



**Representative on Freedom of the Media, ten years on:
Compliance with commitments remains prime pursuit**

**Mission to Croatia, 1996-2007
Closure and completion based on common goals**

**Modelling the OSCE for a robust
“Helsinki Generation”**



Confronting the digital age

Freedom of the media

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Message from the Secretary General

Hofburg, 13 May: The OSCE Secretary General launches the Model OSCE project.



If there is a single quality that has driven the OSCE since its inception in 1975, it is the ability to change. By this, I mean an uncanny capacity to take the strengths of the Organization — its *acquis* of shared values, its cross-dimensional approach, its inclusiveness, and its broad experience in crisis prevention and management — and adapt them to new needs and circumstances, almost as quickly as these fluctuate.

This quality has once again come to the fore. We are responding to developments in the OSCE area, notably to the tensions inside Georgia's conflict zones, where the Chairman-in-Office had led from the front, and also to challenging new directions set by our foreign ministers in Madrid last November.

Many decisions were reached at the Ministerial Council meeting in 2007. Two stand out in highlighting the potential of the OSCE to undertake strategic initiatives over the longer term.

The first one concerns the decision reached on Chairmanships between now and 2011. This has opened up an unprecedented prospect for multi-year planning. The Finnish Chairmanship has seized this opportunity, hosting a ministerial meeting of the "Quintet" — Spain, Finland, Greece, Kazakhstan and Lithuania — in Helsinki in early June.

The second concerns the decision to deepen the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan. This is an important step, not least because it underscores the Organization's will to use its accumulated experience in border management, law enforcement training and institution-building to address the most urgent security challenges — and to do so with the Partners for Co-operation.

Less dramatic than these two, but also in line with the wishes of the participating States, the Secretariat is developing proposals for an internal environmental policy. I draw attention to this because I find it vital for the OSCE to become "greener". Raising awareness is a first step.

The Organization's ability to adapt while remaining true to its mission is also reflected in the two milestones featured in this issue of the *OSCE Magazine*: the tenth anniversary of a unique OSCE institution, the Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the launching of leaner operations in Croatia.

This issue also provides a sneak preview of an exciting initiative that looks to the future with optimism: The Model OSCE Conference, the role-playing event for young people in early July, promises to prove both fulfilling and fun.

Marc Perrin de Brichambaut
 Vienna, June 2008

In this issue



TEN YEARS ON: OSCE REPRESENTATIVE ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA

- 4 Interview with Miklós Haraszti: Compliance with commitments remains prime pursuit
Virginie Coulloudon
- 7 When confrontation ends and co-operation begins: The media and the Government
Zoya Kazanzhi
- 10 The fight for online freedom: Tackling attempts to censor the Internet
Graham Patterson
- 12 Internet-related publications

MOVING ON: MISSION TO CROATIA, 1996-2007

- 13 Closure and completion
Todd Becker
 - 15 Knin: A microcosm of the OSCE's challenges in Croatia
Momir Vukmirović
- ### FINNISH CHAIRMANSHIP
- 17 First Chairmanship "Quintet" sets its sights high
By Sonya Yee and Patricia N. Sutter

MODEL OSCE

- 19 Towards a robust "Helsinki Generation"

OSCE CHARITY BALL

- 20 Dancing and diplomacy for a worthy cause
Patricia N. Sutter
- 22 Moldova: A hotline to life Breaking the silence on family violence
- 23 Skopje: Making music is popular morale-booster in Roma school
- 24 Kyrgyzstan: Lonely *babushkas* and the comfort of strangers
Azamat Ababakirov

26 APPOINTMENTS



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Front cover: Getty Images/Todd Davidson
Back cover: Illustration by Macej Michalski, courtesy of Rafal Rohozinski, The SecDev Group

Compliance with commitments remains prime pursuit



Against the backdrop of new threats and unprecedented challenges to the traditional concept of freedom of the media in the OSCE area, journalists, civil societies and governments can count on the dedication of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Miklós Haraszti, to be a tireless advocate for keeping relevant commitments alive in participating States. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his Office, which is the youngest of the OSCE's three institutions, Mr. Haraszti shared his thoughts with the OSCE Magazine in an interview with Virginie Coulloudon, Deputy Spokesperson in the Secretariat.

Virginie Coulloudon: What makes the OSCE's freedom of the media institution special?

Miklós Haraszti: Ten years on, the Representative on Freedom of the Media is still the world's only intergovernmental press freedom "watchdog". There are of course NGOs that, using different benchmarks, intervene when violations against freedom of the media take place. They are mostly based in Western Europe and in the United States and are quite successful in raising public awareness.

Beyond interventions, what makes our institution special is the fact that the participating States themselves have vested us with the right to address governments directly to request action and to advise them on legislation and

on the direction their reforms should take. We also have an obligation to co-operate with both governments and civil societies in a triangular relationship.

The institution was created at the end of 1997 on the initiative of Freimut Duve, your predecessor, two decades after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act. How has the spirit of Helsinki shaped the freedom of the media institution?

Paradoxically, as much as we like pointing to the continuity of the Helsinki Process, and as much as the Helsinki Accords were a driving force in my life, I believe it is also helpful to analyse discontinuity.

There has clearly been a "disruption" between the conception of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in the early 1970s, and the creation of the OSCE in the 1990s.

During the early Helsinki Process, both sides of the divide were convinced that their own brand of democracy was the only true one. Then, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, both sides seemed to have come to a common understanding of democracy.



Vienna, 29 February, event marking the tenth anniversary of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. (left photo) Plantu, editorial cartoonist of *Le Monde*, spoke about international tensions stemming from secular depictions of religious figures. (right photo) Thomas Hammarberg, Human Rights Commissioner of the Council of Europe (left), joined the appeal made by Miklós Haraszti (right) for the decriminalization of professional mistakes made by journalists and for offences such as insult and defamation to be dealt with exclusively in civil courts.

What was truly a novelty and what was revolutionary about the OSCE was that free and fair elections, a free civil society and free speech were acknowledged as commitments vital not only for democracy but also for international security. Human rights were seen as peacemaking tools.

The three OSCE institutions — the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) and the Representative on Freedom of the Media — came to embody these now-universal values.

Unfortunately, there was a backlash following the so-called “colour revolutions” in some ex-Soviet States. These events created a new “relativist” message at the State level. Just as in the pre-OSCE days, today’s thinking is that different types of democracy exist, and that values and norms such as the right to speak freely should not necessarily be applied equally across different countries.

Despite this, do the commitments of participating States still form the cornerstone of your work?

More than ever. New types of threats and tensions keep emerging, posing difficult challenges to freedom of the media, both to the east and to the west of Vienna. Technology is a crucial factor, but in most cases, at the root of it all is the nature of power, whether it is in an “old” democracy or in a new one.

We should bear in mind, though, that we *can* tackle these challenges, relying on co-operation and dialogue, as long as the spirit behind our shared commitments is alive and well. But if this spirit weakens, if the right of the three OSCE institutions to request compliance with OSCE commitments is questioned, if interventions are regarded as intrusions into internal affairs, then it becomes a steep uphill battle.

Fortunately, even during our fiercest struggles, the participating States continue to be interested in maintaining international co-operation.

So, what is the most efficient way of dealing with the current situation?

Even if commitments are universal, we should not, for example, mechanically condemn the fact that the print media in some OSCE countries are still State-owned. What should be unacceptable is a discriminatory attitude by the authorities against emerging non-governmental, independent media.

We can all agree that bringing about freedom of the media remains a process as long as it is steered along the democratic path.

In this sense, we are “gradualist”; we do not demand that a participating State adopt a particular system overnight. But we do have to be strict when participating States abandon or violate their own commitments, which are what make the Organization unique.

Your mandate stipulates that you can address a violation either by publicly denouncing it or through silent diplomacy. Which approach do you prefer?

I believe the right combination works best. We do try to determine whom we are trying to reach and use cautious judgment in deciding which route to take.

In letters offering my congratulations to newly elected Heads of State or Government, I seize the opportunity to remind them about the country’s commitments and any outstanding issues. We need to let politicians know at the outset that we are happy to co-operate with them and that we can help if they wish. These letters are made known to the governments only, as they are a strategic audience for us.

Later, however, if governments do not tackle their backlog of issues and if violations against freedom of the media continue, then going public can exert a powerful leverage in influencing the political process, civil society and the international community, especially in matters concerning reform, legislation and gross violations.

Increasingly, however, the issue seems to have become one of self-censorship, both to the east and to the west of Vienna. This must pose difficulties for your institution.

Behind most cases of self-censorship, one will find some kind of pressure. My mandate allows me to express criticism against any kind of pressure being exerted on journalists — whether it is harassment, violence or physical attacks. In some cases, I can also call for the law to be enforced.

However, there is a specific sort of self-censorship mentioned in chapter 6 of the mandate of the Representative on Freedom of the Media: This focuses on situations in which some journalists employ a certain type of language over-emphasizing a nationalist or patriotic cause. In fact, the only situation in which my mandate calls for me to directly intervene in matters dealing with journalistic content is when



Miklós Haraszti, Hungarian writer, journalist, human rights advocate, professor and parliamentarian, was appointed OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media in March 2004 and was reappointed in March 2007 for a second three-year term. He and his international 15-member team are based in Vienna.

Born in Jerusalem, he was a co-founder of the Hungarian Democratic Opposition Movement in 1976. In 1980 he became editor of *Beszédo*, a *samizdat* (underground) periodical. He was a participant in the 1989 roundtable negotiations on Hungary's efforts to launch free elections. Mr. Haraszti studied philosophy and literature at Budapest University and received an Honorary Degree from Northwestern University in the United States.

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Bishkek, 20 October 2006.
Miklós Haraszti exchanges views with students of the OSCE Academy.

States encourage journalists to engage in hate language.

The cartoon crisis of a few years ago led to clear cases of self-censorship among normally outspoken journalists and editors. How do you see this issue?

I don't draw any distinction between mercenaries paid to kill journalists who are investigating corruption and fanatics who set out to kill a cartoonist to obey a *fatwa*. The aim is the same: to silence individuals for what they are saying, writing or drawing.

Unfortunately, in the two cases I mentioned, the international community has been quite lenient and has not demonstrated enough robustness.

At the same time, let me also be clear about one thing: When it comes to calls for incitement to crime and violence, I consider it crucial for the law to be enforced and for perpetrators — including media professionals — to be made accountable and brought to justice.

On a related matter, any country wishing to uphold freedom of speech needs to lift its ban on content. I was pleased to see the British House of Lords finally abolishing its blasphemy laws in early March. This positive development was the result of a long and legitimate campaign by Muslim groups who rightly pointed to the practice of double standards. One cannot condemn a *fatwa* issued by a radical imam while maintaining blasphemy laws.

Finally, I agree with those who say that editors need to learn this new wisdom: that there is no such thing as a small newspaper in a remote Danish town. Not any more! The global village has long become a reality, starting with the advent of television but even more so through the Internet. The power of images also needs to be given thoughtful consideration: Pictures can be even more "global" than words.

What challenges lie ahead in the realm of freedom of the media and freedom of expression across the OSCE region?

Two years from now, after I complete my second term in office, my successor will be dealing with a rather different media landscape.

Today, the Internet is still seen as a helping device, supporting print and broadcast media. Soon, the reverse will be true: The few remaining publishing houses will mostly support Internet operations. Digital television and a multitude of platforms will lessen the impact of national television broadcasters. In fact, the term "local media" will no longer be accurate, and every piece of national legislation allocating frequencies, for example, will be challenged by alternative formats of distribution.

Which means that we will finally witness the emergence of genuine pluralism in the media?

Obviously, pluralism in the media, which underpins freedom of expression, will be enhanced, although the concept behind pluralism itself might suffer: On the one hand, the proliferation of blogs is already challenging the traditional notion of the way public opinion is shaped; on the other hand, there will still be a need to fight monopolies as the Internet becomes a lucrative platform and super-portals develop.

Clearly, the digital information age and modern technology are posing a challenge to traditional journalistic ethics, and standards of responsible information are becoming less clear.

However, any attempt to rein in the Internet is an exercise in futility because it knows no national boundaries. In the long run, only self-regulatory measures at the international level stand a chance of being effective.

When confrontation ends and co-operation begins

The media and the Government



BY ZOYA KAZANZHI

“It is like going on a trip to the land of fools.” This is how many journalists I meet in the former Soviet countries describe what it is like dealing with members of official press and public information services. Perhaps the remark is an emotional exaggeration, but I must say that most press secretaries and spokespersons in these countries do seem incapable of interacting constructively with representatives of the media. And, since the feeling is very much mutual, what ensues is not co-operation but an exchange of accusations of lack of professionalism.

This is unfortunate because these supposed adversaries actually should be looking in the same direction: towards informing people about events and decisions and enabling them to be positively engaged in their country’s development. The right to know is a fundamental

principle of a democratic society; it is not a concept that is pursued on a journalist’s whim.

As an ex-journalist and as the former spokesperson of the Central Electoral Commission of Ukraine, I am familiar with the view from both sides of the fence. Press officers continue to be hesitant about sharing information, as in the old days. It is almost as impossible to arrange a meeting with them as with the highest-ranking officials. As for journalists, they persist in seeking access to the most senior echelons of government, but often have no clue why.

Since 2005, this double dilemma has been the key concern in seminars organized by the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. As a trainer in at least ten of them so far, I am struck by the fact that, whether in Azerbaijan, Belarus or Kyrgyzstan, there is nothing to distinguish the list of grievances coming from either side of the information divide.

It never ceases to surprise me, at the start of each two-day event, how people who work in

Osh, Kyrgyzstan, March 2008. Journalists learn how to draw up a plan of action for the media coverage of a forthcoming event.
Photos: OSCE/Iliia Dohel



OSCE/ILIA DOHEL

Trainer Yevhen Hlibovytsky reviews the principles of journalism in Osh.



OSCE/ILIA DOHEL

Tbilisi, Georgia, March 2008. Trainer Zoya Kazanzhi (far right) emphasizes the highest professional standards.

the same trade have never crossed paths. At best, they would have spoken on the phone; half the time they would have come away with a negative impression.

When participants introduce themselves around the table, the feeling of mutual wariness is palpable. Journalists sit off to one side, press secretaries off to the other. After all, “aliens” do not feel at ease in the “enemy’s camp”.

My first task is to try to relieve the tension in the air and create a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. I encourage everyone to talk freely and openly, though this is obviously easier said than done: A journalist working for an official daily might “sanitize” the actual state of affairs to avoid any conflict with local authorities. A press secretary — inevitably, someone who is new at the job — might try and paint an idyllic picture of cozy camaraderie with members of the media.

This is why we tell participants that whatever they say will not go beyond the room’s closed doors. They realize we mean it when we ask them not to record any part of the sessions and

not to quote their counterparts in any of their publications. Everyone agrees to comply: Co-operation looks set to begin.

The list of complaints about press officers is endless, the most common being: The agencies and ministries they represent are extremely tight-lipped, and prying the simplest bit of information out of them is virtually impossible. State press services are slow to comment on accidents and other breaking news. Official press releases are poorly written. Experts are never available for comment. And to top it all off, official press operations seem to be paralyzed during emergencies.

Grievances against journalists are equally wide-ranging: They distort information and misinterpret facts. They are totally off the mark — or have scant familiarity with many issues. For them to gain a basic grasp of a particular topic, they almost need to take part in a special “literacy campaign”. They ignore the importance of research, and some refuse to settle for comments coming from anyone less than a top official.



OSCE/ILIA DOHEL

Trainers, journalists and press secretaries lighten up in Osh.



OSCE/ILIA DOHEL



OSCE/LIA DOHIEL

Oleg Panfilov, Director of the Moscow-based Centre for Journalism in Extreme Situations (right, standing), and Zoya Kazanzhi (above) regularly share their expertise and experience with journalists and press officers in the former Soviet countries.



OSCE/LIA DOHIEL

We write down the exchange of recriminations on the board and talk them through one by one, analysing solutions offered and seeking consensus. My goal is to go beyond imparting the positive aspects of the Western experience by encouraging participants to also learn how to come up with creative solutions. Through it all, the most important thing is to be polite and not to breach the principles of professional and personal ethics.

The seminar then breaks up into two separate groups: This is when we teach — or review — the techniques of journalism, focusing on practical exercises and emphasizing the highest professional standards. For press officers, we use management games simulating real-life situations aimed at demonstrating how the relationship with journalists is shaped and nurtured.

I should point out that many of us media trainers for the CIS region did not have any initial grounding in the democratic standards of journalism. Most of us studied at a Soviet-style *zhurfak* — a university's department of journalism — and, after the democratic changes of the late 1980s, pursued a long path of professional "re-education". So my fellow trainers and I know only too well how hard it is for today's journalists to adapt to modern practices and to shed ingrained propaganda-style methods.

At the same time, even with the best will in the world, press officers and spokespersons often confess to feeling at a loss about what precisely is expected of them. This is not surprising, given that these posts are relatively new and responsibilities are not well defined. At the seminars, press and public information officers often make it a point to tell us that life would be so much easier if participation in the same training sessions would be made mandatory for their

own bosses, usually heads of public agencies and institutions.

What remains after the training events? Most importantly, human contact. I often overhear participants exchanging parting words: "So you're the kind of people one can talk to after all!" "I will be calling you from now on!" "Drop in for a cup of coffee!"

Perhaps learning to listen and to slip into the other's skin is not such a great achievement in itself, but for our seminar participants, it marks the point when confrontation ends and co-operation begins.

Zoya Kazanzhi, from Odessa, Ukraine, is a graduate of Kiev State University. She has completed study programmes under the auspices of IREX ProMedia, the World Bank and the BBC. She is the co-author of a handbook for journalism teachers and media trainers.

More than 400 journalists and staff of State press operations have benefited from 15 seminars organized by the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media designed to improve media coverage of government affairs and enhance public trust in civil servants and in the media. So far, the programme has covered:

- Baku, **Azerbaijan**: 18-20 July 2005
- Sary-Oy, Issyk-Kul region, **Kyrgyzstan**: 7-8 September 2005
- Baku, **Azerbaijan**: 17-19 July 2006
- Sevastopol, Kharkiv, Donetsk and Odessa, **Ukraine**: throughout 2006
- Kokshetau, **Kazakhstan**: 8-9 September 2006
- Almaty, **Kazakhstan**: 24-25 November 2006
- Minsk, **Belarus**: 4-5 June 2007
- Lviv, **Ukraine**: 11 September 2007
- Yerevan, **Armenia**: 19-20 September 2007
- Dushanbe, **Tajikistan**: 11-12 December 2007
- Tbilisi, **Georgia**: 18-19 March 2008
- Osh, **Kyrgyzstan**: 26-27 March 2008
- Khujand, **Tajikistan**, 19-20 June 2008

The fight for online freedom

Tackling attempts to censor the Internet

BY GRAHAM PATTERSON

“The Net interprets censorship as damage and routes around it.”

This bold — not to say utopian — and often-quoted statement was made by Internet activist John Gilmore in 1993, when the World Wide Web was just beginning to take off.

In those early, heady days of the Web, the idea that freedom of expression was on the march was taken for granted. Governments that did not uphold the fundamental human right to speak and write freely, it was assumed, would be powerless against the creeping spread of those values via the Internet.

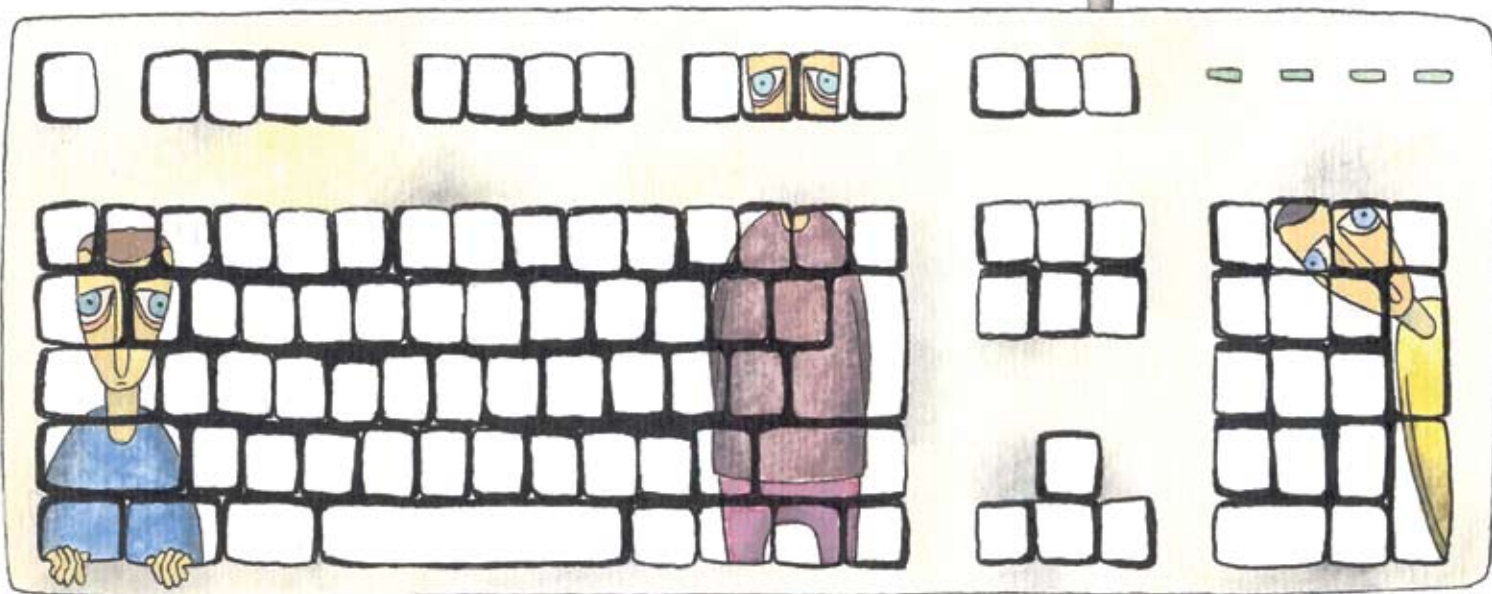


Illustration by Macej Michalski,
courtesy of Rafal Rohozinski,
The SecDev Group

But despite those early dreams, says Christian Möller, former Project Officer with the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the reality today is that Internet filtering and censorship are alive and well, both in the OSCE region and elsewhere.

“Internet filtering is a growing phenomenon both east and west of Vienna,” he says. “Established western democracies filter Internet content too. In Germany for example, one district ordered Internet service providers (ISPs) to filter out right-wing content. British Telecom initiated CleanFeed, a system that filters out a blacklist of sites to protect children from sexual content. Countries in Central Asia also engage in Internet filtering activity.”

Mr. Möller says that the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and his staff routinely scrutinize rules being drafted by States aimed at regulating the Internet. Currently, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine are engaged in drafting such legislation.

“Sometimes legislators think they are doing the right thing,” he says, “but since they don’t fully understand the technical complexities of the Internet, they end up unintentionally limiting freedom of choice by excessively filtering out or blocking content. For example, while blocking one piece of content that they consider undesirable or offensive, they can end up blocking a whole website or even a whole domain.”

Arnaud Amouroux, who has recently taken over Christian Möller’s Internet responsibilities in the OSCE Representative’s Office, cites the case of Turkey’s repeated blocking of YouTube.

Mr. Möller points to various studies showing that Internet filtering typically results in a combination of “over-blocking”, meaning that more content is blocked than intended and — at the same time — “under-effectiveness”, meaning that, since such measures can easily be circumvented by the average experienced Internet user, attempts at filtering can be self-defeating.

Nevertheless, he adds, the recent experiences of countries outside the OSCE region, such as Saudi Arabia or China, have shown that the Internet is by no means uncensorable. "We cannot rely on the Internet as a self-healing mechanism that can defeat censorship or filtering measures by itself. We need to actively promote and guarantee freedom of the media on the Internet."

With this in mind, the Representative's Office is working in partnership with the OpenNet Initiative, an academic network of information technology institutes from the Universities of Toronto, Cambridge and Oxford, and the Harvard Law School. The network is developing software and hardware tools that are capable of accurately assessing the degree of Internet filtering and censorship in specific countries, including OSCE participating States.

The project is all part of the efforts of the Representative on Freedom of the Media to remind governments that the benefits of the Internet far outweigh the dangers of abuse, and to assist them in fulfilling their OSCE commitments concerning the free flow of information.

"There is obviously illegal content too, but the challenge is to differentiate between material that is legitimately illegal everywhere, such as child pornography, and 'unwanted' content that governments may be trying to suppress for political reasons," says Arnaud Amouroux.

In some countries, the Internet is the only source of pluralistic and independent information. "There might be low penetration by the Internet in those countries, but it nevertheless has a great impact because it is the only source of independent information," he says.

In the final analysis, perhaps the best solution to counter 'bad content' is the one that Professor Frederick M. Lawrence of the George Washington University Law School proposed at an OSCE meeting in Warsaw in 2005: "The educated mind is the best filter imaginable."

Graham Patterson is a Web Editor in the OSCE Secretariat's Press and Public Information Section.

www.osce.org/fom

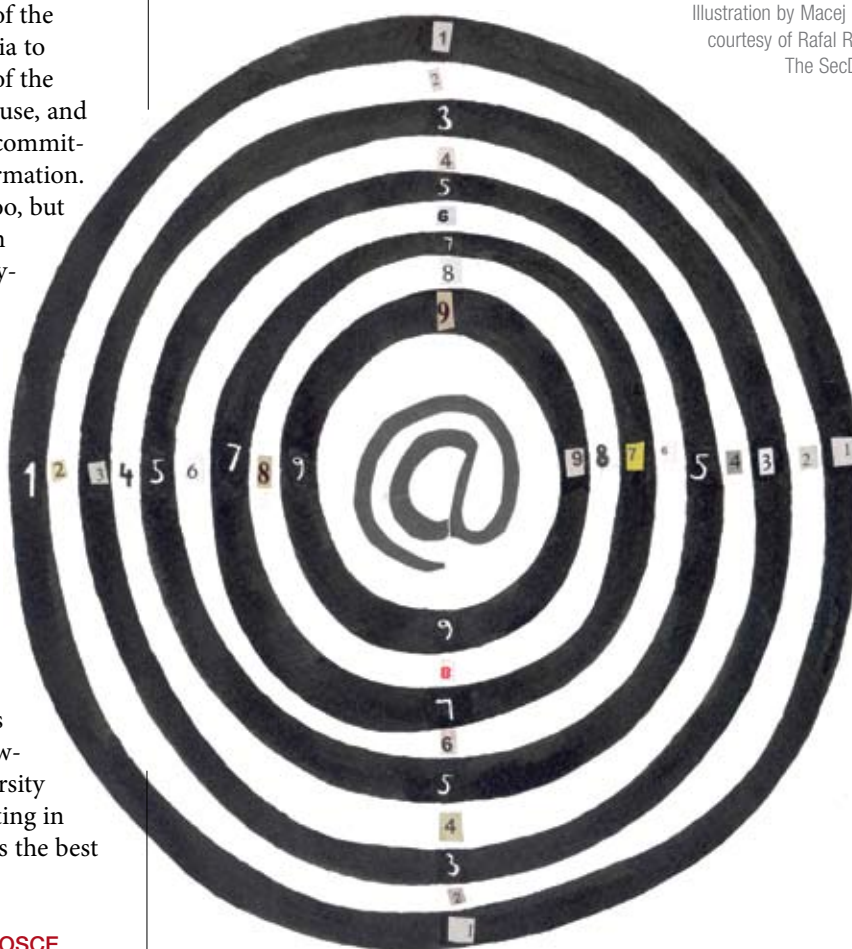
<http://opennet.net>

Efforts to filter or censor the flow of information on the Internet, or to use legislation to suppress content that some governments may consider undesirable, run counter to a number of CSCE/OSCE freedom of information commitments, dating back to the Helsinki Final Act.

In the concluding document of the Follow-up Meeting of the CSCE, held in Vienna in 1986-1989, it was noted that the participating States would "take every opportunity offered by modern means of communication, including cable and satellites, to increase the freer and wider dissemination of information of all kinds".

The Human Dimension Conference of the CSCE in Copenhagen in 1990 reaffirmed that "everyone will have the right to freedom of expression including the right to communication. This right will include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers."

Illustration by Macej Michalski,
courtesy of Rafal Rohozinski,
The SecDev Group



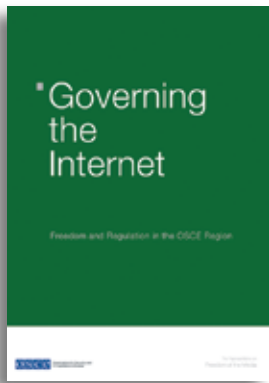
UN Internet Governance Forum: The way ahead?

The Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media is a joint founder of the "dynamic coalition" on freedom of expression and freedom of the media online. This is an informal structure within the framework of the United Nations Internet Governance Forum, which aims at putting issues related to the freedom of the media high on the international agenda. Other participants include Amnesty International, Reporters Without Borders and the Council of Europe.

Internet-related publications

www.osce.org/fom/publications

Since 2003, the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media has been issuing a series of publications highlighting good practices in the area of freedom of expression on the Internet.

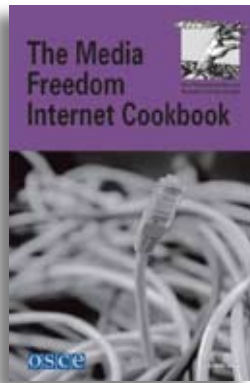


Governing the Internet: Freedom and Regulation in the OSCE Region

July 2007, 231 pages. Christian Möller and Arnaud Amouroux (editors)

Case studies across the OSCE region on how governments, civil society and the telecommunications industry can cooperate in Internet governance.

Source: Expert Workshop on Internet Governance in the OSCE region, hosted by the *Forum des droits sur l'Internet*, Paris, 15 December 2006

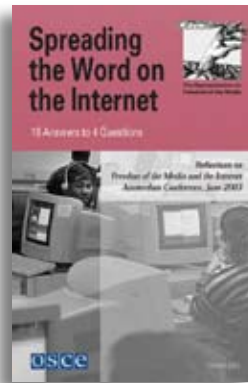


The Media Freedom Internet Cookbook

December 2004, 276 pages. Christian Möller and Arnaud Amouroux (editors)

Recommendations and best practices supplemented by expert papers on legislation and jurisdiction; self-regulation, co-regulation and State regulation; hate speech on the Internet; education and development of Internet literacy; access to networks and to information; and future challenges of the information society.

Source: OSCE Second Internet Conference in Amsterdam, 27-28 August 2004

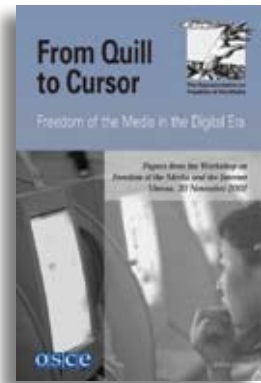


Spreading the Word on the Internet

September 2003, 226 pages. Christiane Hardy and Christian Möller (editors)

Articles on the situation regarding freedom of the media and the Internet in the OSCE region; regulation of decentralized networks; the technical and economic framework; freedom of the media on the Internet; and ensuring freedom of the media on the Internet in the OSCE region.

Source: OSCE First Internet Conference in Amsterdam, 13-14 June 2003



From Quill to Cursor: Freedom of the Media in the Digital Era

January 2003, 118 pages

Series of expert papers on the topic of freedom of the media in the digital era.

Source: Workshop on Freedom of the Media and the Internet, Vienna, 30 November 2002

Now available: The Media Self-Regulation Guidebook

April 2008, 100 pages. English, French and Russian. Edited by Adeline Hulín and Jon Smith. Published by Miklós Haraszti, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. Financed by the Governments of France, Germany and Ireland.

What should be the ethical guidelines in reporting on terrorism? What kinds of sanctions should a self-regulatory body use? What challenges does the Internet pose for the self-regulation of the media? What are the duties of a press council? What criteria should be used in recruiting an ombudsman?

These questions — and more — are answered clearly and concisely by renowned experts and practitioners in *The Media Self-Regulation Guidebook*, the latest publication of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

The *Guidebook* explains the merits of media self-regulation and how to go about establishing a journalists' code of ethics, self-regulatory bodies, a press council and the post of ombudsman. Case studies describe how self-regulatory bodies have resolved complaints ranging from breach of privacy to inaccuracy on a website.

Presenting the publication at the Eurasia Regional Forum for Media Development in Paris in mid-April, OSCE media watchdog Miklós Haraszti said, "I hope that this practical product will encourage the development of self-regulation mechanisms for the media, boost the quality and standards of journalism, and thus help improve media freedom."

He warned, however, that self-restraint by journalists must be preceded and accompanied by self-restraint on the part of governments when dealing with media matters. This is why the target audience of the *Guidebook* includes not only journalists, editors, publishers, and students of the media, but also government officials.



Paris, 17 April. The *Media Self-Regulation Guidebook* was launched at the Eurasia Regional Forum for Media Development, which brought together 130 participants.

Closure and completion

Mission to Croatia, 1996-2007



OSCE/IVOR BRICKETT

BY TODD BECKER

When I was asked to become Senior Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission to Croatia in September 2000, I was told that the Mission would be closing down, probably within a year, maybe in nine months. By the time I left Zagreb, almost eight years later, a small OSCE presence still remained, wrapping up the last issues. So much for crystal ball gazing!

Closing the Mission, as it turned out, involved much more than getting the Government to sign up to a whole series of commitments and agreements. These needed to be implemented — which in turn required preparation of Croatia's

laws, institutions and practices and a reshaping of how Croatians would go about building a transparent, democratic society based on the rule of law.

For some reason, delegations and capitals thought that this could be done overnight. Those of us in the field, Croatian and international staff alike, know from hard experience that such changes involve complex processes, and processes by definition take time. I had the pleasure and the honour to be able to support Croatia and its citizens at this crucial time in its history.

Initially, when I started work under then Head of Mission Bernard Poncet, I soon discovered that the Mission and the Government were

Rnjak, south of Karlovac. Mirko L. (shown above in 2006) and his family are now enjoying the comforts of their restored house. With the help of the OSCE field office in Karlovac, they managed to secure funding for reconstruction from the State.



OSCE/CHRISTA E. KALINSKI-BECKER

Zagreb, 8 December 2007. Prime Minister Ivo Sanader (right) confers the Croatian Helsinki Committee Human Rights Award on Ambassador Becker (left) for having “consistently worked as an official, for seven full years, on the protection of human rights in Croatia”.

at loggerheads over what exactly had to be done. It took time to build trust between the “outsiders” — as most Croatians perceived us — and the Government, which wanted to do it all by itself, although it didn’t always appreciate what “it” involved.

Months of quiet discussions with reform-minded officials in the Foreign Ministry and in the Prime Minister’s office, with strong support from the Belgian and Spanish EU presidencies, the UN Office and one key bilateral embassy in Zagreb, helped the Mission to prepare a document defining six areas in which both the Government and the Mission felt they *could* and *should* take joint action.

That was at the end of 2001. At that point, the Mission had about 500 national and 128 international staff in some 15 locations.

From that moment on, there was no turning back progress towards fulfilling the mandate, which, though slow at first, and halting at times, was steady in any case. Only then did the Mission actually start “closing.” First we consolidated OSCE sub-offices and field offices and terminated activities as soon as tasks were completed. Then we reduced staff and, on my recommendation, began promoting national professionals to assume greater responsibility in the Mission’s work.

Under Peter Semneby, Head of Mission from 2002 to 2005, we developed a results-oriented action plan to meet our goals. This proved invaluable in winning over the Government’s future leaders to the Mission’s ideas.

Following the parliamentary elections in 2003, co-operation between the Government and the Mission was transformed into an active “partnership”. The “way of thinking” that I felt had been inadequate in 2000 had begun to change. Each year, at the hearings in Vienna on our status report and on the budget, the Head of Mission and I could point to satisfactory progress in implementing our mandate. The “downsizing”, which was really the ongoing process towards

closing, was reflected in less money for fewer staff and fewer offices.

With the coming of the present Head of Mission, Jorge Fuentes, in mid-2005, the partnership became institutionalized. The organized, systematic process of problem-solving that we had proposed to the Government in late 2001 had become a reality. The Mission’s doors were opened to the country’s main political personalities, with the President and the Prime Minister participating in the morning meetings with OSCE staff.

In parallel, the Mission and the Government set up a political consultative mechanism involving the Prime Minister and — in monthly meetings — the Foreign Minister, the Justice Minister and the minister responsible for refugee return. In 2006, the work of the “Platform”, as the mechanism came to be known, led to the completion of the electoral, media, police and civil society aspects of the Mission’s mandate and significantly reduced our tasks related to the return and integration of refugees and the rule of law.

All these developments made possible the formal closure of the Mission at the end of 2007, and the creation of an “OSCE Office in Zagreb” in 2008 to deal with remaining issues concerning refugee housing and the monitoring of war crimes trials. But reaching this positive turning point had required time — time for the Government and the OSCE to better understand and appreciate each other’s needs and perspectives, time for the political climate to develop, and time for the democratic process to bring about improved laws and procedures and new institutions necessary to achieve the shared objectives of the Government and the OSCE.

Winding up the Mission to Croatia, I have found, has not been about “closing”, but about “completing”. As the country approached the completion of the tasks it had set out to perform, so also did the Mission move forward towards the completion of its role.

When I left Zagreb in January 2008, the Office still had important work to do. I have no doubt, however, that if both the OSCE and the Government continue to work as diligently as they have in the past, the rest of the issues on their joint agenda can be resolved to their mutual satisfaction. Only then can the job of the OSCE in Croatia be said to have been successfully completed.

Ambassador Todd Becker served as a United States diplomat for 34 years before being seconded to the OSCE Mission in 2000. He is currently on a short-term assignment at the office of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. He plans to teach at and work with conflict resolution organizations in the United States.

Moving on

Knin: A microcosm of the OSCE's challenges in Croatia

BY MOMIR VUKMIROVIĆ

I can't think of a better way to trace the 12-year history of the OSCE in Croatia than to focus on my old hometown, Knin, host to one of the Organization's 17 field operations in the country at the peak of its activities in the late 1990s. Along with Vukovar and Sisak, the office in Knin also served as a key regional centre until 2004, which involved co-ordinating several other smaller offices.

Like it or not, despite its picturesque beauty, Knin will forever serve as a haunting reminder of my country's tragic past. A small, charming town in the Dalmatian hinterland close to the Bosnian border some 50 kilometres from the coast, it was the administrative centre and capital of the rebellious, self-proclaimed "Republika Srpska Krajina" from 1991 to 1995.

Serbs used to make up 90 per cent of Knin's 40,000 inhabitants. Today, the proportion of Serbs is 20 per cent, and the remaining 80 per cent are Croats. About 70 per cent of the Croats are refugees from Bosnia's own conflict next door or were displaced from other parts of Croatia, while 10 per cent are Croat returnees.

When the OSCE opened a field centre in Knin in 1996, shortly after the Mission opened its headquarters in Zagreb early in the year, the resettlement process was in full swing. In a few years, I would be part of these efforts and would join the most significant and visible international organization in town.

One of our main responsibilities was to help local authorities to foster conditions that would ease the repatriation of former Serb residents. This involved the complex issue of restitution of Serb-owned properties that were occupied by refugees and returnees, most of them Bosnian Croats. Not surprisingly, neither the townspeople nor the local officials welcomed the OSCE's efforts to return about a thousand private residences to their rightful owners. In fact, the officials simply refused any contact with the OSCE.

We also encountered a world of difference in the way authorities approached the implementation of the OSCE's mandate: Those from the central government were willing to proceed rapidly, while their local or regional counterparts often appeared to drag their feet.

This left us with no choice but to devote most of our initial energies to building a positive relationship with our hosts and to laying the most fundamental groundwork on which to proceed. For quite some time, monitoring and reporting on the human rights situation in Knin were the only major activities we could carry out.



To help feed his family, Slaven K. grows fruit and vegetables in their backyard in Knin. The family returned from Serbia a few years ago.
Photo: OSCE/Ivor Prickett

But other constraints stood in our way as well, some of which were of our own making. OSCE officers would often neglect, or would forget, an essential principle in monitoring work — that is, publicly welcoming positive developments and giving credit where credit is due.

The successful repossession of one house, for example, or the reintroduction of electricity to one hamlet were often deemed to be too insignificant to earn even a passing acknowledgement to our local partners. Far from valuing these triumphs, no matter how seemingly modest, we would assess everything with a critical eye.

Eventually, we did learn. As soon as we stopped being judgmental towards local officials, their unco-operative attitude started changing too, and our relationship improved — slowly at first, but at an increasing tempo. This was obviously a missing link that was necessary to enable us to make a much-needed contribution to our mandate.

Reforms in the media and police sectors were the first to register progress. Eventually, local officials also came around to the view that there was merit in having civil society on their side; they started financing a well-established network of NGOs to draw them closer as partners in governance.

Armed with new legislation supporting the resettlement of refugees and displaced persons, the work of the Government Regional Offices for Returnees and Refugees was set in motion. This improved the situation of minority groups. In fact, I recall that, in early 2006, a Serb was elected third deputy mayor in a town that had been completely abandoned by the Serbs just ten years earlier.

As our work in Knin entered its final phase, we found it interesting to get varying reactions. While most of the minority returnees and legal and human rights NGOs wanted us to stay on, politicians considered our impending departure to be the logical result of our mutual

co-operation and it was therefore a source of pride and satisfaction.

Because of the spirit of partnership that had been patiently forged on both sides, the actual closing of the Field Office in Knin, on 31 December 2007, turned out to be a pleasant event, with the Mayor and other officials publicly expressing appreciation for the OSCE's crucial role in the town's healing and reconciliation.

And what of the OSCE Mission's greatest resource — its national and international staff? Some moved on to other OSCE missions and other international organizations, while others simply decided the time was right to return home. Most of the Croatian staff — Serb and Croat alike — have chosen to continue making a contribution right in their own country and are gainfully employed in various sectors.

Wherever we are, we can all be secure in the knowledge that we have helped Croatia's cities, towns and villages become better places to live in, where respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law reign supreme, and where the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security has helped the country edge closer to becoming the 28th member State of the European Union.

Born in Knin, Momir Vukmirović joined the OSCE in 1999, and served as Head of the Field Office in Knin from 2005 until its closure in 2007. As a National Programme Officer in the OSCE Office in Zagreb, he is now responsible for reporting on the progress of the housing care programme for former tenancy right holders.



OSCE/DORJAN KLJASNIC



OSCE/DORJAN KLJASNIC

OSCE Office in Zagreb

Ambassador Jorge Fuentes (centre left), Head of the OSCE Office in Zagreb, and Enrique Horcajada, Head of the Executive Unit, with some of the 34-member team (nine international and 25 national personnel). The Office comprises two operational units that work on outstanding issues related to the prosecution of war crimes and housing care programmes.

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2008 FINNISH CHAIRMANSHIP

“And then there were five”

First Chairmanship “Quintet” sets its sights high

BY **SONYA YEE AND PATRICIA N. SUTTER**

As the birthplace of the OSCE, Helsinki served as a fitting backdrop for discussions on the way forward for the Organization, mid-way through Finland’s Chairmanship. On 1 and 2 June, Foreign Ministers and special envoys of the five countries holding the rotating OSCE Chairmanship from 2007 to 2011 came together as the “Quintet” for the first time, at the invitation of the Chairman-in-Office, Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb.

At the meeting of the Ministerial Council in Madrid in November 2007, the 56 participating States had agreed that, following Finland’s term in 2008, Greece would hold the OSCE Chairmanship in 2009, Kazakhstan in 2010 and Lithuania in 2011. The decision marked the first instance in the history of the OSCE of its leadership being officially set four years in advance.

“Finland wanted to seize this unique window of opportunity and convene the first-ever Quintet of Chairmanships, with the aim of bringing about more co-ordination, coherence and continuity in the work of the OSCE,” said Minister Stubb. “We’re trying to create something new here. It could be a way of defining more specific tasks for the Organization.”

Taking part in the meeting were Kazakh Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Petras Vaitiekunas, Secretary of State Ángel Lossada representing the 2007 Spanish

Chairmanship, and Special Envoy Christos Zacharakis representing the incoming Greek Chairmanship.

OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut and Special Representative for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Eva Biaudet presented an overview of the latest developments in the Organization’s activities. Goran Lennmarker, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, also attended the meeting at the invitation of the Chairman-in-Office.

The informal gathering began with a relaxed dinner at the Sundmans Krog restaurant on Helsinki’s harbour front. After greeting his guests, Foreign Minister Stubb launched a discussion on shared priority areas, ranging from the fight against intolerance and discrimination to the OSCE’s engagement with Afghanistan.

Welcoming the group the following day, Finnish President Tarja Halonen underscored the significance of the Organization’s comprehensive approach to security and its inclusiveness and the need to address the plight of the Roma population in the OSCE area.

Indeed, during the discussions, the Quintet reaffirmed their commitment to the comprehensive approach, which gives weight to three distinct fields of activity: strengthening politico-military co-operation, fostering better economic and environmental governance, and supporting human rights and democratic institutions.

Helsinki, 2 June 2008.

Left to right: Secretary of State Ángel Lossada representing the Spanish Chairmanship, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Petras Vaitiekunas, Chairman-in-Office and Finnish Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb, Kazakh Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin and Special Envoy Christos Zacharakis representing the Greek Chairmanship.

Photo: Finnish Foreign Ministry/Petri Krook



Helsinki, 2 June. The flags of Spain, Greece, Finland, Kazakhstan and Lithuania (left to right) are displayed at an informal meeting of representatives of the OSCE "Quintet".

The Quintet agreed on the importance of multi-year planning to strengthen coherence in the Organization's activities. Priority areas included the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan, border security and management, combating terrorism, small arms and light weapons and conventional ammunition stockpiles, tolerance and non-discrimination, gender, economic and environmental challenges, combating trafficking in human beings, and strengthening the dialogue with the Partners for Co-operation.

The Quintet also stressed the Organization's vital role in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, and pledged to intensify efforts to settle the protracted conflicts in the OSCE area.

By the time the Quintet talks ended in the splendid surroundings of the nineteenth-century Government Banquet Hall on Helsinki's Esplanade, it was clear to all five parties that the new format was an invaluable tool. They will continue discussions on the sidelines of the meeting of the Ministerial Council in Helsinki on 4 and 5 December.

"We think that this instrument *will* and *can* continue in the years to come," said Spanish Secretary of State Ángel Lossada, noting that priority tasks such as combating terrorism and promoting gender issues were not meant to be tackled under a single Chairmanship. "We're very proud of the fact that the Ministerial decision [on the series of Chairmanships] was taken in Madrid."

Calling the long-term collaboration of five Chairmanships "unprecedented", Kazakh Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin said the Finnish initiative was in keeping with the spirit of the OSCE and came at a crucial time in its history. The time had come to find "new ways and new mechanisms" to deal with its "well-known problems".

Still, Minister Tazhin said, "change and possibilities" were there, as in the case of the

OSCE's work — now under way — in border management matters related to Afghanistan and its neighbours, and beyond. After all, he said, although "it's a very long way to Afghanistan from Helsinki", issues such as drug-trafficking posed serious problems for Europe too.

At a news conference, the Chairman-in-Office said that the meeting's positive and constructive outcome was encouraging and that the participating States, through the work of the Quintet, could issue a political declaration at the Ministerial Council meeting in Helsinki. The last one was issued in Porto at the end of the Portuguese Chairmanship in 2002; since then, efforts by succeeding Chairmanships to come up with a declaration have failed because of a lack of consensus among participating States.

A Helsinki declaration was an ambitious goal, Minister Stubb said, but the Quintet was sufficiently spread out geographically to make a division of tasks possible. Besides, he added, "The time is ripe for the OSCE to create solutions that can develop the Organization's activities considerably." He noted that power had recently changed hands, or would soon change hands, in many important OSCE participating States.

A few hours after the Quintet's meeting with the press, Alexander Stubb, who has been Foreign Minister only since April, left for Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on a Central Asian tour that would also take him to Tashkent in Uzbekistan and Ashgabad in Turkmenistan — to be followed by a visit to the Kyrgyz and Kazakh capitals in July.

"This shows you the diversity of the OSCE area and its tasks," he said, "and that the Chairmanship is trying to cover as much ground as possible."

Sonya Yee is Press and Public Information Officer in the OSCE Secretariat. Patricia N. Sutter is Editor of the OSCE Magazine.

Meet Finnish Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb

Since 4 April 2008: Foreign Minister of Finland

2004-March 2008: Member of the European Parliament

2003-2004: Counsellor, Finnish Permanent Representation to the EU, Brussels

2001-2003: Adviser to the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, and member of the Commission Task Force on the Convention, Brussels

2000: Professor at the College of Europe, Bruges

1999-2001: Counsellor, Finnish Permanent Representation to the EU, Brussels

1997-1998: Researcher for the Finnish Academy, at the London School of Economics

1997: Columnist for various publications

1995-1997: Adviser, Foreign Ministry

Foreign Minister Stubb is a graduate of the London School of Economics (Doctor of Philosophy, 1999), College of Europe, Bruges (Master of Arts, 1994) and Furman University, South Carolina, USA (Bachelor of Arts, 1993). He holds a *Diplôme de Langue et Civilisation Française* from the Sorbonne University in Paris (1995). He has published nine books and numerous academic articles on the EU.



Modelling the OSCE for a robust “Helsinki Generation”

BY ANNE MARTE AMBLE

“Democracy is not a given. We need to shape it.”
— A participant in the Model OSCE

The United States is gearing up to play Armenia, which in turn is looking forward to playing Austria. The Russian Federation will play the part of Norway, which will act as Tajikistan. And, in a unique twist of fate, Canada and Kazakhstan will find out what it is like to step into each other’s shoes.

These are just some of the interesting country roles that have been officially assigned to 110 students from 30 OSCE participating States when they converge on Vienna from 5 to 7 July for the first-ever Model OSCE Conference.

The roles were decided through a drawing of lots by ambassadors and representatives of 30 OSCE delegations, hosted by Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut at the Hofburg in mid-May.

Agitania, Tramanstan, Tristan, Thule and Kalovina — fictional OSCE participating States — will share centre stage, making a total of 35 countries to be represented by teams of three students each.

“For some time now, the OSCE has been keen to impart its values of dialogue and consensus-building to young people in a setting that is as authentic as possible,” says Virginie Coulloudon, Deputy Spokesperson in the Secretariat. “Now, we’re finally making it happen. This is thanks to 30 enthusiastic national delegations and a network of volunteers in the Secretariat, field operations and OSCE institutions, with the co-ordination of the Press and Public Information Section.”

The participants, who range from 16 to 20 years of age, were born at about the same time as many of the OSCE participating States, following the fall of the Berlin Wall. They will explore creative solutions by carefully negotiating their way through three realistically tense crisis situations: combating terrorists’ use of the Internet, managing shared water resources, and safeguarding Roma-Sinti children from falling prey to traffickers.

To test their negotiating skills and familiarize themselves with the OSCE before the July event, potential participants played out three scenarios earlier this year right in their own classrooms. Some 70 schools all across the OSCE area, from Reykjavik in

Iceland to Kurgantepa in Tajikistan, immersed themselves in conflict prevention and conflict resolution exercises focusing on stemming the smuggling of small arms and light weapons, cleaning up an oil spill, and protecting freedom of the media and minority rights.

“Seeking consensus in the three areas was fascinating and gave us an insight into the tools we need to apply towards our country’s formation — or rather, transformation,” said a student in Armenia. “If everyone at the Model OSCE Conference approached issues in the same co-operative spirit, we stand a better chance of shaping a more democratic world.”

“The role-playing made us realize the complexity of negotiations between two countries with diverging interests,” said students from Sciences Po, the political sciences institute in Paris. “It also left us with a first impression of the challenges that the OSCE and its field operations are tackling.”

Looking forward to his role at the negotiating table in Vienna, a student from Kyrgyzstan said, “Meeting young people from many countries will surely broaden my vision of the world and help me discover what values we share. I hope to gain new insights and put them into practice right here at home.”

Each of the 30 participating delegations was actively involved in creating the detailed scenarios that will be acted out. Austria, Finland, France, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States have provided financial support for the ground-breaking initiative.

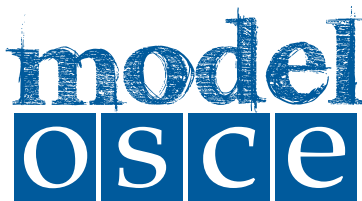
After what will probably be tough and delicate negotiations around the table, along the corridors and in the

café areas at the Hofburg, the Model OSCE Conference will culminate in a simulated meeting of the Permanent Council on 7 July.

“That will have been exactly 35 years to the day after 35 countries concluded the first stage of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Helsinki, on 7 July 1973,” says Virginie Coulloudon. “It’s a remarkable coincidence and a good omen for the new Helsinki Generation.”

www.modelosce.org

Anne Marte Amble serves as a consultant to the Model OSCE project.



Hofburg, 13 May. At a drawing of lots, Dutch Ambassador Ida van Veldhuizen-Rothenbücher discovers that the Netherlands — to be played by Serbia — will take on the role of Turkey at the Model OSCE Conference.



Hofburg, 15 February. Micky Kroell and Finnish Ambassador Antti Turunen announce the lucky tombola winners of the OSCE Charity Ball. This year, the Finnish Chairmanship offered attractive prizes ranging from Nokia mobile phones to Silja Line and Viking Line cruises and a Vienna-Helsinki round trip on Finnair.

Ball photos courtesy of *Fotoatelier Doris Kucera*.
www.doriskucera.at

Dancing and diplomacy for a worthy cause

BY PATRICIA N. SUTTER

For most staff of the OSCE and national delegations, the annual OSCE Ball is all about waltzing in swirling ball gowns and smart dinner jackets, and, for one night at least, partaking in the glamour of a traditional Viennese Ball. Yet unbeknownst to many, the event touches the lives of those less fortunate throughout the OSCE region.

“Initially, we were donating proceeds from the sales of ball tickets to Austrian charities,” says Micky Kroell, a staff member in Conference Services. “It must have been around 1996 when we thought, why not support small projects in OSCE countries where our own colleagues in the field can advise us on where the needs are the greatest and can also assure us that the money is well spent?”

Ms. Kroell has been organizing the ball, held at the Hofburg’s sumptuously ornate imperial rooms since 1994, a year before the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe was transformed into the OSCE.

“At that time, some 500 guests attended; this year, we had double that number,” she says. “Compared with the other society goings-on in Vienna during its festive ball season, ours is a small, low-key and cozy affair — but that’s part of its charm.”

Some 17 OSCE Balls later, 14 of which she has co-ordinated, Ms. Kroell thought that it was about time that the annual tradition, held on 15 February this year, be officially called “The OSCE Charity Ball”. “This makes it easier to obtain sponsorships,” she says. Faithful sponsors include the Hofburg Congress Centre, Hotel InterContinental Vienna and Roemerquelle.

The OSCE Ball in 2007 featured the *Ladies Orchestra*.



Welcoming guests at this year's event, Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut reminded them that the annual ball had raised a total of about €230,000 so far, with most of it going to the most vulnerable across the OSCE area, including those suffering from particularly harsh winters.

The choice of which field activities to support is far from haphazard, explains Sean McGreevy in the Secretariat's Programming and Evaluation Support Unit, which oversees the charity requests.

"Once the proceeds of each Charity Ball are counted, the Secretary General selects special themes or causes he feels deserve support," he says. "The Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre then invites OSCE field operations to submit proposals. There are no set selection criteria, but we do look for activities that are small-scale, have a strong humanitarian aspect and are distinctive from the Organization's day-to-day work."

The goal in most years is to help as many worthy causes as possible, so applications entailing no more than €5,000 in expenditures are encouraged.

In 2006, the Secretary General sent out a call for projects focusing on the fight against trafficking. Previous years included donations to benefit relief efforts related to the earthquake in Tbilisi, the Beslan school tragedy and the Asian tsunami, which affected Thailand, an Asian Partner for Co-operation.

The selection process and administrative procedures are as unbureaucratic as possible. Funds are disbursed through OSCE field operations directly to the selected projects. "All we require are no-nonsense reports on their overall impact," says Mr. McGreevy.

Last year, every field operation that submitted proposals received funding for at least one project each, for a total of nearly €70,000. Beneficiaries ranged from abandoned babies in Albania and homeless people in Bishkek, to schoolchildren in the Georgian-South Ossetian zone of conflict and disabled young people in Uzbekistan.

"The help may seem like a drop in the bucket, but you'll be surprised at how far the money goes," says an OSCE officer in Skopje whose proposal, focusing on street children, was approved.

The projects described in the following pages reveal that the home-grown initiatives that the OSCE Ball favours usually operate on a shoestring budget and are run professionally by local NGOs, civic groups and volunteers, with an eye towards sustainability.

The Hofburg's *Festsaal*. Flowers from Salerno, courtesy of the Italian Delegation, added a special touch in every room.



A hotline to life

Breaking the silence on family violence

Since opening its doors in Chisinau to victims of domestic violence in 2004, Refugiul Casa Marioarei — “Little Mary’s House” — has been serving as a temporary haven and providing a wide range of assistance to hundreds of Moldovan women and children. It has also counselled many of the aggressors, who are usually men, and has helped them seek drug or alcohol rehabilitation.

But Moldova’s only existing domestic violence shelter was sorely lacking a vital tool that it needed to expand its outreach: a telephone service offering professional emergency information, referral services and confidential counselling.

Thanks to a donation of close to €4,000 from the proceeds of the OSCE Ball, Casa Marioarei got its wish. On 14 September 2006, the NGO started the country’s first domestic violence hotline, available 24 hours a day throughout the year. The launching ceremony was especially significant, as it coincided with the first death anniversary of Antonina Lucinschi, founder of the shelter and wife of former President Petru Lucinschi, who came especially for the occasion.

The nationwide hotline has since answered over 800 calls, mostly from women in urban areas. “The desperate cries for help concerned a combination of emotional and physical aggression from a spouse or a partner,” says Tatiana Tofan, who was the first director of Casa Marioarei’s hotline programme.

The unexpected infusion of funds went towards purchasing and installing telephone and office equipment, a campaign promoting the hotline and a round-table discussion to analyse the impact of the hotline. A four-member team, including two psychologists, was formed. Eventually, additional permanent staff will have to be hired and volunteers will have to be trained.

“For a person caught up in the vicious cycle of family violence, dialling the hotline number is a crucial first step. The victim admits that what is being experienced is not normal,” says Ms. Tofan. “After we provide emergency counselling on the phone, we encourage callers to take advantage of our psychological, medical and legal services. Victims can also choose to stay in the shelter for up to 30 days. We have 25 beds for women and their children with all the amenities.”

According to a Moldova-wide survey in 2005, about 40 per cent of women between the ages of 16

Promotional poster:
“If you feel scared in your home, if your partner beats you, threatens you, harasses you physically or emotionally, injures your children, call the Hotline for help.”



and 35 have reported being a victim of abuse or of a violent act at home at least once. Many believe this estimate to be deceptively low.

Judith Hale, the OSCE Mission’s Anti-Trafficking and Gender Adviser, attributes this mindset to traditionally hierarchical structures, with every person assigned a subordinate or a dominant position. Poverty and unemployment aggravate the situation, leaving victims with no choice but to stay put.

Fortunately, large segments of society are beginning to wake up to the existence of domestic violence and to realize that it *is* a serious problem.

With the help of government authorities and a number of international partners, including the OSCE, Casa Marioarei is leading the way — helping victims to recover from their pain and suffering, regain their self-esteem, overcome their fear and shame, and discover their potential to make a fresh start.

Tatiana Tofan is ecstatic that the shelter has again received a donation from the OSCE Ball this year. “Starting this summer, we plan to make the hotline toll-free and we hope we can continue operating it far into the future,” she says.

In March 2008, Moldova entered a promising new era when President Vladimir Voronin signed a law laying out an ambitious framework designed to help Moldova’s families address the complex issues surrounding domestic violence. For the first time, the issue is legally defined. The law makes clear that violence against women is a criminal offence and that perpetrators will be held to account.

“Casa Marioarei represents one small step towards making Moldovan families feel safe and secure in their own homes,” says Judith Hale. “In Moldova, as in many countries, there is a strong link between trafficking and domestic violence, so the shelter’s initiatives are a perfect fit with the OSCE Mission’s anti-trafficking and gender activities.”

With reporting from Antonia De Meo, former Senior Anti-Trafficking and Human Rights Officer, Mission to Moldova.

The Brakja Ramiz Hamid School Music Band performs at an event for OSCE donors.



Making music is popular morale-booster in Roma school

Mako, 13, has a confession to make. “My friends and I meet almost every day to make beautiful sounds together. It’s the main reason I come to school,” she says. “I plan to practise really hard and when I grow up, who knows, I might be able to make a living through music.”

Ilmi, 14, adds: “Many people in this country don’t know too much about the Roma community. We’re very proud of our music and the role it plays in our lives. Through it, we hope that we will be better understood.”

“I have a mandolin, but it is missing two strings; it should have eight and it has only six,” volunteers Nadire, 12. “I have learned a lot from our music teacher and am keen to play even better.”

She is referring to Samir Mehmed who is a graduate in classical music from the Skopje Music Academy and has devoted the past decade to teaching music at the Brakja Ramiz Hamid Elementary School in the municipality of Shuto Orizari.

When he is not in the classroom, Mr. Mehmed shifts his full attention to the school orchestra and its 30 members — 15 girls and 15 boys between the ages of 10 and 15. Amidst the school’s broken windows, decaying walls and floors, and sparse teaching materials, his music classes and the award-winning orchestra serve as a beacon of hope for the school’s 2,000 students, inspiring them to believe in themselves.

“So many other children would take up music and join the group if only they could, but unfortunately we don’t have enough instruments,” says Mr. Mehmed. “The instruments have to be shared, and besides, most of them are ageing and need repair and maintenance.”

Mako, Ilmi and Nadire are among the lucky ones. They have been able to continue their music lessons because of a brand-new set of instruments — an acoustic bass guitar, a synthesizer and three mandolins — purchased with a contribution of €1,000 out of the proceeds of the OSCE Ball.

Shuto Orizari, on the outskirts of Skopje, is home to perhaps the world’s largest concentration of Roma and holds the distinction of being the world’s sole municipality to be governed by a Roma Council. More than 66 per cent of the estimated population of 22,000 are Roma, some of them refugees from the Kosovo conflict.

Recently, another €1,000 from the OSCE Ball benefited a second project for Roma in Skopje, also focusing on education, which undoubtedly holds the key to uplifting the community and integrating it into the mainstream of society. This time around, the money will go towards teaching reading, writing and mathematics to 60 children between the ages of 7 and 15, who are at risk of dropping out of school. The activity is part of the broader efforts of Skopje’s Topaana settlement to improve its lot, in co-operation with Sumnal, a local Roma NGO, and the OSCE Mission to Skopje.

With reporting from the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje: Senior Project Officer Giuseppina Grillo and Programme Assistant Kalina Lakinska.

Babushkas wait patiently to collect their monthly subsidies sent in by sponsors from Europe, the United States and Kyrgyzstan itself.



OSCE/PETER VAN DER PUTTEN

Lonely *babushkas*

The comfort of strangers

BY AZAMAT ABABAKIROV

It's an all-too-familiar story by now, but rarely is it given a human face: In Kyrgyzstan, as in many ex-Soviet States, the post-independence transition years are proving economically and socially dire for the most vulnerable groups of the population.

Among the most neglected are the country's older citizens, many of whom are ailing and have no family network to fall back on. Most of them are women. Having worked hard all their lives, they now find themselves subsisting on monthly pensions of about 1,000 soms (\$26), or less than a dollar a day.

Not a moment too soon, the Babushka Adoption Foundation, an NGO, was founded by Markus Mueller in 1999, a few years before his stint as Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek from late 2003 to early 2008.

"The idea was to find individuals who were willing to donate \$10 a month towards meeting the basic needs of a selected *babushka* (grandmother) or *dedushka* (grandfather)," says Ambassador Mueller, who was an official with the Swiss

Agency for Development and Co-operation at the time.

"The Foundation started with eight *babushkas* and two employees. And now, I'm told, nearly 750 individuals from all over the world, led by Switzerland and Denmark, sponsor more than a thousand elderly people in Bishkek and the southern oblast of Batken, the country's most remote and least developed region. Over the past nine years, the Foundation has distributed about \$500,000 from donors to the most vulnerable."

And the administrative team has expanded to 15, most of them social workers who actively seek out and identify the neediest pensioners and who run errands and do household chores for them. They also provide psycho-social support, though this is not meant to replace the work of Kyrgyz social welfare institutions.

Vera Wolfe, a 76-year-old *babushka*, thought she was terminally ill and was expecting to undergo at least three surgical procedures.

"I weighed only 38 kilos and could barely walk," she says. "I had no other source of income apart from my meagre pension. My

Beneficiaries of the Adoption Foundation include a few *dedushkas* (grandfathers).

grandchildren had abandoned me for better job opportunities in the far east of Russia. Then I heard about how Babushka Adoption helps people like me cope during these difficult times. Thanks to the additional monthly allowance from my sponsor, I can afford healthier food and pay for medicine and other incidentals.”

Klavdia Pogodina, 75, can't say enough about “the most attentive and kindest people” at the Foundation. “They even organized a New Year's party for us and took all of us on an outing to the mountains.”

Sponsors are encouraged to write letters to their adopted grandparents. These are translated and read out to them by Foundation staff or volunteers. “Most of the beneficiaries feel lonely, so the notes and cards mean a lot to them,” says Aidai Membetalieva, Director of the Foundation.

Gift parcels are also welcome and are eagerly anticipated on birthdays and other special occasions. A few sponsors have even visited their *babushka* or *dedushka*, while taking the opportunity to explore Kyrgyzstan's natural wonders.

“The €5,000 from the OSCE Ball fell into our laps in our eighth year of operations, and it went a long way, especially because Swiss support came to an end at about that time,” says Ms. Membetalieva. “We increased our beneficiaries by 250 in Bishkek and Batken oblast and raised €10,000 through special events.”

“Most important of all, the money enabled us to establish ourselves as a strong and sustainable local NGO. We devised a long-range strategy and improved our managerial and organizational skills, and we clarified our vision: to mobilize and increase opportunities for the most vulnerable of the elderly through community self-help groups, income-generating activities, and partnerships with local and international groups concerned with the problems of the ageing.”

As Vera Wolfe sees me to the door after my brief visit with her, her eyes sparkle with hope. She now feels well enough to give back to the Foundation by delivering monthly allowances to those who can no longer walk and doing their grocery shopping for them.



“Every day I pray for the continued good health of the people working at the Babushka Adoption Foundation and the donors from around the world,” she says. “They have restored my dignity. Without them, where would I be now?”

Azamat Ababakirov is a National Press and Public Information Officer at the OSCE Centre in Bishkek.

www.babushkaadoption.org

Appointments

tribute to the “strong contribution” of Ambassador Strohal, who has been serving in the post since March 2003.

Ambassador Lenarčič, 41, has an extensive knowledge of OSCE affairs. From 2003 to 2006, he served as Ambassador and Head of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to the OSCE. In 2005, when his country held the OSCE’s rotating Chairmanship, he chaired the Permanent Council, the Organization’s regular political decision-making body.

“I am honoured and delighted to have received the support of the participating States. It feels good to return to the OSCE family,” said Ambassador Lenarčič from the Government Office for European Affairs in Ljubljana.

At the same time, he added, “I am fully aware of the tremendous responsibilities that the position entails, and of the many challenges that lie ahead. The ODIHR is the central institution that deals with the OSCE’s human dimension. Its role has steadily evolved and has been strengthened since its inception. With the support of the participating States,

the Chairmanship, the Secretary General and, most of all, the fine ODIHR team, I hope to build on the solid legacy of my predecessors, to further consolidate the integrity of the Office and to continue developing its important activities.”

Earlier, Ambassador Lenarčič was posted to the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations in New York (1994-1999) and served as Alternate Representative of Slovenia on the UN Security Council (1998-1999). He then moved to the Office of the Prime Minister (2001-2003), first as Diplomatic Adviser, and later on, as State Secretary.

After his Vienna assignment, he was appointed State Secretary for European Affairs in 2006, heading the working group for the preparation of the Slovenian Presidency of the EU (January to June 2008) and, subsequently, assuming responsibility for co-operation between the Presidency and the European Parliament.

Ambassador Lenarčič joined the Foreign Ministry in 1992 after earning a degree in international law from Ljubljana University.



SLOVENIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

Janez Lenarčič, State Secretary for European Affairs in Slovenia, has been appointed Director of the OSCE’s Warsaw-based Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). He takes over from Christian Strohal of Austria on 1 July.

Welcoming the appointment, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Finnish Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb, took the opportunity to pay

L’ubomír Kopaj, a Slovakian diplomat, assumed the position of OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine on 21 April, succeeding James E. Schumaker of the United States.

He has served as Ambassador of Slovakia to the Netherlands (1997-2000) and Director General of his Foreign Ministry’s Section for

Administration, Logistics and Information (2002-2003). Most recently, he was an expert in the Analysis and Foreign Policy Planning Department (2003-March 2008).

“My first priorities are to improve the managerial structure of the office, increase the transparency of our activities vis-à-vis the Secretariat and participating States, and draw our hosts closer to the preparatory and evaluation

phases of our projects,” said Ambassador Kopaj. “We still have a lot of useful work to do for the benefit of the Ukrainian people.”

Ambassador Kopaj’s involvement in OSCE issues started when he was a member of the Czechoslovakian delegation to the Conference of the Conference on Security and Co-operation (CSCE) in Stockholm in 1984. Later on, he took part in the CSCE follow-up meeting and in the CSCE Summit in Helsinki in 1992.

Between 2003 and 2007, he either led or took part in a number of election observation missions of the OSCE’s Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, mostly in Central Asia but also in countries ranging from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Belgium.

Born in Bratislava, Ambassador Kopaj attended the Moscow State Institute of International Relations and pursued post-graduate diplomatic studies at the University of Birmingham’s School of International Studies and Social Sciences.



OSCE/MICHAEL EVSTAFIEV

French diplomat Alexandre Keltchewsky took up his assignment as Head of the OSCE Centre in Astana on 9 June. He succeeded Ivar Kristian Vikki of Norway.

Prior to his appointment, he served as Special Counsellor to the Director General of *France Coopération Internationale*, an agency set up by the Foreign Ministry to promote French technical expertise in governance, human rights and anti-corruption activities, including institutional capacity-building.

"This is a challenging position to assume, in the light of Kazakhstan's Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2010," Ambassador Keltchewsky said. "It's also a fascinating assignment for a diplomat such as myself whose focus of interest has always been on strengthening East-West relations and building a more stable, democratic and prosperous Europe."

Ambassador Keltchewsky started his career in banking, later joining the French Finance Ministry, where he was assigned to Moscow and New Delhi as Chief Economist with the Trade Commission (1976-1983).

Moving to the French Foreign Ministry, he headed the unit responsible for economic and technical co-operation with East European countries (1984-1986). Overseas postings in Belgrade, Rabat and Moscow followed (1986-1995). During his stint in Rabat, he was temporarily seconded to the European Community Monitor Mission in former Yugoslavia, based in Zagreb.



On his return to Paris, he served as Director of the Foreign Ministry's OSCE and Council of Europe Affairs Division, where he was actively involved in the stabilization process in the Balkan countries within the Royaumont Initiative.

After serving as French Consul-General in Saint Petersburg (1998-2002), he was appointed Inspector at the Office of the Inspector General of the Foreign Ministry (2002-2006).

Born in Paris to a family of Russian émigrés, Ambassador Keltchewsky holds degrees from the University of Paris-Nanterre in economic sciences, specializing in the Soviet economy, and in Russian.



Andrew Tesoriere, an experienced British and United Nations diplomat, assumed the position of Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek on 23 May. He succeeded Markus Mueller, a Swiss national.

"I am new to Kyrgyzstan but not to the wider region," said Ambassador Tesoriere, who has served as bilateral ambassador to Algeria (2005-2007), Latvia (2002-2005) and Albania (1995-1998), and has an intimate knowledge of Afghanistan.

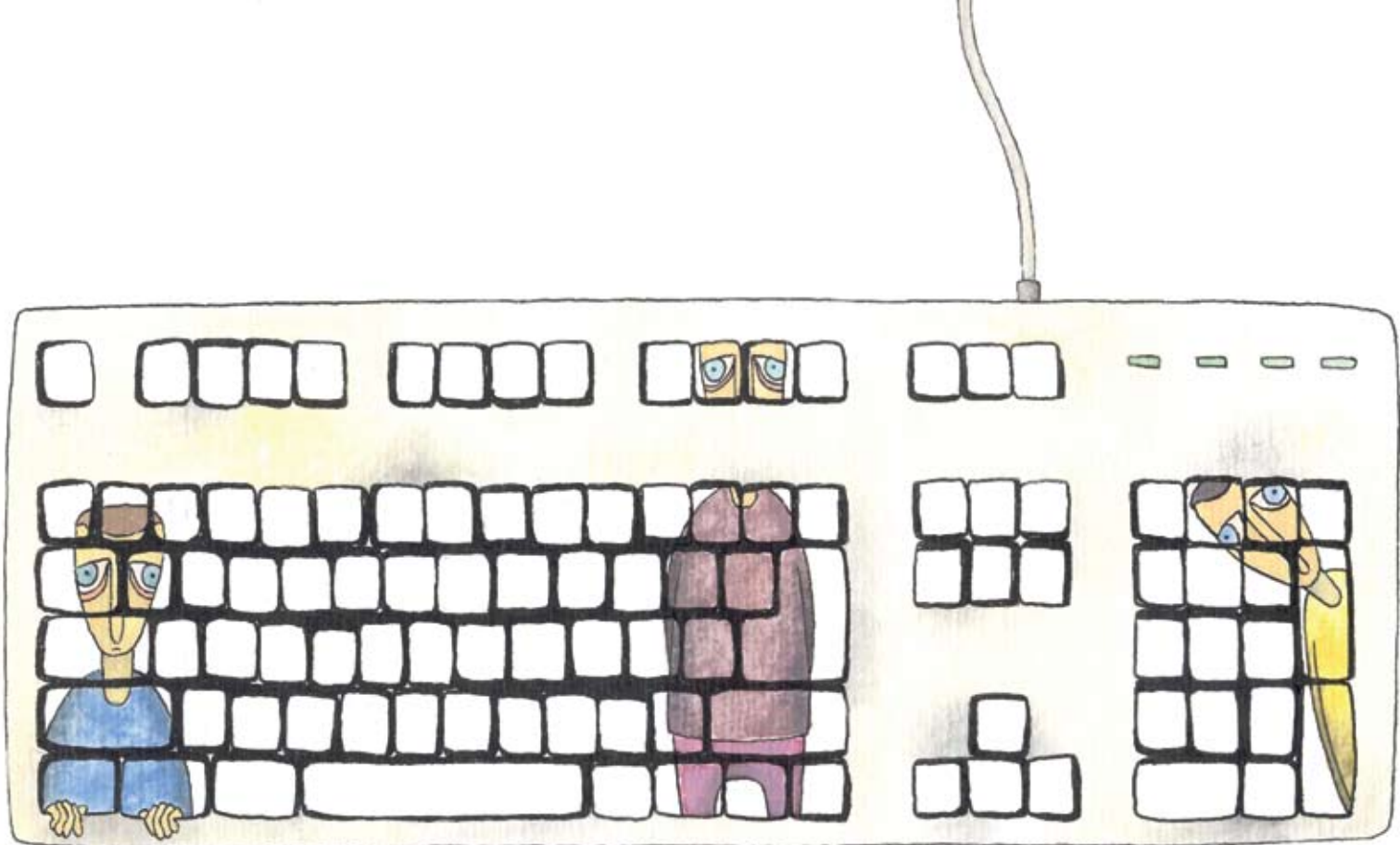
"My first priority is to listen and to understand the Kyrgyz context and the diversity of views," he said. "Fortunately, Kyrgyzstan and the OSCE already have an

excellent working relationship. With the help of a good and experienced team, I will aim to ensure that our activities remain effective and relevant."

In Afghanistan, Ambassador Tesoriere was Head of Humanitarian Field Operations, UNOCHA (1994-1995) and Director of the UN Special Mission (1998-2000). He chaired the intra-Afghan peace talks in Ashgabad in March 1999. He was a senior OSCE observer at Afghan elections in 2004 and 2005. At the time of his OSCE appointment, he was serving as senior NATO adviser in Afghanistan.

Having served as an Alternate Executive Director at the African Development Bank (1981-1984), he has had wide-ranging experience in working on programmes focusing on business and economic development, governance, climate and energy security, counter-terrorism, law-enforcement and the fight against corruption.

Ambassador Tesoriere graduated in international relations and Russian from the University of Wales and completed post-graduate studies at the Universities of London and Cambridge and the *École Nationale d'Administration* in Paris. He is fluent in French and has a knowledge of Russian, Spanish, Albanian, Latvian, Arabic, Farsi, Dari and Pushtu.



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