

Full Establishment of the KVM Expected by Mid-January



OSCE verifiers on the road in Kosovo.

The challenging task of deploying the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) is continuing. Six weeks after the signing of the Agreement between the OSCE and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) on the establishment of a KVM on 16 October, the Organization has established the Mission headquarters in Priština and has identified 1,600 potential mission members. It has drawn up a detailed concept of operations and it has put in place the necessary training, logistics and command structures to deploy and maintain the Mission.

The KVM will verify the FRY's compliance with United Nations Security Council resolutions 1160 and 1199; it

will verify maintenance of the cease-fire, monitor movement of forces, provide assistance in the return of refugees and displaced persons, supervise elections, help in forming elected bodies of self-administration and police forces, and promote human rights and democracy-building. The Head of Mission, Ambassador William Walker, told Reuters on 29 November that the OSCE interpretation of its mission is very comprehensive: "the Yugoslav Government is reading the Agreement in the narrowest possible way and we're reading it in the widest possible way."

Regional Centres will soon be set up in Prizren, Gnjilane, Peć and Kosovska

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Mitrovica (see map on page 3). Smaller Co-ordination Centres will then be set up by the individual regional centres. All regional centres will be operational by the end of January 1999.

On 5 November in Warsaw the Chairman-in-Office, Polish Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek, met Ambassador Walker and discussed some of the major challenges of the operation including security of OSCE personnel. He also met with the newly appointed deputies of the KVM (who are from France, the Russian Federation, Germany, Italy, the UK and Norway).

On the same day, Ambassador Walker, together with his deputies and representatives of international organizations, took part in a target-oriented meeting organized by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) on the human dimension aspects of the KVM regarded as crucial for the success of the KVM. In this context it was recommended that an assertive attitude should be adopted towards promoting respect for human dimension commitments by all sides. This is a key to ensuring the permanent return of displaced persons to their homes and for creating conditions allowing for the holding of elections. The ODIHR has drawn up 'Guidelines for Human Dimension Tasks.' Between 22 and 26 November the ODIHR carried out a preliminary fact-finding mission to Belgrade and Priština to conduct a preliminary assessment of conditions for elections.

On 11 November Ambassador Walker took up his duties in Priština. Upon his arrival he told reporters that this "effectively marks the start of what is an unprecedented international effort to bring stability and peace to all people in Kosovo." On the same day, the Permanent Council approved the 1998 budget for the KVM in the amount of ATS 756.5 million. A cost estimate for the budget of the KVM for one year has been put at ATS 2.36 billion (approximately USD 204 million).

Procurement for the operation has been going on since early October and has accelerated with the release of funds. Orders for vehicles (including armoured and "soft-skin" four-wheel drives, cargo vans, mini-buses and ambulances), computer equipment, communications systems, security equipment and office furniture have been placed with suppliers. Deliveries have begun and will con-

tinue as rapidly as possible to meet the requirements of the Mission.

As of the end of November, KVM staff numbered 290 (including local staff). Pledges for 1,400 others have been made by the participating States. Their deployment will be phased over the next few weeks as the necessary arrangements concerning logistics, procurement and housing are finalized. The deployment capacity is 200 to 250 verifiers per week and the targeted projection is to have approximately 1,500 verifiers in the region by mid-January.

The verifiers arrive in Skopje in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and then travel to Brezovica, in the south of Kosovo, where they are given thorough training at the KVM Induction Centre. From there they are deployed to the Regional Centres and Headquarters. The first training course was held on 23 November and future courses will train 125 at a time.

Steps have been taken to ensure the security of the mission, including precise determination of President Milošević's pledges regarding the safety of the mission, and co-ordination between the KVM and the NATO Air Verification Mission. NATO has deployed an "extraction force" in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Informal talks have also been carried out with the Kosovar Albanians by members of the international community to ensure respect for the security of the verifiers by the KLA. Mines are a concern and the KVM mine action centre is collecting raw data which will be verified when operational capability allows.

The situation in Kosovo has improved over the past few weeks. The Kosovo Diplomatic Observer Mission (KDOM),

which, at the end of November, numbered 268 personnel, regularly patrols the province. KDOM officials, who will eventually be integrated into the KVM, have been engaged in negotiations to separate opposing forces and, by their very presence, have created a more stable environment. With the exception of isolated incidents, tensions have been reduced in a number of areas following successful KDOM negotiations with the Serb Police (MUP) to reduce patrolling activity and with the KLA to stay off the main roads. Where cease-fire violations take place, KDOM has often been successful in preventing further escalation. They have, for example, successfully negotiated the release of a Serbian policeman held by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and, together with Ambassador Walker and United States Special Envoy for Kosovo, Ambassador Christopher Hill, secured the release of two Serbian journalists of the Tanjug news agency who had been held by the KLA for more than a month.

Most internally displaced persons previously living out of doors have come out of the forests and down from the mountainsides and are now living in shelters. This is attributed to the improved security environment created, in large measure, by the international presence in Kosovo. Some reports of harassment of returnees by Serb police have been received by the KDOM. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is distributing food and KDOM is seeking to facilitate the re-supply of electricity to affected regions of the province. There are still some reports of refugees entering Albania.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has drawn attention to the problem of missing persons.

Negotiations on the future status of Kosovo continued in Priština and Belgrade throughout November. Ambassador Hill has submitted draft proposals which are being reviewed by the parties. Substantial efforts by the international

community are being made to facilitate a political settlement of the conflict.

During November, Ambassador Walker met with both Serbian President Slobodan Milošević and Ibrahim Rugova

(President of the Democratic League of Kosovo) to discuss the situation in the province and the development of the OSCE Mission. Ambassador Walker has stressed that he will be impartial in his approach.



Geremek: Charter Should Provide a “Vision of Europe”

In an address to a Re-inforced Permanent Council meeting on 12 November, the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Polish Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek, outlined his views on the Document-Charter on European Security. The Charter has been under discussion since the 1994 Budapest Summit, at which a decision was taken to launch a broad and comprehensive discussion on all aspects of security for the purpose of devising “a common and comprehensive security model for Europe for the twenty-first century”. A decision on guidelines for an OSCE Document Charter on European Security was taken at the 1997 Copenhagen Ministerial Council Meeting. On the basis of those guidelines, participating States have been developing the Document. Most of this work has been carried out in a Security Model Committee in Vienna; it intensified in the run-up to the Seventh Ministerial Council meeting which was held in Oslo on 2 and 3 December.

In his address to the Permanent Council, Mr. Geremek said that “at this historic juncture, nations look to their statesmen for a vision of Europe which will nurture the feeling of security on a much more democratic basis than before.” He said that “it is the duty of statesmen and academics of our generation to provide such a vision, and a professional duty of diplomats to transform it into a work-

able system” and pointed out how the Charter could play a significant role in this respect.

Mr. Geremek noted that the Charter “should not petrify the existing arrangements, but constitute a living document, the embodiment of a flexible vision”. He emphasized that this vision should be based on reality and should address a number of fundamental questions including the relationship between democracy and security and the relationship between economic integration and security. Other points that he raised dealt with the following questions: How can the principle of the indivisibility of European security be reconciled with the concurrent trends towards globalization and national and regional fragmentation?”, “What dimensions of security should be covered in the new vision of security?” and “How comprehensive can this vision of security be without collapsing under its own weight?”

Mr. Geremek also asked rhetorically, “What is the future of the nation-state and its relationship to more powerful and invigorated international organizations and trans-national bodies” and “What would be the most productive relationship between various international organizations and institutions in the evolving security architecture?”

Stressing that efforts in this direction should be rooted in pragmatism, Mr. Geremek pointed out that the role of the OSCE in European security would be defined as much by its relations with other organizations and institutions and through its activities on the ground as by negotiations on the Charter. He cited the Kosovo Verification Mission as a pertinent example. “In other words,” said Geremek, “only a good marriage of theory and practice will lead to the firm establishment of the OSCE as one of the leading European security organizations, specializing in operational, comprehensive conflict-prevention and democracy-building and in the promotion of internationally recognized norms and principles”.

In his statement, Mr. Geremek also stressed the importance of harmonizing interests on arms control and on confidence and security-building measures, and he reiterated the Polish concept of European solidarity which he said was designed to invigorate the concept of co-operative security).

The Charter is one of the issues on the agenda of the Oslo Ministerial Council Meeting. The goal is to have the Charter adopted at the next summit which will be held in 1999.

FULL COVERAGE OF THE OSLO MINISTERIAL COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE GIVEN IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE OSCE NEWSLETTER.

Chairman-in-Office Visits the Caucasus

The Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Polish Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek, made a four-day trip to Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan between 23 and 26 November. The official 15-member entourage included representatives of the OSCE Troika, the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the OSCE Secretariat. Fifteen international journalists also accompanied the Chairman-in-Office.

Mr. Geremek told his hosts that he came with a message: that their countries are important to the OSCE and that resolving the conflicts in the region is a matter of great concern to the whole of Europe. During his visit, Memoranda of Understanding were signed between the OSCE and all three Governments with the aim of deepening co-operation especially in the human rights field. The Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan also welcomed the proposal to open OSCE offices in their capitals as a means to facilitate this enhanced co-operation.

In Georgia, Mr. Geremek met with high-level officials, including President Shevardnadze. They discussed the situation in the country as a whole, and in particular in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The Georgian authorities said that they were in favour of a more active role

for the OSCE in Abkhazia. Mr. Geremek said that the OSCE was ready to consider the establishment of a presence in the Gali region to assist and support democratic institutions and processes.

Regarding the situation in South Ossetia, the Georgian Government expressed gratitude for the OSCE's supportive role in efforts to resolve the conflict, and pointed to some positive developments, especially the start of the return of refugees. On 23 November, a small delegation, headed by a representative of the Chairman-in-Office, Ambassador Jerzy Nowak, went to Tskhinvali, where they held talks with South Ossetian officials.

The Georgian authorities also expressed their gratitude for the support given by the OSCE in the recent elections in Georgia. At his concluding press conference in Tbilisi, the Chairman-in-Office expressed his firm impression that the democratic process in Georgia is irreversible.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was foremost on the agenda during the visits to Armenia and Azerbaijan. All parties involved in the conflict agreed that the Minsk process is the suitable framework for the continuation of the peace process. The Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan as well as the leadership of

Nagorno-Karabakh expressed their firm commitment to support efforts to achieve a resumption of peace negotiations. At the suggestion of the Chairman-in-Office, all parties involved agreed to an exchange of prisoners of war.

In his talks with Armenian President Kocharian and other high-level officials in Yerevan, Mr. Geremek pointed to the economic and environmental dimensions as part of a comprehensive concept of security. The Armenian authorities briefed the OSCE delegation on recent developments towards reforming the country's economic system, as well as initiatives aimed at strengthening the rule of law in the country.

In his talks in Baku with President Aliyev and governmental officials, Mr. Geremek paid particular attention to human rights and the freedom of the media. The Azerbaijani authorities warmly welcomed the suggestion to open a permanent OSCE Centre in Baku as a way to enhance co-operation in the human rights field.

In all three countries visited, the OSCE delegation met with representatives of opposition parties and human rights groups, as well as representatives of international organizations active in the region.

Minsk Process at a Sensitive Stage

Although the cease-fire between Armenia and Azerbaijan in and around Nagorno-Karabakh is still holding, the process designed to bring about a political settlement, led by the OSCE in the context of the so-called Minsk Group, has still not made any significant breakthrough.

Between 9 and 11 November the three Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group (from France, the Russian Federation and the United States of America) visited the region of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In discussions in Baku, Yerevan and Stepanakert they made a proposal that is based on the principle of a "common state". Each of the Parties indicated their readiness to study the proposal carefully, to signify whether it might represent a basis for formal negotiations, and to provide the Co-Chairmen with a formal written statement of their official positions at the earliest opportunity.

The Co-Chairmen briefed the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Polish Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek, on the outcome of the talks at a meeting in Warsaw on 19 November. In a statement released after the meeting, Mr. Geremek expressed appreciation for the report, underscored his assessment that the Minsk Process was at a sensitive stage, endorsed the Co-Chairs' efforts, and called upon all the Parties to examine the new proposal seriously to see whether it could be accepted as a basis for resuming negotiations. He emphasized the necessity for the parties to refrain from making public statements or pursuing temporary tactical advantage through means that might negate the prospects for commencing early negotiations. In that connection, the Chairman-in-Office called on all the parties to demonstrate the political will to negotiate and compromise in the interest of achieving a mutually acceptable and advantageous resolution of the conflict.

The Chairman-in-Office and the Co-Chairmen emphasized the importance of the continuation of the existing cease-fire on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and the Line of Contact. They welcomed the parties' continued assurances of their desire to resolve the conflict through peaceful negotiations.

During his visit to the Caucasus from 23 to 26 November, Mr. Geremek was informed in Yerevan that both the Armenian Government and the Nagorno-Karabakh leadership considered the latest proposal of the Co-Chairmen to be an appropriate basis for further negotiations aimed at achieving a lasting settlement of the conflict. However, during Mr. Geremek's visit to Baku, the Azeri President and representatives of the Government of Azerbaijan voiced their opposition to this proposal. Nevertheless, all parties to the conflict indicated their readiness and willingness to continue their efforts to achieve a settlement in the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group.



On 19 November **Mr. Daniel Tarschys, Secretary General of the Council of Europe**, addressed the Permanent Council. He spoke about recent developments within the Council of Europe (particularly the 103rd Session of the Committee of Ministers) as well as about co-operation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE. Concerning the latter, he described the issues on which and the geographic areas where the two organizations are co-operating, and spoke of the continued need for communication, consultation and co-operation. He spoke in particular of the Council of Europe's willingness to support the human dimension activities of the Kosovo Verification Mission and to co-operate within the framework of the Platform for Co-operative Security.

At the same Permanent Council meeting, **Under-Secretary General Vladimir Petrovsky, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva**, delivered an address in which he focused on efforts to enhance co-operation between the United Nations and regional organizations in general and to deepen relations between the UN and the OSCE in particular. This was Mr. Petrovsky's first address to the Permanent Council.

More than 100,000 users (four million hits) have accessed the **OSCE website** since it went on-line in October 1996. The website is in the process of being updated and will be relaunched in the coming weeks.

Human Dimension Implementation Review Meeting

Over 700 participants gathered in Warsaw from 26 October to 6 November for the fourth OSCE Implementation Meeting on Human Dimension issues, organized by the ODIHR. The Meeting was generally considered to be an improvement on previous years, largely owing to the adoption of a new set of modalities by the OSCE Permanent Council on 9 July.

The new format was an important innovation, aimed at strengthening and increasing the efficiency of the OSCE's human dimension review process. The result was a shorter, more focused meeting, with side events on specific issues in addition to the plenary sessions. According to the new modalities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are now recognized as full participants in the OSCE implementation meetings, giving them equal access to the list of speakers with participating States and international organizations. This resulted in lively debate both during the plenary sessions, and during several new side events, thanks also to the competence and authority of the moderator, Ambassador Leif Mevik of Norway.

The opening plenary of the Meeting was addressed by the Chairman-in-Office,

Polish Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek, the Director of the ODIHR, Ambassador Gérard Stoudmann, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr. Max van der Stoel, and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Mr. Freimut Duve. The OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Giancarlo Aragona, and the Head of the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission, Ambassador William Walker, addressed the closing plenary. In his opening statement, Mr. Geremek emphasized that respect for human rights is a condition for, not an obstacle to, long-term stability.

Attendance at the Meeting was much higher than in previous years. Participants included representatives of the OSCE participating States and representatives of OSCE institutions and missions, two Mediterranean partners for co-operation (Egypt and Israel), the two partners for co-operation Japan and Korea, representatives of eight international organizations and approximately 200 non-governmental organizations. The turnout of NGOs was particularly high and they contributed extensively to debate in the plenary sessions and in the side events. Eight background reports were also prepared for the meeting, one of them by the Council of Europe. They

are available on the ODIHR website (<http://www.osce.odihr.org>).

The five side events were organized at the conference site and were open to all Meeting participants. They were designed to provide additional focus on specific issues, and included a meeting with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, a round-table on freedom of religion, a round-table on gender issues, a round-table on redressing torture, and a two-session round-table on national policies on Roma and Sinti. Attendance was very high at all these meetings. The side meetings produced an additional list of recommendations and ideas for OSCE participating States. The holding of such side meetings was considered a success by the vast majority of participants, and the ODIHR wishes to continue this practice at future Human Dimension Implementation Meetings.

The Rapporteur's report of the meeting, as well as the consolidated summaries and reports of the round-tables, are available on the ODIHR website. The next meeting on implementation will be a part of the review conference which should be held prior to the 1999 OSCE Summit.

Conference Looks at Problems and Solutions to Environmental Problems in the Black Sea Region

The OSCE, together with the Government of Turkey and in co-operation with the Black Sea Economic Co-operation, hosted a seminar in Istanbul on 5 and 6 November on "Sub-Regional Environmental Problems and Co-operative Approaches to Solving Them." Participants in this seminar included government and non-governmental representatives from OSCE participating States, particularly those from the Black Sea region, as well as representatives of international organizations and members of parliament.

The OSCE had several objectives in holding this seminar. First, it was the second in a series of sub-regional seminars – all on the same topic – designed to begin building an agenda for the next Economic Forum (to be held from 25 to 28 May 1999 in Prague), the theme of which will be "Security Aspects in the Field of the Environment". Second, by facilitating the efforts of States in the sub-region to define environmental problems collectively, the OSCE hopes to achieve a genuinely collaborative approach to devising and implementing solutions to these problems. Finally, the conference was designed to raise aware-

ness of some of the key environmental problems in the region as part of the OSCE's ongoing work to prevent conflicts and foster security and co-operation.

In her welcoming address to the conference, the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Turkey, Ms. Imren Aykut, vividly described some of the problems in the region. She called on the Black Sea littoral countries to take responsibility for the realization of their own initiatives. She drew the attention of the participants to the dangerous situation in and around Istanbul caused by excessive maritime traffic, a theme to which many participants returned throughout the seminar. She stressed that solving the environmental problems of the Black Sea is not a zero-sum game; if we can help one state to comply [with the relevant international conventions], all states in the region benefit. However, as she put it, "if the Black Sea loses, we all lose."

Mr. Thomas Price, the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, gave several examples of environmental security problems in and around the Black Sea including nuclear

safety issues, shipping and transport issues, and uneven compliance with international conventions, which can generate tensions within and between States. He called on States of the region to adopt a more co-operative approach in tackling these issues.

Keynote speakers explained the important role played by the Black Sea Economic Co-operation, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, and other parts of the United Nations system, the European Commission, and other actors in helping to support ongoing environmental clean-up activities in the region.

Many participants commented that this was the first time that they had been in a forum in the Black Sea region that combined environmentalists, economists and security experts. They welcomed the OSCE's approach in bringing together diplomats, government specialists in each of these fields, the private sector, and NGOs and expressed the hope that future activities of this kind would help generate effective solutions to environmental security problems in the region.

Small Arms and Light Weapons: An Issue for the OSCE?

Between 9 and 11 November a workshop was held in Vienna entitled "Small Arms and Light Weapons: An Issue for the OSCE?" The meeting was sponsored by the Governments of Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, and Switzerland

in association with the British-American Security Information Council.

Close to one hundred international experts from governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), indus-

try representatives and academics attended the meeting and discussed issues surrounding the small arms and light weapons problem and, in particular, the potential role of the OSCE in international efforts to address this challenge.

Participants noted that small arms and light weapons, from assault rifles to shoulder-launched defence missile systems, constitute a growing problem in civil war situations. The excessive and uncontrolled accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons have been observed to have a destabilizing effect on intra-state conflicts and on civil society. Many of the countries concerned are among the poorest in the world, and it is also a problem that effects the OSCE area.

The first day of the workshop was dedicated to discussion of the problem in general, and examined in greater detail a number of issues and case studies related to the problem. Various initiatives designed to combat the spread and proliferation of small arms and light weapons were highlighted, particularly the work done by other regional organi-

zations like the Organization of American States and the European Union in respect to illicit trafficking. Discussions on the second day focused on harmonizing international controls on legal transfers and explored ways to integrate these policies into conflict prevention initiatives.

Speaking on behalf of the conference sponsors, Ambassador Johannes Landmann, Head of the Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the OSCE, told the Permanent Council on 18 November that “the sponsoring countries believe that there is a role for the OSCE in the efforts to address problems resulting from the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.” He said that this conclusion was prompted by “a widespread awareness among the participants of the menace posed by the uncontrolled prolifera-

tion of small arms and light weapons to European security, and by a growing sense of the need to confront this threat collectively, a responsibility stemming from the concept of the indivisibility of security.”

Ambassador Landmann said that “the workshop recognized a range of comparative advantages that are indicative of the constructive role our Organization can play in addressing the issues involved.” Four potential areas of involvement for the OSCE on this issue were cited: the enhancement of measures with respect to the legal possession, use and transfer of small arms and light weapons; the development of measures to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons; measures with respect to arms already in circulation; and measures to enhance peace-building.

Secretary General Rationalizes Secretariat

The OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Giancarlo Aragona, has restructured the Secretariat to respond to the growing operational tasks of the Organization. In line with a “decision on enhancing the operational capabilities of the OSCE Secretariat” taken at the 1997 Copenhagen Ministerial Council Meeting and following a decision of the Permanent Council based on recommendations made by the Chairman of a Group of Experts, Ambassador Lars Vissing of Denmark, the Secretary General has introduced a number of changes.

The Secretariat has been reorganized on the basis of two departments. The Conflict Prevention Centre focuses on the support of the Chairman-in-Office

in the implementation of OSCE policies, in particular the monitoring of OSCE field activities and co-operation with other international organizations and institutions. It includes a Mission Liaison Section, a Section for External Co-operation, a Mission Staffing Unit and the Co-ordinator for Training and Capacity Building. The Department for Administration and Operations contains all financial, administrative, personnel, information technology, logistics and conference services. A Press and Public Information Section has been established in the Office of the Secretary General. The Office of the Secretary General also includes executive support, legal services and the internal auditor.

The Secretary General said that the reforms are designed to improve the balance between the system of temporary augmentations (used for coping with larger missions), and a more stable structure “where institutional memory, knowledge of OSCE procedures, rapidity of response and a minimum corporate culture are safeguarded.”

He cautioned however that further measures are necessary to strengthen planning, preparedness, and the related start-up capacity, financial management and control, the human resources capability and information technology systems.



News from the Field

The OSCE currently has Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kosovo (FRY), Latvia, Skopje (fYROM), Moldova, Tajikistan and Ukraine as well as an Assistance Group to Chechnya, a Presence in Albania and an Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus. The following are highlights from the work of some of the field operations during the past month.

Update from Albania

During November, much of the focus of the OSCE Presence in Albania was on the constitutional referendum. The OSCE-sponsored Administrative Centre for the Co-ordination of Assistance and Public Participation contributed significantly to the draft constitution. In the weeks leading up to the referendum the Presence followed political developments in the country and worked to defuse tensions in the Central Election Commission. The Presence assisted the ODIHR and parliamentary observers in observing the referendum on 22 November.

The Presence is monitoring the movement of refugees, and working with the Government and international organizations on ways of coping with the problem.

The situation along the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is relatively calm, in large part to the onset of winter.

On 10 November the Field Office in Shkodra was robbed and vandalized. Disturbances were reported outside the Prefecture building in the city on the same day. On 11 November the Permanent Council issued a statement in which it reacted "with deep dismay" to the two violent incidents and said that they "raise serious concerns about the security situation in northern Albania and especially the safety of international personnel." The Council went on to say that "the rule of law must be strengthened

in the country in order that stability can be restored and democracy prevail."

Work of the Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus Reviewed

Two high-level meetings were held in November in Belarus which reviewed the work of the Advisory and Monitoring Group (AMG) in 1998 and looked ahead to its activities in 1999. On 2 November, representatives of the AMG and the Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the chairpersons of five working groups (on elections, ombudsman, mass media, penal code and penal procedure) reviewed co-operation between the AMG and Belarus during 1998, the first year of its operation. After the meeting, which was attended by Foreign Minister Ivan Antonovich and the Head of the Group Ambassador Hans-Georg Wieck, the Foreign Ministry issued a statement to the effect that "in spite of a number of essentially different points of view regarding evaluation of the social and political situation in our country, the sides confirmed that it is necessary to continue a constructive dialogue between Belarus and the OSCE."

On 10 November Ambassador Wieck met with President Alexander Lukashenko to review the work accomplished by the Group in 1998 in implementing its task of advising Belarus in the development of democratic institutions and monitoring its compliance with OSCE commit-

ments. President Lukashenko confirmed his support for the work of the Group and the commitment of his country to comply with OSCE principles concerning democracy, the rule of law and human rights. In a statement issued by the AMG after the meeting, it was noted that the exchange of views between the President and the Head of the Group on the work of the AMG "will be continued in due course".

Assistance Group Praised for Humanitarian Assistance

The OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya has been closely following developments on issues relating to reform of the structure of government, the internal political situation, economic development and the security environment. On 23 November the Assistance Group met with President Aslan Maskhadov, who gave a briefing on internal and external relations. He expressed his deep gratitude to the Group for its active role in providing humanitarian aid to the poorest members of society.

Update from Georgia

The OSCE Mission to Georgia co-ordinated the observation of the 15 November local government elections, with 89 international observers from 28 countries taking part. The aim of this limited observation effort was to identify possible elements of the election process which could be strengthened and im-

proved in view of next year's parliamentary elections. A number of recommendations were made on possible areas of improvement.

In November, the Mission also continued its work in trying to accelerate consultations on the negotiation process concerning the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. Several meetings were held in Tbilisi and Tskhinvali.

The Mission is also closely following the issue of the return of Meskhetians deported during the Second World War. According to some polls, approximately 70,000 Meskhetians would like to return to Georgia.

Update from Tajikistan

Fighting raged through parts of Tajikistan during the first half of November as fighters led by rebel commander

Makhmud Khudoiberdiev occupied several strategic points in Leninabad Province. After three days of fighting, government forces (supported by fighters of the United Tajik Opposition) took back most of the region, driving the rebels into the mountains.

In meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan, the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and a number of ambassadors reiterated their support for the implementation of the General Agreement, and the process towards national reconciliation and the building of democracy. The Mission is contributing to the overall political process in the country by participating in meetings of the Commission for National Reconciliation.

On 25 and 26 November the "Tajik Centre for Information and Analysis of

Human Rights" jointly organized with the OSCE Mission and the Department on Constitutional Guarantees on Human Rights of the Presidency a round table on "National Human Rights Institutions in the Central Asian region – experience, challenges and perspectives." The Mission used the opportunity to relaunch its efforts to establish an Ombudsman institution.

Also on 25 and 26 November the Mission's Shahrituz Field Office, together with the Counterpart Consortium (an American NGO) and the Tajik NGO "Fidokor", held a training seminar for journalists.

As part of its continuing work in the economic dimension, the Mission has prepared a report on the Usoy Dam on Lake Sarez which, according to scientific studies, has potentially dangerous structural faults.

Heads of OSCE Missions and other Field Activities

OSCE MISSIONS

OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission.....	<i>Ambassador William G. Walker, USA</i>
Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.....	<i>Ambassador Robert L. Barry, USA</i>
Mission to Croatia.....	<i>Ambassador Tim Guldemann, Switzerland</i>
Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje.....	<i>Ambassador Faustino Troni, Italy</i>
Mission to Georgia.....	<i>Ambassador Jean-Michel Lacombe, France</i>
Mission to Estonia.....	<i>Ambassador Bernd Braun, Germany</i>
Mission to Moldova.....	<i>Ambassador John M. Evans, USA</i>
Mission to Latvia.....	<i>Ambassador David Johnson, UK</i>
Mission to Tajikistan.....	<i>Ambassador Marin Buhoara, Romania</i>
Mission to Ukraine.....	<i>Ambassador Charles Magee, USA</i>

OTHER OSCE FIELD ACTIVITIES

OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya.....	<i>Mr. Leon Wascinski, Poland</i>
OSCE Presence in Albania.....	<i>Ambassador Daan Everts, The Netherlands</i>
OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus.....	<i>Ambassador Hans-Georg Wieck, Germany</i>
Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the conflict dealt with by the Minsk Conference.....	<i>Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, Poland</i>
OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia.....	<i>Ambassador Gantcho Gantchev, Bulgaria</i>
OSCE Centre in Almaty.....	<i>Ambassador Ulrich Schöning, Germany</i>
OSCE Centre in Ashgabat.....	<i>Ambassador Paul Ullmann, Austria</i>
OSCE Centre in Bishkek.....	<i>Mr. Jerzy Więclaw, Poland</i>

OSCE ASSISTANCE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

The OSCE Representative to the Estonian Government Commission on Military Pensioners.....	<i>Cpt. Uwe Mahrenholtz, Germany</i>
The OSCE Representative to the Joint Committee on the Skrunđa Radar Station.....	<i>Col. Jürgen W. Hübschen, Germany</i>

REPORT from the High Commissioner on National Minorities

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

Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting, Warsaw

The High Commissioner delivered a speech at the opening of the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting in Warsaw at the end of October in which he announced the intention to conduct a study on Roma and Sinti, with a view to arriving at specific recommendations on this question. The part of the meeting devoted to minority issues and Roma and Sinti was also attended by the HCNM's personal adviser.

Consultations in New York

On 3 November, in New York, the High Commissioner organized an informal meeting with the participation of representatives from the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP, UNHCR, UNHCHR, and World Bank, and also from the Open Society Institute's Forced Migration Projects. The aim of the meeting was to exchange views on the strategies and approaches of the different institutions in early warning and conflict prevention, and discuss their practical experience in these areas.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

On 6 November the High Commissioner issued a statement on a number of inter-ethnic issues in the FYR of Macedonia. The statement was sent to President of the Republic Kiro Gligorov and to the leaders of all political parties represented in the newly elected Parliament.

The statement contains a number of recommendations on issues important for the promotion of harmonious inter-ethnic relations in the country, in particular on questions concerning the position of the Albanian minority. The HCNM expressed the opinion that steps to accommodate specific desiderata of the country's Albanian population could be taken within the current constitutional framework of the unitary state. He focused on three major topics: Albanian-language education, including higher education, access of Albanians to public service, and local self-government.

Regarding Albanian-language education, the High Commissioner, while acknowledging the efforts of the Government to increase the number of Albanian students in secondary schools and in the universities, stressed the need to undertake further reforms in this area. In particular, he recommended the creation of a new Albanian-language State University College for training teachers in Albanian-language elementary and secondary schools, which would be linked with the University of Skopje through an agreement on cooperation. The faculties of this new university, opened also for Macedonian language courses and for students of Macedonian or other ethnicity, would reflect the various groups of subjects taught in primary and secondary schools. He also suggested the establishment of a trilingual (English, Macedonian, Albanian) private Higher Education Centre for Public Administration and Business. He stressed that these steps in the sphere of Albanian-language

higher education should be undertaken within the framework of an integrated national system of education in the country. International assistance will be necessary to implement them. The first step ought to be preparation of a comprehensive feasibility study.

The High Commissioner also recommended that the new Government should develop a concrete plan to intensify the search for persons of Albanian ethnicity who could be considered as candidates for public service and that it should have regular consultations with the Albanian parties on this subject.

On the question of decentralization, the HCNM recommended a number of steps aimed at strengthening local self-government seen as one of the important instruments which are at the disposal of a unitary state to accommodate local needs, including local needs of persons belonging to national minorities.

Estonia

On 11 November the High Commissioner responded to an invitation from the Chairman of the Parliamentary Constitutional Committee to send HCNM experts to Tallinn for consultations. The purpose of the visit was for HCNM experts to consult with members of the Constitutional Committee about proposed amendments to the Citizenship Law regarding children born stateless in Estonia since the country regained independence.

Conference in Graz, Austria

From 13 to 16 November, the HCNM's personal adviser, Ambassador Scheltema, participated in a Conference organized by the EU Presidency on educational issues in South-East Europe. At the conference, which was held in the framework of the Royaumont process, Ambassador Scheltema delivered a speech on behalf of the High Commissioner on the activities of the HCNM in

this area. In particular, he focused on the recent proposals made by the HCNM concerning educational projects in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the situation in this regard in Romania. He also drew the attention of the participants to the "Hague Recommendations regarding the Educational Rights of National Minorities" which had been formulated in 1996 by relevant experts in the field at the request of the HCNM.

Russia

From 22 to 24 November the High Commissioner visited Moscow where he had been invited to participate in a Conference on human rights entitled "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Russia". During the visit the HCNM also had separate meetings with some senior officials from the Government and Parliament.

REPORT of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

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

Duve Reports to the OSCE Permanent Council

On 19 November, Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, presented his regular report to the OSCE Permanent Council. In this report, Mr. Duve focused on the situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). He stressed that he had criticised the Law on Public Information which was adopted by the Serbian Parliament on 20 October, only four days after the signing of the Agreement on the establishment of the Kosovo Verification Mission by the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Minister Geremek, and Yugoslav Foreign Minister Jovanović. This Law institutionalized the banning of foreign programmes, levied exorbitant fees on offending media with a 24-hour deadline in which to pay and gave the authorities numerous powers to curtail free media.

In the report to the Permanent Council, Mr. Duve emphasized that after the new

Law went into effect, the Serbian Government started prosecuting the owner and editor of the news magazine *Evropljanin. Naša Borba*, a leading independent newspaper, had decided not to publish while the Law was in effect. To bypass the Law, a number of media outlets registered their subsidiaries in Montenegro.

Mr. Duve viewed this Law as the biggest setback to free media in Serbia and, therefore, also to any lasting peace in the region. It was widely condemned by the international community, including the OSCE Chairman-in-Office.

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media also issued a Report on the Current Situation of the Media in the FRY, as suggested during a debate in the Permanent Council on 27 August.

This Report contained a number of recommendations. It said that ensuring free, independent and pluralistic media – an OSCE commitment essential to any democratic society – should be one of

the top priorities during discussions with the FRY and Serbian authorities. Any decisions on full membership of the FRY in international organizations should also depend on concrete achievements in this respect. The current attitude of the Government in the FRY in this respect was offensive to the OSCE and to its political objectives, stressed Mr. Duve.

Considering the conflict in Kosovo, Mr. Duve noted that any lasting peaceful settlement of this conflict was only conceivable, if there would be also an open and public debate within the FRY about this issue. Such a debate required free and independent media.

Appeal to the Belarus Authorities

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media in his address to the Permanent Council raised a number of other issues, among them the current media situation in Belarus. Mr. Duve appealed to the Belarusian authorities to lift the year-long travel restriction placed on the

journalist Pavel Sheremet in order to enable him to receive the 1998 International Press Freedom Award in New York.

Kyrgyzstan's Positive Approach to Freedom of the Media

Mr. Duve also spoke about the latest media developments in Central Asia focusing, among other countries, on Kyrgyzstan. He stressed that the preliminary impressions were quite positive regarding the Kyrgyz Government's commitment to a free and independent media. Mr. Duve noted that he was impressed by the recent legal safeguards that the President had put in place and by recent court decisions firmly upholding the freedom and independence of the media. The Representative under-

lined that he believed that if Kyrgyzstan continued along this path, it could serve as a model for other countries in their transition to democracy. Mr. Duve singled out a recent comment by the President of Kyrgyzstan to the media emphasizing his appreciation for the media's efforts to undercover corruption which has enabled him to act more forcefully against corruption.

Duve Speaks on Education and Freedom of the Media

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media took part in a conference organized by the Austrian Presidency of the European Union in Graz, Austria, on 14 to 16 December. It was part of the European Union's Process on Stability

and Good-Neighbourliness in South-East Europe (Royaumont Process). Mr. Duve spoke at the Conference on educational issues and on freedom of the media.

Opening Up Serbia's Media

One of the advisers to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media took part in a one-day Conference on 'Opening Up Serbia's Media' organised in Prague by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty on 20 November. Ten prominent Serbian editors spoke at the conference. They stressed that the main obstacle to further development of independent media was the Serbian Law on Public Information and urged their colleagues and the international community to fight for its abolition.

UPDATE from the ODIHR

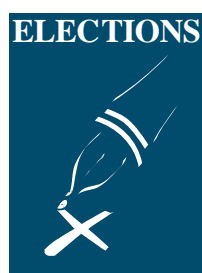
The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is located at Aleje Ujazdowskie 19, PL-00 557 Warsaw, Poland, tel.: (+48-22) 520 06 00, fax: (+48-22) 520 06 05, e-mail: office@odhr.osce.waw.pl

Kosovo

The ODIHR is developing a strategy for human rights training for all Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) personnel, in co-operation with other institutions. This has included publishing a leaflet of 'Guidelines for Human Dimension Tasks' for the KVM, containing practical information on human rights violations, other organizations present in the field and specific practical advice on how to conduct verification and reporting. The ODIHR has temporarily posted an adviser to Vienna as part of the support unit tasked with planning and deployment of the KVM. To carry out

these new tasks, the Permanent Council has decided to augment the ODIHR staff with four new members, posted in Pristina and Warsaw.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia



parliamentary elections in the former Yugoslav

Republic of Macedonia (the first round was reported in the October 1998 *Newsletter*). The ODIHR Observation Mission, headed by Mr. Mark Power-Stevens, deployed 14 long-term observers and 92 short-term observers for the second round.

According to the preliminary statement issued by Mr. Power-Stevens on 2 November, the elections were generally well conducted, in accordance with OSCE commitments, and the voting and counting procedures were generally carried out well. There were concerns, however, about an unfortunate difference in interpretation of the article in the

election law that determines the criteria for a first round victory. The preliminary statement therefore recommended that all regulations and legislation should be made clear and concise. This statement is available on the ODIHR website.

Albania



Voters register before the Albania referendum

An OSCE observation mission observed the referendum on the Constitution in Albania on 22 November. It consisted of 23 long-term observers and core staff and 180 short-term observers deployed throughout the country. A preliminary statement, issued jointly by the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the European Parliament, concluded that the referendum on the Constitution had passed off generally peacefully, in spite of the difficult circumstances under which it was held and the polarized political atmosphere in which the campaign was conducted. Problems were mainly due to the call for a boycott made by the leading opposition parties, in spite of appeals by the international community to participate. Nevertheless, the referendum was an improvement on last year's

parliamentary elections, the mission concluded. The OSCE Presence in Albania provided extensive support to the observation mission.

Kazakstan

The OSCE/ODIHR has been invited by the government of Kazakstan to observe the 10 January presidential election, and sent a needs assessment mission to Kazakstan from 16 to 21 November. An update on Kazakstan will be included in the next *Newsletter*.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Conference for Regional Election Administrators of Central Asian States

A conference on 'Election Administration: Regional Experience and Comparative Perspectives' took place from 17 to 20 November in Almaty, Kazakstan. It was jointly organized by the ODIHR, the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). The Central Election Commission of Kazakstan was also involved. The event was funded by the Government of Denmark and the Soros Foundation. Participants included more than 50 oblast-level election administrators from Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The conference was addressed by President Nazarbaev of Kazakstan.

The central aim of the conference was to review election administration practices in preparation for the elections due in the region during 1999. Discussions covered such issues as maintaining voter registers, resolving electoral disputes, domestic and international obser-

vation, campaign finance, candidate registration and voter education. It provided an opportunity for election administrators to meet and learn from the experience and expertise of the international institutions in the field of elections. Participants also had a chance to share their knowledge and compare their practices in election administration. It was concluded that further training in election administration, as well as voter education, would be required in the future. The OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia contributed greatly to the success of the Conference.

Montenegro

The OSCE/ODIHR office in Montenegro remains open for the implementation of recommendations following the 31 May elections, thanks to voluntary contributions from the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

International Election Standards Project in Ukraine

Mr. Hrair Balian of the ODIHR and Mr. Vijay Patidar from the International Institute for Democracy and Election Assistance (IDEA) in Stockholm, visited Kiev, Ukraine, from 16 to 18 November as part of an international election standards project. Following the last parliamentary elections, in 1998, disputes broke out over the registration of some candidates. The experts met the Central Election Commission of Ukraine and Mr. Holovaty, President of the Ukraine Legal Foundation and one of the members of parliament whose membership is being challenged, with a view to clarifying the election appeals procedure in the country. The experts issued a number of recommendations for the streamlining of procedures and also met with the

Deputy Minister of Justice of Ukraine, the Supreme Court and a representative of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems. The OSCE Mission to Ukraine proved particularly helpful in the implementation of this project, and further work in this area is planned, including a training workshop. A report of the visit is available from the ODIHR.

Albania Prison Training

A return visit of Albanian officials to England took place from 25 October to 1 November. The officials visited several prisons, including a young offenders institution, to get a clear view of the functioning of prisons in the United Kingdom.

Expert Panel for the Prevention of Torture

The second meeting of the ODIHR Expert Panel for the Prevention of Torture took place in Warsaw on 29 October. (For a full report of the first meeting, see July *Newsletter*). The Expert Panel includes: Ms. Danielle Coquoz, Head of the Central Tracing Agency and Protection Division at the International Committee of the Red Cross; Mr. Ian Gorvin, Director, Europe Regional Programme at Amnesty International; Mr. Douglas Johnson, Executive Director, Center for Victims of Torture; Mr. Claude Nicolay, Deputy Prosecutor General of Luxembourg and formerly Chairman of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture; and Professor Nigel Rodley, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture and Professor of Law, University of Essex. The Panel is mandated to advise the ODIHR on how best to develop programmes and activities to combat torture in OSCE participating

States without duplicating ongoing efforts by other organizations. During the November meeting the Panel offered concrete guidance to the ODIHR on developing new projects involving legislative reform, training, and strengthening the work of non-governmental organizations, and on ways to integrate anti-torture activities into existing projects. The expert panel is also helping the ODIHR in the development of a strategic plan to combat torture.

In continuation of activities against torture, the ODIHR will be actively participating in the worldwide campaign leading up to the United Nations International Day in Support of the Victims of Torture on 26 June 1999. Such participation was recommended by the Advisory Panel and by the Round-table on Redressing Torture held at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. The activity will be funded by a voluntary contribution from the Government of the United Kingdom.

A field handbook for OSCE mission members is currently being developed by the ODIHR and experts to provide better training in methods of combating torture.

Roma and Sinti

The ODIHR Roma interns are close to completing their work on the Roma and Sinti webpage. This project was funded by the Government of Norway. The latest intern, Mr. Marko Knudsen, also helped plan and organize two round-table meetings at the 1998 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting entitled "National Policies on Roma and Sinti". These meetings were attended by well over 50 participants, including

Roma participants and State delegations from around the OSCE region.

Istanbul Human Rights Conference

On 20 November, the ODIHR Director Ambassador Stoudmann opened a human rights conference in Istanbul organized by Amnesty International and the Istanbul Bar Association. The conference pointed to the positive steps recently undertaken by the Turkish Government to promote human rights and discussed and offered concrete proposals for the future. This meeting also provided an opportunity for Ambassador Stoudmann to have extensive talks with Mr. Hikmit Sami Türk, the Turkish State Minister for Human Rights.

Memoranda of Understanding with Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan

Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) have been signed between the ODIHR and the Governments of Georgia (23 November), Armenia (24 November) and Azerbaijan (26 November). OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Polish Foreign Minister, Professor Bronislaw Gerekme, and Presidents Eduard Shevardnadze, Robert Kocharyan and Heydar Aliyev, of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan respectively, signed the MOUs. (see article on page 5) Attached to the MOUs are a set of projects, separately developed for each of the three countries following an ODIHR assessment mission to the region in March this year. The implementation of some of these projects has already been initiated, while the completion of all projects is anticipated by the end of 1999. The projects, covering democratization and election assistance, will be fully reported on in the ODIHR semi-annual reports.

Goodbye – Welcome

In the course of November, the ODIHR had to say goodbye to a good friend and trustworthy supervisor and colleague. Gerald Mitchell, Head of the Election Section, had decided some time ago to move on to new challenges. He leaves

an impressive record behind: a methodology for election observation and a highly motivated and professional team which has established the ODIHR's reputation and credibility in the field of elections.

The ODIHR will soon have the pleasure, however, of receiving Gerald Mitchell's successor. Mr. Hrair Balian, who has just been appointed, has wide experience in regard to elections in the OSCE region. He recently headed the International Crisis Group's team in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

REPORT from the Parliamentary Assembly

The Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is located at Rådhusstræde 1, DK-1455 Copenhagen K, Denmark, tel.: (+45-33) 32 94 00, fax: (+45-33) 32 55 05, e-mail: oscepa@centrum.dk

OSCE Parliamentarians Monitor Referendum on the Constitution in Albania

Italian Senator Tana de Zulueta, Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, was appointed Special Coordinator by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Polish Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek, to lead the OSCE's Monitoring of the 22 November Referendum on the Constitution in Albania, and to issue the preliminary statement on behalf of the international community. The 200 International Observers included fifteen representatives of the OSCE PA from Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Italy, Romania, Sweden and Turkey. The observation group also included delegations from the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and the European Parliament. The delegation monitored the Referendum in conjunction with the OSCE/ODIHR.

Prior to the Referendum, the parliamentarians met with representatives of the Albanian Central Voting Commission and of the major parties. They also attended an extensive briefing programme provided by the OSCE/ODIHR

Observation Mission and the OSCE Presence in Albania. Senator de Zulueta held meetings with Deputy Prime Minister Ilir Meta and the Mayor of Tirana, Mr. Albert Brojka. She also paid a visit to the OSCE Presence in Albania, where she was briefed by Ambassador Daan Everts, Head of the OSCE Presence.

On 23 November Senator de Zulueta issued a preliminary joint statement on the Referendum together with Mr. Victor Ruffy (Switzerland) MP, Representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and Mr. Kåre Vollan, Head of the OSCE/ODIHR Observation Mission. Also, the European Parliament joined in issuing the preliminary statement although their representative, Ms. Doris Pack (Germany) MEP, was unable to be present at the press conference where the statement was issued.

In the statement, the observers took note of the very polarized political atmosphere in Albania. Serious incidents had occurred during the week leading to the Referendum. However, according to the statement, the referendum represented an improvement compared with the elections of the previous years and gen-

erally took place in a peaceful and orderly manner in spite of isolated incidents. At the same time, the observers recognized a number of administrative difficulties, in particular concerning the voters' list. The statement commended the voters and the election officials for their performance. The observers also appealed to all parties, including the Democratic Party, to resume a dialogue.

Interparliamentary Dialogue

Norwegian MP Mr. Tor Nymo represented the OSCE PA at the Annual Session of the Nordic Council from 9 to 12 November 1998 in Oslo. During the Session the Nordic Council strengthened its focus on the so-called "Adjacent Areas," most notably the Baltic republics and northwestern Russia.

Sir Peter Emery, Treasurer of the OSCE PA, represented the Assembly at the 44th Annual Session of the North Atlantic Assembly (NAA) from 10 to 13 November 1998 in Edinburgh. He addressed the NAA about the work being carried out by the OSCE PA and stressed the importance of the good cooperation between the two Assemblies. At the Session in Edinburgh OSCE PA President Emeri-

tus Mr. Javier Rupérez was elected as President of the North Atlantic Assembly.

Upcoming meetings of the OSCE PA

On 1 December 1998, the Bureau of the OSCE PA met in Oslo. This meeting was held in conjunction with the 2-3 December OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting, at which the President of the OSCE PA, Ms. Helle Degn, spoke. On 14-15 January 1999, the Standing Committee will meet in Vienna to decide on the general theme for the upcoming Eighth Annual Session, in St. Petersburg, scheduled for 6 to 10 July 1999. Also, there will be an Expanded Bureau meeting on 22-23 April 1999 in Copenhagen.

OSCE PA Vice-President to Attend Meetings in St. Petersburg

The Vice-President of the OSCE PA, Mr. Willy Wimmer, Member of the German Bundestag, will represent the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly at the session of the Commonwealth of Independent

States Inter-Parliamentary Assembly which will take place on 8 December 1998. Mr. Wimmer will also participate in the Autumn Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation to be held on 9-10 December 1998. Both meetings will be held in the Tavrishesky Palace in St. Petersburg, the venue of the next Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in July 1999.

OSCE PA Brochures and Reports

A report which summarizes the "OSCE Parliamentary Seminar on Conflict Resolution and Democratic Development in the Caucasus," held in Tbilisi on 5-6 October 1998, has been produced by the International Secretariat of the OSCE PA. At the Tbilisi Seminar, the topics and discussions focused on issues such as the concept of regional security and the importance of interdependence and cooperation between OSCE participating States.

For the past three years, the OSCE PA "Prize for Journalism and Democracy" has been awarded to one or more individuals who have promoted the principles of free journalism as laid down by the OSCE Budapest Declaration of 1994. The recipient of this year's \$20,000 USD Prize, is British author and historian Mr. Timothy Garton Ash. A brochure describing the ceremony, along with a historic background of the Prize, is now available.

A brochure entitled "A Brief Introduction to the OSCE PA" has been produced. The Parliamentary Assembly provides a vital link between the governmental side of the OSCE and representatives directly elected by the popular will of voters in each OSCE country. The brochure describes the main bodies, principal activities and members of the OSCE PA.

All of the above mentioned reports and booklets are available by request from the International Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen.

List of Public Information Materials

available upon request at the Prague or Vienna Office of the OSCE Secretariat

(as of November 1998)

Publications	Publisher/ Editor	Language(s)
<p>CD-ROM Compilation of documents 1973-1997 Includes documents from Summit Meetings, Follow-up and Review Conferences, Ministerial Councils, Senior and Permanent Council, Forum for Security Co-operation, Expert Meetings, OSCE Newsletters, Secretary General Annual Reports, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and ODIHR publications, Seminars, public releases and speeches from the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and much more. <i>First Edition</i></p>	OSCE Secretariat Prague Office	The CD-ROM contains the documents in all 6 OSCE working languages*
<p>OSCE Newsletter (monthly) - Volume V (1998) - Volume IV (1997), Volume III (1996), Volume II (1995), Volume I (1994)</p>	OSCE Secretariat	Since 1.01.98, all 6 OSCE working languages* 1994-97: English and Russian

Publications	Publisher/ Editor	Language(s)
Fact Sheet (General) (Ref.PR/FS-ENG/007 - October 1998)	OSCE Secretariat	all 6 official OSCE languages*
Image Brochure (colourful overview of the OSCE)	OSCE Secretariat	English, Russian, German
OSCE Handbook 1996 (general information on OSCE, Second Edition)	OSCE Secretariat	English, Russian
Survey of OSCE Long-Term Missions and other OSCE Field Activities	OSCE Secretariat/CPC	English
The Secretary General's Annual Report on OSCE Activities (1993, 94, 95, 96, 97 and 98)	OSCE Secretariat	all 6 OSCE working languages*
ODIHR Semi-annual Report 1998	ODIHR	English, Russian
From CSCE to OSCE Statements and Speeches by Dr. Wilhelm Höynck, Secretary General of the OSCE (1993-1996)	OSCE Secretariat	English
Bibliography on the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities: Documents, Speeches, Related Publications. <i>Third Edition</i>	Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations The Hague March 1997	English
The Role of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in OSCE Conflict Prevention - An Introduction	Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations The Hague June 1997	English
The Oslo Recommendations Regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities and Explanatory Note	The Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations, The Hague February 1998	English, Russian
Fact Sheet of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM)	OSCE Secretariat/HCNM	English, Russian
Chronological Review from 1973 to 1997 of CSCE/OSCE official publications <i>(list of bound versions of documents issued at the conclusion of a review, follow-up and other major CSCE/OSCE events including the Negotiations on Confidence and Building Measures)</i>	OSCE Secretariat Prague Office	English
Reference Manual - Decisions Compilation 1993-94, 1995,1996,1997, 1998	OSCE Secretariat	English
Summary of Meetings, Decisions, Missions and Documents <i>Volume IV (1997), Volume III (1996), Volume II (1995), Volume I (1990-1994)</i>	OSCE Secretariat Prague Office	English

* Working languages of the OSCE are English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish

The logo for the OSCE Newsletter. The word "OSCE" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with each letter contained within a dark blue square. Below "OSCE", the word "NEWSLETTER" is written in a smaller, bold, dark blue, sans-serif font.

OSCE
NEWSLETTER

The OSCE **NEWSLETTER** is published monthly by the Secretariat of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

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