

## Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe



*High Representative Solana addressing the Permanent Council of the OSCE*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- OSCE agrees to establish FRY Mission ... 3
- New CiO pays first visit to Belgrade ... 4
- Address to UN Security Council ..... 4
- ODIHR supports ombudsman offices ... 5
- Kosovo's newest human rights body ..... 6
- In BiH ombudsmen divide competence ... 7
- Georgia's border monitors - one year on ... 8
- News from the field ..... 10
- In Brief ..... 12
- Press profile ..... 13
- Update from ODIHR ..... 15
- News from HCNM ..... 17
- Report from PA ..... 19
- News from RFOM ..... 21
- Report from Secretariat ..... 22

# The EU and the OSCE – working together to prevent crisis and conflict

## Javier Solana delivers key address to Permanent Council

*By Michal Olejarnik and Bonnie Landry*

Close co-operation between the European Union and the OSCE is a cornerstone of security in Europe. This was the message delivered by the High Representative of the European Union for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, to the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna on 18 January.

The last decade had presented many threats to security and co-operation in

Europe, he said: "Each has created its own challenge, and each has called for a different response. But one lesson can be drawn from them all: no single state, institution or organization is able to meet these challenges and risks on its own.

"It is only through working closely together that we can effectively address the new challenges to our security and stability. We need a network of interlocking international institutions and

organizations if we are to have confidence in our ability to protect our own collective interests. Close co-operation between the EU and the OSCE is therefore a cornerstone for security in Europe", he said.

Mr. Solana, who is also the Secretary General of the Council of the European Union, noted that existing co-operation between the EU and the OSCE covered a wide range of areas and issues. He used

the opportunity of his address to the PC to focus on crisis management, in particular on its civilian aspects.

“Both organizations have seen significant developments in this area over the past year. And these developments are rapidly paving the way for a much closer and more operational co-operation between us,” he said. “The result will be an increase in our collective capacity to respond to future crises, and wherever possible to take action to prevent them.”

Close co-operation with the OSCE was an integral part of the EU’s efforts to improve the ways it responded to crisis, he noted.

### **Mobilizing civilian resources**

While acknowledging that a lot of attention was being paid to the developments on the military side, in particular the European Rapid Reaction Force, the High Representative drew attention to the importance of civilian personnel in responding to crisis situations.

“The situation in Kosovo demonstrated clearly the difficulty of deploying sufficient numbers of properly trained civilian staff when needed. Troops cannot be expected to carry out civilian duties. That is why we need to focus on developing resources such as police, prosecutors, judges, legal experts, monitors, human rights experts, administrators and civil protection teams,” he said.

The EU’s own action plan on non-military crisis management, agreed in 1999, beside setting concrete targets to enable the EU to provide adequate civilian staff and resources, stated that the enhanced EU capability could be used for missions led either by an international organization, such as the OSCE or the United Nations, or by the EU itself.

“All these developments will be of benefit to the OSCE,” said Mr. Solana. “We will be more likely to respond positively to any request from the OSCE, and



*Javier Solana speaks to the press*

will be able to do so in a more co-ordinated manner. Our efforts do not prejudice the role of the EU or the OSCE in any future crisis situation. But they underline the need for us to work closely together in order to ensure that the limited resources we have can be used for both EU- and OSCE-led missions.”

He highlighted several ways in which the two organizations were already co-operating and sharing expertise. They included the planning, preparation and implementation of field activities; rapid deployment of civilian field staff; as well as expertise and experiences relating to police work, rule of law and local administration.

### **Information exchange**

The High Representative also drew attention to what he described as “one of the most basic aspects of co-operation”, the exchange of information.

“The EU Situation Centre and the OSCE Situation Room of course share an interest in improving the flow and use of available information, so that political bodies can be made aware of, and if possible prevent, potential crises.

“The reporting from the many OSCE field missions throughout the entire area is a particularly valuable source of information. The OSCE and the EU together need to explore further how best to exploit the full potential of the age of information.”

Finally, he assured his audience that the EU’s efforts to build capacities for crisis management were not taking place at the expense of its efforts to prevent conflicts and crises from occurring in the first place.

“Prevention is of course better than cure, which is why we are devoting time and energy to this issue.

“The OSCE has considerable expertise here through your field missions and your work in support of minorities and independent media. This is why the [EU’s] Nice report recommends that the EU deepen its dialogue with, and support for, key partners, including the OSCE, for example by systematically supporting the rights of access to potential conflict zones by the OSCE.”

The need for mutually reinforcing and interlocking institutions to safeguard peace and stability in Europe was increasingly clear, he said, not least in the field of crisis management.

“It is our responsibility to develop structures and co-operation in a way that guarantees the complementarity and compatibility of our efforts,” said Mr. Solana.

“We must ensure added value and avoid duplication. I think we have already come a long way, but there is much still to do. It will require close and effective co-operation. Only together can we reach our goal of a re-united, peaceful and secure Europe.”

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# Permanent Council agrees on establishment of new OSCE Mission to Yugoslavia

## Sixth OSCE field presence in South-eastern Europe opens in Belgrade

A new chapter of co-operation between the OSCE and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) was opened on 11 January, when the Permanent Council adopted Decision No. 401, establishing the new OSCE Mission to FRY and formally closing the previous Mission of Long Duration in Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina. On 15 January, the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna dispatched an OSCE team to Belgrade to assess the operational and technical needs for the new field activity. Two days later, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, appointed Ambassador Stefano Sannino from Italy as the Head of the new Mission.

The first weeks in the life of this latest OSCE field presence have seen a flurry of activity. Staff members of the Secretariat's Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) and Mission Support Section started to locate premises and recruit staff in Belgrade, while the new Head of Mission, a career diplomat with extensive experience in South-eastern Europe, notably as Deputy Chief of Mission of the Italian Embassy in Belgrade from 1993 to 1995, embarked on a series of meetings with the local authorities and international organizations.

"The technical aspects of establishing this mission have been going very smoothly", said Timothy Isles, Head of the Operation Centre, part of the CPC. "A

lot of planning has gone into the process from early on, and this has paid off, because the operation was very straightforward", he added with satisfaction.

"One of the first steps was to send to Belgrade a so-called 'Mission Activation Team', consisting of a number of specialists from the Secretariat working on

recruited in the Yugoslav capital. To cover the anticipated costs of the FRY Mission in 2001, the Permanent Council decided on 11 January on a total mission budget of 3,174,900 euros.

The mandate of the new mission, the sixth OSCE presence in South-eastern Europe, is to provide assistance and expertise to the Yugoslav authorities and interested individuals, groups and organizations at all levels in the fields of democratization, human rights, and media development. The work on human dimension aspects can already build upon an assessment report put together by a small group of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), who temporarily remained in Belgrade after the closure of the Elections Observation

Ambassador Sannino's agenda in the past few weeks has been intense: he met with representatives of the Federal

Yugoslav Presidency, the Prime Minister's Office and the Foreign Ministry, as well as the Speaker and Members of Parliament. He also had discussions with local non-governmental organizations, the European Union, the United Nations and representatives of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. These meetings provided a forum in which the new Head of Mission introduced the tasks and proposed methodology of the OSCE office.

At the same time, one of the important preconditions for the future work of



*The new Head of Mission to FRY Sannino (left) meets the Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia, Goran Svilanovic*

issues such as communications, personnel, information technology and building issues", Mr Isles explained.

### Staff selection

Until the arrival of the envisaged 30 international mission's staff members, this Secretariat team represents the core mission presence: "Nearly half of the international staff has already been selected and they are now in the process of being deployed to Belgrade", he added.

Roughly the same number of national professional staff is currently being

the Mission in FRY was met when the OSCE and the Council of Europe in February exchanged letters of agreement concerning the modalities of co-operation in Yugoslavia between the two organizations. Building on already existing common experience and prac-

tice, these modalities include work on strengthening the protection of human rights and minorities, the rule of law, the building of democratic institutions – notably those of the judiciary and law-enforcement agencies – and civil soci-

Further information on the new OSCE Mission to FRY – including the Permanent Council Decisions on mandate and budget of the mission – can be found on the OSCE website at

[www.osce.org/news/in\\_focus/fry-mission\\_in\\_focus](http://www.osce.org/news/in_focus/fry-mission_in_focus)

## New CiO pays first visit to Belgrade

### Meetings held with President and other leading figures

On 15 January, the Chairman-in-Office, Romania's Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, flew to Belgrade, following the decision by the OSCE Permanent Council on 11 January to establish an OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY).

In Belgrade, Mr. Geoana met the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Vojislav Kostunica, and the Yugoslav political leadership. The discussions focused mainly on issues relating to the recently adopted mandate of the OSCE Mission to FRY, including the

strengthening of democratic institutions and the rule of law, as well as reform of the judicial system. The tense situation in the Presevo Valley in southern Serbia was also discussed.

During his meetings, the Chairman-in-Office reiterated the full support of the OSCE for the consolidation of democratic change in Yugoslavia, offering assistance through the OSCE Mission to FRY, as well as through other OSCE institutions and offices. Mr. Geoana emphasized that the OSCE Mission would become operational as soon as possible.

On the same day as his visit to Belgrade, a team from the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna arrived in the city, tasked with taking the practical steps towards opening the Mission's new office (*see main story*).

Concluding his one-day visit, Mr. Geoana said, "I am looking forward to a fruitful and mutually rewarding partnership between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the OSCE".

He added that he greatly appreciated the commitment of the Yugoslav Government to solving all open issues through negotiation.

## CiO addresses UN Security Council

### Speech covers fields of co-operation between the OSCE and United Nations

On 29 January, the new OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Mircea Geoana, Foreign Minister of Romania, addressed the United Nations Security Council in New York. Speaking at a closed meeting of the Organization, he discussed the co-operation between the UN and the OSCE on issues of common interest. This was the first time an OSCE Chairman-in-Office has



The UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan (right) greets the OSCE CiO, Romania's Foreign Minister, Mircea Geoana

been invited to address the Council in a meeting devoted exclusively to the comprehensive area of co-operation. The meeting reflected efforts to increase transparency and to adopt a more pragmatic approach to improving efficiency and co-operation between the organizations. In his address, and during the question-and-answer session, the Chairman-in-Office presented the priorities of the

current Romanian OSCE Chairmanship and put forward ideas and concrete proposals aimed at improving the framework for co-operation between the OSCE and the UN. Mr. Geoana referred to the establishment of an efficient

mechanism for exchanges of information on existing and potential crises and lessons learned from common field missions; promotion of periodical joint assessments on developments in areas of mutual interest, and the appropriate par-

ticipation of the two organizations in each other's meetings on topics of common concern. He emphasized the operational dimension of the co-operation between the OSCE, as a regional organization, and the UN, as a global one.

## The Ombudsman – a useful tool for building democracy and rule of law

### How the ODIHR supports establishment of these institutions in OSCE States

Ombudsman institutions, originally a Swedish creation, have been a true success story in many countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Established in the aftermath of communism, ombudsman and other national human rights institutions have played an important role in the transition processes in this region. Where regular legal remedies have been either non-existent or ineffective, ombudsman institutions have taken up human rights cases and made the work of the authorities more transparent.

One example is their work in gaining full access to institutions such as prisons, which are usually hidden from the eyes of the public.

In view of this positive experience with ombudsman institutions in parts of Europe, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) supports the establishment and work of national human rights institutions in countries in transition across the OSCE area.

#### Independence is essential

“Ombudsman institutions can be a very useful tool in all democracies, but they often have special relevance for transition countries where well-functioning legal structures are not yet fully established”, says Gerald Staberock, the

official in charge of the ODIHR's Ombudsman programme.

The programme assists governments in developing the legal framework for

Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Experts agree on certain criteria that must be met for an ombudsman institu-

tion to be able to work successfully.

“Most importantly, the office must be independent”, explains Dean Gottehrer, an expert on ombudsman institutions who works for the ODIHR.

“The institution's staff must be sure that they will not be dismissed after making unpopular interventions.”

For the citizens of a country in transition to develop trust in the new institution, true independence from the executive branch of government is essential. The ODIHR therefore supports the creation of Ombudsman institutions which are accountable to Parliament, rather than being part of the government structure.

“The question of independence can be seen as a litmus test for whether there is a real intention to create an effective institution or whether pledges are made



*The Kosovo Ombudsman, Marek Nowicki (second from left), with several of the staff of his office*

the creation of Ombudsman institutions and in the training of staff. Currently, the ODIHR is engaged in such projects in Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation.

For some of its projects, the ODIHR co-operated with experts from the ombudsman offices of Poland and Slovenia. In developing this programme, the ODIHR closely co-operated with the Council of Europe, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United

# Kosovo's newest human rights institution

*Just three months after its inauguration on 21 November last year, Kosovo's first Ombudsperson institution has received a remarkable number – nearly 130 cases – of alleged violations of human rights and abuses of authority. Most of the cases concern labour disputes, access to social welfare and problems related to property, and the Albanian and Serbian legal staff are busy investigating the complaints and drafting recommendations for the Ombudsperson to the appropriate authorities.*

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK), as part of its mandate to build and support indigenous institutions in the province, has helped to develop and establish the new human rights institution, which is striving to become a multi-ethnic, independent and locally operated body. The OSCE, with support from the US government, provided the necessary budget to create a fully operational institution for 2000 and 2001. For the following years, the Institution may request funds from international donors and/or the Kosovo Consolidated Budget as additional funding is needed, especially

to set up field offices throughout Kosovo and to provide them with logistical support.

The most important task of the Ombudsperson Institution is to investigate complaints from any person or entity in Kosovo concerning human rights violations and actions constituting an abuse of authority by the Interim Administration, as well as any emerging central or local institution. It is unique in that it accepts complaints about alleged abuses by international or internationally guided authorities.

To achieve its goal of promoting and protecting human rights, the institution works in an atmosphere of transparency, maintaining confidentiality when necessary to protect applicants, witnesses or others involved in cases.

Once the Ombudsperson Institution had been promulgated by a regulation of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo in June 2000, the OSCE, working closely with the Council of Europe, helped identify candidates to fill the key positions in the institution. During this process, the OSCE also consulted several relevant

local actors such as university professors, members of Kosovo's legal community, as well as human rights and legal non-governmental organizations.

This selection process resulted in the appointment of the prominent Polish lawyer and human rights activist, Marek Antoni Nowicki, as Ombudsperson. He is assisted in his work by two local and one international deputy: Nike Lumezi, a former judge, practising lawyer and instructor in penal law and penal procedures at the Kosovo Police Service School; Ljubinko Todorovic, a former public attorney for the Pristina municipality and manager of the Geriatric Centre in Pristina; and Donna Gomien, an American human rights expert and Associate Professor at the Norwegian Institute of Human Rights.

At a press conference in January, Mr. Nowicki reviewed the first two months of the work of his institution, noting that the number of complaints received thus far, he said, "suggests that the people of Kosovo are starting to consider the institution as something that exists to give them the assistance they need."

more as a way of paying lip-service to human rights protection", he adds.

## **Personality of ombudsman**

Another key aspect is the integrity and personality of the person heading the ombudsman institution, in particular as the authority of an ombudsman or woman is usually empowered only to make recommendations that are not legally enforceable. The success of a new institution therefore depends to a large extent on the energy and skill with

which the incumbent takes on the role of advocating the people's rights.

While ombudsman institutions can play an important role in defending human rights and furthering democracy and the rule of law, the limits of such institutions must be seen realistically. They can hardly exist in the complete absence of even basic legal structures, and there must be a genuine commitment to a meaningful democratic transition process by the government. Like any other mechanism for the protection

of human rights, ombudsman institutions depend on the general environment they operate in.

"We strongly stress the involvement of civil society in the process of establishing an ombudsman institution", says Mr. Staberock. "As a truly novel and different type of institution, ombudsman offices can only be effective if the public is informed about the scope of their work, and if the people accept these institutions and make active use of them."



OSCE

NEWSLETTER

# State and Entities' Ombudsmen share responsibilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Three institutions exist with no hierarchy

*The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) appointed the State's first Ombudsman in December 1995. The office of Ombudsman for BiH was established in Annex 6 of the Dayton Agreement, and, together with the Human Rights Chamber, it makes up the Human Rights Commission.*

Both institutions are jointly responsible for the investigation of violations of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and its Protocols and other relevant human rights instruments.

The OSCE Mission provided political, operational and financial support to the newly established offices in Sarajevo and Banja Luka, with a view to establishing a state institution which would be independent of the BiH authorities it was expected to monitor. During the past five years, the Mission has established a close working relationship with the Ombudsman, including co-operation in investigations, channeling of important individual cases and implementation of recommendations.

## Quasi-judicial status

In the immediate post-conflict period, the Ombudsman was faced with a state apparatus undergoing profound changes, and the institution's task was often to substitute for the judiciary. At that time, the office introduced the ECHR to the BiH legal system to help the country comply with its commitments.

As a result, the institution has acquired a quasi-judicial status, which

is difficult to reconcile with the non-judicial nature of its mission. However, in the past few years, the Ombudsman has increased its non-judicial activity and turned to standard mediation tasks.

With an eye to making the BiH ombudsman institutions' operations more effective and self-sustaining, the High Representative imposed the Law on the Human Rights Ombudsman for Bosnia and Herzegovina on 12 December 2000, as the new basis for the Ombudsman's operations.

It is critical that a functioning relationship be established between the Ombudsman of BiH and the Ombudsmen of the Entities (the Ombudsman of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ombudsman of Republika Srpska). And, of course, it is essential that all three institutions can exist independently of the international community.

The BiH Ombudsman's competence parallels that of the Entity Ombudsmen, meaning that cases concerning the State of BiH or simultaneously involving both entities fall under the exclusive competence of the BiH Ombudsman. Questions relating to only one entity fall under the exclusive competence of the Entity Ombudsman concerned. There is no hierarchical relationship between the Ombudsman Institutions.

However, the BiH Ombudsman is competent to organize co-operation and consultation between the various ombudsman institutions and to represent them in the international arena. The nature of the institutions' relationships

promotes co-operation and information sharing in certain cases.

The newly appointed Ombudsman for BiH, Frank Orton, has expressed his intention to examine structures rather than individual cases, and to employ less formal legal approaches. This approach may develop the institution's capacity, but a solution remains to be found for the backlog of cases currently pending before the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman could use his competence to refer cases to courts or the Human Rights Chamber while turning to more conventional mediation techniques.

## Less formal approach

A less formal approach may enhance the internationally appointed Ombudsman's prestige and credibility, and gradually develop a greater awareness and sense of responsibility among other institutions – including the courts – about the need for consistent application of the ECHR. At the same time, the Ombudsman is expected to prepare his own office and staff for citizen's complaints against situations created by state institutions (e.g. the border police or electoral bodies, as well as requests regarding freedom of information or diplomatic protection).

The OSCE BiH Mission continues to offer its support and co-operation to all three Ombudsman institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Mission's aim is to bring to fruition its efforts to establish a sustainable and functioning ombudsman structure that could support reconciliation and develop the basis for greater respect for human rights.

# Tensions reduced on Georgian-Chechen border where OSCE monitors continue to observe

Exactly one year ago, the OSCE opened the first permanent border post

*By Lydia Wazir and Marina Bartl*

Being an OSCE monitor up on the border between Georgia and the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation can be a tough job. Border monitors not only have to contend with the harsh weather conditions – winter temperatures drop to sub-zero levels – but must also master the rugged terrain on their regular patrols of the border. The region has been a sensitive area, but much has changed since February 2000, when the first permanent OSCE observation post was opened.

The border monitoring role was handed to the OSCE Mission in Georgia by the Permanent Council on 15 December 1999, when it adopted Decision No. 334 establishing a monitoring operation on the border between Georgia and the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation. The security situation today has significantly improved in comparison with the situation 15 months ago. Only one week after the Permanent Council took its decision, two missiles exploded in the border-crossing area, injuring four Georgian border guards at the Georgian observation post overlooking the border. An OSCE team was quickly dispatched, located the injured soldiers on their way to Shatili, and took them in for medical assistance.

## Defusing tensions

“We believe that we have done a lot to defuse the tensions in the area”, says Gerald Thomas, Deputy Operations Officer in Georgia. The stability in the region can be attributed to the high

concentration of Russian troops and border guards in the Chechen Republic, the deployment of Georgian border guards in the border area, and the presence of the OSCE international observers. However, due to topographical conditions the border area can never be considered 100 per cent sealed, and for very small groups, it will always be possible to cross. But as yet, the OSCE

the Georgian border guards, who provide security for the unarmed OSCE observers, has been positive and preventative in nature.

“Conditions for the monitors have improved significantly”, says Mr. Thomas. The initial establishment phase in the winter of 1999/2000 was a challenge – basic supplies and equipment such as food and blankets, generators

OSCE/MISSION TO GEORGIA



*Border patrol members surveying the terrain in the border area*

monitors have neither observed nor received reports of any crossings of the 81-kilometre border within their area of responsibility.

Despite two recent incidents in which OSCE monitoring base camps were attacked – possibly in attempts to steal equipment– the situation has been calm and stable, and co-operation with

and emergency equipment had to be helicoptered into Shatili, location of the first permanent monitoring presence.

Two additional permanent bases in Omalo and Girevi, and one overnight base in Tebulo, were established during the summer. A complete team of 42 monitors was actively monitoring the border by July 2000.





*Approaching one of the two mountain passes that run towards the border*

### Rising tensions

Until December 1999, tensions between Georgia and Russia had been running high. Accusations and ‘unfriendly insinuations’ dominated the atmosphere. On 2 December 1999, the Head of the Mission to Georgia, Ambassador Jean-Michel Lacombe, met President Shevardnadze to discuss the prospects for a settlement of the dispute.

The President had declined two Russian requests: to grant the right of passage to Russian army units, which intended to fight Chechen insurgents from the South, and to conduct a joint control operation along the border region in the Chechen sector. According to President Shevardnadze, the insurgents had threatened to treat Georgia as an enemy if it co-operated with Russia. Georgia proposed receiving Russian observers along its part of the Russian-Georgian border, but this was declined by the Russian side.

The Georgian side also denied Russian statements that arms were being brought to the Chechen insurgents

through Georgia. Many refugees had been crossing the border into Georgia. However, the border crossing was closed in mid-December, and no movement across the border had been reported since.

During the course of their meeting, President Shevardnadze expressed his readiness to accept international observers, as well as media representatives to monitor the situation along the Chechen sector of the Georgian-Russian border. The build-up of operations in the mountainous region of northern Georgia began immediately after the adoption of the Permanent Council decision. By February 2000, the first permanent observation post had been opened, with the OSCE border monitors tasked to report on any movement across the border between Georgia and the Chechen Republic.

Despite the now well established camp facilities, monitoring the border is still a difficult task. Sometimes a patrol will lead up to an elevation of 3,500 metres over rugged and steep terrain,

starting from a height of 1,500 metres. “It is quite a challenge physically. But it is also a challenge just to be there in the region,” says Vadim Pivovarov, Chief Operations Officer. Patrols on the ground have to adapt to rapidly changing weather conditions. On some occasions, avalanches, landslides and torrential rainfall have hampered border monitoring and delayed the transport of personnel and supplies to the team sites.

### Regular presence

Daily patrols are carried out by the border monitors on foot, and in winter, when necessary on skis. In addition, night-time observation and helicopter patrols are conducted on a regular basis. In November, the number of border monitors was reduced to 26, as only limited movement across the border is possible in winter. Two of the three permanent bases, in Shatili and Omalo, remain operational all year round.

The OSCE is now the only international organization regularly present in the Shatili area. Both sides – Georgian and Russian – are satisfied with the presence of the OSCE in the area. Thus, the border monitors have already accomplished one of their basic tasks – namely to help contribute to stability in the region. After reviewing the security situation in the border area, the OSCE Permanent Council decided last September to extend the mandate of the operation until 15 April 2001.

During a recent visit to Georgia, the OSCE’s Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, suggested that the Organization would probably agree to a further extension of the border patrols for a period of eight months.

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## News from the field

*The OSCE currently has Missions or other field activities in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), Latvia, Skopje (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The following brief reports reflect some of the recent work which these field operations have undertaken.*

### **Head of Kosovo Mission outlines the new priorities for 2001**

Daan Everts, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK), has outlined the Mission's operational priorities for the 12 months ahead. "This year will see the consolidation of the progress made by the Mission to date, as well as placing greater focus on longer-term needs", he said. One of the key priorities for OMIK in 2001 is to advocate and strengthen the participation of Kosovars in all levels of administration.

"We will be concentrating on developing the efficiency, sustainability and self-sufficiency of the institutions created by the Mission in 2000. Creating professional public institutions, such as the civil service, the police, the judiciary, and the public service media, is crucial to promoting local ownership of the new bodies and structures..."

"All the newly-created institutions have been planned with a view to eventually handing over policy and management responsibilities to the people of Kosovo", Mr. Everts stated.

As the institution-building pillar of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the OSCE Mission will continue to emphasize the importance of democratic principles, transparency of government, and respect for the rule of law and human rights, and to encourage the incorporation of these principles into UNMIK policy. As part of the ongoing democratization process in the province, OMIK will also work toward preparing the ground for possible elections.

It hopes to see the establishment of an Interim Media Commission administered by Kosovars, replacing the current Temporary Media Commissioner's office. The public broadcasting service, Radio-Television Kosovo, will become fully independent of OSCE this year, while the newly-reconstructed terrestrial transmission system should, once it is fully functioning, be able to transmit its programmes and those of the independent media throughout almost the entire province.

The OMIK-run Kosovo Police Service School should reach its training target of 4,200 police cadets by June, and will gradually shift towards more supervisory and specialist training.

### **OMIK welcomes regulation to combat human trafficking**

In January, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo welcomed the adoption of a new regulation aimed at combating trafficking in human beings in the province. The regulation, which was signed on January 13 by Bernard Kouchner, the outgoing Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General, was drafted by an inter-agency working group including representatives from OMIK and the OSCE-supported Department of Democratic Governance and Civil Society.

Making trafficking in human beings a criminal offence in Kosovo, the new regulation provides for improved protection and assistance for the victims of trafficking, most of whom are young women and girls.

"This is a very important step towards tackling what is, in effect, a modern form of human slavery", OMIK Head Daan Everts said.

Through its victim assistance programmes and training for judges and lawyers and for non-governmental organizations, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo is strongly engaged in combating trafficking in human beings. It monitors the trafficking problem through focal points in each region which work closely with the UNMIK Police and the International Organization for Migration.

### **OMIK initiates training seminars for new Kosovo municipal heads**

On 15 and 16 January, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo held its first training seminar for the 30 new municipal assembly presidents elected in the municipal elections in October 2000. The training session, which was held in Pristina, was organized by the OSCE Institute for Civil Administration, and focused on conflict resolution and the promotion of tolerance. The host of the session was Dr. Johan Galtung, a Norwegian conflict resolution specialist who has helped mediate in more than 40 conflicts around the world.

The training seminar was the first of a series of four that will be held throughout 2001 for the newly-elected municipal assembly presidents. Subsequent sessions will cover economic development, citizens' participation in local government and the role of the opposition in the new assemblies. Training for

the newly-appointed chief executive officers of the assembly is also scheduled to take place this spring.

### **OSCE presence in Kazakhstan organizes seminar on media issues**

Together with the local non-governmental organization 'Adil Soz', the OSCE Centre in Almaty, Kazakhstan, organized a two-day Seminar on the Strengthening of Professional Relations and Co-operation between the Mass Media, Law Enforcement Bodies, and the Court System in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The event, which took place on 26 and 27 January in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, was held in the framework of the Civil Society Assistance Project, outlined in the memorandum of understanding between the Government and the Warsaw-based OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

One of its main goals was to underline the importance of transparency, objectivity, and mutual respect as the basis for relations between journalists and government structures. It focused on how to best construct relations between the press on the one hand and law-enforcement bodies and the court system on the other.

Discussions among participants demonstrated that issues such as journalistic ethics and professionalism, access to information, and attempts to restrict freedom of expression and speech are of great concern and of great interest to society as a whole.

### **Elections meeting in Kazakhstan discusses ODIHR recommendations**

Representatives of the Kazakh parliament, various government ministries and agencies, as well as civil society actors, participated in the second OSCE-organized round table on Elec-

tions, held in Astana, Kazakhstan, on 25 January. This series of round tables is designed to further discussions of ways and means of implementing the recommendations made in the final report by ODIHR on the parliamentary elections held in Kazakhstan in October 1999.

The second round table, which was conducted in collaboration with the Government of Kazakhstan and the country's Central Election Commission (CEC), focused on the independence of election commissions, transparency of vote count and tabulation procedures, and all other election-related procedures.

The participants, who also included representatives of political parties that did not have seats in parliament, made concrete recommendations on increasing the representation of political parties in the CEC and all other election commissions, enhancing the rights of observers, and limiting interference by executive authorities in the electoral process. The round table in Kazakhstan was moderated by Ihor Ostash, Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

### **Media seminar jointly organized in Yerevan by OSCE and CoE**

A seminar on 11 and 12 January in Yerevan brought together representatives from various Armenian government bodies, the mass media and academia for discussions about the current status of media legislation in the country. The event, which was organized by the OSCE Office in Yerevan and the Council of Europe (CoE), focused on questions related to access to information and relevant legislative initiatives. Another key point on the agenda was a detailed analysis of the Television and Radio Broadcasting Law adopted by the Armenian national assembly on 9 October 2000. Two

experts from the CoE spoke about European standards on media regulation and the conformity of current Armenian legislation to Council of Europe requirements. One of the commitments undertaken by Armenia is to ensure that its media legislation is in compliance with basic international principles.

### **Ukrainian-Greek talks cover ways to combat human trafficking**

As part of its efforts to combat trafficking in human beings, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) jointly organized a five-day study visit by Ukrainian officials to Greece. Representatives of the Ukrainian Government and their Greek counterparts held talks in Athens from 22 to 26 January on the establishment of a network for the repatriation of victims of human trafficking and further co-operation in the fight against organized crime.

The Ukrainian delegation also met with the Greek ministers of public order, labour and justice, as well as with officials of other government agencies.

At present, Greece does not have any special mechanisms to differentiate between illegal immigrants and victims of trafficking. One of the main tasks of the Ukrainian delegation, the OSCE and the IOM was to discuss with the Greek authorities the importance of developing such mechanisms.

As a result, both sides agreed to develop a mechanism for protecting victims of trafficking and assisting in their repatriation, and to co-operate and co-ordinate regarding the prosecution of traffickers. It is expected that a bilateral agreement between the two States will be elaborated and signed in April 2001, during the visit to the Greek capital of Vice-President Juschchenko of Ukraine.



On 10 January, the **OSCE Chairman-in-Office (CiO), Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana**,

welcomed the decision of the Government of Turkmenistan to release Primukuli Tanrykuliev and Nurberdy Nurmamedov from prison, as part of a larger amnesty of 12,000 prisoners. Mr. Tanrykuliev, head of the dental faculty of the Turkmen Medical Institute, was arrested and sentenced to eight

years in prison. His arrest came shortly after the broadcast of Radio Liberty interviews in which he had sharply criticized the parliamentary elections, as well as the decision of the People's Assembly to grant President Niyazov the right to remain in office as long as he wanted. Human rights monitors believe these remarks were the real motivation behind his arrest.

Commending the decision to release the two prisoners, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office encouraged the Turkmen authorities to take similar amnesty decisions with regard to Mukhamad Aimu-

deny of the European Union (EU), to discuss co-operation between the OSCE and the EU. Their discussions focused on possibilities for enhancing the mechanisms for exchanging information between the two organizations, with a view to building up closer co-operation guided by complementarity, compatibility and synergy, in line with the principles enshrined in the Platform for Co-operative Security. Some concrete areas of common action and co-operation were identified. The meeting also featured an exchange of views on current OSCE



*The OSCE CiO, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana (centre), his Portuguese counterpart, Jaime Gama (left), and Albert Rohan, Representative of the Austrian Foreign Minister, participate in the Troika press conference in Bucharest*

years of imprisonment in 1999 on a charge of embezzlement that had been investigated and dropped several years earlier. International human rights observers attributed his arrest to private remarks in which he had expressed an interest in seeking a seat in the parliamentary elections of December 1999. Mr. Nurmamedov was arrested in January 2000 and sentenced to five years in a corrective labour camp based on charges that he had publicly quarrelled with a busi-

ness partner. His arrest came shortly after the broadcast of Radio Liberty interviews in which he had sharply criticized the parliamentary elections, as well as the decision of the People's Assembly to grant President Niyazov the right to remain in office as long as he wanted. Human rights monitors believe these remarks were the real motivation behind his arrest. The sentence was increased to four years in August 1999.

During a visit to Stockholm on 19 January, the **OSCE CiO Geoana** met with **Anna Lindh, Foreign Minister of Sweden**, which currently holds the presi-

dent's office. "There are many areas of common interest between the OSCE and the EU, and we are trying to find the best ways to enhance their complementarity and our mutual co-operation", Mr. Geoana said.

The **OSCE Ministerial Troika**, represented by Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana; the Secretary General of the Austrian Foreign Ministry, Albert Rohan; and Portuguese Foreign Minister Jaime Gama, met on 23 January in

Bucharest. The Ministers focused on current issues of concern to the OSCE; the recent developments in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; the situation in Kosovo; regional issues in the Caucasus, including the situation in Chechnya (Russian Federation); and the situation in Belarus. Other participants were the OSCE Secretary General, Jan Kubis; the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Adrian Severin; the Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Gérard Stoudmann; and representatives of the OSCE High Commissioner on National

Minorities and of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

In a press release issued on 29 January, **Romanian Foreign Minister and OSCE CiO Geoana** strongly condemned the brutal attack on six Serbian and Bosniac staff members of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo near Mitrovica/Kosvoska Mitrovica. "I am shocked by this brutal assault on OSCE personnel in a clearly marked OSCE vehicle, which is unprecedented in the history of the Organization", Mr. Geoana said. "OSCE personnel are working under difficult cir-

cumstances to help Kosovo and its people to overcome the consequences of cruel policies and a vicious war. To attack them is to attack the very process of healing society in Kosovo. Such an attack can under no circumstances be justified by any past grievances".

The staff members involved in the incident had been driving home from the OSCE Regional Centre Mitrovica/Kosvoska Mitrovica when their vehicle was stopped by a crowd in the southern part of the city. KFOR's swift assistance at the scene prevented the situation from escalating.



*Excerpts from international media coverage of the OSCE and its activities over recent weeks.*

## ROMANIAN CHAIRMANSHIP

### *Die Presse, 2 January*

'With the old year, the one-year-long Austrian OSCE Chairmanship ended; in the new year, Romania has the Chairmanship. The high point of the red-white-red Chairmanship was the accession of Yugoslavia at the OSCE Ministerial Council in Vienna at the end of November. Vienna had no success in the Caucasus: The conflicts in Georgia (Abkhazia and South Ossetia) and between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh remained unresolved. Also, the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya had to date been unable to the crisis region.'

### *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 8 January*

'Romania has since the start of the year had something like a double chairmanship of the OSCE. Last year, the for-

mer Foreign Minister, Adrian Severin, was elected President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and on 1 January, the new Romanian Foreign Minister, Mircea Geoana, took over the one-year OSCE Chairmanship from the Austrian Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner. Geoana characterized it as a "double honour" for Romania to play such a prominent role in the co-operation between the Governments as well as between the parliaments of the 55 OSCE States... Geoana said that, for Romania, the OSCE was an important building block in the security architecture of Central, East and South East Europe. The potentialities of the OSCE in conflict prevention as well as in confidence-building after the end of an armed conflict must be better utilized. That also entailed a further development of the plans to establish an OSCE rapid reaction force. In addition to this, co-operation between different institutions within the OSCE as well as between the OSCE and other international organizations such as the EU and NATO needed to be improved.'

### *Der Spiegel, 2 January*

'The Government in Bucharest is hoping that the Chairmanship of the

OSCE will bring with it a push toward reforms and international political recognition... As late as last year, Romania was seen as one of the problem children of the OSCE. Above all, the discrimination against at least 700,000 Roma, the restrictions on local autonomy for the 1.7 million Hungarians in Transylvania and the legal persecution of homosexuals earned the country repeated criticism.'

### *Die Presse, 12 January*

The core programme of this year's OSCE Chairmanship was made public yesterday, when Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE for this year, outlined his plans at the OSCE Permanent Council. Geoana wants to continue the efforts of the Austrian Chairmanship to resolve the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and in Chechnya. He also wants to establish the OSCE 'REACT' intervention force for crisis areas as soon as possible... "With REACT, the OSCE will act preventively, but also in post-conflict situations, to protect the population in crisis areas," Geoana said in an interview with Die Presse... "The OSCE is in a process of change. Its new responsibility is to ensure stability in Europe.

Therefore we have to prove our strength in the Euro-Atlantic region”, he said.’

## OSCE MISSION TO FRY

### *Le Monde, 13 January*

‘The OSCE yesterday announced the establishment of an office in Belgrade to provide support for “democratization, protection of minority rights and media development”, as well as for the return of refugees.’

### *Reuters, 15 January*

‘The OSCE will soon establish a mission to Yugoslavia, from which it has been barred for seven years, its current Chairman said on Monday. Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, Chairman of the 55-nation OSCE in 2001, held talks with Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica and other senior officials during a visit to Belgrade. “We have finally reached agreement on the OSCE mission in Belgrade,” Geoana told reporters. “Today we have members of the advance team with us and in one or two days we will decide who is going to lead the mission and from then on we hope to have the mission up and running as soon as possible,” he said.’

## BELARUS

### *Reuters, 28 January*

‘President Alexander Lukashenko accused the OSCE mission in Minsk of plotting with the opposition against him ahead of presidential elections in the

autumn... Lukashenko, criticized by the West for authoritarian rule, has frequently clashed with the Minsk-based mission of the OSCE, and last November raised the prospect of asking it to quit Belarus... Hans-Georg Wiecek, Head of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus, said Lukashenko had made similar allegations to parliament last month. “We are in favour of democratic procedures and institutions, but the result is something for the population to decide in free and fair elections,” he told Reuters. Last October, the OSCE sharply criticized parliamentary polls as failing to meet international standards.’

### *Süddeutsche Zeitung, 30 January*

‘The Belarusian President, Alexander Lukashenko, has accused the Minsk mission of the OSCE of training opposition “fighters” and providing them with weapons. In a statement on State TV, he said that the West wants to turn “peaceful Belarus” into a “second Yugoslavia”... Already two weeks ago, State TV sharply attacked the German Head of the OSCE mission, Hans-Georg Wiecek, calling him a “former espionage officer” currently engaged in “preparing the ground for NATO generals”.’

## KOSOVO

### *Reuters, 29 January*

‘The new Chairman of the OSCE said on Monday crucial elections in

Kosovo, expected this year, needed six months of preparation. Romania’s Foreign Minister, Mircea Geoana, the current OSCE Chairman, told reporters after briefing the UN Security Council that the United Nations wanted the elections held as soon as possible but needed to decide first what people would be voting for, such as the powers of a new Kosovo-wide assembly... “Our experts on the ground are telling us that we need six months of advance work before elections could be held in proper conditions and we are doing our part in preparing the technical elections, when and if the UN will decide that these elections will be held,” Geoana said.’

### *Le Monde, 31 January*

‘Last night, an OSCE vehicle transporting Serb interpreters of the Organization was attacked by Albanians on the outskirts of Mitrovica, on the road to Pristina. One of the passengers was almost lynched, after having been dragged out of the car and beaten. He is seriously wounded.’

### *Der Standard, 31 January*

‘The Head of the OSCE Mission, Ambassador Daan Everts, stated that (this) was a “serious crime” which “undermined the work of all international organizations.” He said the situation was “unacceptable”. During past days, several violent incidents have occurred in Mitrovica.’

Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy  
at the University of Hamburg/IFSH

## OSCE Yearbook 2000

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### ELECTIONS

#### Repeat parliamentary elections held in Azerbaijan show some improvement



An International Election Observation Mission concluded that the repeat parliamentary elections held on 7 January in several districts of Azerbaijan marked some improvement compared to the 5 November 2000 ballot, but still did not meet a number of

mistrust and were marked by a boycott by several opposition parties.

As an improvement over the previous election, the Central Election Commission this time showed more flexibility during the candidate-registration process and addressed most complaints adequately. However, serious concerns remained, in particular with regard to the independence of local election commissions, which again were in some cases subjected to interference, pressure

lot-box stuffing and a flawed counting and tabulation process.

The International Election Observation Mission was a joint effort of the ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. The ODIHR long-term observation mission was deployed on 18 December and was headed by Ambassador Charles Magee (USA). On election day, more than 100 short-term observers were deployed, including five parliamentarians from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and 13 from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.



An ODIHR observer checking signatures on a register of voters during the repeat elections held in Azerbaijan

international standards for democratic elections. While the authorities undertook a number of measures to address the significant shortcomings of the 5 November ballot, these measures were insufficient to restore full confidence in the electoral process. Thus, the repeat elections took place in an atmosphere of

and intimidation by local authorities.

On election day, polling took place in a calm and orderly manner, and in contrast to the previous election, observers were generally able to conduct their work unhindered. However, observers again noted a number of irregularities, including some cases of bal-

#### Election Observation Reports

The ODIHR has released a final report on the parliamentary elections in Belarus (15 and 29 October 2000). The report is available on the ODIHR website at:

[www.osce.org/odihr/elecprep.htm](http://www.osce.org/odihr/elecprep.htm)

#### Second round table held to discuss elections in Kazakhstan

At the second round table on elections in Kazakhstan, the participants agreed that the existing election law must be amended to promote independent election commissions and a fully transparent process during the vote count and the tabulation of results. The meeting, held in Astana on 25 January, was a follow-up to the first round table on elections in September 2000. The second round table was attended a number of groups including: Members of Parliament from both chambers, representatives of the Presidential Administration, the Ministry for

Foreign Affairs, and the Central Election Commission (CEC), as well as members of civil society, the major political parties, and the international community. The latter included the ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE Centre in Almaty.

The meeting was open to the media in the interest of making the debate better known to the general public.

The ODIHR presented three documents to facilitate and focus the debate: a review of existing Kazakh election legislation and CEC regulations; general guidelines on developing a legislative framework for elections; and a paper on more effective participation of minorities in the electoral process, based on the Lund Recommendations of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

A governmental working group on improving election legislation will meet three times in the months ahead to prepare the next round table, planned for late April. This event will be devoted to electoral dispute resolution and penalties for violations of the law.

#### **ODIHR law reviews**

The ODIHR has provided reviews of the following election laws:

- Electoral Code of Armenia;
- Election Code and regulations issued by the Central Election Commission for parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan;
- Referendum Law of Montenegro.

#### **ODIHR tentative observation calendar for 2001**

The ODIHR tentative observation calendar for 2001 is available on the ODIHR website at [www.osce.org/odihr/ecalendar.htm](http://www.osce.org/odihr/ecalendar.htm).

## **DEMOCRATIZATION**



### **Seminar on Government-media relations in Kazakhstan**

A seminar on strengthening professional relations and co-operation between the mass media, law enforcement bodies and the court system in Kazakhstan was organized by the ODIHR together with the OSCE Centre in Almaty and the media-monitoring NGO, Adil Soz. The seminar, held on 26 and 27 January in Astana, underlined the importance of transparency, objectivity and mutual respect as the basis for relations between journalists and government structures, and focused on how to improve relations between the media and law enforcement bodies and the court system.

The participants also discussed proposed amendments to the Law on Mass Media, which is currently under consideration by Parliament.

The seminar took place within the framework of the Civil Society Assistance Project under the memorandum of understanding between the Government of Kazakhstan and the ODIHR.

### **Co-ordinators of Anti-trafficking Task Force hold meeting**

A meeting of the co-ordinating team of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings in South-eastern Europe was held on 19 January. They agreed that the Task Force should focus on the following countries and territories: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Romania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The co-ordinators discussed various project proposals and background papers, including a proposal to

create a regional clearing house for national networks on victim protection and assistance. The Task Force is chaired by Helga Konrad of the ODIHR.

## **ROMA AND SINTI ISSUES**

### **Yugoslav Roma move towards creating joint platform**

The development of a platform of the Yugoslav Roma is the goal of a series of regional meetings, the first two of which were held in January organized by the ODIHR with the participation of Roma political parties and NGOs and Serbian and Yugoslav authorities in Kovacica (Vojvodina) and Belgrade. The ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues supports the drafting of the platform document and, as a next step, the creation of a working group of Roma experts to contribute to the preparation of the new Yugoslav and Serbian laws on national minorities.

For many of the Roma participants - representing political parties, human rights groups, humanitarian organizations and independent experts - the meetings provided a first opportunity to openly express their views. The process leading to the adoption of the new laws on national minorities makes it necessary for the Roma community to structure dialogue and co-operation among themselves and with other political actors in Yugoslavia. It is thus also contributing to the overall process of defining and articulating Roma interests within the democratization process in the country, as well as to overcoming the fragmentation of the political landscape that has characterized the Roma community since the previous regime.

The ODIHR Contact Point's assistance to the development of the Roma platform is part of a new programme on Roma under the Stability Pact for South-eastern Europe.



## OSCE Human Dimension Commitments: A Reference Guide is now available on the internet

A new ODIHR publication, OSCE Human Dimension Commitments: A Reference Guide, is now available on the ODIHR website:

[www.osce.org/odihr/docs/compilation](http://www.osce.org/odihr/docs/compilation)

The new publication is a comprehensive and user-friendly compilation of materials on OSCE commitments in the human dimension, which will enable delegations, OSCE field operations and institutions, and the general public to have easy access to relevant OSCE documents and commitments on specific topics.

Part A of the Reference Guide covers the OSCE "Human dimension" commitments arranged by topic. For the first time, it is now possible to obtain an overview of the existing commitments on any topic within the human dimension of the OSCE. Part A also includes the provisions of the OSCE human dimension mechanisms and the mandates of the OSCE institutions dealing with the human dimension.

In Part B, the OSCE human dimension commitments are listed by document in chronological order, beginning with the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and running through to the Decisions of the Vienna Ministerial Council held in November 2000.

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## **NEWS** from the High Commissioner on National Minorities

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### **High Commissioner discusses Serb minority issues in Croatia**

From 7 to 9 January, the High Commissioner visited Croatia. The main focus of his visit was to discuss issues relating to the country's Serb minority. Among the points raised during meetings with Croatian officials, including

the Deputy Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Justice, were the draft constitutional law on minorities, problems regarding the return of Serbs to their places of origin in Croatia (particularly as regards housing), and the arrest of suspected Serb war criminals.

### **Van der Stoel visits OSCE's newest participating State**

From 15 to 17 January, Mr. van der Stoel visited the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In Belgrade, he met with the Prime Minister of Serbia, Zoran Djindjic; the Federal Minister of Justice, Mr. Grubac; and the Federal Minister of

National and Ethnic Communities, Mr. Ljajic. The High Commissioner also met with the Director of the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights and the head of the UNHCR office in Belgrade. Discussions included the federal structure of the country, minority rights, and possible integrative approaches to dealing with multi-ethnic diversity in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

On 16 January, the High Commissioner visited Novi Sad, the capital of the province of Vojvodina. He met with representatives of the Vojvodina parliament, the Mayor of Novi Sad, the Secretary for Minority Rights in Vojvodina and representatives of the Hungarian, Croat and Slovak minorities. He was interested to learn about inter-ethnic relations in Vojvodina and relations between the provincial and federal authorities.

### **Ukrainian experts discuss draft of language law**

On 19 January, the High Commissioner's office hosted a group of experts from Ukraine to discuss a draft law on development and use of languages in Ukraine. The Ukrainian officials met with legal experts from the High Commissioner's office to discuss the compliance of the draft law with international standards, particularly as regards the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

### **Visit to Slovakia concentrates on minority education**

From 21 to 24 January, the High Commissioner visited the Slovak Republic together with two international education experts. He spent two days at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. He held a series of meetings with

professors and students to ascertain possible ways of improving education for future teachers who could teach in minority languages, particularly Hungarian. In Bratislava, the High Commissioner met with the Deputy Prime Minister for Human Rights, Minorities and Regional Development and with the Minister of Education to gauge their views on the issue.

On 24 January, the Slovak Government announced its support for the creation of a faculty at the University to prepare teachers for Hungarian mother-tongue education.

Also on 24 January, Mr. Van der Stoel was awarded Slovakia's highest honour, the Order of the White Double Cross, first class. The Order was presented by President Schuster in an official ceremony at the presidential palace.

## **The Multi-Ethnic State**

*By Max van der Stoel*

There seems to be a tendency to suggest that the fate of Yugoslavia has demonstrated the untenability of multi-ethnic states. The corollary of this argument is that the only viable states are ethnically pure ones.

This logic is misguided and dangerous. Multi-ethnic states are the norm rather than the exception. Indeed 'purity' is a myth. One of the lessons of the twentieth century is that attempts to create nation-states from multi-ethnic ones are usually conflict ridden. Besides, the new states that are created almost always contain minority communities. Should they have their own states?

For those who think that we should not bother trying to keep Bosnia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia together, what is the alternative? Was it not the rhetoric of 'one nation, one state' that got us into this mess in the first place? And

where do we draw the line? Kosovo and Montenegro are not ethnically pure, nor is the rest of Serbia. Is separation a panacea for the interest of all communities and if so, what would a map of Europe look like?

What are the security implications if we no longer seek to support multi-ethnic states? What, for example, would be the future of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with its sizeable Albanian minority? We must be careful that exponents of the nation-state ideal do not inadvertently provide justification for ethnic cleansing.

Multi-ethnic states may be more prone to tensions, but these conflicts need not be violent. The key is to move away from the all or nothing scenario of secession or assimilation. A national group does not need independence to protect its interests. A majority does not have to sup-

press a minority in order to guarantee its security. Protecting minority rights, facilitating minority participation in the life of the state and allowing for a certain amount of self-government can balance the interests of nations within states.

Surely recent history has offered us enough evidence that ways have to be found of accommodating and integrating ethnic diversity rather than giving up on the multi-ethnic state.

In the future, we should therefore put more emphasis on preventing states from falling apart rather than merely focusing on trying to put them back together again.

*This article, written by the High Commissioner on National Minorities for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, was published as a Letter to the Editor in the International Herald Tribune on 2 February 2001.*

# 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](mailto:osce@oscepa.dk)

## OSCE PA President Severin pays second working visit to Copenhagen

From 14 to 17 January, Parliamentary Assembly President, Adrian Severin, paid a second working visit to the International Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen, during which he had meetings with Danish Foreign Minister, Mogens Lykketoft, the Chair of the Danish Foreign Affairs Committee, Ms. Inger Marie Bruum-Voero, as well as the new Head of the Danish Delegation to the OSCE PA, Mrs. Jytte Andersen. Mr. Severin also had discussions with the members of the Danish Delegation. During the meeting with the Foreign Minister, the future role of the Parliamentary Assembly was discussed and views were exchanged on the priorities of the Romanian Presidency of the OSCE PA.

Mr. Lykketoft expressed his appreciation of parliamentarism as a sound basis for democracy, at both the national and international levels. The Minister further stressed the importance of the Assembly in the work of the OSCE, and he promised to continue the cooperative relations that the Assembly and the Danish Government have enjoyed in the past. Mr. Lykketoft and Mr. Severin also discussed the future of Europe in terms of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, the prospects of an enlarged European Union and the situation in the Balkans. In this connection,

Mr. Severin provided information about his recent visit to the Balkans and his experiences in leading the OSCE observation of the Serbian elections as Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office.

## Severin addresses Heads of OSCE Missions meeting in Bucharest

On 22 January, PA President Severin addressed the Heads of Missions at their meeting in Bucharest. Mr. Severin, noting the continuing support of the OSCE

by are very interested in the OSCE field work and the ones who have visited the field are impressed with the work and the dedication of the OSCE field staff." Mr. Severin also stressed that the OSCE PA was ready to increase its co-operation with the Missions. "By getting more involved in OSCE field work, Members of Parliament can help provide a communication link to indigenous governments and parliaments and help increase support for the work of the Missions," he added.

President Severin expressed his hope that the Heads of Missions would see visits of parliamentarians as an opportunity to create another link through which political or practical problems can be raised with the OSCE and the parliaments of the OSCE participating States.

The Heads of Missions welcomed the Assembly's field activities, particularly the hard work of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Working Groups. Several Heads of Missions praised the work already done by parliamentarians in Albania, Belarus and Moldova and asked for increased contacts between their missions and Members of Parliament, stressing that more visits to the field could be very helpful to them in their efforts.

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, noted the need for good cooperation between the two branches of the OSCE and welcomed the presence of



PA President Severin meets with Danish Foreign Minister Mogens Lykketoft, Chair of the Danish Foreign Affairs Committee

Parliamentary Assembly for OSCE field activities, told the Mission Heads that, "by far the most important part of the OSCE's work is that of the missions. Members of the Parliamentary Assem-

President Severin and PA Secretary General, Spencer Oliver. During the meeting, Mr. Oliver discussed ways in which parliamentarians have been helpful to the missions in carrying out their important work.

#### **Address to Preparatory Seminar for Ninth OSCE Economic Forum**

On 30 January, the PA President Severin addressed a preparatory seminar for the OSCE Economic Forum 2001. The seminar, held in Brussels, was entitled, 'Good governance in the public and private sectors against the background of globalization'. In his speech Mr. Severin focused on the parliamentary dimension of good governance and the critical role that parliamentary assemblies have to play in the arena of international economics, when faced with an irreversible globalizing world.

Parliamentarians could promote consistent international norms and regulations which contributed to the ease of all international economic transactions, just as consistent national laws contributed to the prosperity within a nation. Mr. Severin further emphasized that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly had long argued that the economic dimension was far too neglected within the OSCE's framework for security.

"A comprehensive bolstering of this aspect of security is required: the assets at the disposal of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Co-ordinator must be increased, the activities of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly must be encouraged and co-operation with regional economic organizations strengthened."

Mr. Severin held meetings in Brussels with the President of the European Parliament Mrs. Nicole Fontaine, Elmar Brok, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the European Parliament, Bodo Hombach, Special Co-ordinator for the Stability Pact and Tom

Price, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

On 31 January, President Severin met the President of the Belgian Senate, Armand de Decker, and Charles Janssens, Head of the Belgian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Mr. Severin also participated in a lengthy discussion of OSCE issues in a meeting with the Belgian Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly, which was also attended by former Foreign Minister Eric Derijcke and former Prime Minister Mark Eyskens. Following the meetings, President de Decker hosted a luncheon in Mr. Severin's honour.

#### **PA Ad Hoc Committee on Kosovo meets in Berlin**

On 17 and 18 January, the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Kosovo, chaired by Vice-President Dr Rita Suessmuth, met in Berlin to evaluate the work already done by the team and to prepare for further actions. The team was welcomed in Berlin by the President of the German Bundestag, Wolfgang Thierse, and Dr. Gunter Pleuger, Secretary of State at the Foreign Office. Kosovo team members, Vice-President Tana de Zulueta, Mrs. Elisabeth Meijer and Mrs. Grethe Fossum, participated in the meetings which included extensive briefings by experts from German ministries, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and various international organizations, including the UNHCR, the United Nations and the Red Cross.

The main topics discussed were the situation of minorities and the conditions for general elections in Kosovo, refugee problems in South-Eastern Europe, trauma and reconciliation projects, youth unemployment and the status of women, children and young people in Kosovo, as well as problems and prospects for business in Kosovo. The meeting concluded with agreement that the Committee

should place emphasis on furthering dialogue between the ethnic groups in Kosovo, as well as between Pristina and Belgrade.

#### **OSCE PA Vice-President moderates round table in Kazakhstan**

Ihor Ostash, a Member of the Ukraine's Parliament, and the Vice-President of the OSCE PA, moderated the second round table on elections in Astana, Kazakhstan on January 25, was conducted in conjunction with the OSCE Centre in Almaty and the OSCE/ODIHR and in collaboration with the Kazakh Government.

Participants at the second round table included representatives from the Central Electoral Commission (CEC), the Kazakh Parliament and opposition parties. Omirbek Baigeldy, the head of the Kazakh Delegation to the OSCE PA, also attended. They discussed ways in which the electoral legislation, in particular as concerns the formation and independence of election commissions, could be improved.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Ostash noted that the discussions, though at times difficult, had taken place in an open format and that there was agreement among participants on key areas in which electoral changes were needed. He urged all the participants to submit their proposed changes to Zagipa Balieva, head of the CEC and chair of a Government Working Group on improving election legislation, who was tasked by the round table with compiling recommendations for the next round table, scheduled for May.

#### **PA President Severin addresses seminar in Italy**

OSCE PA President Severin addressed a Seminar entitled 'Post-Communist transition ten years later: Challenges and outcomes for Europe and the

Role of Central European Initiative', held on 2 and 3 February, in Forlì. The Seminar, organized jointly by the University of Bologna and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the aegis of the Italian Presidency of the Central European Initiative (CEI), focused on the present challenges in the Central and East European regions and on the future role of the CEI in the regional co-operation process.

In conjunction with his visit to Italy, President Severin had meetings with the

President of the Senate, Nicola Mancino and the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Luciano Violante, as well as with the Italian Delegation to the OSCE PA, headed by Senator Antonio Duva.

#### **Preparations for the Tenth Annual Session of the PA in Paris**

Vitaly Evseyev, Deputy Secretary General, Ms. Gina Dark, Conference Coordinator and Kurt Andersen, General Services Officer, visited Paris on 29 and 30 January, in order to see the premises

for the next Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Organizational arrangements of the Session were discussed with the French hosts and it was agreed that the inaugural and plenary sessions would take place in the Hemicycle, Palais Bourbon, the historical meeting room of the Assemblée Nationale. The text of the Agreement between the OSCE PA and the French Parliament was discussed, as well as other documents pertaining to the Annual Session.

## **NEWS** from the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

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#### **Representative on Freedom of the Media visits Georgia and Russia**

From 21 to January 2001, Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, visited Tbilisi, Georgia, as well as Moscow and St. Petersburg in the Russian Federation. The main purpose of the visit was the presentation of the OSCE freedom-of-the-media book, *The Caucasus: In Defence of the Future*, published last November in three languages, Russian, English and German. This volume, the second in the "In Defence of the Future" series, is a collection of essays and articles by 26 well-known Caucasian and Russian authors devoted to the present-day situation in the Caucasus and the search for possible ways of resolving the conflicts. Mr. Duve was accompanied on the visit to Georgia and Russia by the former OSCE Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the Caucasus, Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini. In both Russia and Georgia, Mr. Duve and Ambassador Tagliavini encountered keen interest in this unique

volume, a cultural premiere which for the first time invited writers from cultures and peoples in the Caucasus to contribute to a book on the future of their region.

During the visit, at a press conference at the Moscow State University School of Journalism, Mr. Duve presented an overview of the work of his Office in 2000 to a group of Russian journalists, foreign correspondents, students and faculty of the School.

In Moscow, he met with the Deputy Minister of Education and discussed that Ministry's proposed programme against racism and hate speech and envisaged future co-operation. He exchanged views on his mandate and press freedom with the Director of the Department of Information and Press of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He gave a radio interview to "Echo of Moscow," which was broadcast subsequently nation-wide on NTV.

In St Petersburg, Mr. Duve participated in a well-attended round table on freedom of the media at the House of

Journalists. He laid flowers at the grave of the murdered journalist Galina Starovoitova.

Several Petersburg television channels carried footage of the Representative's visit, and newspapers such as *Izvestia* and *Kommersant*, ran articles about freedom of the media and about the Caucasus book presentation.

#### **FOM adviser visits the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia**

The Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media is working closely with the newly established OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Alexander Ivanko, Adviser to the Representative, travelled to the FRY to consult with the Mission in establishing the priorities of its future media mandate. The mandate should include issues related to transparency of ownership of electronic media, frequency allocation and management, and the restructuring of RTS (Radio-Television Serbia) into a public service broadcaster.

## **Media developments in the Czech Republic remain under observation**

The Representative on Freedom of the Media continued closely monitoring the developments in the situation regarding Czech Television, where a change in the management structure made in December 2000, which had not met with the approval of the journalists, who had thought it to be politically motivated, resulted in mass demonstrations and attracted massive media attention. On 11

January, Mr. Duve reported to the OSCE Permanent Council on the case, welcoming assurances from the Foreign Minister, Jan Kavan, that the Government was addressing the legal core of the problems by changing the law on Czech Television.

## **Duve intervenes over developments in Belarus Media**

On 10 January, the Representative on Freedom of the Media, intervened with the Belarus Foreign Minister, Mikhail

Khvostov, to express his concern regarding the placing under seal by the tax authorities of the printing equipment owned by the private publishing house Magic. Freimut Duve recalled two previous letters he had sent to the Belarus Foreign Minister on the Magic issue. The Representative also noted with interest the Belarusian President's recently expressed desire to "normalize to the maximum" Belarus's relations with the OSCE, among other European organizations.

# **REPORT** from the OSCE Secretary General and the Secretariat

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## **Working consultations take place during visit to Moscow**

On 11 January, the Secretary General, Jan Kubis, travelled to Moscow for working consultations with Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, and the Deputy Foreign Minister Yevgenii Gusarov. He also met Director Chizov, the Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration Pritchot'ko, the Chairman of the Duma Committee on International Affairs, Dimitry Rogozin, and the Secretary General of the Council of Collective Security, Valery Nikolayenko.

During his discussions, the Secretary General's Russian interlocutors expressed the country's strong commitment to the OSCE. They stressed that the Russian Federation considered the OSCE a key element in the European security architecture, and was in favour of deepening and expanding co-operation and genuine political consultations. They also said Russia would be guided by pragmatism and realism in its activities towards this end, and expected a similar approach from its partners.

Among the main topics discussed

were questions related to the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya, ways to improve OSCE work and activities in the economic and environmental areas, better implementation of the Platform for Co-operative Security and inter-institutional co-operation based on a good understanding of development of the parallel integration processes in the Euro-Atlantic-Asiatic area. Also covered were problems stemming from new threats and challenges, such as terrorism and extremism, and ways to address these on the basis of lessons learned from both successful and also unsuccessful efforts.

In Moscow, the OSCE Secretary General also met the Ambassadors of Romania and the Visegrad Group, as well as Ambassador Alfred Missong, Head of the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya.

## **Heads of Mission and Troika Meetings held in Bucharest**

Together with senior staff members of the Secretariat, the Secretary General participated on 22 and 23 January in the Heads of Mission Meeting organized by the Romanian Chairmanship in

Bucharest. Other Secretariat participants included the Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, Ambassador Marton Krasznai, the Director of the Department of Human Resources, Sean Hand, the Director of the Department of Management and Finance, Michael von der Schulenburg, and the OSCE Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities, Thomas Price.

The meeting afforded an opportunity to lay out the basic priorities of the Secretariat for the year 2001, and enabled the new directors of the Human Resources and Management and Finance departments to introduce their ideas on the co-operation of their departments with the OSCE field activities.

The Heads of Missions and the Chairmanship also discussed the security situation in various field activity areas of the OSCE, especially in those where a deterioration was possible, as well as technical and other measures to enhance the security and safety of the OSCE staff.

Following this event, the Secretary General participated in the meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Troika, which took

place on 23 January in Bucharest. During the talks, he met separately with the Chairman-in-Office, Romania's Foreign Minister, Mircea Geoana, and took part in a working breakfast with the heads or representatives of the OSCE Institutions.

### **Kubis holds meeting with the King of Jordan**

On 24 January, the Secretary General met with His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan, who was paying an official visit to Austria. During their meeting in Vienna, he informed the Jordanian Head of State about the current activities of the OSCE and its Secretariat, placing emphasis on the experience of and perspectives for co-operation with the Mediterranean and other OSCE Partners for Co-operation. Among other issues, they discussed the 1999 seminar on the 'Implementation of human dimension commitments', which was held in Amman, and the Seminar on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, due to take place in the spring of 2001 in Seoul, Korea. His Majesty expressed his interest in further developing this co-operation, with an outreach to civil society and non-governmental organizations. He extended an invitation to the Secretary General to visit Jordan, which was gladly accepted.

### **Consultations take place in Stockholm with Swedish EU Presidency**

The Secretary General travelled on 29 January to Stockholm, where he held official consultations with Swedish Government representatives and gave a speech at the Stockholm International Forum on the subject of 'Combating intolerance.'

During his visit to Sweden, which currently holds the Presidency of the



*The new Head of the Permanent Delegation of Spain to the OSCE, Ambassador Joaquin Perez Gomez, presents his credentials to Secretary General Jan Kubis*

European Union (EU), the Secretary General met with the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh; Kristter Bringeus, Deputy Director-General of the Division for European Security Policy; Hans Magnuson, Deputy Director-General of the Division for East and Central Europe; Robert Rydberg, Director of the Division for European Security Policy and Chairman of the EU Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management; and Sven-Olof Petersson, Director-General for Political Affairs. In a separate meeting, he discussed questions related to the REACT concept (Rapid Reaction Assistance and Co-operation Teams), training and mission staffing with representatives of the Foreign Ministry, the Swedish National Police Board, the Swedish International Development Agency, and the Swedish Armed Forces International Centre.

The Secretary General's Swedish interlocutors expressed the strong and continued support of Sweden for the

OSCE as a cornerstone of the pan-European security architecture. They appreciated the flexibility and effectiveness of the OSCE, and its ability to find quickly the appropriate political and operational solutions to questions and problems. The detailed discussion in many respects followed the list of priorities Sweden has put forward and is promoting during its current EU presidency. Prominent among the topics were matters related to conflict prevention and civilian crisis-management mechanisms, including REACT, ways and means of enhancing OSCE/EU co-operation in these fields and in general, OSCE police-related activities, and OSCE activities in the economic and environmental

area and ways to improve these. With regard to regional matters, the situation in the Caucasus was discussed (in the light of the travel there by both Minister Lindh and the CiO in February), as well as the Western Balkans and Belarus. Finally, ideas were exchanged on how to improve the work of the OSCE.

### **New Head of Spain's Mission to OSCE presents his credentials**

The new Head of the Permanent Mission of Spain to the OSCE, Ambassador Joaquin Perez Gomez, presented his credentials to Secretary General Jan Kubis on 19 January. Among his previous postings, he was Spain's Ambassador in Belgrade, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for four years until 2000, and held the same rank in Sofia, Bulgaria between 1987 and 1993.

### **Symbol of global peace received by Secretary General**

During December, the Secretary General received Patrick Petit, International

and United Nations Affairs Co-ordinator of the New York-based World Peace Prayer Society. Mr Petit was in Vienna to hand over a symbol of the Society's wish to promote a culture of peace in Europe. On behalf of the OSCE, Mr Kubis accepted the gift of a 'Peace Pole', a two-metre high hexagonal wooden column, engraved on each face with the words "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in six languages. Mr Petit said the Society was dedicating the pole to the OSCE to highlight the Organization's achievements during the past 25 years. In response, the Secretary General thanked the Society and said the honour was a good omen for the work of the Organization in the 21st century. The pole has been provisionally erected in the Hofburg, while a fitting permanent location is decided upon.

#### **Preparatory seminar for Economic Forum held in Brussels**

The impact of globalization on traditional notions of good governance was the subject of a two-day seminar, organized jointly by the European Commission and the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, in Brussels, from 30 to 31 January. The seminar on 'Good Governance in the Public and Private Sectors against the Background of Globalization' is one of three preparatory seminars for the OSCE Economic Forum 2001, which will take place in Prague from 15 to 18 May, on the theme of 'Transparency and good governance in economic matters'.



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The challenge of globalization and its impact on traditional notions of governance has demonstrated a growing need for international co-operation, co-ordination and common strategies to confront new problems at the global level. The Brussels seminar addressed environmental legislation, consumer protection, labour standards etc., which affect the everyday lives and the security of citizens. Pascal Lamy, the EU Commissioner for Trade, opened the Seminar together with Daniel Dalanu, representing the Romanian Chairmanship of the OSCE, and Thomas Price, the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

#### **'For Human Dignity' – first OSCE training video launched**

A video about the origins and work of the OSCE was officially launched on 31 January at a presentation to OSCE Delegations in Vienna. The video, entitled 'For human dignity', comprises a historical section describing how the OSCE evolved out of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and also gives a picture of the current status of the Organization. It was shot at the Permanent Council in Vienna, as well as at the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights building in Warsaw and at several locations in the OSCE Mission to Kosovo.

People interviewed in the video include the OSCE Secretary General, Jan Kubis, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoep, the Director of ODIHR, Gerard Stoudmann, the Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve, and the former German Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher. It also contains archive material on the history of the Organization.

This is the first video that has been produced about the OSCE. It is intended to be used for training and educational purposes with OSCE staff, foreign ministry officials and students as the main target groups; however, it is hoped that it will also be of interest to the general public. The video is 30 minutes long and was produced by Preview Production in Munich.