



*OSCE human rights officers working in the field*

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## OSCE Expands its Activities across Kosovo

The OSCE has significantly strengthened its presence in Kosovo. By the end of August, over 260 international and 500 local OSCE staff were working throughout the province. The Mission's Regional Centres were up and running in Gnjilane, Prizren, Peć and Kosovska Mitrovica, and preparations were being made for the opening of the Police Service School in Vucitrn. The Mission also opened field offices in Lipljan, Kosovska Kamenica, Djakovica and Orahovac, which gives the OSCE a unique field presence throughout Kosovo (see map on p.3).

However, the security situation in the province remains a key concern. Taking advantage of its large field presence, the Mission has stepped up its activities

regarding human rights monitoring and the rule of law. OSCE human rights teams travel throughout the province, and particularly to areas with large minority populations, to investigate reported human rights violations, abductions and killings.

Other issues of concern involve freedom of movement, access to public facilities, food supplies and medical care. Where possible the OSCE mission members and field assistants try to follow up reports of human rights violations by interviewing family members and eyewitnesses. The Mission has also initiated several specific projects in co-operation with other international organizations, including a survey on the situation of the Serb population in Priština.

The OSCE Mission is also providing support to the Emergency Judicial System that has been established in Kosovo. Apart from assisting in selecting and interviewing candidates for positions in the provisional judiciary, the Mission is providing transport and logistic support for mobile judicial teams. The so-called "flying judges" travel throughout Kosovo to review the cases of persons detained by KFOR. Without the mobile teams, a significant number of individuals would not be able to have their cases heard. The OSCE continues to organize transport, assemble the teams and troubleshoot emergencies as they arise on a daily basis.

Establishing the new Kosovo Police Service remains a top priority. As part of its

mandate of democracy-and institution-building, the OSCE Mission has been given the task of setting up and running the Kosovo Police Service School, where local Kosovo police officers will receive their initial training.

Following selection by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the first class of recruits were due to begin their training on 7 September. Classes include: crime investigation; defence tactics; democratic policing, in which loyalty towards the democratic legal order will be the focus; legal affairs; police patrol duties; use of firearms; police skills, including first-aid, conflict intervention and handling refugees; forensics and evidence; and traffic control. On successful completion of the initial training, candidates will participate in 19 weeks of field training with United Nations police officers.

Nearly 20,000 people applied for training at the Kosovo Police Service School. About 20 per cent of the recruits are former police officers in the region. A total of 3,000 candidates are expected to receive training over the next 10 months. The training will be conducted by 150 international police instructors, seconded by OSCE participating States.

The Mission is also preparing to open the first Political Party Service Centres. These Centres will give political parties through-



*OSCE police trainer (left) meets candidate for the new Kosovo Police Service (right)*

out Kosovo access to office space, basic communication facilities, computers and meeting space. Five Centres to be located in Priština, Gnjilane, Prizren, Peć and Kosovska Mitrovica, are to be opened in September. In most of these towns, buildings have been identified and negotiations for their leasing are underway.

Mission members have also met with local and international non-governmental organizations. Many local NGOs have expressed the need for assistance in formulating project proposals and fund-rais-

ing. In addition, NGOs have expressed an interest in starting a regular NGO bulletin as a means of information and coordination. The Mission is looking for ways of following-up on this proposal.

**The OSCE Mission  
in Kosovo is located at:**

Beograd Str. 29  
38 000 Priština  
Tel.: 381 38 500 162  
Fax: 381 38 500 188  
e-mail: osce.mk7@unet.com.mk

**The OSCE Mission in Kosovo forms a distinct component within the overall framework of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo with specific responsibilities in the areas of police training, media affairs and human rights, democratization and elections. More information is available at <http://www.osce.org/kosovo>**

# Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Kosovo/Kosova



## OSCE Secretary General Visits Mission in Kosovo



*OSCE Secretary General Ján Kubiš (middle) and Mirjana Robin, Interim Manager Radio/TV Priština (left), at Radio Priština*

During a two-day visit to Kosovo, OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Ján Kubiš, obtained a first-hand impression of the buildup of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

As part of his visit, 20 and 21 August, Ambassador Kubiš visited the facilities of the Mission, including the Kosovo Police Service School, Radio Priština and the OSCE Regional Centre in Gnjilane, met with Mission members and the Mission's international and local partners. He also had meetings with representatives of Albanian and Serbian political parties.

The visit began in Priština, with a briefing by Ambassador Daan Everts, the Head of the Mission. The Secretary General was also extensively briefed by the directors of the various departments on the current humanitarian, political and judicial situation in Kosovo, and mission activities, including the training programme of the Kosovo Police Service School in Vucitrn.

In a meeting with the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG), Dr. Bernard Kouchner, Ambassador Kubiš discussed the implementation of the UNMIK mandate and

co-operation between the OSCE and the United Nations. He also discussed the general security situation and co-operation with KFOR during a meeting with Lieutenant-General Michael Jackson.

The Secretary General also visited the studios of Radio Priština, which was put on the air by OSCE as an emergency and transitional measure on 28 July (see separate story). In an interview with the radio station Ambassador Kubiš stressed the effort of the OSCE to promote the free media in Kosovo: "We are mobilizing the international community to provide financial support," he said, adding that the OSCE had been working with the European Broadcasting Union and other experts on plans to reestablish TV Priština as a public service broadcaster for Kosovo.

After a short visit to the OSCE Regional Centre in Gnjilane, Ambassador Kubiš, together with Dr. Kouchner and Ambassador Daan Everts visited the Kosovo Police Service School in Vucitrn, 40 kilometers northwest of Priština. Steve Bennett, OSCE Director of the Police Training and Education, briefed the Secretary General on the training programme. 3,000 Kosovars will go through this program in the first year, he said. The first class with 200 trainees is due to begin training on 7 September.

## Radio Priština Returns to the Airwaves

Radio Priština is back on the air, broadcasting news and public information in three languages throughout Kosovo. Broadcasting resumed on 28 July, under OSCE supervision.

“There were many exceptional challenges in putting this radio station back on the air,” explained Mirjana Robin, OSCE Interim Manager of Radio/TV Priština. The challenges ranged from repairing the damaged building and cleaning up all the glass and refuse to finding the actual technology and equipment needed to start broadcasting again.

Thanks to an all-out effort by OSCE Mission in Kosovo staff, however, the radio station was back on the air within four days.

Radio Priština is now broadcasting programmes in Albanian, Serbian and Turkish, using a mix of different frequencies for the different languages. The Albanian-language programming has already been increased from one to five hours of programming, on 13 August. The Serbian and Turkish language broadcasts have remained at one hour per day. The news programme is compiled by local journalists and programme contributions are also made by UNMIK Radio.

For its daily information, Radio Priština is relying on international, Albanian and Montenegrin news services, and the Internet. However, the communication infrastructure in Priština is sometimes sporadic and leads to delays in obtaining up-to-

date news. At present, the editorial staff of ethnic Albanian, ethnic Serb and ethnic Turkish journalists has grown to 40 members from 24. Several Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs have been hired as radio technicians.

In addition to the radio station, efforts are underway to establish a public television broadcasting station. The European Broadcast Union is sending an interim international management team, as well as studio equipment, to get the station up and running. The Norwegian Government is donating \$ 1 million to the OSCE to be used for the start-up costs of TV Kosovo, and broadcasting is scheduled to begin on 19 September.

## OSCE Sees Positive Developments in Tajikistan

Following a critical time in May and June, the implementation of the peace agreement in Tajikistan is back on track. In a major breakthrough, on 3 August the leadership of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) announced the disbandment of their armed formations, after intense negotiations between the Tajik Government and the UTO.

OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Norwegian Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk welcomed the announcement by the UTO leadership in a statement on 10 August. He described it as “the decisive step” towards full implementation of the Protocol of Military Issues of the General Agreement on Peace and National Accord.

The OSCE is one of the guarantors of the 1997 Agreement, which ended the civil war in Tajikistan. In this capacity, the OSCE has been working to facilitate the implementation of the Agreement, and particularly the protocols dealing with political and military issues and the return of refugees.

In May and June this year, the implementation of the Agreement passed through a period where progress and critical moments alternated. It became necessary to assist in the resumption of the activities of the two main negotiating mechanisms for the implementation of the General Agreement: the Commission for National Reconciliation and the direct

dialogue between the Tajik President E. Rakhmonov and UTO Leader S.A. Nuri. The then United Nations Secretary-General Special Representative Ambassador Ján Kubiš, and Ambassador Marin Buhoara, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan, together with other international representatives engaged in intense negotiations to overcome the difficult moments.

This joint effort resulted in a meeting between the President of Tajikistan and the UTO leader at which several issues were agreed upon: the appointment of a number of UTO nominees to government positions; a new timetable for the demobilization of the UTO armed units;

as well as other pending issues. This paved the way for meetings that ultimately resulted in the UTO decision to disband its armed forces, thus creating conditions for lifting the bans and limitations on the activities of UTO political parties and movements.

In his statement, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office encouraged the parties to “use the favourable momentum” to push the peace process further and lift the current bans and limitations on the activities of political parties and mass media, as provided by the General Agreement. Two days later, on 12 August, the Supreme Court of Tajikistan reversed its June 1993 decision on banning the activities of UTO political parties.

The OSCE has been engaged in Tajikistan since 1994, when the then CSCE Mission to Tajikistan was established. The Mission, currently numbering 10 international staff, was given a broad and flexible mandate to support political reconciliation, democracy-building and respect for human rights in Tajikistan.

Much of the Mission’s work relates to the human dimension. It has been actively involved in the promotion of equal rights for all citizens, in fields such as civic education, institution-building, political pluralism, election-related issues, human rights monitoring, reporting and intervention, freedom of the media and gender issues.

The Mission’s field offices deal with a number of issues such as ownership and occupation of homes and land, fair treatment of prisoners and army draftees (including the release of illegally detained persons), locating missing persons, assisting with the development of the local media, gender issues, human rights education, and equal distribution of humanitarian aid by local authorities. Since 1997 the Mission has been involved in the process of national reconciliation in Tajikistan.



OSCE Chairman-in-Office Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk of Norway has expressed his deep concern about the latest developments on the Chechen-Dagestani border in the Russian Federation. In a statement issued on 13 August, he described the plight of the

civilian population as extremely worrying, since large numbers of people have been forced to flee from their homes. “The deteriorating security situation also has serious regional ramifications. There is a danger of destabilization, not only of areas immediately affected by the unrest, but of the wider Caucasus region. The OSCE will be following the situation closely,” added the Chairman-in-Office.

## PRESS PROFILE



*Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 6 August*

“The OSCE as part of UNMIK is currently establishing a police school, in which from the end of August 3,000 local policemen will be trained over the next two years... The training will not only cover how to direct traffic, how to make arrests, how to handle weapons, first aid and so on, but will also be about work ethics, in which the personal integrity of the officer and his loyalty towards the – still not established – democratic legal order will be in focus. The ambition of the Director of the police academy, Steve Bennett, an American wearing cowboy boots, is to set this standard for the future training and work of the police in Kosovo and at the same time to create a new image of the police as ‘friend and helper’.”

*Der Standard, 10 August*

“Two months after the end of the war, only some 500 of the 3,000 police officers that are needed in Kosovo have actually arrived there. This is an additional failing of Europe – which already before the war showed itself incapable of putting up the 2,000 men needed for the Kosovo (Verification) Mission of the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe). On the other hand, when the military are screaming, there are always enough resources, money and personnel.”

*Reuters, 13 August*

“The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)... refused officially to recognise the presidential vote, easily won by Nazarbayev. Kazakhstan, embarrassed by the snub and keen to win the approval of the West this time around, says it has met the main demands made by the OSCE for changes to its election rules.”

*Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 13 August*

“For quite a long time, the concept of preventive diplomacy has been part of the vocabulary of international conflict management. At the Budapest Summit in December 1994, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) confirmed its primary task as an instrument for early warning, conflict prevention and conflict management...”

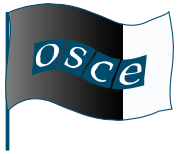
Examples of successful preventive diplomacy are the OSCE missions to the Baltic States, which in co-operation with the European Council and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities have advanced the drafting of citizenship laws favouring the non-Latvian or non-Estonian population, especially Russians, and by so doing in the long term prevented a conflict. An equally preventive task was performed by the OSCE mission in Ukraine, the mandate of which provided for ‘regular and objective reporting on all aspects of the situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea’ and which managed to move Kiev towards a constructive arrangement on autonomy.”

*The Christian Science Monitor, 19 August*

“Europe already has a mechanism to prevent conflict. For seven years, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe – the 55-nation grouping comprising the states of Europe and the former Soviet Union, the US and Canada – has given a conflict prevention mandate to its High Commissioner on National Minorities. Working from an obscure row house in The Hague, senior Dutch statesman Max van der Stoep and a small group of advisers – on a tiny budget – have criss-crossed the continent for seven years, working with governments and minorities on solutions to ethnic tensions... Europe’s ongoing experiment shows the possibility of a real and cheap way to create conditions now that will avoid brinkmanship and force later. Mistrust and hatred will still limit its effectiveness. But with the right person and the leverage to back him up, early conflict prevention may be our best hope to help multiethnic states build stable societies.”

*The New York Times, 30 August*

“The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which is supposed to be developing democratic institutions in Kosovo, is proposing new rules for the news media that could hurt the cause of democracy and free press. The OSCE is directing a radio station and will do the same with television. It will also set up a media monitoring group and regulations on print and especially broadcast media... This approach is overkill. The project to train journalists and support promising local news media is worthwhile. It will be undercut, however, if high-paying, OSCE-run stations grab the best reporters... The monitors and regulators are also a bad idea. The best way to combat hate speech is not to ban it, but to ensure that Kosovo’s citizens have access to alternative views.”



## News from the Field

*The OSCE currently has Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kosovo (FRY), Latvia, Skopje (fYROM), Moldova, and Tajikistan 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.*

### **Democracy-promotings Seminars to be Held in Belarus**

As part of its mandate to promote democratic institutions in Belarus, the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group (AMG) in Belarus is preparing a series of six regional conferences on local self-government, rule of law and regional economic development. The conferences will take place between October and March 2000, bringing together international experts, public administration officials, representatives of the private and public sectors of industry and trade, and non-governmental organizations from Belarus and neighbouring States. The conferences will focus on issues such as free trade zones, trans-border cooperation and privatization, as well as local government and the rule of law.

### **OSCE Intensifies Monitoring along fYROM Borders**

The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission in Skopje is intensifying its monitoring activities along the borders with Kosovo and Albania. The absence of a significant international presence in the areas has left the field open to smuggling and other forms of organized crime. In a recent incident, machine gun fire was exchanged

between groups of smugglers and Government forces. The Mission is seeking to assist the authorities by monitoring the most exposed areas and providing reliable and accurate information on the situation in the region. In addition to its border monitoring tasks, the Mission is aiding the Government on a wide variety of issues, including the economic dimension.

### **Mission to Moldova Observes Poll in Gaguzia, Moldova**

The OSCE Mission to Moldova, together with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), monitored elections held on 22 August to the People's Assembly of Gaguzia, an autonomous region in Moldova. The event was of special importance for the process of democratization in the region, as they were the first elections to be conducted by the Gaguz authorities themselves. The Mission, which is responsible, *inter alia*, for providing advice and expertise on human and minority rights and democratic change in Moldova, monitored both the actual polling process and the campaign leading up to the elections. No serious violations of election law were observed. Mission members were due to observe the second round of elections, to be held on 5 September.

### **Discussion of the Draft Election Law Launched in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina has begun a public discussion of the draft permanent election law. The law, which introduces significant electoral reforms, aims to foster moderate politics and accountability of publicly elected officials. The draft is currently being reviewed by the Office of the High Representative and the Council of Europe and will then be presented to the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina for consideration and passage. The Mission has organized meetings with political party representatives, non-governmental organizations and civil society representatives to present the contents of the draft law and the OSCE's planned follow-up activities. Mission members are also participating in radio and television campaigns aimed at increasing popular understanding of the draft law. The draft was prepared by a working group of representatives from the OSCE, the Office of the High Representative and Bosnia and Herzegovina nationals. The Mission has also conducted a public information campaign to involve the country's citizens in the drafting process.



## 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: hcnm@hcnm.org

### Van der Stoel Receives a Knighthood

On 31 August, in a ceremony at the Royal Noordeinde Palace in The Hague, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands awarded the

OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoel, the House Order of the Golden Lion of Nassau. Mr. Van der Stoel is the first Netherlands

citizen to receive the award since 1919. The following is an excerpt from Queen Beatrix's speech on presenting the Order to Mr. Van der Stoel:

*"Mr. Van der Stoel,*

*Fifty years is a long time in a human life, but only a brief moment in history. After the devastating wars that Europe has witnessed during this century, no one could have imagined that any country or people would ever wish to start another war. Yet in the five decades that followed the Second World War this happened time and again. Various new States in our continent became involved in serious armed conflicts, not so much between nations as between minority and majority groupings within the national borders. The cause has nearly always been ethnic tensions deeply rooted in European history, forces which still pose a threat to peace throughout Europe. Containing and decreasing this threat has been a central theme of your work since your appointment in 1992 as High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.*

*In the years of the Cold War, Western Europe had a system to provide an early warning of a possible attack on our Alliance. With the creation of a High Commissioner on Minorities, the term acquired a new meaning: to identify as early as possible any resurgence in*

*nationalist feeling and tensions between ethnic groups. You are entrusted with the sensitive task of monitoring problems relating to minorities and indicating how they could best be defused. Nobody can have been surprised by that choice. The position is perfectly suited to someone whose entire career has been devoted to protecting and strengthening the international rule of law and the rights of the individual.*

*The appointment of a High Commissioner on National Minorities was an experiment for the OSCE. The demands made of the High Commissioner were high, the resources at his disposal were minimal. Much, if not everything, depended on the character of the officeholder himself and the way in which he managed his limited means. On all these points you have far exceeded expectations; you approached this delicate task with all the acumen, energy and tenacity that we already knew you possessed. While always remaining in the background and wherever possible allowing others to take the credit – you have successfully demonstrated the continuing value of quiet diplomacy. Thanks to you, the office of High Commissioner on National Minorities has become an*

*essential instrument in the work of the OSCE.*

*Seven years is a brief moment in history, but a long time in a human life. For almost seven years now, you have been engaged in this difficult task that is, however, vital to the future of Europe. The way in which you, as High Commissioner, have served the cause of peace has earned you great respect both within the international community and in your own country. Your work in this field has been the crowning achievement of a long and impressive career as a public servant.*

*Exceptional service merits an exceptional tribute. It is my good fortune to have a very special mark of honour at my disposal: the House Order of the Golden Lion of Nassau. This Order was founded in 1858 by King Willem III, who was also Grand Duke of Luxembourg, and is now a joint House Order of the Heads of State of the two countries. Looking back on your term of office as High Commissioner, which is now drawing to a close, and on the important public offices you held previously, I have great pleasure in bestowing on you a Knighthood in this Order."*

## Latvia

The High Commissioner visited Latvia on 24 and 25 August. He met with newly elected President Vaira Vike-Freiberga, Prime Minister Anders Skele, Foreign Minister Indulis Berzins and the Minister of Education Silva Golde. He also met with the Head of the Commission of the Saeima (Parliament) on Education, Culture and Science, Dzintars Abikis, the leadership of the Naturalization Board and the Head of the Administrative Unit of the Latvian Language Training Programme, Aija Priedite. The High Commissioner was joined on his visit by an expert from the Council of Europe.

The High Commissioner discussed with Saeima representatives the timing for further review of the language law which was recently returned to Parliament by the President. The High Commissioner agreed with Mr. Abikis that a joint delegation of experts headed by the High Commissioner's legal adviser would advise the Standing Committee on the redrafting process which is to take into account the proposals made by the President.

In discussions with the President and government representatives, Mr. van der Stoel focused on the promotion and strengthening of the role of the State language in Latvia. He proposed to support the efforts of the Latvian Language Training Programme to raise additional funds for training courses, particularly for teacher training. In meetings with local representatives of the international community, including international organizations, he urged that international financial support be given to this programme.

In a final press conference, the High Commissioner stressed the need for further integration of the Russian-speaking population into Latvian society. He

urged Russophones to take advantage of available opportunities in order to learn the State language.

## Greece

On several occasions in August, the High Commissioner was asked for his opinion on the ongoing discussion in Greece regarding the question of national minorities. He therefore decided on 24 August to issue a statement setting out his views on the issue. In it the High Commissioner explained the commitments contained in the 1990 Copenhagen Document concerning the protection of persons belonging to national minorities. He said that some recent comments in the Greek press "give the impression that the recognition in the Copenhagen Document of the right of persons belonging to national minorities freely to express, preserve and develop their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity is tantamount to recognizing the right of self-determination of persons belonging to national minorities. In reality, however, these are two completely different concepts." He pointed out that "the right of self-determination relates to the status of territory." In the Copenhagen Document, territorial autonomy is mentioned as an option and not a right, and nothing in the Document "may be interpreted as implying any right to engage in any activity or any action in contravention of the principle of the territorial integrity of States."

He pointed out a second misunderstanding in the ongoing discussion over minority rights, namely that "in order to acquire or enjoy the rights mentioned in the Copenhagen Document, a minority will have to be formally recognized by the State." He said that the Copenhagen Document makes it clear that this is not necessary.

Finally, he referred to confusion about the relationship between the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) and the Copenhagen Document. He pointed out that "The Treaty of Lausanne (article 45) deals with the religious rights of the 'Muslim minority' in Greece. But that does not mean that the Copenhagen Document has no relevance for persons belonging to the Muslim minority in Greece. Within the wider religious group, there are smaller groups with an ethnic or linguistic identity of their own, such as Turks, Roma and Pomaks, to which the provisions of the Copenhagen Document do apply."

## High-Level Officials Inaugurate Renovated Premises



*Mr. Max van der Stoel in front of the recently renovated office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities*

On 31 August the recently renovated office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities was inaugurated by the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, J.J. van Aartsen. The ceremony was attended by over fifty guests, including OSCE Secretary General Ján Kubiš and Norwegian Ambassadors Kim Traa-

vik and Kai Eide representing the Chairman-in-Office.

The historic eighteenth-century patrician's house overlooking a canal in the centre of The Hague has been the High Commissioner's office since January

1993. At the Oslo Ministerial Meeting of December 1998, the Netherlands Government expressed its readiness to renovate, enlarge and refurbish the premises. As a result, the High Commissioner's office, formerly on the top two floors, was expanded to include the whole build-

ing, and significant internal and external renovations were carried out in the spring of 1999. The Netherlands Government also equipped the office with new furniture and a new telephone system. A new computer network is being installed.

## 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@odih.osce.waw.pl*

### ELECTIONS



#### **Joint OSCE-UN Assessment Mission Visits Tajikistan**

A second joint assessment mission by the OSCE and the United Nations was conducted in Tajikistan from 24 July to 7 August. The mission was part of the preparations for the parliamentary elections expected to be held early next year. The ODIHR continues to co-operate closely with relevant United Nations departments to meet its obligation under the peace agreement to support the peace process and, in particular, the holding of parliamentary elections under a new election law.

#### **ODIHR Deploys Needs Assessment Missions in Georgia, Ukraine and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

Three needs assessment missions were deployed at the end of August 1999 in view of the upcoming parliamentary elections in Georgia, and the presidential elections in Ukraine and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. All three elections are scheduled for 31 Octo-

ber 1999. Depending on the findings of the missions, the ODIHR is considering election observation missions in the three countries around mid-September 1999.

In addition, the ODIHR established a team of experts in Tbilisi to assist the Georgian authorities in training district-level election officials and law enforcement agents with a view to the forthcoming elections.

#### **ODIHR Sends Needs Assessment Mission to Kazakhstan**

The ODIHR conducted a needs assessment mission to Kazakhstan to evaluate the legal and administrative framework, the status of election preparations and the political and media environment for the 10 October parliamentary elections. The needs assessment mission was tasked with determining whether the ODIHR should deploy an observation mission. As of the date of publication a decision has not been reached.

As part of the project "Voter Education through Electronic Media", under the Memorandum of Understanding with Kazakhstan, the ODIHR presented to the

Central Election Commission a series of ten television spots, produced in conjunction with the BBC, designed to enhance voter awareness of the election process. In addition, the ODIHR participated in a seminar in Kazakhstan on the role of electronic media in the election campaign.

#### **Training of Domestic Election Observers in Kyrgyzstan**

An ODIHR Election Adviser and an expert from Electoral Reform International Services have visited Kyrgyzstan to continue preparations for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding project for training domestic election observers.

### DEMOCRATIZATION



#### **Joint ODIHR-Council of Europe Field Mission Assesses the Situation of the Roma in Kosovo**

A joint ODIHR and Council of Europe field mission visited Kosovo from 27 July to 6 August 1999 to assess the situation of the Roma community. The team

was composed of the ODIHR Adviser on Roma and Sinti Issues, Mr. Nicolae Gheorghe, and the Chair of the Specialist Group on Roma/Gypsies of the Council of Europe, Mrs. Josephine Verspaget. It was assisted by Judith Kiers, Democratization Officer with the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

The mission was organized in response to alarming testimonies by Roma refugees, several reports of human rights organizations on violations of the human rights of the Roma in Kosovo during and after the war, and Mr. Gheorge's own visit to Roma refugee camps in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia from 27 May to 2 June 1999.

Based on the findings of the visit, the expert team recommended a number of measures aimed at improved protection of the Roma in Kosovo, reconciliation between Roma and Kosovo Albanians, and the improvement of the situation of Roma refugees and internally displaced persons.

### **Roma Experts Seconded to the ODIHR and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo**

Following consultations between the Finnish authorities and the ODIHR, the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has seconded two Roma experts to the ODIHR and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. Mr. Helge Valama began an initial six-month term in the Priština regional office of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. Mr. Henri Hedman took up a one-year assignment as Assistant to the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues on 1 September 1999.

### **Working Group Meets on Torture Prevention in Kazakhstan**

Within the framework of the ODIHR's efforts to combat torture, the OSCE Centre in Almaty organized a working group meeting with ODIHR expert Mr. Bill Bowring of the Human Rights Centre of the University of Essex, government representatives and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The meeting continued efforts to establish a constructive dialogue between the Government and NGOs, initiated at a first Government-NGO meeting on torture issues on 2 to 3 July 1999. The working group meeting which took place on 16 and 17 August 1999 in Astana, was attended by representatives of the Human Rights Commission, the General Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of the Interior and three NGOs.

Points of discussion included the reporting procedure under the United Nations Convention against Torture, the reports submitted by Eastern European States and the definition of torture in Kazakh domestic legislation. Differences of opinion occurred, particularly over the question of whether Kazakhstan provides accessible and competent State bodies and mechanisms for receiving and resolving complaints of torture.

The meeting was part of the Legislative Reform Assistance Project, under the Memorandum of Understanding between the ODIHR and the Government of Kazakhstan. As a next step, the ODIHR will submit a report on the compliance of Kazakh domestic legislation with the United Nations Convention against Torture.

### **ODIHR Helps Establish Prison Staff Training College in Croatia**

The ODIHR has continued to assist the Croatian prison service in establishing a training college for prison staff, which should be fully operational in autumn 1999. An ODIHR expert, Mr. Alan Walker of the Human Rights Centre of the University of Essex, visited Croatia from 28 to 30 June 1999 and advised the Croatian authorities on various issues related to the college and to international reporting mechanisms. In July, two trainers from the United Kingdom prison service conducted two training courses in Zagreb with their Croatian colleagues who will be teaching at the college. The training included subjects such as the purpose of a prison service, prison security, anti-suicide measures, leadership and team-building, stress management and care for prisoners.

Mr. Walker, also visited the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia from 5 to 9 July 1999 to provide operational advice on various issues including international reporting mechanisms. The development of a training college for prison staff was discussed, an initiative the ODIHR is considering supporting.

### **Television Programmes to Increase Public Awareness in Armenia**

A programme on the human rights of refugees was broadcast on 21 August 1999 on Armenian State television. The programme was the fourth in a series of six on human rights topics produced under the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Armenia and the ODIHR. It was produced by a local television crew in co-operation with local and international NGOs working in Armenia.



*Working together: Participants in the ODIHR workshop for Abkhazian, Georgian and South-Ossetian journalists*

### **ODIHR Assists the Public Defender in Georgia**

On 6 August 1999, ODIHR expert Dr. Andrzej Malanowski of the Polish Ombudsman Office concluded a two-month mission to Georgia where he assisted the Public Defender in creating a series of mechanisms for reviewing and processing individual human rights cases. The expert also focused on supporting the Public Defender in establishing good relations with State authorities, which are crucial for the protection of human and civil rights in Georgia.

In his final report, Dr. Malanowski recommended a number of measures to increase the effectiveness and credibility of the Public Defender's Office. These

recommendations include the recruitment of qualified and motivated personnel and the modification of the present internal organizational structure so that it better reflects the incoming complaints. In view of the imminent resignation of the current Public Defender, the Georgian authorities should also make sure that his successor will be a person of high credibility, courage and personal independence, with experience in the field of human rights protection.

### **Workshop for Abkhazian, Georgian and South-Ossetian Journalists**

Twenty-one journalists from Abkhazia, Georgia and South Ossetia met in Warsaw from 26 to 28 August 1999 to attend

a workshop organized by the ODIHR in co-operation with the OSCE Mission to Georgia. The workshop, moderated by Andrei Ostalsky from the BBC World Service Training Trust, focused on the exchange of information on the current state of the mass media, as well as on the relevance of journalistic ethics and the promotion of freedom of the media in the region.

In the course of the working group and plenary discussions, the representatives of the three entities entered into a constructive dialogue, characterized by increasing sensitivity on all sides with regard to the concerns of the other delegations. This consequently led to a number of practical recommendations.

There was a common understanding among the participating journalists that, in order to promote better mutual understanding and trust, it was necessary to work together more closely and to increase the exchange of information. To this end, the participants agreed to endeavour to establish a Journalistic Association of the Caucasus Region – open to journalists from other neighbouring countries and committed to the principles of freedom of speech and free flow of information. It was also suggested that a joint Internet site and to organize training courses for Abkhazian, Georgian and South-Ossetian journalists.

## **REPORT** from the Parliamentary Assembly

*The Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is located at Rådhusstræde 1, DK-1466 Copenhagen K, Denmark, tel.: (+45-33) 32 94 00, fax: (+45-33) 32 55 05, e-mail: osce@oscepa.dk*

### **“Democracy Team” on Belarus Meets with International Organizations**

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) ad hoc Working Group on Belarus was due to hold a meeting on 13 September with representatives from international organizations and governmental representatives regarding recent political developments in Belarus the OSCE’s joint parliamentary and governmental initiatives. The Chairman of the “Democracy Team”, Mr. Adrian Severin (MP-Romania), and the Head of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus, Ambassador Hans-Georg Wieck, will inform high-level international officials about recent pivotal events in Belarus, as well activities planned by the OSCE bodies for the next two months. At the OSCE meeting, to be held at the International Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen, the “Democracy Team” will not only seek to inform other international actors about its own activities, but also to discuss the plans and activities of other organizations and their possible co-ordination.

The recent series of meetings that the OSCE has sponsored and chaired in Belarus and in Bucharest has laid the foundations for a national round table that is expected to work out details for holding future parliamentary elections in the year 2000.

### **OSCE Postpones Parliamentary Seminar in Antalya**

Owing to the serious earthquake in Turkey, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey have postponed the Parliamentary Seminar which was to have been held on 29 and 30 September in Antalya, Turkey. The Parliamentary Seminar will be rescheduled for the spring of the year 2000. The seminar theme – “New Risks and Challenges: Minorities in the Twenty-First Century” – will focus on a number of issues, including the role parliaments may play in seeking to develop co-operative strategies, to build internal security and to solve complex ethno-political issues. Coping with regionalism and ethnicity as political issues and finding legislative solutions to concerns of groups within a society and between neighbouring States are topics that will also be discussed in the spring.

Due to the postponement of the seminar, the Assembly’s meeting schedule has also been changed. The planned Bureau Meeting in Istanbul, to be held in conjunction with the OSCE Summit, will now be an Expanded Bureau Meeting. The Expanded Bureau Meeting for the spring of the year 2000, which normally would have been held in Copenhagen, is now scheduled to take place in conjunction with the Seminar. This Meeting will focus on the preparations for the Ninth Annual Session to be held in Bucharest in July 2000.

### **Nantes to Host Conference on Subregional Development**

The OSCE Parliamentary Conference on Subregional Development will be held in Nantes from 13 to 15 October 1999. This will be the second OSCE Conference on Subregional Development, designed to bring together representatives of various subregional organizations and European and world institutions so that an insight can be gained into their objectives, programmes and aspirations, as well as to allow the Members of Parliament to learn about the difficulties involved. The Conference, which is being organized by the French National Assembly in partnership with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, will be presided over by OSCE PA President Helle Degn.

The Nantes Conference will be attended by OSCE Secretary General Mr. Ján Kubiš and Mr. Thomas Price, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, as well as Mr. Are Jostein Norheim, Representative of the Chairman-in-Office. Over 100 participants from OSCE countries and international and regional organizations are expected to participate.

## Parliamentarians will Observe Elections in Georgia

Parliamentary observers from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will observe the 31 October parliamentary elections in Georgia, in conjunction with the ODIHR. The Parliamentary Assembly delegation will be assisted by, and work with, the OSCE Observer Missions in Tbilisi. All OSCE observers are deployed in co-operation as provided in the Agreement between the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the ODIHR signed in 1997. Since 1993, nearly 700 short-term observers from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly have monitored more than 30 elections in the OSCE region. Having been engaged almost exclusively in short-term observation, the Parliamentary Assembly has played a prominent

role in election observation in transitional and developing democratic systems. Under the Agreement between the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the ODIHR, short- and long-term observers are co-ordinated and deployed under a unified plan. A unified statement for the observers is then delivered by a Special Representative, appointed by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office upon the recommendation of the President of the OSCE PA. The Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office is generally chosen from senior members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

### Presidential Activities

Ms. Helle Degn, unanimously re-elected at the Eighth Annual Session in St. Petersburg for an additional one-year term as

President of the Assembly, will continue her activities directed towards increasing the visibility of the Assembly and the OSCE as a whole. Since September 1998, the President has visited all OSCE Institutions and ten OSCE Field Missions, while high-level bilateral visits were paid to the United States of America, Sweden and France. In October, the President will pay a high-level bilateral visit to Finland, followed by visits to OSCE Missions in the Baltic States, Kosovo and the Caucasus. The President also intends to participate in the election monitoring missions in the Russian Federation and Croatia.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

15-18 September	<i>OSCE Chairman-in-Office visit to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia</i>
20 September – 1 October	<i>OSCE Review Meeting, Vienna</i>
28 September – 4 October	<i>OSCE Chairman-in-Office visit to Central Asia</i>
19-20 October	<i>Preparatory Seminar for 8th Economic Forum on “Environmental Impact of Conflicts”, Tashkent</i>
8-10 November	<i>OSCE Review Meeting, Istanbul</i>
11-17 November	<i>Preparatory Meeting for OSCE Summit, Istanbul</i>
18-19 November	<i>OSCE Summit Meeting of Heads of State or Government, Istanbul</i>
6-7 December	<i>Mediterranean Seminar on “Implementation of Human Dimension Commitments”, Amman</i>



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Kärntner Ring 5-7  
A-1010 Vienna, Austria  
Tel.: (+43-1) 514 36-196  
Fax: (+43-1) 514 36-105  
E-mail: [info@osce.org](mailto:info@osce.org)

For more information on the OSCE  
see the OSCE Website:  
<http://www.osce.org>