

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

OSCE Chairmanship co-ordinates role of international bodies in global fight against terrorism

Meeting in Lisbon unites organizations in comprehensive campaign

Senior officials from the United Nations, NATO, the European Union and the Council of Europe, among other organizations, gathered in Lisbon on 12 June at the invitation of the OSCE Chairmanship to discuss the co-ordination of the international effort to combat terrorism

The one-day meeting was opened by the Prime Minister of Portugal, Jose Durao Barroso, who described it as a "pioneering and timely initiative" to gather the high representatives around the common goal. "No one country or organization alone can defeat

terrorism", he said. "It needs international co-ordination, co-operation and synergies."

Portugal, which has made the fight against terrorism a key priority for its year in the Chairmanship of the OSCE, announced its intention in January to call



The OSCE in the midst of the sights and sounds of Armenia

Public affairs roundtable examines OSCE visibility-raising strategy.

Press and public information officers from field missions, institutions and the Secretariat met in Yerevan, Armenia on 7 and 8 June, to discuss ways of raising the Organization's public profile. Some 20 participants, invited by the Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, Roy Reeve, agreed to put greater emphasis on the

OSCE's unique operational role on the ground. This includes its 19 field missions, and its practical work in fields as diverse as border-monitoring and police-training.

Staff from the activities missions expressed a wish for more press and public information material to be made available in local languages, especially Russian. They also requested that more training in dealing with media

should be provided for media focal points in missions, which the Press and Public Information Section undertook to arrange for the next public affairs meeting in Vienna in the autumn.

Participants had an opportunity to meet staff from Armenian non-governmental organizations involved with the media and to visit the OSCE Office in Yerevan, as well as to tour some of the cultural sites in Armenia.



The OSCE Troika at the Lisbon meeting was represented by (from left): the Romanian Foreign Minister, Mircea Geoana; the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Antonio Martins da Cruz; and the General Director for Political Affairs at the Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands, Hugo Siblescu

such a meeting in order to provide an opportunity to take stock of the activities undertaken by the various security-related organizations since 11 September 2001. It would thus facilitate better co-ordination of their plans, as well as focusing on the OSCE's traditional activities, such as the promotion and protection of human rights and strengthening the rule of law.

Antonio Martins da Cruz, the Portuguese Foreign Minister and current Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, moderated one of several sessions. He said that a central pillar of the common effort should be the development, under the aegis of the United Nations, of an efficient and articulated strategy that avoided duplication and reinforced co-operation, while building on the expertise and individual strengths of each organization.

OSCE approach

He recalled the OSCE's reaction to the attacks in New York and Washington, which raised the need to update its instruments and commitments in the fight against terrorism. "To this end, the OSCE adopted the Bucharest Plan of Action. In Bishkek, a Central Asia-

oriented Programme of Action was endorsed as a response to specific sub-regional problems", he said.

Both the Plan and the Programme specified a variety of anti-terrorist measures to be adopted by participating States and by the Organization as a whole, while also acting as a framework involving all OSCE bodies and institutions in the prevention and combating of terrorism. He singled out the appointment of a Senior Police Adviser and the setting up of an Anti-Terrorism Unit in the Secretariat.

Mr. Martins da Cruz also drew attention to the Chairmanship's naming of a Personal Representative for Preventing and Combating Terrorism, the former Danish Defence Minister, Jan Troejborg. He has been working with the OSCE Secretariat in moving forward the implementation of both the Bucharest and Bishkek action agendas.

In his address, the Secretary General of the OSCE, Jan Kubis, described the approach to its anti-terrorism agenda as based on three, mutually-reinforcing layers: assistance to its own participating States and facilitation of their activities; promotion of co-operation with sub-regional organizations; and the effective

linking up of all these regional efforts on a global platform.

"The OSCE's plans of action recognize that the United Nations conventions and the UN Security Council resolutions constitute the global framework for the fight against terrorism. Legal and political obligations under these UN documents constitute the point of departure for action by the OSCE and its participating States", he said.

He also announced that, in accordance with its Platform for Co-operative Security and the Bucharest and Bishkek plans, he would be calling a meeting of sub-regional organizations and initiatives within the OSCE area on 6 September in Vienna.

"The purpose of this meeting [will be] to discuss the role and contribution of sub-regional groupings in preventing

IN THE JUNE ISSUE

- OSCE Chairmanship co-ordinates role of international bodies in global fight against terrorism 1
- Public affairs round table examines OSCE visibility-raising strategy 1
- Practising a parliamentary culture in post-conflict Kosovo 3
- Prisoners are people too: a case study on credible reporting 5
- All in a day's work in Osh 7

REGULAR REPORTS

- News from the field 9
- In brief 10
- Press profile 11
- Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights 13
- High Commissioner on National Minorities 15
- Parliamentary Assembly 15
- Representative on Freedom of the Media 17
- Secretary General and the Secretariat 18

and countering terrorism and other new security challenges, such as organized crime, arms, drugs and human trafficking, illegal migration and money laundering, when relevant to combating terrorism", said Mr. Kubis. Ways would also be identified for facilitating information exchange, closer co-operation and better co-ordination of efforts.

Among other speakers, Lord Robertson, the Secretary-General of NATO,

and Walter Schwimmer, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, voiced their own concerns about the need for international organizations to work more effectively together.

Other organizations that were invited to participate in the meeting at high level included the International Committee of the Red Cross, the European Commission, the UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention and the Financial

Action Task Force on Money Laundering.

The meeting concluded with a pledge by the participants to continue and sustain their efforts to fight terrorism vigorously and to assist each other, exchanging information in a co-operative and open spirit. They also agreed to maintain regular contact and to this end, the Portuguese hosts agreed to call a second meeting next year in the same format.

Practising a parliamentary culture in post-conflict Kosovo

The Kosovo Assembly buckles down to the business of legislating

By Sven Lindholm

Now that the euphoria of last year's election victory has calmed and the Government has been established, Kosovo's Assembly members have shifted their attention to learning how to be a constructive force in the political process – demonstrating good governance and legislative skills in the midst of managing day-to-day political realities. Joint self-government has not only ushered in a momentous chapter in the history of post-conflict Kosovo; it also marks a new phase in the OSCE's continuing task of institution-building, based on cultural pluralism and the rule of law.

On 17 November 2001, the people of Kosovo went to the polls to elect 120 representatives to the Kosovo Assembly, described by the Constitutional Framework as "the highest representative and legislative Provisional Institution of Self-Government of Kosovo". On 4 March this year, following a major breakthrough among the major parties to share power, Assembly members elected a president, endorsed a prime minister and approved his cabinet of ministers.

With a Government in place pledged to "act in the interests of all the inhabitants of Kosovo without discrimination



The Kosovo Assembly: the highest representative and legislative Provisional Institution of Self-Government of Kosovo

[on] any ground", the Assembly representatives can now concentrate on fulfilling the responsibilities vested in them by the electorate, starting with the committees who will review draft laws and resolutions and make recommendations. The fledgling lawmakers realize the enormity of the challenges they face in tackling the social and economic legislative agenda – but they also recognize that the opportu-

nities are there, if they use them wisely and well, to transform the political culture and equip Kosovo for the future.

"None of us was a parliamentarian. We haven't done this before. We have so much catching up to do", is a frequent refrain heard among the men and women in the Assembly.

To fill the dearth of experience and expertise, the OSCE drew up an Assem-

bly Support Initiative (ASI), which addresses the long-term capability of Assembly members to grow into wise, effective and constructive legislators, representing the collective interests of all communities in Kosovo. The ASI, a consolidated inter-agency programme which has the OSCE at its helm, was launched in February. Since then, nine major events have taken place in the form of training sessions, workshops and conferences.

Good governance

"The programme is all-encompassing", says Franklin De Vrieze, co-ordinator of the ASI for the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMiK). "It covers practically every aspect essential to stabilizing the foundation of this crucial democratic pillar: the principles of parliamentarism, drafting and reviewing legislation, drawing up a legislative agenda, oversight of the executive branch, interaction between political parties, planning and implementing a budget and relations with the media. The culture of good governance underpins the whole Initiative, encouraging openness, transparency, accountability, ethical conduct and democratic principles."

His comments were echoed by some of the party representatives. "The OSCE has rightly continued its role in supporting democracy and the political process in Kosovo after the Assembly election", says Alush Gashi of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK). Bujar Dugolli, head of the parliamentary group of the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK), remarks: "The OSCE and its implementing partners have been making great efforts in making the work of the Assembly more professional, including through the sharing of experiences with other European parliaments."

Indeed, enabling Kosovo Assembly representatives to learn from the efforts of their counterparts in other parts of Europe is at the centre of the ASI. So far, parliamentarians from Belgium, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia and the United Kingdom have recounted their experiences in carrying out their democratic mandate. Even before the ASI got started, at a post-election week-

long training seminar in December for the winning candidates, parliamentarians from Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, the United Kingdom and the United States were already at hand to pass on their knowledge of running a self-ruling legislative body.

In early April, the President of Slovenia's Parliament, Borut Pahor, led the first foreign delegation to the Kosovo Assembly. Addressing a conference on parliamentarism under the ASI, he related the challenges a young democracy such as Slovenia had faced in cultivating a parliamentary culture and establishing an open market economy and the rule of law.

Continued confidence

"A parliamentary culture does not develop by itself and does not provide a solution to all problems, but it enables democratic decisions to be taken", Mr. Pahor told the Kosovo Assembly. "Indeed, it promotes peace and stability which are of vital importance in this part of Europe." He invited the Assembly to send a delegation to Ljubljana to explore closer Kosovo-Slovenian parliamentary ties.

At the same conference, Peter Vanhoute, a Belgian parliamentarian, also extended an invitation to a study tour in Brussels in October. He described how the Belgian parliament functions as a multilingual parliament, with Flemish and French the two official languages, along with German on certain occasions. Similarly, the Assembly of Kosovo has Albanian and Serbian as official languages, with special facilities for other minority languages such as Turkish.

A two-day workshop in March was devoted to another prime concern: earning the public's trust through transparency. Carolyn McCool, Director of the Democratization Department of OMiK, explains the need for the special



Borut Pahor, the President of the parliament of Slovenia, speaking before the Kosovo Assembly. Behind him sits Nexhat Daci, the Assembly President

focus: "Democracy entails a responsibility to the electorate and the establishment of a bond between the people and the institutions of government. Elected representatives should understand and act upon democratic principles so that an effective and responsive government can endure in Kosovo."

Adds the ASI co-ordinator, Franklin De Vrieze: "In a parliamentary system, the viability of the government depends on the electorate's continued confidence in the parliament. The representation function of the Kosovo Assembly, or any parliament for that matter, is only as good as its communication with civil society."

Equal opportunities

Most people in Kosovo would agree that they have yet to start interacting meaningfully with the Assembly. In tandem with the ASI's efforts to help legislators establish communication links with the electorate, the OSCE has been fostering the potential role of non-governmental organizations, community centres and other elements in civil society as supportive and influential partners of government institutions.

Of special interest to the 34 women members of the Assembly was a two-day seminar in early June to promote equal opportunities for both men and women. The fact that over a quarter of the legislative body consists of women,

although impressive, is due to a requirement of the OSCE's Central Election Commission that every third person on each party's list of candidates list should be a woman.

Otherwise, as pointed out by an OSCE report on the gender situation in Kosovo, women in the region continue to be disadvantaged socially, economically and politically. The report, which served as the participants' working document, observed: "Village councils do not have women representatives; less than five per cent of the 245 lawyers in Kosovo who are members of the Bar Association are women. There are presently no women ministers, and only very few in senior positions."

Half-way through its first year, the

Initiative is poised to channel its multi-agency support towards additional areas: the professional development of parliamentary committees, strengthening the links between the Assembly and municipalities, working effectively with the civil service, and other administrative and practical matters. Learning from parliaments in western capitals will continue to be a key feature of the Initiative.

"The parliament will certainly have a decisive role", the Slovenian parliamentary president, Borut Pahor, concluded in his address to Kosovo's parliamentarians. Reminding them of the Assembly's potential place in history and the contribution of the Assembly Support Initiative, he said: "People will consider the Assembly's actions and decisions as their

guiding light for the future. For most of them, the parliament will represent a place where it is possible to be different and yet reach reasonable compromises and consensus for the benefit of all."

The OSCE's partners in the Assembly Support Initiative are: the National Democratic Institute, the US Agency for International Development, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, Westminster Foundation (UK), and the country offices of Belgium, Switzerland, the UK and the USA in Pristina, with the support of the Kosovo Assembly Secretariat.

Sven Lindholm, OMIK Press Officer, was previously the Acting Spokesperson of the Mission.

Prisoners are people too: a case study on credible reporting

Learning how to monitor and report on human rights in the Caucasus and Central Asia

Improving the capacity of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Caucasus and Central Asia to monitor human rights and produce credible reports is the goal of several projects carried out by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). To apply what they have learned, the NGOs are asked to draw up proposals for their own monitoring projects, some of which are then funded by the ODIHR. In some countries, the NGOs' reports become the subject of roundtable discussions with the authorities, setting follow-up activities in motion. This article looks at one such recent case.

June was a busy month for representatives of NGOs and governmental institutions in Armenia, when they were invited by the OSCE to join in a series of training sessions designed to assist the country to protect the human rights and freedoms of its people more effectively by building up the capacity of domestic NGOs. In September, the

sessions continue with a close-up look at the techniques and methods employed in monitoring and reporting on human rights.

The second year in which this project has been implemented by ODIHR actually began with a training session in April, when 22 representatives of human rights NGOs and state bodies took part. The topics covered the history, philosophy and theory of human rights, international systems of human rights protection, including case law of the European Court of Human Rights, and domestic remedies.

Experts from the Polish Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights prepare and conduct the programme of training sessions, with the assistance of the OSCE Office in Yerevan.

Four groups of Armenian NGOs, who completed their training in 2001, have this year implemented their own monitoring projects and produced reports dealing with various areas of human rights and freedoms. They covered topics

as diverse as the rights of pre-trial detainees to communicate with the outside world, students' rights to higher education, refugees' rights in relation to military service and the working conditions for lower courts in regions of Armenia.

The monitoring projects aim at improving the domestic human rights situation both in terms of law and practice, as well as strengthening civil society's participation in the process of decision-making and reform. With the assistance of the OSCE, these activities have led to the publication of several reports, copies of which can be obtained from the Office in Yerevan, or through its website: www.osce.org/yerevan/document

Pre-trial prisoners

One report in particular, which examined the ability of pre-trial prisoners held in detention centres to maintain contact with the outside world, raised serious concerns about the conditions in which these rights were being implemented. Two NGOs, the Civil Society

Development Union and the Union for the Protection of the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty, had gathered the facts between August and November last year.

The project had sought to examine to what extent detainees or arrested persons were able to inform relatives and friends of their situation and under what conditions. These covered visits, correspondence and the receipt of parcels. The goal was to develop recommendations on amending the legislation and the existing practice.

Concern about the issues involved in protecting human rights in places where people are deprived of liberty has grown since the accession of Armenia to the Council of Europe in January 2001. The following October, responsibility for prisons and pre-trial institutions was transferred from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Justice, a development that dovetailed with the period of monitoring and the preparation of the report.

During the roundtable discussion that was held with government officials especially to discuss the report, a paradox emerged: the conditions of pre-trial detainees – in which officially there is a presumption of innocence – were worse than those of post-trial prisoners.

Draft amendments

However, work is underway to draft amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code. The Ministry of Justice has stated that the new code would aim to change current practice; that is, visits would now be authorized, except in special cases, and correspondence would not be subject to censorship.

The Ministry of Justice has also started training prison staff in the new penitentiary system, and the regulations and international standards relating to the treatment of detainees. A number of



Prisoners at Armenia's Kash colony take part in a discussion on their human rights

concrete measures still have to be addressed: an awareness-raising campaign targeted at investigators, prison staff and the public at large; engaging NGOs in a discussion on detention-related regulations; strengthening the role of civil society through the formation of professional NGOs into an institute of public monitors; and practical matters such as providing space for visitors' facilities.

At the round table, a representative of the Ministry of Interior, which handles about 70 per cent of investigative work, called attention to the current state of training of social workers and psychologists and other specialized professions, which he believed was worse than in the Soviet era.

A second meeting on the monitoring report was hosted by the OSCE Office in Yerevan and brought together representatives of international agencies – the US Agency for International Development, the Open Society Institute, Prison Reform International, World Learning, and several NGOs. Its aim was to work out ways of implementing the useful observations and recommendations from the first meeting. It has been agreed between NGOs, the Ministry of Justice

and international organizations that a working group of civil society actors should elaborate concrete mechanisms for establishing an Institute of Public Monitors.

The report noted that over 80 per cent of the investigators and 95 per cent of the judges stated that detainees very rarely apply to get authorization for correspondence. In some cases, the period to notify someone about a relative in detention was as long as 15 days although the law stipulates 12 hours. Some 40 per cent of the surveyed detainees and their relatives had never attempted to obtain permission for visits, and only 14 out of 99 such attempts succeeded before the verdict was delivered.

The report concluded that "... the right of detainees to communication with the outside world is not implemented in practice". The recently adopted Law on Treatment Arrested and Detained Persons is intended to introduce radical changes to this situation. However, it is thought that a number of difficulties will remain in connection with persisting practices. The penitentiary reform process is tackling some of these issues and the report contains further recommendations.

Prison reform is focus of special OSCE meeting

Many countries that are in transition to democracy have only just started to restructure their prison systems. Some face resource problems or are struggling with long-held beliefs about how prisons should be set up and administered that leave little room for adherence to international human rights norms.

To help these countries to align prison conditions with international standards, while ensuring that pris-

ons fulfill their function of protecting society from dangerous criminals, the OSCE held a special meeting in Vienna on 8 and 9 July. Government representatives, international experts and NGOs looked at measures, taken by OSCE participating States, that have worked and those that have not.

Participants also reviewed the human dimension, focusing on the training of prison personnel and the

treatment of prisoners. The different approaches to monitoring prison conditions were examined, highlighting the role played by NGOs and international organizations.

The meeting, organized by ODIHR and the Portuguese Chairmanship of the OSCE, should result in concrete recommendations for national action programmes, aimed at implementing international legal provisions and OSCE commitments.

All in a day's work in Osh

Steering democracy through a tapestry of cultures in Southern Kyrgyzstan

By Kathleen Samuel

Just before dawn, the Nissan Patrol beams its bright headlights towards the front of my house on Deputy Street. As I get into the field office's vehicle, I hear the morning call to prayer from a nearby mosque. Rashid, our driver, and Rastam, our legal assistant, and I start off on the five-hour drive to Kyrgyzstan's Jalal-Abad province. Our destination: the mountain town of Kerben, the scene of frequent mass meetings and demonstrations since early this year, including a violent riot in March.

Our journey takes us from the city of Osh, known as the country's southern capital, where the OSCE Field Office is based, to Kerben, a trying 300-kilometer trip. We pass twice through the Uzbek border checkpoints of the fertile Fergana Valley, head back into Kyrgyzstan, and then go through another Uzbek checkpoint. From there, the Kyrgyz road runs adjacent to the border with Uzbekistan, into the foothills of the Alai mountain range and past groups of yurts, or felt tents, set up by Kyrgyz nomads.



Some of the OSCE Field Office staff in Osh (from left): Rashid Aizatullin, Albina Temirbulatova (now at the OSCE Centre in Bishkek), Kathleen Samuel, and Mukhtar Irsav

Kerben, a remote and impoverished part of Jalal-Abad province, is the seat of a popular deputy in Kyrgyzstan's *Jogorku Kenesh* (parliament), whose arrest in January, and eventual conviction,

have sparked regular protests by his followers (deputies in Kyrgyzstan do not enjoy immunity). Since then, my colleagues and I have spent much of our time on the road to observe the trial,

rallies and other activities linked with the civil discord. On these visits, we meet the local authorities, representatives of security agencies, protest leaders, members of non-governmental organizations, *akshals* ("white beards", elderly men who are highly respected as wise community leaders) and *babushki* (grandmothers).

Attentive listening to a broad cross-section of the population is an essential

way. The villagers tell us that the men, young and old alike, have set out on foot and on horseback through the mountains, to reach the 630-kilometer main road between Osh and Bishkek. They plan to take part in another protest action to close this vital route, which is the only transport link between the northern and southern halves of Kyrgyzstan.

Reaching the centre of Kerben by

onions, garlic and small pieces of lamb.

If we chance upon a special occasion, we may be offered a boiled lamb's head with organs intact, as a sign of respect. In Jalal-Abad province, the traditions of hospitality run deep and have at times even been employed to defuse tense situations. The *akim* (mayor) of a village in the area has been known to offer the protesters tea and *plov* as a sign that he is



OSCE/Kathleen Samuel

Scenes of everyday life around Osh: selling lepyoshki; waiting for plov by the entrance to a yurt; and the hat vendor (for an explanation, please read the article).

part of field monitoring and is particularly crucial in observing politically sensitive and divisive issues. Using this tool and taking pains to remain fair and neutral, the OSCE Field Office in Osh has been working extremely hard to earn the trust of all sides involved in the strife.

Our work is also aimed at building confidence through dialogue. After all, the first step towards resolving a crisis is seizing the right opportunity and making use of the ability to discuss contentious matters with concerned parties, in order to identify shared advantages and a common position. By doing both – listening and building confidence – we are working towards setting the stage for mediation.

On this trip, we notice that the fields around Kerben and the village bazaars appear emptier than usual, despite the fact that spring planting is well under

mid-morning, we find thousands of men in *kalpaks*, the traditional Kyrgyz felt hat, and women with headscarves sitting in the middle of the road. They are holding placards and blocking traffic in both directions. Most of the protest leaders are men. Women provide the organizational logistics and sometimes take on the unfortunate task of serving as buffers between the protesters and security forces. Women also assume the unsung but key role of maintaining order and discipline among the protesters.

Hospitality is paramount in the Fergana Valley – an area shared by Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan – and southern Kyrgyzstan is no exception. People in the communities frequently invite us in for tea (*chai* in Kyrgyz and *choi* in Uzbek), *kumys*, which is fermented mare's milk, and *plov*, a Central Asian speciality of boiled red rice with carrots,

open and ready for dialogue.

A written snapshot of life in Central Asia may resemble that in many other OSCE field offices, as the working methods and guiding principles are essentially the same. But upon closer observation, one notices and feels certain differences that clearly set the region apart.

Kyrgyzstan, like most of Central Asia, has many levels of identity, both eastern and western. While the camel caravans of old have disappeared from the trade routes, the region remains an important arena for trading in goods and ideas. To steer the democratization course in this fascinating part of the world, the challenge for the OSCE is to be able to manoeuvre through these multiple identities.

Kathleen Samuel is the Political and Human Dimension Officer of the OSCE Field Office in Osh, Kyrgyzstan

In April 2000, the OSCE opened a Field Office in Osh, more than a year after the inauguration of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, the capital. The country's second largest city with an estimated population of 400,000, Osh is an ancient trading post along the Great Silk Road.

In keeping with its rich history, this part of the country continues to be a colourful tapestry of cultures and ethnicities, weaving east into west, Asia with Europe. Today, Osh is about 43 per cent Kyrgyz and 43 per cent Uzbek, with the "other" category a mix of Russians, Tajiks, Ukrainians, Meskhetian Turks, Dungans (Chinese Muslims), Uighurs (a Turkic people from western China), Tatars, Koreans, Germans, Armenians, Azeris, and the list goes on.



News from the field

The OSCE currently has missions or other field activities in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo (Yugoslavia), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Yugoslavia.

Minorities in Kosovo still come up against barriers to integration

In a joint assessment report issued on 22 May, the OSCE and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) called for further changes to improve conditions for minorities in Kosovo and to create an environment conducive to the return of all ethnic groups. The report, the ninth in a series, states that while the number of serious violent incidents has gradually decreased in the province, intimidation and harassment persist in many minority areas.

"Discrimination in Kosovo is pervasive and requires clear laws and effective remedies", commented Pascal Fieschi, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, adding that "Kosovo's elected authorities have a responsibility to work to right these wrongs and find solutions to improve the situation for everyone."

The lack of full freedom of movement continues to be the largest barrier to the integration of minorities and their participation in Kosovo society, according to the report, which covers the period from September 2001 to April 2002. This affects minority access to employment, education, health care and other essential services.

Multi-ethnic media agency opens in Tetovo

The Media City Desk, a multi-ethnic media agency, began operations on 16 May in Tetovo, a crisis area last year in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Its Macedonian and Albanian writers will produce daily news features in the Tetovo area, free of charge, for all local and national media outlets. The objective is to promote co-operation among journalists serving readers in the Macedonian and Albanian languages, provide quality news, expand the news agenda and raise journalistic standards.

The Media City Desk is managed by the Association of Local Media in Tetovo, a non-governmental organization (NGO) that was founded by a partnership of Albanian and Macedonian television and radio stations. Its staff of journalists and technicians are committed to producing well-researched, objective and balanced news.

The project was facilitated by the Tetovo field station of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, and was supported financially by the International Organization for Migration, the Canadian International Development Agency, and the American organization, Mercy Corps.

Environmental information centre opens to the public in Armenia

An environmental information centre featuring a specialized library, Internet facilities and a legal database opened to the public in Yerevan on 24 May. The centre will also serve as a venue for public discussions and meetings of non-governmental organizations.

At the opening ceremony, Roy Reeve, the Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, stressed the centre's role in promoting freedom of information and underlined the uniqueness of the initiative. The establishment of the centre is expected to add impetus to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention of 1998 in Armenia, which ratified it in May 2001 following a joint campaign by the OSCE Office in Yerevan and NGOs. The Convention grants civil society access to information, justice and participation in the decision-making process in environmental matters.

Contributors to the effort were the United Nations Department for Public Information, the United Nations Environmental Programme, and the British Alumni Association who co-ordinated and implemented the initiative. The United States, the United Kingdom and Germany provided financial assistance.

www.osce.org/photos

Visit the OSCE photo archive online to view more than 1,500 images related to the work of the Organization. The archive features advanced search options. High-resolution versions of most images are available upon request.

OSCE

NEWSLETTER

Project launched in Tajikistan to boost girls in higher education

The OSCE Mission to Tajikistan and its Garm field office have launched a project to promote girls' access to higher education, focusing on the Garm and Jirghital districts of the Karategin valley. The region has a high drop-out rate among girls in secondary school and has one of the lowest percentages of girls who go on to higher education.

Girls from rural and mountainous areas benefit from a government quota system that facilitates their access to universities. However, there is a lack of transparency in the distribution system, and co-operation between central and local authorities needs to be strengthened.

To look into some of these problems, two roundtable meetings were organized in mid-May. Participants from the Ministries of Education and Economics, local authorities, teachers and civil groups agreed to establish an indepen-



Girls from Tajikistan's rural and mountain areas look forward to improving their chances of getting a higher education

dent task force that will monitor the distribution process from June to September, after which a final roundtable will issue recommendations. The OSCE Mis-

sion, together with the Ministry of Education, has also published and distributed an information leaflet on the quota system.

IN BRIEF

At a press conference on 6 June, Ambassador Joao de Lima Pimentel, Chairman of the Permanent Council, called on the Government of Belarus to present concrete proposals for improving its co-operation with the OSCE. He was speaking after the OSCE Permanent Council's discussion on the Minsk authorities' decision not to extend the visa of the Acting Head of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group (AMG), Andrew Carpenter. Belarus had previously refused to extend the visa of former Acting Head, Michel Rivollier.

The Portuguese Chairmanship expressed its regret, saying this had effectively frozen the AMG's activities in Belarus. "This can only harm the interests of Belarus", Ambassador Pimentel said. However, he added, "We think there are still possibilities to see if we can obtain an agreement." For the time being, the mission would continue to exist under the responsibility of an



Eberhard Heyken, OSCE Special Envoy to Belarus, and Joao de Lima Pimentel, Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council, meet the press

administrative officer. "We hope that appropriate conditions will be established allowing it to resume activities in accordance with the mandate and based on a concrete programme", the Chairman said.

The Portuguese OSCE Chairmanship expressed its full support for the decision of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Michael Steiner, to declare null and void the Resolution on the protec-

tion of the Territorial Integrity of Kosovo, which was adopted by the Assembly of Kosovo on 23 May.

In its statement, the Chairmanship said that it regretted the fact that the Kosovo Assembly members had decided to ignore the clear and unanimous views expressed by Special Representative Steiner, the UN Security Council President and the international community on this issue. "The elected leaders in Kosovo are expected to fully comply with the terms of Security Council Resolution 1244 and the Constitutional Framework for provisional self-government and to work in favour of peace and security in Kosovo and in the region", they stated.

The Portuguese Chairmanship also recalled the UN Security Council presidential statement of 7 March 2001, emphasizing that the border demarcation agreement between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, signed on 23 February 2001, must be respected by all.

The **Portuguese OSCE Chairmanship** expressed its deep concern about the continued detention of a group of opposition politicians and human rights activists in Kyrgyzstan, who had been taken into custody on 16 May by police during a protest in front

of the parliament building in the capital, Bishkek. "The Chairmanship considers that Kyrgyzstan needs to increase confidence between Government and civil society, and therefore any steps leading to increased tensions should be avoided by all sides", the Chairmanship said in a statement.

It also called on the Kyrgyz authorities to engage in a real dialogue involving all political parties and representatives of civil society to try to find solutions to the current challenges. The **CIO's Special Adviser on Central Asia, Ambassador Herbert Salber**, travelled to Kyrgyzstan on 16 May to discuss the political situation.



PRESS PROFILE

Excerpts from a recent selection of articles on the OSCE and its activities.

OSCE AND THE NATO EXPANSION

The Economist, 4 May

[from 'A moment of truth', a special report on the future of NATO] Critics feel that to extend new invitations to Slovenia, Slovakia, perhaps the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and possibly even Bulgaria and Romania, would inevitably dilute the alliance, turning it into more of a security talking-shop. That might make a bigger NATO more acceptable to Russia, but would reduce it to little more than an armed version of the OSCE, which is open to all Europeans and spends its time on good works such as election-monitoring.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 4 May

[from an opinion piece on the future of NATO by Markus Wehner] What the Kremlin would like to see in the body is a security organ for Europe with wide-reaching capabilities, which has more power than the unloved OSCE.

Reuters, 9 May

The United States has signalled it would like to see Romania and Bulgaria brought into NATO, raising the prospect that up to seven ex-Communist countries could be invited to join the 19 current members at a summit in Prague in November. Russia has also strengthened its ties with the alliance. But John Chipman [the director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies] said such expansion could dilute the military effectiveness of NATO and turn it into a group more like the OSCE, the human rights and security watchdog.

Der Spiegel, 15 May

[from 'The Big Hanging Bridge', an analysis of NATO] The planned expansion in November will transform the Alliance, but this "transformation", assured [German Foreign Minister Joschka] Fischer, "will not move towards another OSCE". In fact he is convinced of the opposite. Fischer's internal comment: the degeneration of the Alliance to something like the OSCE, a powerless East-West talking shop with headquarters in Vienna, is "unavoidable".

The Independent, 15 May

[from an article analyzing the post-Cold War era] Many now fear the new relationship with Russia could mean the end of NATO as a serious defence organization and its transformation into a

broader political and strategic alliance, an "OSCE with weapons".

The Economist, 18 May

[from 'Vladimir Putin's long, hard haul', an article on Russia-NATO relations] In talking shops such as the OSCE and the Council of Europe, a sort of antechamber to the European Union, Russia is an established member. It helps with peacekeeping in Bosnia, as well as with peacemaking in the Middle East.

The Economist, 1 June

[from a letter of OSCE Secretary General, Jan Kubis, to the Editor] Sir: Your dismissal of the OSCE as a "talking shop" is neither accurate nor fair... The OSCE has deployed hundreds of monitors from participating States at elections across the region through its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. Other OSCE institutions are engaged in similar pragmatic activities. Some 85 per cent of the annual budget is spent on work of this nature, making a practical difference to the lives of ordinary people in troubled areas – hardly the work of a mere talking shop.

Associated Press, 28 May 2002

[quoting the declaration of the Russia-NATO Summit held in Rome] We are convinced that a qualitatively new relationship between NATO and the Russian Federation will constitute an essential

contribution in achieving this goal [...] to build together a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy and co-operative security and the principle that the security of all states in the Euro-Atlantic community is indivisible]. In this context, we will observe in good faith our obligations under international law, including the UN Charter, provisions and principles contained in the Helsinki Final Act and the OSCE Charter for European Security.

Die Presse, 29 May

[from an editorial by Burkhard Bischof on the future of NATO] The result of such a "super-NATO" would be, as many observers fear, a toothless organization like today's OSCE: big, bulky, weak to decide and prone to paralysis.

OSCE MISSION AREAS

Reuters, 13 May

The former Yugoslav leader [Slobodan Milosevic], who is conducting his

own defence, used news clips and documents in a bid to show that journalists and OSCE monitors were in and around the village of Racak as Yugoslav police entered in January 1999. "Is it possible the police called in the journalists and the OSCE as they were carrying out a massacre?" Milosevic asked Karel Drewnikiewicz [a retired British general who served with the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission in late 1998] in two hours of tetchy cross-examination about the alleged Racak massacre.

Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 21 May

The South East European University [in Tetovo] is a compromise product of a year-long conflict between the Albanian and Macedonian politicians, which became reality thanks to the OSCE and, specifically, to its former High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoep.

Associated Press, 23 May

"We have been informed that the human rights situation has been getting

worse", said [member of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Working Group on Belarus] Uta Zapf... "We have an impression that the goal of Belarusian authorities is to get rid of (our group) in Belarus." She added that if the authorities did not extend the visa of the current Advisory and Monitoring Group head Andrew Carpenter, it would "create a new round of tensions in the relations between OSCE and Belarus".

Interfax Belarus, 24 May

The [Belarusian Foreign Minister Mikhail Khvastov] rebuked the OSCE leadership as "not willing to hear out what the Belarusian side has to say about the operation of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus..." The Minister noted that the goals and objectives of the mission must be intelligible to the Government. In particular, "the AMG should not be oriented towards several dozens of people, who represented the you-know-part of society, but draw a more objective picture of the complex processes in the country", Mr. Khvastov added.

Recent OSCE Events

11 and 12 July, Bucharest. Co-ordinating regional efforts to increase transparency and facilitate business.

OSCE Portuguese Chairmanship, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania and the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

8 and 9 July, Vienna. Meeting on prison reform. Second OSCE supplementary human dimension meeting in 2002.

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and OSCE Portuguese Chairmanship

6 to 10 July, Berlin. Eleventh Annual Session of OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

26 June, Lisbon. Ministerial meeting of the Troika (Foreign Ministers of Portugal, Romania and the Netherlands).

OSCE Portuguese Chairmanship

24 and 25 June, Almaty. Conference on Islam and national security of newly independent states in Central Asia.

OSCE Centre in Almaty, European Commission in Kazakhstan and Kazakh Institute for Strategic Studies

20 and 21 June, Almaty. Round table on strengthening integrity in the public and private sectors, Kazakhstan.

OSCE Centre in Almaty

20 and 21 June, Bangkok. OSCE-Thailand conference: human dimension of security.

OSCE and Government of Thailand

17 and 18 June, Baku. Meeting on religious freedom while combating extremism.

OSCE Office in Baku, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and Azerbaijan State Committee on Working with Religious Associations

For more information as well as news of future events, please visit: www.osce.org/events

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

Senior Official pays visits to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan

The Director of the ODIHR, Gerard Stoudmann, visited Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in May to review ODIHR activities in both countries and discuss future priorities with the authorities. In Kyrgyzstan, he met President Askar Akaev, as well as with representatives of the opposition to discuss the recent escalation of tensions in the country following the shooting of demonstrators by security forces in the Aksy region. The ODIHR Director called for urgent steps to foster dialogue between all political forces in order to restore confidence.



ELECTIONS

Montenegro: municipal elections

The ODIHR issued a preliminary statement on 16 May concluding that the municipal elections in the Republic of Montenegro/Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were generally conducted in accordance with OSCE commitments and Council of Europe standards. The international observers noted that voters were able to choose from a wide range of political parties. Broad access to information was available through the media. The accuracy and transparency of voter registers were further improved, and political parties were well represented on election commissions at all levels.

While noting the strengths of the electoral framework, the international monitors also observed some shortcomings. The control of election mandates by political parties and coalitions remained a key concern, as this practice in effect prevents voters from knowing which candidates they are electing. There were isolated incidents of violence. The media were generally biased and the print media violated the campaign silence period.

The ODIHR long-term observation mission, headed by Nikolai Vulchanov (Bulgaria), was established in mid-April and included 18 election experts and long-term observers. For election day, the ODIHR was joined by the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, and deployed 114 short-term observers.

Ukraine: final report issued on parliamentary elections

Following the observation of the parliamentary elections in Ukraine on 31 March, a joint mission of the ODIHR, the OSCE PA, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and the European Parliament, returned to Ukraine for a three-day visit from 9 to 11 May to review the crucial post-election phase.

In its final report, the ODIHR concluded that, despite some shortcomings, the elections brought Ukraine closer to meeting international commitments and standards for democratic elections. While Ukraine met commitments fully or partially in such areas as universality, transparency, freedom and accountability, it failed to ensure fairness in the process. Technical improvements in election

day procedures are needed to protect the secrecy of the ballot and to provide the voters with an orderly and dignified process. The report is available on the ODIHR website: www.osce.org/odihr

Armenia: roundtable on electoral reform

A two-day roundtable on electoral legislation reform highlighted the importance of implementing and enforcing electoral laws for the conduct of democratic elections in Armenia. The event followed the first reading of amendments to the Electoral Code. The changes contained some positive changes in line with ODIHR recommendations but failed to address a number of problem areas. Discussions focused on the formation of electoral commissions, complaints, appeals and violations, voter lists, voting arrangements and transparency safeguards.

Although no consensus was reached on the key issue of the formation of the Central Election Commission, general agreement was reached on other matters. The meeting's conclusions were presented to the National Assembly and the media, prior to the second reading of the

amendments. Comments on the proposed amendments, produced jointly by the ODIHR and the Venice Commission, are available on: www.osce.org/odihr

The roundtable was organized by the OSCE Office in Yerevan, the Council of Europe Representation in Yerevan and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, in co-operation with



A voter in Montenegro is checked for the presence of an invisible ink-mark to ensure she is not voting twice in municipal elections

ODIHR and the Venice Commission. Participants comprised representatives from the Government, parliament, political parties, election administration, courts, civil society and the international community.



DEMOCRATIZATION

Kazakhstan: training for pre-trial detention centre staff

The ODIHR held two training seminars for the staff in pre-trial detention facilities in the southern and western regions of Kazakhstan from 20 to 26 May. The seminars introduced the staff to international standards and best practices through sessions focusing on detention conditions, availability of facilities for sick detainees, and detainee-staff relations. The trainers emphasized that the humane treatment of detainees played a key role in maintaining security in places of detention. They also underlined the crucial need for adequate standards in view of the fact that all inmates should be presumed innocent as long as they are not convicted by an independent court.

Kazakhstan is currently reforming its penitentiary system and is among the most advanced countries in this field within the Commonwealth of Independent States. The training, conducted by high-ranking prison officials from Sweden and Poland, was carried out in co-operation with the OSCE Office in Almaty, the Ministry of Interior, and the Kazakhstani International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law.

Kazakhstan: roundtable looks at religious freedom

The ODIHR and the OSCE Centre in Almaty, Kazakhstan, held a roundtable on inter-confessional security on 16 May to analyse the situation of human rights and religious freedom in Southern Kazakhstan. The lively exchange of opinions contributed towards improving the climate for dialogue between state and religious institutions.

The event was organized in co-operation

with the Sociological Resource Centre in Shymkent and the local government (*Akimat*). It was part of the ODIHR Civil Society Programme for Kazakhstan and was a follow-up activity of the plan of action of the Conference on Freedom of Belief and Expression which took place in Jalal-Abad, Kyrgyzstan, in February this year.

Southern Caucasus: ODIHR continues large-scale gender programme

During the early months of 2002, the ODIHR continued its large-scale programme to promote gender equality and increase women's political participation in the Southern Caucasus. Since the programme started in 2000, seminars, training courses and awareness-raising activities have reached thousands of women in the region.

In Georgia, the ODIHR initiated the creation of a coalition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on gender issues aimed at developing a coherent common strategy on advancing women's rights. Representatives of the more than 40 NGOs in the coalition met in Tbilisi from 26 April to 2 May to discuss future activities.

The meeting was preceded by a training workshop for 22 trainers from 11 regions of Georgia. The aim was to improve the trainers' training skills, advance their knowledge of women's leadership and gender equality, and equip them with project development skills. In the coming months, each participant will hold eight follow-up training seminars and develop gender programmes in their home regions.

A similar programme is being implemented in Azerbaijan where the ODIHR is also working towards the creation of an active network to place women in government posts and to lobby for gender-sensitive policies. In May, the ODIHR conducted two training workshops in Baku for 20 women from 10 regions of Azerbaijan. The aim was to create local training capacity in the regions by strengthening the participants' knowledge of gender issues and training techniques, and by preparing them to conduct one-day awareness raising and lobbying seminars in their home regions. The sec-

ond training workshop also included project development skills.

Workshop held on rule of law in Chechnya

The ODIHR, in co-operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, organized a workshop in Kislovodsk, Russia, on 29 and 30 May on the re-establishment of the rule of law and the protection of citizens' rights in Chechnya.

Some 40 judges and lawyers from Chechnya and neighbouring regions discussed the processing of individual complaints of alleged human rights violations and improving co-operation between key institutions concerned with the protection of human rights. Also discussed was the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights and the new Criminal Procedure Code which will enter into force in July.

Separate training sessions for judges, prosecutors and lawyers are now being planned, aimed at enhancing each group's technical and substantive expertise.



ROMA & SINTI

Plovdiv, Bulgaria: roundtable organized on conflict prevention

The ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues organized a roundtable on conflict prevention in a mainly Roma neighbourhood in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. The meeting, held on 14 and 15 May, was jointly organized with the US-based NGO, Project on Ethnic Relations, and local Romani NGOs. It focused on how to prevent tensions such as the riots that broke out earlier this year in the neighbourhood over a dispute with the municipality on the provision of municipal services.

The participants discussed a number of unresolved issues that had triggered conflicts in the past, including the massive debts that many tenants in the neighbourhood owed to the municipality's energy and water providers, the illegal construction of houses, lack of proper registration of many of the Roma, long-term unemployment, and tensions between family clans.

As a result of the meeting, a local contact point will be appointed to serve as a mediator between the local authorities and the Roma community. The Plovdiv roundtable was part of a broader project to prevent or ease the tensions between Roma communities and the majority population in municipalities with large Roma minorities.

Registration of Roma voters is promoted in France

As part of its programme to advance Roma political rights, the ODIHR Contact Point held a series of meetings with the French authorities and human rights groups aimed at improving the participation of "non-sedentary Roma", or *gens de voyage*, in elections. French legislation

includes specific provisions on the registration of *gens de voyage*, which are currently under discussion because of the growing awareness of the potentially discriminatory impact of the legal provisions on this group's participation in the elections. The issue was also addressed in the recently issued ODIHR report on the French presidential elections.

NEWS from the High Commissioner on National Minorities

The Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) is located at Prinsessegracht 22, NL-2514 AP The Hague, The Netherlands, tel: (+31-70) 312 55 00, fax: (+31-70) 363 59 10, e-mail: hcnm@hcnm.org

High Commissioner reviews issues in Kazakhstan

The High Commissioner on National Minorities, Rolf Ekeus, made his first official visit to Kazakhstan, on 16 and 17 May, to learn more about key issues affecting inter-ethnic relations there. In Astana and Almaty, he met government officials, representatives of the Russian, German, and Uighur minorities, members of the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan, and the chairmen of *Akhzhol*, the

opposition party. He was interested in the connection between democratization and inter-ethnic relations, the use of majority and minority languages, especially in the media, minority participation in public life, and education.

Legislation seeks to protect minorities

In May, the High Commissioner's Office provided comments on the draft 'Agreement on co-operation between the Government of the Federal Republic of

Yugoslavia (FRY) and the Government of Romania in the field of protection of national minorities'. The Office will continue extending its assistance to the concerned parties on this matter and on similar agreements between the FRY and Hungary, and between the FRY and Croatia, which are currently under negotiation. The High Commissioner's Office is also involved in the discussions on the drafting of a constitutional law on the rights of national minorities in Croatia.

REPORT from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

The Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is located at Rådhusstræde 1, DK-1466 Copenhagen K, Denmark, tel: (+45-33) 37 80 40, fax: (+45-33) 37 80 30, e-mail: osce@oscepa.dk

Parliamentary Assembly holds 11th annual session in Berlin

More than 300 parliamentarians from 55 OSCE participating States were due to attend the 11th OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Annual Session, being held this year at the Reichstag, in Berlin, from 6 to 10 July. Debate was expected to focus on the political, economic and human rights aspects of the international fight against terrorism, as well as other current issues relevant to security in the OSCE area. A final declaration will be adopted and forwarded to the OSCE



The Reichstag building, seat of the German Federal Parliament in Berlin, was the venue of the 11th OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's annual session

OSCE

NEWSLETTER

Ministerial Council, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the national parliaments of the OSCE participating States. The Seventh OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy was scheduled to be presented to Austrian reporter, Friedrich Orter, and the Belarusian journalist, Pavel Sheremet, at a special ceremony on 6 July.

Parliamentarians examine security in south-eastern Europe

More than 60 parliamentarians from 22 European countries met in Bucharest on 6 and 7 June to discuss cultural, economic and political aspects of security in south-eastern Europe. The conference, hosted by the Romanian Parliament, was held under the auspices of the Tri-Parliamentary Troika on the Stability Pact: the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA), the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and the European Parliament.

The President of Romania, Ion Iliescu, and the Speaker of the Senate, Nicolae Vacaroiu, addressed the opening session. Participants included Adrian Severin, President of the OSCE PA; Peter Schieder, President of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly; Baroness Emma Nicholson of Winterbourne, First Vice-Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament; Erhard Busek, Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe; Stojan Andov, President of the Macedonian Parliament; and Dragoljub Micunovic, President of the Yugoslav Parliament.

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Severin said there was a consensus among the participants that the recognition of the present borders in South Eastern Europe was essential to stability and development. He pointed out that organized crime and the parliamentarians' role and responsibilities in South Eastern Europe were the subject of intense discussion. Economic development and stability, he added, would be fostered by the strengthening of institutions, good governance and eliminating corruption. The Chairman's conclusions are available on www.osce.org/pa

This was the second Parliamentary Conference devoted to South Eastern

Europe. The first was held in September 2001 in Brussels during the European Parliament's Chairmanship of the Troika. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly currently holds the Chairmanship. The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly will take over in July and will host the Third Parliamentary Conference later this year.

Working Group on Belarus visits Minsk

The Chairperson of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly *ad hoc* Working Group on Belarus, Uta Zapf, MP (Germany), and two members of the Group, Helena Demakova, MP (Latvia), and Urban Ahlin, MP (Sweden), visited Minsk from 20 to 23 May.

The visit was the third since the presidential election. It was part of the OSCE PA's continuing efforts to reinvigorate a dialogue with the Belarusian authorities and with other social and political forces in the country.

The delegation expressed its growing concern that the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus (AMG), which had been functioning without a Head since the departure of Ambassador Hans-Georg Wieck in December 2001, was now again without a Deputy Head since Michel Rivollier's request for the renewal of his diplomatic accreditation had been denied. In addition, the Belarusian authorities were unable to provide any positive information on their intentions regarding the work and further accreditation of the remaining personnel of the AMG.

The delegation reiterated its proposal that the Belarusian authorities accept the proposed candidature of the new Head of Group, allow the AMG to continue its work on the basis of the original 1997 mandate and the relevant article of the Istanbul Summit Declaration, and discuss the details of the future work of the AMG once the new Head had taken up his duties in the country. The delegation once again expressed its serious concern that Belarus' relationship with all OSCE Institutions and with other European organizations would be hindered without a positive resolution to this problem. The press release issued at the end of the visit

is available on: www.osce.org/news

PA President meets parliamentarians in Slovakia

PA President Adrian Severin paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic on 29 and 30 May at the invitation of the National Council (parliament) of Slovakia. He had high-level meetings with Slovak parliamentary and governmental leaders including the President of the National Council, Josef Migas and Foreign Minister Eduard Kukan. He also met with the Head of the Slovak Delegation to the OSCE PA, Peter Osusky, and the Chairmen of the Committees on European Integration and Human Rights. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Severin met the officers responsible for OSCE matters. Mr. Severin was briefed on the political situation in Slovakia, including the parliamentary elections scheduled in September. He praised the involvement of the Slovak Republic in the OSCE and the active participation of Slovak parliamentarians in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. He was accompanied on his trip by PA Presidential Adviser, Gustavo Pallares.

Severin addresses Economic Forum

Mr. Severin addressed the opening session of the 10th OSCE Economic Forum in Prague on 28 May. "Water is a scarce resource that knows no boundaries; therefore its management and its sharing should provide a strong basis for co-operation among nations", he said, citing the Danube River Green Corridor and other examples of successful water management co-operation in the OSCE area.

The PA President informed the participants about the next OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Sub-regional Economic Conference to be held in Switzerland in the spring of 2003, focusing on small- and medium-size enterprise development.

PA conference on security set for October in Almaty

Vitaly Evseyev, Deputy Secretary General of the OSCE PA, and Paul LeGendre, Programme Officer, were in Almaty on 28 and 29 May to discuss

preparations for a Trans-Asian Parliamentary Conference to be hosted by the parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan. It was tentatively agreed that the conference would be held on 21 and 22

October and would be devoted to issues of security within the trans-Asian dimension of the OSCE. Mr. Evseyev and Mr. LeGendre met with the Vice-Speaker and the Secretary General of

the Kazakhstan Senate and other officials. They also met with representatives of the United Nations Development Centre and the OSCE Centre in Almaty.

NEWS from the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

The Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media is located at Kärtner Ring 5-7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria.
Tel: (+43-1) 512 21 45-0, fax: (+43-1) 512 21 45-9, e-mail: pm-fam@osce.org

Another journalist murdered in Russia

On 29 April, Valeriy Ivanov, a leading journalist and editor of *Tolyatinskoye Obozreniye*, was killed in the industrial city of Togliatti, south-east of Moscow. He was shot in the head at point-blank range by an unidentified assailant. In a letter on 3 May to Mikhail Lesin, the Russian Minister of Press, Television and Radio Broadcasting, Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, said that he had been informed that the murder might have been connected to Mr. Ivanov's professional activities, since his newspaper was known for its coverage of local organized crime, drug trafficking and corruption.

Mr. Duve noted that "a very well respected non-governmental organization, the Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, had recently stated that 'Russia has become one of the world's most dangerous countries for journalists.'" Although he did not necessarily share this sentiment, Mr Duve added: "I do believe it is now up to the Russian authorities to prove otherwise".

Turkey's new broadcasting law is questioned

The Representative has asked for further clarification on the new Turkish broadcasting law, which was passed by Parliament in Ankara on 14 May. In a letter to the Foreign Minister, Ismail Cem, on 15 May, he noted: "According to the information available to my Office, this law is even more restrictive than the preceding law of 1994 in making it easier to control broadcasters, and in removing

previous legal obstacles to the monopolization of private media ownership."

Case of murdered reporters Nogin and Kurennoi is revisited

In a letter to Carla del Ponte, Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague, Freimut Duve has raised the subject of the murdered Russian journalists, Victor Nogin and Genadii Kurennoi. Both were killed in Croatia in September 1991 while reporting from the scene of fighting between Croatian forces and Serbian militia. "The circumstances of their deaths are still sketchy, but a number of Russian journalists investigated the case and have come up with a plausible scenario of what had actually happened to Nogin and Kurennoi. One of the individuals who can shed light on their murder is Milan Martić, currently in the custody of ICTY," noted the OSCE Representative.

Milan Martić, former leader of Croatia's Serb minority, had been indicted in 1995 for ordering cluster bomb attacks on Zagreb. However, there were also public allegations linking him to the killings of the two journalists. "Without prejudicing the judicial process, I would encourage Your Excellency to take a closer look at these allegations. I would suggest interviewing Russian journalist Vladimir Mukusev who has conducted his own investigation, and if you find the evidence convincing enough, indicting Martić for these murders. An indictment of an official by an international tribunal for the murder of a journalist would be an

important precedent, especially with the establishment of the International Criminal Court", wrote Mr. Duve.

Turkmenistan: report says media freedom is non-existent

On 23 May, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media told the Permanent Council that Turkmenistan was the only OSCE participating State in which media freedom, as defined under his mandate, was non-existent. Presenting his Office's sixth country report, Mr. Duve stressed: "Turkmenistan is a country where the notion of freedom of the media has not undergone any real changes since the days of the Soviet regime. Furthermore, in the course of the entire decade since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the Turkmen Government has carried out a deliberate policy of subjecting all of the nation's media to the interests of building their totalitarian state."

He said that for the first time since he assumed the post of OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, he found himself not at liberty, for security reasons, to provide the public with the names of the experts who had assisted in preparing the report. "These are the conditions in which journalists, who tried or are still trying to make a difference, have to work. For an organization that claims to be a family of democracies, such a situation can only be described as completely unacceptable", the OSCE Representative emphasized.

He also noted that the Government of Turkmenistan was alone among the Cen-

tral Asian states in ignoring the Central Asian Media Conferences that have been taking place in the region for the past three years. The Government had never provided the Office of the Representative with an explanation on this matter.

Mr. Duve added: "The report clearly states that any recommendations to the

Government of Turkmenistan regarding changes in the media field may only be made within the larger context of a global and fundamental change in the State's attitude towards freedom of speech, in the context of adhering to the entire spectrum of international human rights... my Office is currently in the process of devel-

oping several media projects in some Central Asian States; however, I do not see any possibility of getting involved in similar work in Turkmenistan before there is a substantial change in the attitude of Turkmenistan's leadership to freedom of expression", the OSCE Representative concluded.

Freedom and Responsibility: Yearbook 2001/2002 is launched

Essays on the impact of the events of 11 September 2002 on the media are featured in the latest yearbook published by the Representative on Freedom of the Media. Journalists Michael Massing and Ahmed Rashid, scholar and author Leonard Sussman, as well as the Representative himself, attempt to answer the burning question: "Has terrorism – and the war on terrorism – contributed to a decline in press freedoms?"

Poignant accounts of "Young People in the Balkans: the *mobile.culture.container* on its 2002 Tour" are featured in the second chapter. The book also contains a set of views and commentaries

on the mass media, focusing on Central Asia and Belarus. A special chapter is devoted to compelling personal reflections by staff members of the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media on the topic: "Our work - what we think, why it matters".

All four sections provide a fitting context for the final overview, outlining the projects and activities of the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media in 2001 through to the early part of 2002. The Yearbook, the fourth to be published, is available on www.osce.org/fom. The Russian edition is expected to be published in mid-September.



"Whenever a country considers itself to be at war, freedom of expression is the first casualty." *Freimut Duve [in Freedom and Responsibility, Yearbook 2001]*

REPORT from the OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat

The OSCE Secretariat is located at Kärntner Ring 5-7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria.
Telephone: (+43-1) 514 36-0, Fax: (+43-1) 514 36-96, e-mail: pm@osce.org

Meeting with head of Stability Pact

On 2 May, the OSCE Secretary General, Jan Kubis, met Erhard Busek, the Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and Special Co-ordinator of the Southeast European Co-operative Initiative. They discussed ways of improving co-operation between the OSCE and the Stability Pact. Mr. Kubis said that the OSCE could make a key contribution by providing the Stability Pact with support through its missions and field activities in the Balkans.

Address to Council of Europe ministers

The Secretary General addressed the

110th Session of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe which took place in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 2 and 3 May. High on the agenda were the Council's contribution to international action against terrorism and the impact of regional co-operation on stability and democratic reform in Europe.

The Secretary General met with a number of ministers and other high-level participants. In a constructive exchange of ideas, Mr. Kubis and the Secretary General of the Arab League, Amre Moussa, agreed to facilitate the exchange of information and contacts through the establishment of focal points within both institutions.

Speech to UN ECE in Geneva

At the invitation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE), the Secretary General addressed its 57th Annual Session on 8 May in Geneva. He took the opportunity to hold meetings and consultations with the OSCE's partners. He met the Executive Director of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Brigita Schmognerova, the Deputy Executive Director, Paolo Garonna, and the Director of the Environment and Human Settlements Division, Kai Barlund. The officials and the Secretary General agreed to build on previous joint successes and to explore

OSCE

NEWSLETTER

other areas of co-operation. The important role played by the UN ECE in reviewing the implementation of the OSCE participating States' commitments in the economic and environmental dimension was underlined.

Mr. Kubis had an exchange of views with the President of the Davos World Economic Forum, Professor Klaus Schwab, and Directors Thierry Malleret and Macha Levinson. They examined various ways in which the OSCE and the Forum could be mutually supportive. The WEF is engaged in a number of initiatives managed by *ad hoc* task forces. The Office of the Co-ordinator on OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities will follow up on the results of these discussions.

The Secretary General also met the

Under-Secretary-General and Director-General of the United Nations Office in Geneva, Sergei Ordzhonikidze (who is also the Secretary General of the Conference on Disarmament). Both heads agreed on the importance of the traditional tripartite meetings, the next of which will be hosted by the United Nations in Geneva in early 2003. They also welcomed the outcome of the New York meeting on co-operation between the United Nations system and regional organizations and explored the possibility of a regional follow-up event on co-operation in conflict prevention and crisis management. The OSCE Chairmanship and the Secretary General had invited the Director General to visit the OSCE and address the Permanent Council.

Meeting FRY Minister in Vienna

On 14 May, the Secretary General met Vuk Zucic, the Assistant Federal Minister for Multilateral Activities in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). The Minister was taking part in the Forum for Security Co-operation's expert meeting on combating terrorism within the politico-military dimension of the OSCE. Mr. Zucic described the preparations being made for the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) meeting [held on 19 June] at the level of foreign ministers, which is currently chaired by the FRY. He offered to keep the OSCE regularly informed on SEECP activities.

The OSCE and Asia-Pacific: a bridge between regions

Strengthening the connection between the OSCE and the Asia-Pacific region in order to tackle common challenges was at the forefront of the discussions at the OSCE-Thailand Conference on the Human Dimension of Security, held on 20 and 21 June. The event reflected the efforts of the OSCE to reach out to other regions of the globe through the exchange of information and a sharing of experiences.

The meeting, held in Bangkok at the invitation of Thailand, focused on human dimension issues. There were problems that had similarities in both regions, while others were shared. Human and drug trafficking, in particular, posed social, economic and security threats to both Europe and Asia.

Portuguese Ambassador Tadeu Soares, speaking on behalf of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, said: "Every year, millions of men, women and children are trafficked worldwide into conditions amounting to slavery... in fact, it seems that nowadays traffickers prefer the human trade for prostitution to the drugs trade, due to the fewer risks involved".

The Romanian Secretary of State,

Mihnea Motoc, on behalf of the OSCE Troika, emphasized the need to integrate initiatives at the national, regional and international levels to tackle trafficking in human beings within the network of transnational organized crime.

Tej Bunnag, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, said that the conference's significance lay in the fact that it extended the dialogue beyond the OSCE area to include Thailand, ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which is the security forum of Asia and the Pacific.

The meeting made clear that the Asian Partners of the OSCE – currently Japan, Korea and Thailand – serve as a bridge connecting the OSCE with Asia. The OSCE's culture of carrying out dialogue and decision-making in an equitable manner, as well as the Organization's institutions and instruments, were considered as possibly applicable to the Asia-Pacific region. The Organization's work in the human dimension dealing with human rights, minority issues, and freedom of belief or religion were based on universal principles and might also

be of value in the Asian region.

A number of practical proposals were put forward, aimed at advancing the cause of closer partnership between the OSCE, Thailand, and ASEAN/ARF. Closer working ties could, for example, be explored in such areas as the rule of law, counter-terrorism, counter-trafficking – including providing support on drafting legislation to combat threats such as trafficking and terrorism – and the sharing of experiences in training programmes for law enforcement agencies.

The meeting brought together some 150 participants from OSCE participating States, both Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation, and representatives of regional and international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the academic community. Member countries of the ASEAN Regional Forum attended as guests of the host country and made valuable contributions to the discussion.

The Chairmen's summary and other meeting documents are available on the conference website: www.mfa.go.th/osce_hdc



After the Public Affairs Roundtable (see front page), the OSCE group was shown some of Armenia's cultural treasures including Geghard monastery, which dates from the 4th century AD. Some of the buildings were partly hewn out of the mountainside, but the main church was erected in 1215.



The **OSCE NEWSLETTER** is published by the Secretariat of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The views expressed are those of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the OSCE and its participating States.

Kärntner Ring 5-7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria
Tel.: (+43-1) 514 36-180 / Fax: (+43-1) 514 36-105 / E-mail: info@osce.org
Keith Jinks, Editor / Alexander Nitzsche, Deputy Editor / Patricia Sutter, Associate Editor
For more information, see the OSCE website: www.osce.org

