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS: 4 JANUARY

It was difficult to organize normal presidential elections in 45 days. The OSCE was very worried about it, but we did our best. I'm very proud of the fact that, under my interim presidency, the elections, although not perfect, were conducted well.

I do hope that the parliamentary elections — they are always more challenging than presidential ones — will also be free and fair. Believe me, we will do our best to prove to ourselves and to our international friends that, not only can we fight for freedom and democratic values, but we can also protect them once we have them.

PA WINTER MEETING, 19-20 FEBRUARY

I've been coming to the OSCE since 1996 and feel very comfortable here because I am among real friends who are sincere about wanting to create democratic institutions in the newly independent countries. I'm not very happy about the fact that the OSCE is not as active in conflict resolution as it could be, but I hope that this will change soon.

EMBARKING ON REFORMS

We have very ambitious plans to fight the deep-seated corruption that has had a negative impact on the State as well as on society. Pensioners wait hopelessly for their monthly payments of \$7; sometimes they wait for years! About 52 per cent of the people are living below the poverty line. The new Government has not yet requested the OSCE to expand its economic assistance to the country, but we hope that you will find ways to help us.

We also need to strengthen our parliament to make it more effective and more transparent. We lack technical equipment, properly trained staff and even the capability to operate a normal voting system at plenary sessions. We have prepared a special draft on the subject, which I have circulated here, and I hope the OSCE and its participating States will help us in this area too.

An Austrian politician told me that in his country, it is not so very important which of the two presidential candidates wins in the April elections, because either one will be good for Austria. I was so envious! I wish one day I could say the same about my country.

Burjanadze: The 43-day President

Nino Burjanadze, Speaker of the Georgian Parliament since 2001, and one of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Vice-Presidents since 2000, served as Georgia's interim President from 23 November 2003 to 4 January 2004. First voted into Parliament in 1995, she chaired its Legal Committee in 1998-1999 and its Foreign Relations Committee in 2000-2001. In August 2003, she emerged as the leader of an opposition electoral alliance, the "Burjanadze-Democrats". She is a law graduate of Tbilisi State University and holds a Ph.D. in international law from Moscow State University.

Foreign Minister Solomon Passy starts OSCE Chairmanship with high-level diplomacy

BY RICHARD MURPHY

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office for 2004, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy, made an energetic start to the year with a hectic schedule of visits to participating States.

After formally presenting Bulgaria's Chairmanship programme to the Permanent Council in Vienna, he travelled to Brussels to meet NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, his predecessor as OSCE Chairman-in-Office, and later attended the inauguration of new Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili in Tbilisi.

Early in February, the Foreign Minister spoke at the annual Munich Conference on Security Policy. Visits to Moscow, Brussels, New York and Washington were planned for later in the month.

The new Chairman-in-Office, a 47-year-old scientist and former anti-communist dissident, stressed the need for all 55 participating States to implement their existing OSCE commitments rather than devise new ones.

"We have strategies, we have papers, we have agreements. What we need today is to implement these documents," he said in Vienna on 15 January. "There is little point in producing new documents without implementing those we already have."

At a news conference in Vienna, the Chairman-in-Office spoke eloquently on what the CSCE/OSCE had meant to him in his youth.

"The OSCE was the organization of our hopes, the hopes of my generation," he said. "I am very happy that we are now harvesting the results of the Helsinki process. I do believe that this Organization can fulfil the dreams of new generations today."

IMPLEMENTATION

The Minister told the Permanent Council

that leading the list for implementation was the Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century, which had been adopted by the OSCE foreign ministers in Maastricht in early December 2003, as well as the OSCE Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism and related documents.

"What is called for are practical robust measures to fight terrorism, to be implemented to a large extent in co-operation with other international agencies," he said.

He added that in the fight against terrorism, the OSCE was concentrating on concrete activities such as strengthening airport security, tackling the threat posed by the use of shoulder-fired missiles against civilian aircraft and improving the security of passports and other travel documents. Building up police capacity in participating States and improving border controls also played a critical role.

One new area highlighted by the Chairman-in-Office was education.

"Education is a major tool for setting up democratic institutions and securing democratic governance, for generating respect for human rights and for promoting tolerance, and for achieving sustainable

Georgia gets a new flag and a new president: Inauguration of Mikheil Saakashvili on 25 January. Photos: OSCE



economic development and raising human resources for successful market economies,” he said.

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

Minister Passy acknowledged that there were limits to what the OSCE could do in terms of direct assistance for education. “At the same time, we all know that the OSCE has immense political potential for enhancing awareness and mobilizing resources,” he said.

COLLECTIVE SOLUTIONS

In their replies, heads of delegation of participating States expressed broad support for the priorities of the Chairmanship, while focusing on additional concerns of their own.

Russian Ambassador Alexander Alekseyev said that “functional and geographical imbalances” in the work of the OSCE and “double standards” practised by some countries needed to be tackled.

“All the OSCE participating States to some extent encounter violations of fundamental OSCE values on their own soil, the more so since the emergence of new trans-border threats which can be dealt with only through collective efforts,” he said.

“If, however, the OSCE format is used — not for a collective search for solutions but for propaganda purposes and for the perpetual preaching by one group of countries to another — this can only lead to a ‘freezing’ of the old lines of division within the OSCE, the emergence of new ones and a weakening of the OSCE’s function as a mechanism for partnership and co-operation on a basis of equal rights.”

U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Douglas Davidson said Bulgaria was assuming the Chairmanship at an important moment in the Organization’s history.

“This Organization remains essential to the freedom, independence and security of people from Vancouver to Vladivostok. We must all work together to assure its continued success,” he said. Respect for OSCE commitments remained as vital as ever, Mr. Davidson added. “Without such respect, no real security and stability is possible.”

He welcomed the fact that resolution of the Transdniestrian and Georgian conflicts was at the top of the Chairmanship’s list of priorities, adding that other “unfinished business”, such as the withdrawal of Russian forces from Moldova and Georgia,

should also be addressed. Resources should also be devoted to initiatives in the political-military sphere, including tackling excess stockpiles of ammunition.

NATO

On 21 January, Minister Passy travelled to Brussels to meet NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and address the North Atlantic Council.

The Chairman-in-Office said the Bulgarian Chairmanship would like to see the excellent existing co-operation between the OSCE and NATO in the Balkans extended into other areas, such as the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

“In the fight against terrorism, the efforts of NATO and the OSCE are mutually reinforcing,” he added.

Noting the interest expressed by many

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, were among the dignitaries at President Saakashvili’s inauguration.



NATO ambassadors in the OSCE's playing a role in supporting Afghanistan — an OSCE Partner for Co-operation since 2003 — the Minister said: "The OSCE has considerable expertise in building democratic institutions and monitoring elections. I believe this expertise might be shared with Afghanistan, provided a consensus can be found."

GEORGIA

At the inauguration of the new Georgian President in Tbilisi on 25 January, Minister Passy pledged continued OSCE support for democratic development in the country and voiced pride at the speed with which the OSCE had responded to Georgia's request for assistance in organizing presidential and parliamentary elections.

"I would like to express our readiness to support the

Government of Georgia in its efforts to promote democratic values, build democratic institutions, encourage economic and social development and uproot corruption at all levels," the Chairman-in-Office said.

In his discussions with Georgian leaders on the unresolved conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Minister Passy stressed the importance of safeguarding Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

"We regard the preservation of the territorial integrity and national unity of Georgia as an important prerequisite for the democratization of the country and for stability in the South Caucasus as a whole," he added.

Richard Murphy is OSCE Spokesperson and Head of Press and Public Information.

Passy: Committed Euro-Atlantist

Solomon Passy, a leading political and public figure in Bulgaria, was appointed Foreign Minister in July 2001. He served briefly as Chairman of the Foreign Policy Committee for Defence and Security in the 39th National Assembly.

His political life started in 1984, when he founded Bulgaria's Green Party, for which he served as spokesman for ten years.

In 1990, he joined the Grand National Assembly as a member of the Union of Democratic Forces, which brought together the most important non-communist parties. He co-authored the new Bulgarian Constitution, which was adopted on 13 July 1991.

That same year, Minister Passy founded the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria, a non-governmental organization dedicated to fostering the common values of the Euro-Atlantic community, acting as its



President from 1992 to 2001. Also in 1991, he became a member of parliament for the National Movement Simeon the Second, founded by Bulgaria's Prime Minister and former King, Simeon Saxe-Coburg Gotha.

Minister Passy has been involved in a number of public initiatives, such as the Bulgarian Aero-Space Agency, the NATO Information Centre, and the Institute for Regional and International Studies, of which he is the co-founder and a member of the Board.

He is a member of the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds, the Bulgarian National Geographic Society, and the Bulgarian Wildlife Fund. He has taken part in three expeditions to

Livingston Island in Antarctica.

The holder of a Ph.D. in mathematical logic and computer science, he was assistant professor at St. Kliment Ohridski University in Sofia and the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences from 1984 to 1994.

Born on 22 December 1956 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, he is the son of Isaac Passy, a well-known Bulgarian philosopher and university professor.



FREIMUT DUVE'S PARTING SHOTS

When an institution builds an institution

First OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, 1998-2003

“What? Another press freedom watchdog!?” Erhard Busek, Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, was not alone in reacting sceptically to the news that the OSCE was to create the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media. But six years later, writes Mr. Busek in a commemorative booklet, Freimut Duve is leaving behind “not only an established institution, but above all, a respected one”. Shortly before his return to his native Hamburg and to the United States, where he plans to do some research and writing, Mr. Duve answered questions from OSCE Press Officer Mikhail Evstafiev.

Mikhail Evstafiev: When you became the first OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media on 1 January 1998, were you optimistic that freedom of the press was showing steady improvement?

Freimut Duve: I would not call it “steady improvement”. But it’s true that it was a time when participating States had expressed a desire to share the world of Western freedom. Otherwise, they would not have agreed to my appointment.

At that time, we were feeling confident that we would be able to overcome the burden of the past, as seen in the structure of media outlets in the newly emerging democracies. Who would have foreseen how the situation would change in the following six years — and not for the better!

The new media openness in some States has been replaced by nervousness, self-censorship and a constant fear of oppression. As a result of a shift in priorities among the OSCE participating States, civil liberties, including freedom of expression, have been pushed to the sidelines by what many countries believe are more pressing concerns.

As I leave the OSCE, the record in some of the States concerning freedom of the media is more problematic than when I took this job.

How did the institution come about?

Before my appointment, I was Chairman of the Third Committee of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) and founded the OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy, now in its ninth year. I became increasingly convinced that the OSCE needed an institution for the media. I discussed it with colleagues at the PA and then proposed the idea to the then German Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel, and asked him to make an official proposal to the OSCE.

Do you think the mandate of the Office has proved its usefulness and does it need strengthening?

The mandate is clear: helping journalists who find themselves in a difficult situation, helping States improve their media structures, and helping Governments and institutions improve the education of their journalists. I’m not a strong believer in paperwork. Adding or deleting a single comma would be difficult and would need a unanimous decision. The issue is not so much about strengthening the mandate as about what one does with it. We have a very small office, yet we are heard all over the world.

Duve: A life “about war in the soul”

§ 1936: Born in Würzburg, Germany, into “a Jewish family with roots in the Balkans” (self-description)

§ Grew up in Hamburg and studied modern history, sociology, political science and English literature at Hamburg University

§ 1970-1989: Editor and publisher specializing in works of political writers such as Vaclav Havel

§ 1980 to 1998: Social Democrat Member of Bundestag (German Parliament), representing Hamburg/Chairman of Sub-Committee on Culture/Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina/Member of OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Chairman of Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions (1995-1998)

§ December 1997: Appointed first OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media by Sixth OSCE Ministerial Council in Copenhagen

§ 1997: Received Hannah Arendt Award for Political Thinking

§ Author and writer, including *Vom Krieg in der Seele* (About War in the Soul), 1994

§ Initiated *Freedom of the Media* publication series (36 titles so far), including *Freedom and Responsibility Yearbook* and *In Defence of the Future*, collections of essays by writers from war-torn societies. The series carries the logo, *Des Schreibers Hand* (The Writer’s Hand), with the special permission of its illustrator, German author and Nobel Prize winner Günter Grass.



Courtesy of Vito von Eichborn Verlag/
Rowohlt Verlag

How much support in general have you enjoyed from participating States?

I cannot expect the States that I criticize to offer much support. Right at the outset, we developed procedures and put them in place. After receiving information of a worrying nature in a specific country, we would first take up the issue with the respective foreign minister and ask for a reply.

As a second step, we would then go public on the case, and of course some States don’t like that at all. You have to remember that in speaking up for media freedom, the only instrument we have at our disposal is informing the public about our position. Over the years, some Governments have, little by little, become more co-operative and transparent because a number of their civil servants have tended to agree with our concerns. Even if these officials could not disagree directly with their presidents or ministers, they realized that we had to do what we had to do.

We have had to criticize some governments severely. In Ukraine, for example, I had to speak up against President Kuchma’s policies. Then, in September 2000, the murder of journalist Georgiy Gongadze, whom I knew personally, shocked us all. And now,

three years later, I have the feeling that the Government in Ukraine — because it is not a monolithic structure but is made up of many individuals with great hopes for their country — will finally try to solve this crime.

Which States have surprised you by the way they reacted on being reminded about their commitments to a free and independent press?

Some have surprised me by reacting negatively and some by their willingness to work with us. I must say I was very surprised at some reactions from the United States, which actually has been helping this Office a lot. I would have thought that my criticism of its media problems, especially after the events of 11 September 2001, would at least be acknowledged — if not happily welcomed.

We have criticized Ukraine often and yet the Ukrainian Ambassador’s response to my final address to the Permanent Council on 11 December was rather positive. The same is true of the Ambassador of Azerbaijan.

In fact you received some praise for that speech, but mostly criticism. How did that feel?

I felt that I had done my job. I was not there to be embraced. How could I expect everybody to open their arms to me and kiss me and tell me how wonderful I was? That would be terrible. I don’t expect to have any kind of dialogue with dictatorships. If they were interested in any change at all, they would think about becoming more open and straightforward.

What are the most common ways in which States sometimes fail to meet their commitments?

In the 1990s, the West thought it had a mission to democratize Eastern Europe.

But two years into the job and after visiting many parts of the post-Soviet region, my attention was also drawn to certain developments in the West. For example, when journalists were killed in Spain by terrorists, my Office expressed outrage immediately and demanded swift police action. Then along came a candidate for the post of Prime Minister in Italy who practically monopolized the media. He would not for a minute think of keeping an institutional distance between himself and his media concerns.

I criticized this again and again. But you know, my main concern is not Italy but rather the dangerous precedent that Italy sets. Other States, seeing the Italian example, have good grounds for saying: “That’s how we do it in Europe, Mr. Duve, so please keep your mouth shut! If they can get away with it, why can’t we?”

Are there any mistakes you would confess to or are there things you would do differently today?

The first thing I would do is combine Freedom of the Media and the independence of legal institutions into one OSCE function. Why? Because these are the two shields for democracy. You can't really help journalists if you can't rely on the independence of judges.

Looking back, perhaps I should have had a slightly bigger staff [of four]. I must underline though that my lean team — currently nine internationals — has done a rather good job over the years. I would hate to use up too much taxpayers' money; it is not mine. As a member of parliament for two decades, I am used to asking where the money comes from. I also think very much like a businessman; I like keeping an eye on the budget.

Sometimes I get angry at certain people who constantly enlarge the Organization. A new task is introduced, and another one, and another one.

The OSCE Freedom of the Media institution, which is never silent and is well-known throughout the world, uses just slightly over half a per cent of the OSCE budget. And we never had any unnecessary expenses. I refused to have a personal car or a driver. You don't need them in Vienna. You can always take the tram!

How concerned are you that the fight against terror has pushed freedom of the media issues into the background?

On 12 September 2001, I told my staff that this institution would not use the expression "fight against terrorism". Some presidents should be reminded that there are countries that have lived under terror for 50 years — such as Colombia, or Ireland for 40 years, or Spain, for 20 years.

Terrorist criminals who kill people should be caught, but they don't have to be ranked as a global enemy. There is a dramatic difference between world enemies and small-scale criminals who use small-scale weapons on a global level. But now we have succeeded in making them feel "global" and now they can employ other things — hatred for the West, for example — in organizing themselves.

Would you have any advice to offer to your successor?

To focus on the protection of journalists who investigate corruption. And to look into the issue of the concentration of the media in the West. Some media outlets see journalism as merchandise to be sold and not as an instrument to keep democracy alive.

From your vantage point, how do you see the future of the OSCE?

Personally, I think the importance of the OSCE is diminishing. It has a future only if it raises the central question: "How will modern economies, modern States and modern democracies develop in this day and age of globalization?"

But if new themes come up for which we do not have the proper instruments, and if subjects are taken up for which we cannot do much, then it will not work. We cannot simply keep holding seminars and setting up meetings, meetings and more meetings. We need concrete projects. In a world where millions are dying from hunger and AIDS, we can't afford to waste money on organizing nice conferences and seminars in nice places with little to say and little follow-up action. We need to deliver with tasks that are linked with our values.



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Des Schreibers Hand
Courtesy of Günter Grass

Freimut Duve receives Germany's Order of Merit

German President Johannes Rau has conferred the Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany on Freimut Duve to honour his tireless efforts on behalf of journalistic freedom in the 55 OSCE participating States.

"Freimut Duve did pioneering work and became a fixed and respected figure within the OSCE structures," said President Rau at a ceremony in Schloss Bellevue in Berlin on 13 January. "As the first OSCE Media Representative, he gave the office structure and content and made it effective."

The President noted that during Mr. Duve's six years in office, he helped numerous journalists who faced difficulties over their critical reporting, and coined terms such as "censorship by killing" and "structural censorship" — indirect methods of harassing the media that force them to resort to self-censorship.

The wide scope of his activities encompassed issues such as freedom and responsibility and the Internet, media in multi-lingual societies, and a roaming multimedia peace project, President Rau said.

The German Foreign Ministry has been an active supporter of Mr. Duve's office, providing project funding worth more than 320,000 euros in 2003 alone.

DIRE WARNING

“You’ll be the subject of a Duve press release”

Freimut Duve has been a thorn in the side of many a Head of State and many a diplomatic mission. For several journalists, however, he was their last recourse. True to his mission, he chose to end his second and final term by establishing the Veronica Guerin Legal Defence Fund to help journalists facing prosecution. The Fund honours the Irish investigative journalist who covered drug-trafficking and organized crime for Ireland’s *Sunday Independent*, and was murdered in June 1996. The following are just some of the many tributes to Mr. Duve that poured in from journalists around the world.



Freimut Duve, a man deeply engaged in the battle with dictatorships, regardless of their ideological colour, represents the trend in social democracy that has placed human rights and citizens’ freedoms at the centre. Human rights are the same for everyone — for Chileans and Russians, for Greeks and Poles,

for Palestinians and Jews.

Freimut Duve’s name has become a symbol. I have heard it in Almaty, Santiago, Madrid and Istanbul. I have heard it in Jordan and Israel. It is important that a politician who stubbornly believes in a moral sense of values can still be found in present-day Europe.

Adam Michnik
First recipient of OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy, 1996
Editor-in-Chief, *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Poland’s first independent newspaper)
Warsaw

Although serious and important institutions should not be identified with people, institutions are made up of people, after all. It is a fact that only with the appointment of Freimut Duve did the OSCE become more present, active and heard.



I remember his swift reaction when we were having problems with the new democratic authorities. He did not need any persuading to pick up the phone and call his friend, the late Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic.

His was one of those names we used for intimidation: “We’ll call Duve.” Or: “You’ll be the subject of a Duve press release.” At times when we were isolated and exposed to the greatest danger and pressure, especially during the conflict in Kosovo and the 1999 NATO air strikes, Freimut Duve

managed to encourage and help us in ways in which almost no one else could.

Veran Matic
Editor-in-Chief, Radio and TV B92
Chairman, Association of Independent Electronic Media
Serbia and Montenegro



For those of us born in the Soviet Union, meeting a bureaucrat who

has a different approach to public organizations is rare. We, a group of human rights activists, met Freimut Duve at the House of Journalists in Moscow shortly after his appointment. When we told him about the situation of journalists in the post-Soviet regions, his mood appeared to grow darker with every reference to journalists who had been killed.

Our mutually beneficial co-operation began when we organized conferences in Central Asia with his Office. It is astounding, but Mr. Duve was recognized relatively quickly by post-Soviet journalists as the main defender of their rights.

If one were to try and describe

the work of Mr. Duve in figures, it would have to be in the number of journalists who were saved — through his engagement — from jail sentences or unjustified accusations by law enforcement bodies.

Our co-operation throughout the years has shown how much a prominent writer and politician can do if he agrees to temporarily become a bureaucrat. A good bureaucrat.

Oleg Panfilov
Tajik journalist
Director, Centre for Journalism in Extreme Situations (human rights organization within the Russian Union of Journalists)
Moscow

Even before Mr. Duve and I met in July 2001, I was already receiving his support during the most difficult time in my life. Thanks to his efforts, the OSCE was the first international organization to officially express concern over the fate of my husband, Georgiy Gongadze, in September 2000. Mr. Duve wrote a letter to the Ukrainian authorities three days after my husband's mysterious disappearance, asking for a detailed account of action taken to investigate the case.

On realizing

the deliberate inaction on the part of Ukrainian law-enforcement agencies, Mr. Duve showed exceptional integrity by openly condemning the investigation as "extremely unprofessional". His warning to the powers-that-be, that "by trying to silence, you produce the explosion of non-silence", prophesied the worldwide outcry which was to follow.

In 2001, my husband was posthumously awarded the OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy.

It has become

clear to me that the role of the OSCE and other international organizations in upholding the principles of freedom of speech should be pro-active and not purely reactive. After all, the murder of

a journalist is often preceded by harassment and intimidation. If the international community can intervene at this stage, lives can be saved.

Mr. Duve's vision empowers me to

continue demanding justice for all the victims of "censorship by killing" in Ukraine.

Myroslava Gongadze
Correspondent,
Radio Free Europe
Washington, D.C.



Three-year-old twins Nana and Salome Gongadze in 2001, shortly after their father's death.

Journalism in my country is still a highly dangerous profession. We live here as if on top of a volcano. It's either the FSB (security service) threatening to throw us in jail, or our president is suddenly unhappy and is contemplating closing down our newspaper, or the crime scene lashes out at us and loads its guns.

Friends keep repeating: "Better slow down, times have changed, democracy is over."

In light of this sad reality, a person who is prepared to protect you under any circumstances with



all the means available to him becomes a central figure. And he asks for only one thing in return: that you continue to do your job.

Mr. Duve has become this person in my case. The fact that I can continue my work as a journalist in the "hot spot" called the Russian Federation is to the credit of my loyal friend and constant defender.

Anna Politkovskaya
Recipient of OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy, 2003
Journalist, *Novaya Gazeta* (Russian biweekly)
Moscow

"We [the participating States] commit ourselves to ensuring the freedom of the media as a basic condition for pluralistic and democratic societies. We are deeply concerned about the exploitation of media in areas of conflict to foment hatred and ethnic tension and the use of legal restrictions and harassment to deprive citizens of free media. We underline the need to secure freedom of expression, which is an essential element of political discourse in any democracy. We support the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media in its efforts to promote free and independent media."

Istanbul Summit Declaration, 1999
(paragraph 27)

Mixed reviews from east and west of Vienna

"I wasn't there to be embraced," said Freimut Duve, when asked to comment on some of the reactions to his final state-of-the-media address to the Permanent Council on 11 December 2003. Excerpts from some of the official responses:

"Mr. Duve's repeated pronouncements about the situation of the media in Italy confirm the persistence of a negative bias. His assertions are totally groundless, based on an inadequate knowledge of the issue and a very superficial assessment ... Italy is one of the great European democracies, a country with a consolidated culture of freedom and pluralism, where every technical, legal, institutional and constitutional guarantee exists to sustain the utmost freedom of information."

Permanent Mission of Italy

"We should like to express our indignation at the crude and distorted assessments contained in Mr. Duve's report concerning evaluations of the work of the media in Turkmenistan.

"... The various political labels attached to us with such ease by Mr. Duve, his distorted evaluations of our affairs and other insulting comments addressed to Turkmenistan are then published on the Internet and in other global media. We call on Mr. Duve to stop issuing such statements and to refrain from making political evaluations as they go well beyond the limits of his mandate."

Delegation of Turkmenistan

"While we ourselves have of late disagreed with the factuality of Mr. Duve's frequent criticisms of the United States, we nonetheless support and defend his right to voice such criticisms, as the ability to discuss and debate differing views openly and freely is the essence of what his Office was set to foster ... We wish Mr. Duve all the best in his future endeavours, which we understand include a stint in Washington. We also wish to assure him that unless he becomes the object of a national security investigation, and therefore the subject of a court order, the records of his book purchases will remain between him and his bookseller."

United States Mission



Balkan youth give hero's send-off to "defender of their futures"

Freimut Duve's passionate concern for the fate of the younger generation in post-conflict societies and his firm belief in communication as a liberating force were rewarded recently with a heartfelt tribute at one of several farewell ceremonies.

BY KEITH JINKS

Nothing so became the first OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media in office as the manner of his leaving it, to paraphrase affectionately.

Without his knowledge, some 20 young people from Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Kosovo had been invited especially to say goodbye to their mentor and role model.

They represented the promising media professionals of tomorrow — participants in campus newspapers and radio and video groups that were spawned throughout the Balkans by Mr. Duve's groundbreaking mobile.culture.container project.



In the cozy setting of the Kreisky Forum, once the home of Austria's best-known Chancellor and now a prestigious East-West meeting point, the youngsters erupted in wild cheering and singing as project co-ordinator Darko Petrovski expressed gratitude to Freimut Duve on their behalf.

A journalist from Skopje, Mr. Petrovski said that the experience of being co-creator of the project was "quite incredible", and described how the series of newspaper workshops with young people — only slightly younger than himself — opened their eyes to the exciting possibilities of their own future.

For once, Mr. Duve was genuinely at a loss for words, visibly moved. Many in the audience — which included *prominenti* from the world of politics, media, diplomacy and culture — were similarly touched by this spontaneous burst of appreciation for the work of this larger-than-life individual.

After the remarks of, among others, former Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, journalist Andrej Babitsky whom he had helped to safeguard in Chechnya, and Myroslava Gongadze, widow of the murdered Ukrainian journalist, Georgiy Gongadze, it was Mr. Duve's turn to speak.

The *mobile.culture.container* concept, he recounted, had come to him late one evening as a *Kopfgeburt*, a word only inadequately rendered in English as a flash of inspiration.

"I love the term *Kopfgeburten* — births out of your head," he said. "And one thing I am really grateful to my head for is that one night I had this funny, illogical thought: I have to defend the future. It's illogical because how can one defend the future when it is not there yet?"

"Out of that came this resolution: We have to do something for the younger generation in the Balkans which has gone through what I had to go through as a young person in war-torn Hamburg, when it was under the permanent threat of destruction."

He described how, with the help of family and friends, the idea took concrete shape, eventually emerging as a sort of travelling high-tech circus. His daughter, a film-maker, had said, "*Papi, du bist verrückt*. You are mad," and proceeded to give him advice on how to go about it. The rest is truly history.

The Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council in 2003, Justus de Visser, hinted at the clashes that had marked Mr. Duve's period of office whenever his personal sense of his mission's importance crossed paths with the diplomatic niceties of the



Organization: "I would absolutely fail if I said that you made everybody constantly happy!" he said.

"You fought your battle as a real crusader with total commitment and total personal integrity. And you have been successful, because at the end of the day, it is not only the diplomatic discourse in the Permanent Council that is important. What's important is that individuals feel that there is an address in Vienna that doesn't forget about them. And that address is called the OSCE."

Ambassador de Visser said the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media would continue: "That's certain. Under a different leadership, that's equally certain. And it will be different because nobody can replace you. Not because you are such a perfect man, but because you are quite a character. And I thank you for that."

The evening was moderated by Rubina Moehring of Austrian Radio and Television (ORF), also representing Reporters Without Borders.

The following day, 12 December, the 20 visitors from the Balkans took part — along with Freimut Duve and the former staff of the *mobile.culture.container* — in a lively discussion at the *ORF Radio Kulturhaus*, where the topic was once again "The defence of the future". This time, the goal was to explore how the project could be duplicated in other war-torn regions.

Keith Jinks is Deputy Spokesperson of the OSCE.

A rare laid-back moment: Mostar, summer of 2002, in the *mobile.culture.container*. Photo: Jacqueline Godany



Travelling multimedia enterprise finds permanent home

The OSCE mobile.culture.container, the brainchild of Freimut Duve, has wound up its widely acclaimed three-year tour of key towns and cities in the conflict-ridden countries of south-eastern Europe. It has found a permanent home in Mostar.

The target audience of the travelling reconciliation project were young people between the ages of 15 and 21, a generation grappling with self-doubt and a personal dilemma: whether to stay where they were born and help rebuild their countries, or to venture out to greener pastures. "In Defence of our Future" — the project's rallying cry — was aimed at persuading them to stay.

Mr. Duve secured private and State sponsorship to sustain his initiative and won the political backing of host authorities. The physical components moved about on large trucks every five to six weeks. Donated by an

As it evolved, the mobile.culture.container turned its attention to engaging young people from various ethnic groups in the nuts and bolts of media work. Eventually, a network of 11 school newspapers and seven radio groups was created. "Today, correspondence from these editorial teams is sent across borders in print and as broadcasts — from Kosovo to Republika Srpska, from Skopje to Mostar," says project director Achim Koch, a theatre director and former teacher whom Mr. Duve calls an "organizational genius".

The mobile.culture.container was typical of the way Mr. Duve approached things, says Erhard Busek, Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

"For him it was always obvious that it is not high in the skies or at diplomatic conferences, but rather down



Austrian transport firm, the containers were linked up to form the perimeter of a circus-like tent. In every community on its route, the mayor made a prominent site available for the project.

Both the tent and the containers served as the flexible venue for meetings and round-table discussions, musical, dance and theatre performances, classes and workshops, radio stations, photo and video laboratories, Internet cafés, and even a catwalk for fashion shows — all co-ordinated by a small permanent staff and run by a constantly-changing crew of young volunteers.

on the ground where international organizations can make a difference."

At times the project met with "open astonishment", Mr. Busek recalls, as people were simply too preoccupied with coming to grips with their lives in a post-conflict society. Where the mobile.culture.container did find resonance was among ostensibly hostile ethnic groups who simply ignored their backgrounds and lost themselves in the stimulating world of intellectual thought and creativity.



ELECTION OBSERVATION

Observing Russia's Duma elections is a hard day's night

BY MIKHAIL EVSTAFIEV

MOSCOW, 7 December, 5 a.m. — While most of the potential voters in this city of 10 million are still asleep, the elections for the State Duma, the lower house of parliament, have been under way for several hours now in Russia's far East. Preliminary reports are starting to trickle in to the International Election Observation Mission, a joint undertaking of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Parliamentary Assemblies of the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

The sixth floor of the Stalin-era Ukraina Hotel in the heart of Moscow has been serving as the Observation Mission's headquarters since 3 November, when 57 long-term international election experts from 16 participating States flew into town.

Throughout the day, it will serve as the nerve centre for more than 500 international observers from 42 countries, scattered across Russia's vast territory and 11 time zones — from Vladivostok to St. Petersburg. Together, they will monitor the elections — the first since the election of Vladimir Putin in March 2000 — to determine whether they meet democratic standards.

6.30 a.m. About a hundred observers with blue and white OSCE/ODIHR armbands and a battery of printed forms to fill out emerge from the warm hotel lobby into the cold and darkness of a wintry morning. They are in pairs, representing two different nationalities. Each team has been assigned a

translator, a vehicle and a driver and a specific city district to monitor.

It is snowing and there is hardly any traffic. Crossing town to the north-east Veshniaki district is a breeze for two short-term observers, Bojana Asanovic from the United Kingdom and John Lowenhardt from the Netherlands. Their mission: to monitor the opening of polling stations, the voting process, the counting of ballots, and the tabulation of results — through to the delivery of ballot boxes to the district electoral commission.

Their first stop is a school that has been converted into a polling station, where they present their credentials — issued by the Russian Central Election Commission — to the security guard.

Since 1997, Bojana has observed elections in Armenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and Serbia, where she is originally from. She studied at the Belgrade University and worked as a journalist in the former Yugoslavia. In 1994, she moved to Britain where she qualified to be a barrister. As a criminal defence and human rights practitioner, she often represents the interests of asylum seekers in Britain.

"Election observation offers as much human as procedural interest for me," says Bojana. "It's a better way to see and understand a new country than if I were a mere tourist just visiting the main attractions."

John, a university professor and author of a series of books on Soviet politics and

A man reviews the list of 23 political parties that ran for the Duma, the Russian parliament's lower house.

Photos: OSCE/
Mikhail Evstafiev

Voters cast their ballots at a sports gym-turned-polling station.



Bojana Asanovic is on the alert as servicemen cast their votes in the town of Balashikha, outside Moscow.



Russia, finds Russian elections “always exciting”. “After all, most of the time, their outcome is uncertain. Compared to the mockery of elections in the days of the USSR, this is real life!” He observed elections in the Ivanovo region of Russia in 1995 and twice in Tatarstan as a long-term observer in 1996 for three months, and in 1999.

“Wherever I have been assigned, it is obvious that technical procedures have progressed enormously over the past eight years,” says John.

8 a.m. Polling stations open throughout Moscow. Bojana and John have just wrapped up an exchange with the local election commission staff, mostly teachers in this school, and have also noted some irregularities. They spot the representatives of political parties contesting seats in the Duma — United Russia and Yabloko — who are also monitoring the voting.

Among the first voters to show up are the elderly, perhaps partly because of the Soviet-era tradition of voting as a discipline, not as a democratic right.

10:30 a.m. Bojana and John hop into their mini-van and go for a little break at a small café and exchange first impressions.

“There are still factors hindering free and fair elections,” says John. “Some are remnants of the past, such as the option to vote ‘against all candidates/parties’, and some are peculiarities of the transitory present, including the weakness of political parties and the dominance of the ‘party of power’. Apart from these, even if members of polling station commissions are truly independent and are committed to ensuring fair procedures, they are extremely over-burdened.”

Bojana and John agree on the next polling station to check out: the Matrosskaya Tishina detention centre.

Around 12 noon. Surprisingly, the main steel door of the Matrosskaya Tishina detention centre opens right after the foreign observers present their IDs. Bojana, John and their interpreter are ushered into the well-guarded detention centre.

Once inside, they are escorted through more control gates, with each one set up as a chamber; the next steel entry opens only after the other one is safely locked. Across a courtyard, a sliver of sky is stretched over the high brick walls. The scene is eerie: iron-barred windows, emotionless inmates in grey uniforms in the middle of their cleaning chores, and walls lined with barbed wire.

During the Soviet era, or even as recently as the mid-1990s, such a visit would only have been possible after advance clearance from top Interior Ministry authorities. Times have changed: people at a lower level no longer need to wait for approval from their superiors; they can make decisions for themselves.

The three visitors walk through more gates before they reach a detention block deep inside the facility. On the third floor, voting is already under way.

Under the watchful eye of uniformed personnel, the detainees, mostly young men, walk out of their crowded cells one at a time, their hands behind their backs. They announce their names to an officer, sign forms, receive ballot forms, and fill them out at a curtained-off desk.

A guard turns the key to a cell door and lets the detainee back in. Another detainee is called out.

By midday, most of the 1,143 detainees who are eligible to vote have done so. So far, only two have refused, citing their “democratic right to abstain from voting”.

Perspectives

“The State Duma elections on 7 December failed to meet many OSCE and Council of Europe commitments, calling into question Russia’s willingness to move towards European standards for democratic elections, concludes the International Election Observation Mission in a statement issued today ... The Central Election Commission deserves credit for its professional organization of these elections. However, the pre-election process was characterized by extensive use of the state apparatus and media favoritism to benefit the largest pro-presidential party, reflected in voter apathy.”

From an ODIHR press release datelined Moscow, 8 December 2003

After 2 p.m. Driving across Moscow, one cannot help but notice that most of the posters and billboards belong to the United Russia movement, key supporters of President Vladimir Putin. (The group also dominated the airwaves throughout the campaign period, a fact that was later reported by long-term election monitors.)

Back in the Veshniaki district, Bojana and John visit two more polling stations in a school. None of the voters seem surprised by the presence of several militiamen at the entrance as Moscow has been placed on a higher level of alert in case of terrorist attacks.

Looking on at families who have come in full force — from grandparents to their grandchildren — Bojana remarks, “I feel that although I am not personally involved, I am part of something constructive. The OSCE has had an impact on many countries in the Balkans and the former USSR. All of these changes matter to me since I come from ‘Milosevic Land’. I have seen elections in Serbia go wrong. But when they are free and fair, elections do change the lives of ordinary people.”

After 4 p.m. The sun is going down as we drive outside Moscow to the town of Balashikha, which is a popular place for “dachas” (country houses) for Muscovites. Red brick houses are under construction all along the way.

The sports school-turned-polling station is teeming with young, uniformed servicemen — obviously fresh conscripts from the Interior Ministry’s Dzerzhinskaya division, which is stationed nearby.

John and Bojana fill out another report, just as they have done at the other polling stations. They need to be specific and accurate, and to note the minutest details: Were there any campaign materials within 50 metres of the polling station? Were ballot boxes empty and properly sealed at the start and the ballots properly stamped? What was the exact number of registered voters? Were any voters intimidated into voting a certain way? And so on.

8 p.m. A police officer locks the doors of the polling station in a library in Veshniaki. By this time, the local staff have been at work for 12 hours.

Bojana, John and several observers from United Russia and the Communist Party watch as the ballot boxes are unsealed and the boxes are emptied. The staff begin sorting out the ballots into three categories: ballots with the list of all the 23 registered political parties and movements, ballots with

the single-mandate candidates, and ballots cast in a contest for the seat of the mayor of Moscow.

It looks like it might take forever to count and sort out every single ballot. “If the British system were adopted, the polling station’s staff would be able to leave by 8 p.m.,” says John. “The ballots would be transported from polling stations to a big hall — a sports complex or a civic centre — and counting would be taken over by a fresh brigade of personnel, under the open scrutiny of the media.”

As it is, the votes are still being counted at 10 p.m. by the same people, without any shifts. Interrupted only by a quick dinner, Bojana and John complete their own work at about five o’clock the next morning. After the counting of about a thousand ballots cast in this polling station is finally over, Bojana and John follow the transport of election material to the Regional Election Commission, where the results are entered into a computer.

It is past 6 a.m. when they make it back to the hotel.



At a press conference at the Ukraina Hotel on the afternoon of 8 December, the International Election Observation Mission announces its preliminary report, assessing how the authorities, political parties, the media, and civil society fared in meeting the country’s international commitments towards democratic elections.

“The biggest problem observers inevitably encounter after such an intense activity is deciding where to go and when to leave,” Bojana says.

Would she recommend this job only to an enemy? “Definitely not,” she says with a smile. “I would recommend it only to my best friend.”

Mikhail Evstaviev, Press Officer in the Secretariat’s Press and Public Information Section, covered the Russian Duma Elections with a film crew in preparation for an updated version of the OSCE video, “For Human Dignity”.



John Lowenhardt observes the ballot-counting right after polling stations close in Moscow.

Perspectives

“The problem lies not in the critical remarks directed at the Russian Federation. The problem is in the politically motivated tone, in an attempt to create the impression that the violations detected call into question the fairness of the elections and the irreversibility of the democratic processes in Russia. This we cannot accept for the reason that there is clear evidence here of elements of a discriminatory attitude towards Russia ... We have cited examples when similar violations in other countries have been noted only ‘in passing’ and have certainly not been interpreted as marking a retreat from democracy or non-conformity with ‘European standards’.”

Ambassador Alexander Alekseyev, Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the OSCE, in a statement to the Permanent Council on 29 January 2004



ANTI-TERRORISM

The MANPADS Menace

Taking aim at the shoulder-fired missile threat

Confronting the very real threat that shoulder-fired missiles pose to civil aviation was the subject of an OSCE-sponsored intergovernmental conference on 23 January in Vienna. Experts from Finland, France, the United Kingdom and the United States as well as from NATO, the European Community, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization briefed government representatives on the measures they can take to protect travellers and airports in the OSCE area against this deadly form of terrorist attack.

Shoulder-fired missiles come in three varieties: electro-optical (similar to a camera), laser-guided and infrared (or heat-seeking). Depending on type, they can hit an aircraft as far away as 6.5 kilometres (4 miles) and as high as 4 kilometres (2.5 miles). Photo: Finnish Defence Forces

BY BRIAN WOO

Man-Portable Air Defence Systems, or MANPADS, as they are known, have been in the hands of both state and non-state actors for more than 30 years. The devices have been deployed against civilian aircraft in more than 40 incidents, scoring hits in more than half of them and killing some 600 people.

Why are MANPADS so lethal and why should a MANPADS alert be taken seriously?

They are lightweight, easy to use and simple to conceal. An individual weapon is assembled from four main pieces in as little time as five minutes. Anybody can learn to use one with minimal training. Using a combination of technologies, MANPADS are capable of targeting many types of aircraft. More sophisticated than rocket-propelled grenades, they have a greater range and a guidance system that can latch onto and track aircraft.

Hundreds of thousands of MANPADS exist, including up to a quarter of a million older-generation SAM7s. The availability of the weapons on the black market, both within the OSCE area and on its borders, is a matter of growing concern. We know that Al-Qaida and other terrorist and criminal groups are in possession of MANPADS. They have resorted to them in the past and will no doubt seek to do so again.

A widely held perception is that the problem of MANPADS is relevant only to a few countries and specific sites. But if there is any predictability to the behaviour of international terrorists, it is that they will invariably opt to hit a soft target over a hardened one. Counter-terrorism experts warn that airports in the OSCE region should consider the possibility that they could be targeted by terrorists.

This growing concern was what led the OSCE's Action against Terrorism Unit to invite national counter-terrorism and airport security officials from OSCE capitals to Vienna to meet with international MANPADS and civil aviation specialists. The pioneering effort, made possible with major funding from the Government of Canada and with the co-operation of the Montreal-based International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), resulted in an exchange of practical and action-oriented information on how to make airports in the OSCE region more secure in the face of the MANPADS threat.

The experts agreed that some basic planning and co-ordination among local security officials and with communities around airports can be very effective in addressing the threat, especially in identifying areas that could be ideal launching pads. Solutions discussed ranged from increasing public awareness to installing defensive systems on airplanes.

STOCKPILE SECURITY

Protecting airports from such contingencies is not the only focus of MANPADS-related counter-terrorism work. Controls over stockpiles and exports are also being strengthened. In July 2003, the OSCE's Forum for Security Co-operation agreed "to promote the application of effective and comprehensive export controls for MANPADS". The decision, endorsed by the Ministerial Council in Maastricht, aims at bolstering stockpile security and management, reduction and disposal, as well as improving border controls to prevent illicit trafficking.

Valery Zemskov, representative of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), drew attention to the initiatives of the six-member group, particularly the Russian Federation's voluntary introduction of "unilateral restraints on deliveries of such systems to politically unstable countries and regions".

Mr. Zemskov said the CSTO was prepared to actively support the OSCE and other organizations in their efforts to mitigate the MANPADS menace through unified standards which might also be considered for adoption by other regional organizations such as the OSCE.

Also playing a crucial role is the Wassenaar Arrangement, which in 2003 agreed on a set of "Elements for Export Controls of MANPADS". With an eye towards adopting or supporting best practices and initiatives, the OSCE works closely with this group of 33 conventional arms-exporting countries, 28 of which are also OSCE States.

TOP PRIORITY

French official Bruno Bisson shared the highlights of the G-8 countries' "Action Plan to Enhance Transport Security and Control of MANPADS" which they adopted at their summit in Evian in June 2003. He said that the threat posed to civil aviation by these weapons, especially in the hands of terrorists or States that harboured them,

was clearly uppermost in everyone's mind.

The OSCE should also encourage other regional organizations to support the MANPADS initiative within their spheres of influence, whether it is in Africa, the Middle East or Southeast Asia.

The efforts of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Forum (APEC) are clearly a major step in the right direction. At their meeting in Bangkok in October 2003, the 21 leaders of APEC agreed to protect international aviation by committing themselves to stricter control of MANPADS and essential components. This includes strongly regulating their domestic production, transfer and brokering, as well as banning their transfer to non-state end-users.

APEC also pledged to strengthen co-ordination efforts in counter-terrorism, including the MANPADS issue, within Asia-Pacific and between APEC's Counter-Terrorism Task Force and the G-8's Counter-Terrorism Action Group, which was launched in June 2003.

At the OSCE meeting, David Carriedo of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee (UNCTC) underscored the importance of strengthening such regional initiatives. "The UNCTC is learning from the work of others on MANPADS and looks forward to promoting the OSCE's efforts in connection with the UNCTC's meeting with international, regional and sub-regional organizations later this year," Mr. Carriedo said.

Although the tasks involved in counter-terroring terrorism are daunting, OSCE participating States have unambiguously demonstrated firm political will to tackle current and emerging security challenges in the 21st century: more than 170 representatives from 52 of the OSCE's 55 participating States took part in the January meeting. Significantly, 40 of the 50 OSCE States that have major airports sent key officials from their capitals.

Brian Woo is Head of the Secretariat's Action against Terrorism Unit, which was established in May 2002.



The man-portable nature of the weapons makes them easy to conceal, such as in a large duffle bag. The weapons are typically 1.5 to two meters long (4.9 to 6.6 feet) and weigh between 14 to 18 kilos (30 to 39 pounds).

Up close and personal in Serbia and Montenegro

The OSCE meets municipalities



High school students in Dimitrovgrad, in eastern Serbia, gather for a lecture on democratization by Ambassador Massari in February 2004. The municipality's residents are mainly of Bulgarian origin.

Orphans in Uzice, western Serbia, say hello to Rory Keane, Mission Spokesperson, and the Outreach team in September 2003.

Photos: OSCE/Milan Obradovic

BY PATRICIA SUTTER

Every three to four weeks, a small team from the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro, armed with briefing notes and information packets, sets off from Belgrade shortly after daybreak to take the OSCE on the road.

Whether the meticulously prepared agenda lasts just a full day or involves an overnight stay, the first port of call is always the town hall. There, one hour-long meeting after another proceeds like clock-work: with local political leaders, with rule-of-law and police officials, with representatives of non-governmental organizations, with heads of religious communities and with journalists and media executives.

The talks are earnest, with copious note-taking by all parties to ensure follow-up action. But the visitors and their hosts also make time for the lighter side: competing with Hungarian and Croatian minority teams at a football game (Subotica in Vojvodina), distributing "My House is in Europe" notebooks in the Albanian, Serbian and Roma languages to first-graders (Bujanovac and

Medvedja), and hiking with municipal officials and environmentalists on the Crni Vrh mountain (near Bor in eastern Serbia).

There are memorable people-to-people encounters while visiting a refugee camp (Zajecar), an orphanage and a school for the handicapped (Uzice), touring a Roma television station (Nis), launching the OSCE's multiethnic community policing programme (Bujanovac), and dropping in on the OSCE-sponsored Education and Information Centre (Herceg Novi and Niksic in Montenegro).

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Welcome to "Outreach", a programme that was launched by the OSCE Mission in June 2003 with visits to Novi Sad and Subotica in the Vojvodina region. Part educational and information campaign, part morale-boosting goodwill tour, and part reconnaissance and fact-finding mission, it is designed to allow as many face-to-face encounters as possible between the OSCE staff and local and civic leaders — all within a day or two.

"We realized that if we were really serious about making an impact in our host

country, we should avoid becoming too Belgrade-centred,” said Head of Mission Maurizio Massari, explaining why he and his staff devote quality time, care and resources to *Outreach*.

“The fact is, there are huge differences between the realities in the capital and in the rest of the country in terms of civil society, political structures, institutions and socio-economic concerns. And if you want to rise to the challenge of the job and be truly effective in identifying what people want and need, you simply must find out what is going on out there.”

Kragujevac

On a crisp, sunny day in mid-November 2003, the *Outreach* destination was Kragujevac in central Serbia, 140 kilometres south of Belgrade and just a little more than an hour’s drive away. With a population of 200,000, it is the centre of the district of Sumadija and the third biggest city after Belgrade and Nis.

Here and there, historic structures reveal traces of the city’s glorious past: Kragujevac was once the capital of the state of Serbia; it was there that the first Serbian Constitution was drafted. But the residents are not as nostalgic for the 1800s as they are for the recent past, when the city was a thriving manufacturing hub for armaments as well as vehicles, most notably the “Yugo”.

“Our biggest concern is our socio-economic situation,” the mayor told the OSCE team. “We’re on the brink of poverty. The Zastava car and arms factory, the area’s biggest employer, is going through a painful restructuring, with worse still to come: the work force is to be further reduced from 3,600 to 1,000.”

Still, the sense of pride among the municipal leaders was palpable: since the NATO bombing in 2000, the process of democratization and reconstruction had been making headway, they said, citing specific achievements. They looked forward to implementing the new Law on Local Government, which empowers municipalities like theirs to run their own affairs.

The heads of nine non-governmental organizations — most of them women — painted an equally mixed picture of how civil society was faring. Mostly volunteers, they told the OSCE team that they were all gainfully employed and that they wanted to do more on behalf of the three out of ten people in Kragujevac who were

jobless. Could the OSCE help in pushing through a legislative framework for NGOs?

Following a meeting with the Head of the District Court and a look at a well-preserved nineteenth century domestic court, a buffet lunch provided yet another glimpse into who’s who in Kragujevac.

Among the special guests were the Chief of Police, the representative of the Institute for Mentally Disabled Adults, the director of the secondary school and the town’s leading literary figure.

Seated at a special table was a convivial group of religious leaders representing the Serbian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant and Seventh-Day Adventist churches. They confirmed that it was the first time they had ever sat together for a meal.

The mood was decidedly more sombre at Sumarice, the site of a sprawling memorial park dedicated to some 7,000 Kragujevac citizens who perished during the Second World War at the hands of Nazi forces. The guided tour of the Museum of the Genocide meant a great deal for an assistant in the OSCE Mission: her grand-uncle had been among the 300 schoolchildren taken out of their classrooms one day in October 1941 and executed.

Democratic Tenets

Ambassador Massari has a soft spot for the academic community, and an *Outreach* schedule is never complete without his addressing an educational institution. In Kragujevac, a lecture on “Ethics and Globalization” for law students at the university was an absolute must.

“Outside Belgrade, students have only a vague impression of what’s involved in integrating into Europe and the democratic tenets behind the OSCE’s projects and programmes,” he said, “so I seize every opportunity to talk to them about these themes in greater depth.”

Back in the municipal building, a discus-



The Mayor of Uzice discussing local issues with Ambassador Massari.



In Kragujevac, central Serbia, religious leaders came together for the first time under the auspices of the Outreach programme.



Students at a high school in Bor, eastern Serbia, inaugurate their youth parliament on the occasion of a visit by Ambassador Massari and the Outreach team in October 2003.



The people-to-people visits of the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro are carefully mapped out.

NGO leaders in Kragujevac brief the Outreach team on how they are helping members of civil society help themselves.



sion with about a dozen media representatives ran the gamut of concerns, from the status of Radio-Television Serbia to the woefully inadequate equipment of media outlets. “The country’s shaky political situation is holding up our entry into the modern world of communications,” a journalist complained.

Ambassador Massari revealed on TV Kragujevac that the OSCE, working with the European Agency for Reconstruction, was going to invite 60 managers to take part in an entrepreneurial development course aimed at creating jobs. Leaders of NGOs would also be offered a course on how to write and present project proposals, which would go a long way towards helping them to obtain grants from various international agencies.

THINKING POSITIVELY

“These are just small gestures meant especially for *Outreach* visits,” the Ambassador later explained, “but they help people think more positively about their future and about the OSCE. We want to show that it’s not only the country’s main institutions and the central government that we serve.”

Earlier, in Bor and Zajecar, in eastern Serbia, the Outreach team had made good on its promise to provide youth parliaments with computers and basic office equipment to enable them to have access to the Internet, create websites and develop student exchange programmes.

During the visit to Novi Sad in June 2003, the university’s

Faculty of Engineering was heartened by the news that the OSCE Mission would make it possible for blind students to have access to Internet and telephone services through the installation of special equipment.

“More important than these modest undertakings,” Ambassador Massari said, “the visits have a tremendous pay-off throughout the country, as they help the Mission’s various departments in initiating new activities or enhancing current projects — whether they are in support of police education, anti-trafficking, media legislation, prison reform, gender equality or minority rights.”

SPRINGBOARD

Still not quite a year old, *Outreach* shows no signs of slackening. The scheduled local elections at the end of 2004 act as a springboard from which to raise awareness about the importance of strong and capable local self-government. Under the new election law, citizens will be able to vote directly for their mayor without having to go through bloc-voting for the party.

Stelios Beys-Kamnarokos, Senior Political Officer, who serves as advance party for *Outreach* stops — about a dozen so far — is a staunch believer in the programme’s contribution to the country’s reform process.

“For a long time, Athens was considered a Balkan capital in Europe,” he said, recalling the modern history of his native Greece. “Today, it is aspiring to be a European capital in the Balkans. We in the Mission would like nothing more than for Serbia and Montenegro to follow the same destiny.”

Patricia N. Sutter is Editor of the OSCE Magazine.



OSCE DIPLOMACY

In Belgrade and beyond, a delicate balancing act

“No turning back the clock”: Ambassador Maurizio Massari

Three weeks after meeting Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, Ambassador Maurizio Massari found himself attending the reformist leader’s funeral. It had been just three months since the 44-year-old Italian career diplomat assumed his post as the Head of Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, shortly before the country was renamed “Serbia and Montenegro”. In a conversation in Belgrade with the *OSCE Magazine*’s Editor, Patricia Sutter, Ambassador Massari talked about the Mission’s Outreach programme and the country’s “zigzag course”.

Patricia Sutter: How do you gauge the impact of the Mission’s Outreach programme?

Ambassador Massari: At the end of each visit, the team gets together to assess how it went. How can we do better the next time? Did we convey the right messages? We are, after all, engaged in building up the capacity of societies — not just impersonal institutions.

Is media coverage one of the ways you measure your impact?

If that were the sole barometer, I would be overly optimistic because there is no lack of print and broadcast coverage on OSCE issues here. The yardstick I would use is the feedback from ordinary people, which, I feel is rather positive. It encourages us to carry on.

On your visits to municipalities, you stress that “the OSCE’s doors are always open to you”. Is there a danger of promising too much?

We do not and cannot promise the moon, obviously. We emphasize that our assistance has to be within our mandate and our budget, and that we can also serve as facilitators between local governments, civil groups and potential donors. We are in close touch with embassies and other organizations, and when we discover interesting projects worth funding — even if they are in the remotest corners of the country — we try to draw our partners’ attention to them.

Would you say that the Outreach programme mirrors the Mission’s delicate balancing act?

Very much so. As a “second-generation” mission, our work is based on a co-operative and constructive relationship with the national authorities. We remind ourselves constantly that we are here at their invitation.

At the same time, that doesn’t mean we are the Government’s executive implementing agency; otherwise, we would lose our political and moral leverage. Independent actors should regard us as a neutral player. When we have to, we should stand up for the rights of civil society. And when we see real progress, we should also acknowledge it.

I believe that the OSCE is highly respected in this country and is recognized as a vital institution. We are expected to speak our mind on matters related to the country’s social and political development. We are a point of reference for the international community largely because we represent the interests of 55 participating States and are seen as inclusive.

We are the youngest OSCE mission in



south-eastern Europe, by the way. The Mission was established by participating States in January 2001; the following year, the Mission's Office in Podgorica, Montenegro, was opened. Currently, we have some 53 international and 133 national staff. In terms of both political clout and practical activities, our role will continue to be crucial.

It has been an event-packed first year on your watch. How would you rate your performance in addressing these non-stop developments?

I'll let other people comment on that. What I've been finding extremely fulfilling is being involved in the reform process in concrete areas — whether in relation to improving prison administration, fostering an independent-minded media or helping in the fight against corruption. Keeping track of the details provides direct feedback on how the country is progressing on its path towards democracy and European integration.

Thanks to the Mission staff's expertise, we are privy to technical data and analyses in the sphere of democratization, which helps me in fulfilling my political and diplomatic functions.

This synthesis of political and technical elements is really the outstanding feature of OSCE diplomacy. For example, one speaks to an official to advocate a specific piece of legislation relating to the media or the judiciary, or to call attention to the unsatisfactory pace of implementation of a certain programme that is vital to reforming the police. So all these technical issues have a political relevance. This is unique to the OSCE and is another argument in favour of having the OSCE on the ground.

There's that word again: "unique". What exactly does it mean?

Yes, I know it's an overused term, but it's true. I've often asked myself, "What's so unique about this Mission?"

Then I look back to when I was heading a Foreign Ministry department in Rome specializing in the Balkans, and I realize that my knowledge and understanding of reality in the most populated country in the region has increased tenfold. It's a big disadvantage to be dealing with an issue only from a distance, even as a so-called expert. On top of that, the international media tend to focus on one development at a time, giving you a narrow view from afar.

But how do you sell this uniqueness to the public?

Sometimes there is a gap between the public profile of some of the OSCE missions on the ground and the OSCE's general

profile. In the major capitals, you get the impression that we're almost a forgotten organization. Certainly I think that devising an outreach campaign at a central level, with the help of the Chairmanship, is worth thinking about, especially if the OSCE wishes to continue being valued as a major international partner.

How do you foresee the next several months in light of the war crimes trials, the series of elections and a host of other long-term concerns?

I would say that developments in the country are following a zigzag path, and I'm not overly pessimistic about the path becoming "linear" in the future, because there have been some positive developments in several areas. We are living in an imperfect democracy, but even this is a significant achievement compared with the authoritarian regime of the past.

We are witnessing the crumbling of the political consensus that was crucial in opposing the old guard. The huge challenge now is how to start the second phase of the transition.

Given the country's unfortunate legacy, why should all the shortcomings that we are now encountering be entirely unexpected? It would be wishful thinking to expect a country to fully recover in three years. We have to be realistic, but at the same time we should be optimistic that the country will opt for the right kind of democracy — liberal, modern and European.

At the end of the day, there is no alternative but to move forward to full democracy. I believe that most people here feel the same way we do — that there simply is no turning back the clock.

Given the breakneck pace in the field, do Mission members ever have the chance to reflect on the big picture?

It requires a great deal of discipline and determination. I, for one, can't think of a better contribution to the international community than to put some thoughts down about our experience in assisting in the transition process, to analyze very candidly what we have done right and what we have done wrong in promoting democracy, to compare the OSCE's roles in the different countries in the region, and to draw some lessons to avoid repeating the inevitable mistakes that have been made.

I emphasize "inevitable" because democracy-building is a learning process after all, and we will never be faultless. We are only human, trying to help as best we know how.



John de Fonblanque joined the British Foreign Office in 1968 after studying philosophy at Cambridge and completing a masters degree at the London School of Economics. As well as postings in Jakarta and New Delhi, his career has involved working with multinational organizations, including 11 years with the UK representation to the European Union in Brussels and four years as Director dealing with the United Nations and Global Issues at the Foreign Commonwealth Office. He also worked in the Treasury and the Cabinet Office and was a Visiting Fellow at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House).

PERMANENT COUNCIL

The OSCE is “multilateral diplomacy in action”

Former British Ambassador John de Fonblanque left Vienna in December 2003 after four years as Head of the United Kingdom Delegation to the OSCE. In February, he took up a new position as Director with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in The Hague, seeing it as a chance to contribute to an innovative form of preventive diplomacy. In a farewell interview with OSCE Spokesperson Richard Murphy, Ambassador de Fonblanque shares his views on the advantages and disadvantages of consensus decision-making and other unique traits of the OSCE.

Richard Murphy: What were some of the high points of your time in Vienna?

Ambassador de Fonblanque: Let me say first that what has made Vienna memorable for me has been working closely and openly with a wonderful group of colleagues from the whole of the OSCE to resolve real problems — that is what multilateral diplomacy is all about. I arrived three months before the Istanbul Summit took place in November 1999, which was a major, high-profile event that produced the Charter for European Security, the adapted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) and the Istanbul commitments on withdrawal of Russian forces from Moldova and Georgia. That set the scene for much of the work of the subsequent four years, right up to Maastricht at the end of last year.

Another high point was the OSCE response to what happened in 2001 in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, where I believe the activities of the OSCE were very instrumental in preventing civil war. Of course there were other actors involved too and the credit goes very much to the people of the country themselves and

the President. But it is quite clear that the very rapid response of the OSCE after the Ohrid Agreement in setting up a mission was important, as it helped to carry out some of the provisions of the Agreement, such as supervising the return of police to the villages.

Another activity worthy of mention is the Georgia border-monitoring operation which was set up in early 2000 and has expanded steadily to cover a large portion of the border between Georgia and the Russian Federation. The basic idea is to ensure that the border is not misused and thus eliminate or reduce the risk of cross-border incursions. I think the whole operation has been very successful in doing just that.

The setting up of the Strategic Police Matters Unit has greatly strengthened the OSCE. A police force that is well-trained, effective, and aware of human rights considerations is one of the most crucial of the conditions for stability and progress. We were lucky enough to secure an extremely experienced international policing figure in Richard Monk, who has been doing an excellent job. Although this activity is still

on a small scale, I firmly believe that it will grow. It's one of the very useful things the OSCE can do.

How do you see the strengths and weaknesses of the OSCE?

I think the Organization has a lot of strengths. The starting point is the body of agreements on shared values which cover an extraordinarily wide range. They have real depth and provide the basis for its operational work on conflict prevention. The concept of intrusiveness that is embedded in the OSCE means that participating States have a duty not only to look after human rights in their own countries but also to take an interest in human rights issues throughout the OSCE area.

Another strength is the OSCE's focus on prevention. No other organization has an institution quite like the High Commissioner on National Minorities, with a mandate to focus on prevention at the earliest possible stage.

As for weaknesses, I would only say that good principles and institutions are effective only to the extent that States respect them. Looking at the down side, one of the problems with the OSCE is that there are a lot of commitments that are not being implemented, and this is where more work needs to be done.

What have been the main frustrations?

I think one of the most difficult things to deal with at the OSCE is the problem of really serious human rights violations, when States are unwilling to do more than pay lip service to their commitments. In the end, there is a limit to what the Organization can do, but it has developed a number of valuable tools and must deploy them to maximum effect.

What has been your experience of consensus decision-making?

I believe consensus decisions on political issues are necessary, but it is certainly true that there are some areas of decision-making where the consensus decision rules are extremely frustrating. I'm thinking particularly of appointments, where the need for consensus on some senior appointments leads to an extraordinarily time-consuming, divisive and inefficient procedure. I'm sure that many good candidates are deterred by the thought of a process that can last up to a year and involves dissection of candidates by 55 States, and in which politics sometimes plays as great a role as the merits of the candidates.

How do you view OSCE field missions?

The field missions are very much at the

heart of the OSCE's operational capability and therefore crucial to its future. They vary considerably depending on the quality of the Head of Mission, which is a vital factor. It's quite a difficult job because it involves balancing the mandate — which is, broadly speaking, to promote the implementation of OSCE objectives — with the wishes of the host Government, which may have different views of its priorities. But the job can be done, and some Heads of Mission have done it with remarkable success.

I think it's important to try to find a way of getting away from the feeling that having a mission is a stigma and implies that there is something wrong. There is no shame in recognizing the value of outside assistance to achieve agreed objectives. A mission is there to help and I think most of the countries with missions do in fact recognize this.

Why is there no OSCE field mission in Northern Ireland?

I think it's a question of priorities and of where the OSCE can actually do the most good. The fact is that in Northern Ireland there are well-established processes, particularly the Good Friday Agreement, which already involve external participation, and it's not clear that bringing in another external actor would actually help. There are other disputes, particularly new ones with less of a history, where the OSCE can more usefully get itself involved.

Do you have any recommendations to your former colleagues on the Permanent Council?

One recommendation that I made in my farewell speech is that the OSCE should give much more attention to the economic dimension. In certain parts of the OSCE geographic area, failure to make the transition to a market economy remains a major cause of instability. Some countries want to improve their economies and to benefit from liberalization and membership in the global market, but it's very clear that to do that, they need a substantial transformation of their institutions, their legislation and their structures; in other words, good governance.

This is not something that the OSCE has the resources or the expertise to take on by itself, but there is expertise and there are resources in the international community which could be mobilized. The OSCE, with its close links with the countries concerned, is ideally placed to act as a kind of catalyst to bring them in. This is the essence of the strategy adopted at Maastricht, which now needs to be put into practice.

APPOINTMENTS



Carlos Manuel Durrant Pais was appointed **Head of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje** in December 2003, succeeding Craig Jenness of Canada.

A career diplomat who was born in Angola, Ambassador Pais is not new to the Organization. He was Portugal's Alternate Permanent Representative to the OSCE from July 2001 to April 2003. In 1985, he was a member of his country's delegation to the CSCE Cultural Forum in Budapest.

Ambassador Pais has been deeply engaged in European affairs through his multilateral assignments. He was Deputy Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe and served on the task force that prepared and carried out the first Portuguese Presidency of the European Community. He was later appointed Deputy Director General for European Affairs in the Portuguese Foreign Ministry.

His bilateral postings abroad have included Baghdad, Prague, Budapest and Rio de Janeiro, where he was Consul General.

"When I was with my national delegation during Portugal's Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2002, I was interested in learning how activities were being implemented in the field," Ambassador Pais said. "Now, in Skopje, I am able to see firsthand how policies agreed in Vienna benefit the everyday lives of citizens — thanks to the commitment and professionalism of the members of the OSCE Mission."



Markus Mueller, a Swiss national, has succeeded Turkish diplomat Aydin Idil as **Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan**, with effect from 1 November 2003.

"Our main challenge lies in assisting the Kyrgyz Government and civil society in building institutions

that improve people's quality of life," he said. "We must translate the OSCE's principles into day-to-day reality for the average citizen."

An economist, Ambassador Mueller served as co-ordinator of a co-operation programme under the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC). From 1986 to 2003, this position took him to Bangladesh, Mali, and most recently, to Central Asia and Afghanistan.

His vast experience in implementing regional programmes in Central Asia includes water management, the development of mountainous regions

and a conflict-prevention programme in the Ferghana Valley.

Earlier in his career, Ambassador Mueller was a delegate to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), spending time in Angola and East Africa. In Ethiopia and Eritrea, he contributed to the development and implementation of one of the ICRC's largest food assistance operations.

Besides humanitarian assistance, policy development and programme management, Ambassador Mueller has a strong interest in promoting small and medium-sized enterprises and economic reform programmes.

Vladimir Pryakhin of the Russian Federation has been appointed **Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, Armenia**. He succeeds Roy Reeve of the United Kingdom, who assumed the position of the Head of the OSCE Mission to Georgia on 1 August 2003.

Prior to his appointment on 15 October 2003, Ambassador Pryakhin served as Deputy Department Head at the Russian Foreign Ministry. From 1997 to 2002, he was posted in Vienna as Senior Counsellor at his country's Permanent Mission to the OSCE.

His foreign service assignments have focused on regional issues within the Commonwealth of Independent States, on disarmament and on scientific and technological co-operation.

"The appointment of a Russian national as head of an OSCE field office reflects the Organization's efforts to move towards universalism," Ambassador Pryakhin said at a meeting with the press in Yerevan. "I am confident that my experience in dealing with issues in the Caucasus will help me in meeting the Organization's high expectations."

Outlining his team's



work programme in Armenia, which ranges from action to combat corruption to improving the investment climate, he said the capacity of Armenia's law enforcement agencies to combat terrorism would be strengthened. He also called attention to three large projects, altogether worth more than a million euros, aimed at creating a constructive partnership between the Police Service and the population.

Ambassador Pryakhin is the author of several publications, including a study of the OSCE's contribution to the settlement of regional conflicts in the former Soviet Union. Emphasizing his strong academic background in international relations, he said he would like to strengthen the OSCE's ties with the country's educational institutions.

"Armenia has considerable intellectual potential and we would like to offer a course on the OSCE in Armenian universities," he said.