



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

## OSCE boosts its democratic policing operations with series of new initiatives

New Police Academy adds further impetus to the OSCE's efforts in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

*In the past few weeks, the OSCE has forged ahead with its engagement in democratic policing. A Senior Police Adviser was appointed, a co-operation agreement on policing was signed with the European Commission, and in the town of Idrizovo, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the new National Police Academy has opened its doors to the first set of cadets. At the same time, the adoption of an Amnesty Law by the country's parliament has given further impetus to the OSCE's confidence-building activities in the area.*

Democratic policing has moved to the top of the agenda for the OSCE's operations in south-eastern Europe. Nowhere is this better reflected than in the professional profile of participants in the regular two-day induction courses at OSCE headquarters, which prepare new staff for their future tasks in the field. Just like in the autumn of 1999, when the Kosovo Police Service School (KPSS) was established, up to a third of the new recruits who pass through Vienna for introductory briefings these days carry "police" in their titles.

Whether they are police instructors, trainers or monitors, most of the new staff are bound for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, where the new National Police Academy opened its



OSCE/Marko Georgiev

*With the help of the OSCE, which is overseeing the restoration of the rule of law, life is returning to normal in conflict-devastated areas like Matejce, north of Skopje*

doors in February to multi-ethnic groups of police cadets. While the KPSS can already look back at two and a half years of successful police training, and is now starting to hand over some of its functions to local staff, the OSCE's police operations in its neighbouring country have only just begun.

For several months now, OSCE officers have been monitoring the redeployment of national police officers into the previous conflict areas in the former

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. On 11 February, the country's authorities – following the passage of an Amnesty Law by parliament – started redeploying police forces into the first 65 villages, out of a planned 136. On the same day, the first class of 101 police cadets – men and women from different ethnic groups, 80 per cent of them ethnic Albanians – embarked on a nine-month training programme in the Police Academy in Idrizovo, near Skopje. The course curricu-

lum for the new recruits comprises three months of intensive basic police instruction and six months of highly structured field training.

“Together, you will protect human rights and ensure that all decent people feel safe and secure, regardless of their race, ethnicity or religion. Together, you will help reshape this country’s future”, Craig Jenness, the Head of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, told the first recruits at the Academy’s opening ceremony. Since 4 March, another 150 cadets have joined the Academy, which augurs well for the programme’s popularity.

The start of the multi-ethnic training programme, which was designed by the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the OSCE, marks a new step towards rebuilding confidence in this Balkan country. The OSCE Mission to Skopje has invested some 400,000 euros in the refurbishment of the Police Academy, with another 1.8 million euros earmarked to complete the project. Under the programme, senior national police instructors and OSCE police officers and field personnel will work side by side to train a total of 500 new police officers by July 2002. A further 500 officers are scheduled to have been trained by the end of 2003. To ensure completely multi-ethnic training, an additional group of 100 cadets from the majority population will be trained in a fully integrated programme.

### Tangible results

The passage of an Amnesty Law by the parliament of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at the beginning of March is considered a milestone in the country’s quest for stability, and was warmly welcomed by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Portuguese Foreign Minister Jaime Gama. “The adoption of the law will facilitate the police redeployment process and increase confidence in the country. It will also greatly contribute to the stabilization of life in a multi-ethnic society, in accordance with democratic and tolerant values, and clearly demonstrates the importance attached by parliamentary members to respecting the rule of law”, he said.

On the ground, in the former conflict areas, the new law has already produced tangible, positive results. Following the passage of the law, it was envisaged that most of the 136 villages would be participating in the process of redeploying police forces by the end of March.

One of the most visible signs of progress could be seen in February in the conflict-torn village of Matejce, north of Skopje, where the ethnically-mixed local community council reconvened for the first time since the beginning of the crisis. Representatives of ethnic Albanian villagers, who make up the majority of the population, gathered with the three ethnic Serb members of the council to discuss the reconstruction of the village and the return of displaced people to their homes.

The meeting was facilitated by the recent redeployment of ethnically-mixed police patrols and supported by OSCE monitors and police advisers. “We see this as a major step towards the return to normal life in a village that was seriously affected by last year’s conflict”, said Mr. Jenness.

February also saw the signing of the first Memorandum of Understanding between the OSCE and the European Commission (EC) on the contribution of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje to the policing operation. Under the agreement, the EC will deploy two of its police experts to the Skopje Mission, where they will work closely with the Mission’s Police Development Unit. They will introduce relevant European Union policing models, standards and best practices to the joint enterprise, with the aim of reforming police operations in the country.

Further underlining the increasing significance of democratic policing in the work of the OSCE, a Senior Police Adviser has recently been appointed (see page 5). The new position was created to improve the overall co-ordination of the Organization’s police operations between headquarters and the field, as well as to intensify the OSCE’s interaction with other international partners involved in policing.

*By Alexander Nitzsche*

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# ‘The long march of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia’

## Policing on prime time: an eyewitness report

*Christian F. Wehrschuetz, Belgrade correspondent of the ORF, the Austrian national broadcaster, recently looked in on the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje to get an overview of the challenges it is tackling on the ground. His visit resulted in on-the-spot reports in Austria’s main evening news over two consecutive days in early March. The first report provided a glimpse of how confidence-building monitors and police advisers are assisting with the redeployment of the police to villages in the former conflict areas. The second report focused on the activities of the Police Academy in Idrizovo, near Skopje. Mr. Wehrschuetz later shared his insights with the OSCE Newsletter on ‘the long march of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia’. Translated excerpts of his informal notes follow:*

Bringing law and order back into this crisis region is the aim of the OSCE, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which is based in Vienna. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, police officers from many OSCE countries are on duty, both at the police school and in the field. From the central police office in Tetovo, it is clear that establishing the rule of law and the authority of a constitutional State will take time. On the one hand, the trust of the Albanians has to be won back; on the other hand, the resistance of organized crime to the return of the police has to be broken down.

Therefore, as they go about their patrols with the OSCE, the multi-ethnic police exercise a great deal of caution. Arrests are avoided as much as possible so as not to provoke new tensions. The circumstances are aggravated by the many Albanians who prefer to take care of criminal offences themselves instead of reporting them. Police patrols, which are usually made up of five police offi-

cers – Albanians and Macedonians – currently take place mainly during the day and in the early evening hours. In this way, the police make their presence known even if a continuous presence in most of the villages is not possible just yet. The Macedonian border area with Kosovo (FRY) poses a problem: it is situated in the area of Tetovo, which is very mountainous and difficult to monitor.

from all the national groups must be women. This also supports the position of women among the Albanian students.

The training itself consists of normal police training, with special attention given to police ethics and human rights. The weapons instruction still covers Kalashnikovs, but this will no longer be the case in the future, when the multi-ethnic police and the academy will be



OSCE/Marko Georgiev

*Multi-ethnic police cadets at the opening ceremony of the Police Academy in Idrizovo*

The multi-ethnic police are educated and trained in an academy on the outskirts of Skopje, which is headed by a Macedonian police general. Besides the Macedonian instructors, there are also police officers from the participating States of the OSCE, which practically finances the academy.

By July 2002, 500 police officers will have completed their basic training at the academy. The courses last three months. The second class, with 150 recruits, started their training in early March. Among the students, 90 are Albanians, 30 are Macedonians and the rest belong to other national minorities. The recruits should not be more than 25 years old. Some 15 per cent of the participants

part of an extensive police reform, as part of the EU Stabilization and Association Process.

Today, the police still have many characteristics of an armed force: for example, they still are equipped with rocket launchers. To meet European criteria, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will have to transform its police force into a civilian police whose main task is to be a friend and extend a helping hand.

Moreover, the OSCE hopes that, through the joint training of the multi-ethnic police, an *esprit de corps* will develop among the recruits, helping them eventually to overcome national tensions.

# Putting an indelible Kosovo stamp on the Police Service School

Slowly but surely, local police officers have started doing the teaching

By Sven Lindholm

*The eighteenth class of the OSCE-run Kosovo Police Service School (KPSS) in Vushtrri/Vucitrn graduated on 30 March. One major difference of this group of 296 cadets from the previous seventeen classes stood out at the ceremony: for the first time, the multi-ethnic graduates were led in by one of their own – Officer Jetullah Aliu, who had also served as their Master Drill Instructor throughout their course.*

I have always loved this profession and first came to the academy as a young boy. I had a strong feeling that some day I would come back, and wanted to return as an instructor”, says Kosovo Police Service (KPS) Officer Jetullah Aliu. As the Master Drill Instructor, he teaches discipline to new cadets, provides the first contact with students and often has the closest dealings with them. A Kosovo Albanian, he was a drill instructor from 1981 to 1988 at the same site, when it once served as the centre for police training in the former Yugoslavia.

During the difficult period in September 1999, the OSCE established the Kosovo Police Service School practically from the ground up. Its goal of developing a multi-ethnic police force as a major step towards rebuilding confidence in the rule of law in Kosovo is bearing fruit. To date, the school has trained 4,700 locally-recruited cadets in democratically-oriented policing through basic as well as specialized programmes.

“Capacity-building”, which means developing the skills of individuals as well as institutions through training, is central to the mandate of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. Capacity-building is about improving skills, professionalism and co-operation, and eventually handing responsibilities over to the people of



OSCE/Lubomir Korek

*The OSCE-run Kosovo Police Service School is turning out to be a showcase of capacity-building – preparing the local population to take over institutions*

Kosovo in support of institutional development. The OSCE Mission has consistently advocated the participation of the local population as essential for promoting the local ownership of new institutions. As a matter of policy, the OSCE aims to gradually transfer the management of structures that it creates or reforms to local staff.

## First generation

To this end, the Kosovo Police Service School has developed an intensive 12-week programme for KPS officers who wish to share their knowledge with other officers by becoming KPSS instructors. More than 100 KPS officers were trained and certified as police instructors in 2001. These instructors are now conducting basic training to new cadets at the KPSS as well as in-service training to experienced officers in the field.

One officer who has been witnessing and experiencing positive developments in the quality and professionalism of

KPSS cadets is Major Driton Zabergjia. A member of the first KPSS class in 1999, he is now among the first generation of local officers who are passing on the skills they have learned at the KPSS to other cadets. Like his colleague, Officer Aliu, Major Zabergjia was an instructor at the police academy before 1990.

“The Director of the Police School and his staff have given us great support to prove that we are a central part of the institution”, he said. “I am very pleased to be playing a role in the establishment and development of a respected local police force in Kosovo.”

Major Zabergjia works closely with the school’s international police trainers to develop advanced and specialized courses for the KPS. These courses are offered by the school to ensure that the KPS officers deployed throughout Kosovo are equipped with the skills to be professional police officers and to serve the law enforcement needs of the whole spectrum of Kosovo’s population.

“This is a very important and responsible position, since it deals with the development and education of cadets and experienced police officers as full partners in the KPS institutional system”, said Major Zabergjia. The Police Training Division develops courses that are crucial to the making of a fully fledged KPS officer, including specific aspects of criminal investigation, traffic control, arson investigation, domestic violence investigation and close protection security.

He added: “This is one of the best examples in Kosovo, showing how we are working and striving towards building a multi-ethnic base in our activities. The increased contribution of KPSS instructors gives a positive impression and makes us proud to be involved and to be part of the KPSS system.”

#### Mentoring role

The multi-ethnic model represented by each class is also now being imple-

mented in the school’s day-to-day teaching, as international trainers begin to assume a mentoring role. Over the past few months, the new, local KPS instructors have been an integral part of the training of police officers, working with cadets from the morning parade at 8.30, through to the theoretical and practical classes, until the lights go off at 9.30 in the evening.

One class is benefiting from team-teaching of two KPS officers, Agim Melenica, a Kosovo Albanian, and Zlatica Nedelkovic, a Kosovo Serb. The class is taught in both Albanian and Serbian. Through example, the cadets learn the principles of democratic policing and tolerance. “In our teaching, we try to pass on what we have learned from international police instructors and our experiences as police officers”, said Officer Melenica.

The instructors also learn from their students. “We always try to help cadets

both in and out of the classroom and try to have a fair relationship with them. So far, the students have given us only positive evaluations about the way we teach, but some of the opinions they have expressed have been valuable in helping us improve our teaching methods”, adds Officer Nedelkovic.

Local trainers are the future of the KPSS and its students are, clearly, satisfied with this significant development. According to one cadet, “The lectures of local instructors yield better results. Even when translations are not needed, they make more of an effort to impart a greater understanding of policing techniques.”

If this level of capacity-building is sustained, the Kosovo Police Service School, with the assistance of the OSCE, will have a very bright future indeed under local administration.

*Sven Lindholm is Acting Spokesperson of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo*

## Monk: ‘A mature society requires open and accountable policing’

*The new Senior Police Adviser talks about the OSCE’s strengths in police-related activities and describes the additional challenges the Organization is being called upon to take on by participating States on the criminal and security-related front.*

In February, Richard Monk, a former senior police officer from the United Kingdom, assumed the responsibilities of Director and Senior Police Adviser to the OSCE Secretary General, a post established by Permanent Council Decision No. 448 on 4 December 2001.

In this new function, Mr. Monk will provide a vital link between the OSCE, the United Nations, NATO, the European Commission and the European Union, as well as between the Organization’s Secretariat and its missions and field activities. One of his first tasks will be to chart the OSCE’s police-related programmes for the future, and to ensure that these are



OSCE/Michal Olejarnik

distinct from those being undertaken by other international organizations.

“I am keen to see that, wherever possible, our police assistance programmes relate to work being undertaken by other bodies within the OSCE”, Mr. Monk told the *OSCE Newsletter*. “Non-governmental organizations should also provide us with information and knowledge that is helpful in developing improved policing capabilities.”

He stressed the need for the establishment of guidelines which can be used to plan new missions or to provide fresh assistance within existing ones. “To that end, I am looking forward to hearing the views of the OSCE Heads of Mission and their staff”, he added.

“Policing that is effective against major crime and is responsive to a community’s needs is crucial to promoting social, political and economic well-being”, Mr. Monk went on to say. “The OSCE is already associated with multi-

ethnic police training programmes by virtue of its successful work in Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and southern Serbia, but there are other tasks that we are being invited to tackle. We also need to think about training for investigators – on a regional basis – in modern methods of combating major crime, including sexual crime.”

Mr. Monk emphasized that, in his view, a mature society requires a mode of policing that is both open and accountable. “This is why I believe the

OSCE must be ready to give advice to interior ministers on the means of building integrity into policing.”

Richard Monk served as a police officer for 35 years. From March 1998 to March 1999, he was Commissioner of the United Nations International Police Task Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2000, he was invited by the United Nations Secretary-General to be a member of the United Nations Panel on Peace Operations, which prepared the “Brahimi Report”, reviewing the criti-

cisms and failures of past peacekeeping operations. In 2001, Mr. Monk undertook a five-month study of policing in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on behalf of the OSCE. He also reported, on behalf of the OSCE and the Office of the High Representative, on the role and tasks of a follow-up mission to the UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has been adopted as the starting point for the future European Union police mission in the country.

## Chairman-in-Office continues official tour of OSCE mission area

*In February, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office (CiO), Portuguese Foreign Minister Jaime Gama, continued his programme of visits to the Organization’s missions in south-eastern Europe, to familiarize himself with the issues facing the participating States in the region. The trip took him to Serbia and Montenegro on 18 and 19 February and to Kosovo on 20 February. He ended his programme with a trip to the Caucasus, which took him to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in early March.*

**D**uring his stay in Serbia and Montenegro, Mr. Gama took the opportunity to hold meetings with the highest-level political officials at the federal, Serbian and Montenegrin levels, including Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica, and the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Goran Svilanovic. In the Montenegrin capital, Podgorica, Mr. Gama met President Milo Djukanovic and Foreign Minister Branko Lukovac.

In his discussions, the CiO focused on the further involvement of the OSCE in the continuing process of reform aimed at building democratic institutions in Serbia and Montenegro. Particularly worth noting were reforms affecting the judiciary, the police and the media, already initiated by the OSCE



*Jaime Gama, Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE (right), and Michael Steiner, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Kosovo, meet the press*

Mission in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). The Mission has also been actively engaged in the stabilization of the situation in southern Serbia, where a multi-ethnic police force has been established. Currently, the preparations for the holding of early municipal elections – in close co-operation with the governmental co-ordinating body – is at the top of the agenda of the Mission in Belgrade.

“South-eastern Europe will remain a priority area for the OSCE”, Foreign

Minister Gama said. “I was pleased to see the excellent co-operation between the OSCE and the various authorities I met with, as well as a sincere acknowledgement of OSCE support for the various reform processes and confidence-building measures in progress.”

Ambassador Stefano Sannino, Head of the Mission to the FRY, welcoming the visit of the Chairman-in-Office, said that “it comes at a moment when the Mission is striking a balance of a year of activities, following an approach that

centres around co-operation and co-ordination with the country's authorities and its official institutions".

On 20 February, the CiO travelled on to Kosovo, where he held meetings with Pascal Fieschi, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, and Michael Steiner, the new Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in the province. Minister Gama also met Lieutenant General Marcel Valentin, the Commander of the NATO-led Kosovo Stabilization Force (KFOR) and key political representatives of the province. This was Mr. Gama's first visit to Kosovo, where the OSCE has its largest mission, comprising more than 450 international staff members.

### Finding solutions

Two weeks later, the CiO continued his series of field visits with a four-day trip to the South Caucasus, where the OSCE is present in three participating States. The main goal of his trip to the region was to seek to reinforce the dialogue aimed at finding possible solutions to conflicts arising from the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

In the Armenian capital, Yerevan, on 4 and 5 March, Minister Gama met with Armenian President Robert Kocharian, the "President" of Nagorno-Karabakh,

Arkady Ghoukasian, and other high-level political representatives. Their discussions focused on the current prospects for a successful and peaceful resolution of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and the role that the OSCE could play in the process. The active role of the OSCE Office in Yerevan in promoting legislative reform and economic growth was also discussed and positively assessed.

From Yerevan, Foreign Minister Gama travelled on to the Georgian capital, Tbilisi. Earlier, he had expressed his deep concern at the intention of the leadership of the breakaway province of Abkhazia in Georgia to conduct so-called parliamentary elections on 2 March on the territory under its control. In his official statement, the CiO had stressed that all refugees and internally displaced persons should be accorded the right to a safe, secure and dignified return to their homes in Abkhazia before any elections in the region could be held.

Speaking in Tbilisi, Mr. Gama again took the opportunity to meet high-level political representatives of the country, among them the Georgian President, Edvard Shevardnadze, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Irakli Menagariashvili. He commended Georgia on its efforts in counter-terrorism.

"The OSCE stands ready to continue

to support Georgia", he said. "Moreover, a particular focus of the activities of the OSCE in the future will be on combating drug trafficking and the salvage of radioactive sources, which might be used by terrorists for their criminal purposes."

During his stay in Georgia, the Chairman-in-Office also flew to the OSCE monitoring base at Shatili, near the border with the Russian Federation, where he acquainted himself with the activities of the OSCE border monitors, who are observing the Chechen and Ingush sections of the Russo-Georgian Federation border. Mr. Gama described this operation as an important contribution to conflict prevention and stability in the region.

Foreign Minister Gama concluded his visit to the South Caucasus with a trip to Azerbaijan, where he met President Heydar Aliyev, Prime Minister Artur Rasizadeh and Foreign Minister Vilayat Guliyev. President Aliyev requested the CiO to find a peaceful solution to the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh before the end of the Portuguese chairmanship. In reply, Minister Gama stressed that the Portuguese Chairmanship would do everything possible to meet the expectations of the two parties to the conflict and to reinvigorate the work of the Minsk Group of countries dealing with this issue.

## Peace, piece-by-piece: The painstaking work of confidence-building

OSCE monitors are performing a delicate task in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, helping the Skopje Government to redeploy the police into previously strife-torn communities. This means being a diplomat, negotiator, patient listener and social worker, all rolled into one

*By Daniel Renton*

Every morning at 9 o'clock, a fleet of armoured vehicles sweeps out of the OSCE compound in Tetovo and heads off along the region's plains or up into some still-snowbound mountain villages. Inside sit the rather curiously

named "confidence-building monitors" (CBMs), 24 international personnel from 10 different countries, whose job is to ensure that the peace deal – the Ohrid Framework Agreement – which brought an end to the inter-ethnic conflict in the

former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2001, is implemented on the ground.

We, the confidence-builders, are the OSCE's movers and shakers in the field. We monitor the redeployment of the ethnically mixed police forces into the terri-



*Confidence-building monitors like Daniel Renton are working themselves out of a job – and that can only be a good thing*

tories formerly held by Albanian rebels, facilitate meetings to bring together ethnically divided communities and constantly assess the security situation as well as the mood of the local people in order to head off problems and to resolve difficulties long before they develop into the cause of another firefight. Confidence-building monitors are the fingertips of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje, feeling the pulse and delicately applying first aid to what's broken.

My own area of responsibility, the region around the town of Tetovo, is the most sensitive in the country. The conflict started here in February 2001 between the ethnic Albanian armed group – the self-proclaimed National Liberation Army (NLA) – and the Macedonian security forces. The eight months of fighting that followed in the Tetovo region left not only many dead and wounded, but also long-lasting social, material and economic scars. A large number of houses were destroyed, 7,000 ethnic Macedonians and Albanians were displaced from their homes, formerly harmonious ethnically-mixed communities suddenly found themselves divided, and the economy – already fragile and precarious – crashed.

In September, peace was re-established when the major political parties signed the Ohrid Agreement, which pro-

vided for the protection of Albanian minority rights in terms of language, education and job opportunities in state institutions. Additionally, it paved the way for laws on local self-government and for an amnesty for ethnic Albanians who took part in the conflict, provided that they disarmed by 26 September. The OSCE's nine-year-old mission, based in Skopje, was tasked with facilitating the peace process, and consequently experienced massive growth – from just a handful of international staff to several hundred in only a few weeks.

#### **'Softly-softly' community policing**

The primary task of the monitors, who make up the bulk of the OSCE international personnel in the country, has been to create favourable conditions for the return of an ethnically-mixed police force to the areas formerly held by the NLA. The return of the police is an essential part of the peace process, as it means not only a return to law and order but also a confirmation of the territorial integrity of the State. However, police redeployment, even in the form of 'softly-softly' community policing, accompanied at every step by internationally recruited OSCE police advisers, has been anything but easy.

The main obstacle has been the slow introduction of amnesty legislation, which has made many citizens fear the

redeployment of the police in case they be arrested for crimes committed during the conflict. The Amnesty Law was finally passed in March, but prior to that it was not easy to convince ex-fighters cooped up in isolated mountain villages that they were safe. It has been the job of the confidence-building monitors and OSCE police advisers to persuade the sceptics, and despite a slow start, we have had success. By the end of March, in the Tetovo region, police had returned to about 80 per cent of villages, and it is anticipated they will return to the remaining areas in the near future.

#### **Imaginative approach**

The monitors do much more than just facilitate the return of the police. Our job is to create the conditions for a long-lasting peace in the area, and this calls for an imaginative and proactive approach. It means being a diplomat, negotiator, patient listener and social worker, all rolled into one. In the course of one working day, I may start the morning in a smoky room, trying to convince diehard sceptics to talk to their neighbours, pass the afternoon shovelling snow off a mountain road to allow displaced people to return to a village, follow that up with a meeting with a mayor to discuss freedom of movement, and then end the day in the same smoky room, reiterating the same arguments to the same sceptics I met in the morning. Confidence-building requires a combination of saint-like patience, mule-like determination and – not least of all – a cast-iron stomach to handle industrial quantities of coffee.

Sometimes our diligent and painstaking efforts are thrown off-track by sudden and unpredictable events. Such is daily life in the Balkans. At the end of 2001, my efforts to restore confidence in the Dzepciste municipality, a particularly sensitive area that had been home to many members of the former NLA, were dealt a severe blow when three Macedonian special police were killed in an ambush and seven Albanians were arrested on a variety of firearm and terrorist charges. There followed an armed stand-off between Macedonian security forces and local Albanians that lasted for several weeks in the snowy Dzepciste fields.



It's taken a lot of talking and still more coffee to deal with the repercussions of those events, which have taught us that our efforts to build a long-lasting peace can be reversed with dizzying speed in just a matter of minutes. Fortu-

nately, however, such incidents are now very rare. As spring approaches, I can confidently say that, in the Tetovo area, the local population increasingly believes that peace is here to stay.

We, the confidence-building moni-

tors, may soon be out of a job and perversely, that can only be a good thing.

*Daniel Renton is an OSCE Confidence Building Monitor in the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje.*

## Conference on Freedom of Belief and Expression in Central Asia calls for dialogue and tolerance

By Michael McNamara

*Acknowledging the urgency of tackling the roots of terrorism, including violence motivated by religious factors, the 75 participants in the Conference on Freedom of Belief and Expression in Jalal-Abad, southern Kyrgyzstan, agreed that a more intensive dialogue between Central Asian governments and religious groups, combined with improved religious education, would go a long way towards discouraging extremism.*

As the world turned its gaze on Central Asia last year, the threat posed by terrorism, inspired by fundamentalism, was never more obvious. No less obvious was the need to counter that threat. At the same time, many in the global community have voiced concern that any counter-measures adopted should remain strictly within the boundaries of international human rights commitments.

It has become increasingly apparent that terrorists win advocates in countries where human rights are denied and civil liberties are repressed. Denial of individuals' basic right to worship and to follow a religion of their choice, for example, can destabilize a society. If they are discriminated against, led astray and alienated, practising and devout believers can also be driven to violence.

Against this background, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, through its Field Office in Osh, and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) jointly organized a Conference on Freedom of Belief and Express-

sion in Jalal-Abad, southern Kyrgyzstan, on 15 and 16 February. The event was made possible with the assistance of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and the State Commission on Religious Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, with the financial support of the Foreign Office of the United Kingdom.

"Too often in the past, the dialogue has been based on statements of positions, not viewpoints", observed Jeremy Gunn, a member of the ODIHR Advisory Panel on Freedom of Religion or Belief. "Bringing the parties together – religious leaders, representatives of government and of non-governmental organizations, diplomats and scholars – encouraged greater understanding of one of the most pressing issues in Central Asia: the relationship between the State and religion. Much still needs to be done, but the Conference was a very welcome step."

Omurzak Mamayusupov, Director of the Kyrgyz State Commission on Religious Affairs, regarded the Conference as continuing the process begun by the OSCE's Bishkek international conference on preventing and countering terrorism in December 2001. He welcomed the holding of the event in Jalal-Abad, but stressed that it was "useful not only for Jalal-Abad but also for all of Central Asia".

### Growing concern

The break-up of the Soviet Union has given rise to a significant growth in religious life in Central Asia, not only within traditional religions in the region, but

also in non-traditional missionary activities. Governments in the region have sought to suppress any religious activity that is not approved by government-appointed religious administrative bodies established in the Soviet era. They have shown particular concern at the growing support for conservative Islam, whose followers they often label *Wahhabis*, whether or not they happen to be members of that sect.

Among the organizations that have become most prominent in recent years is the *Hizb ut-Tahrir*. Operating underground, the movement calls for the overthrow of governments in the region through non-violent means and for the re-establishment of a caliphate harking back to early Islamic history. Central Asian governments, which believe it to be a considerable threat to the political order, have responded by jailing individuals for being members and for distributing its materials.

The rise in the activities of extremist organizations and the subsequent crackdown has been especially evident in the Ferghana Valley, a region of Central Asia that includes parts of southern Kyrgyzstan, northern Tajikistan and western Uzbekistan.

In Jalal-Abad, on the easternmost fringe of the Ferghana Valley, the area in Kyrgyzstan where these groups are most active, 117 *Hizb ut-Tahrir* members were arrested last year. In Uzbekistan, more than 2,000 people are believed to have been arrested and convicted since 1999 for participation in banned Islamic

groups, particularly the *Hizb ut-Tahrir*. And in Tajikistan, according to the Ministry of Security, more than 105 group members were arrested in 2001.

### Addressing extremism

The Conference participants reaffirmed their conviction that the ability to freely express one's religious beliefs was a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of democratic society – and a prerequisite for lasting stability. They were convinced that, with greater access to education,

vulnerable groups would be much less likely to be drawn into extremist activities.

Mukhamedjan-Aji Akhmedov, the imam of the Bilal Mosque in Jalal-Abad, pointed out that, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there had been 35 mosques in the area; now the number had multiplied to nearly 2,000, with many of the new imams just as inadequately educated as the masses.

The worsening economic situation in the region during the transition years had not helped either: "I strongly believe that economic conditions in the region are contributing to the spread of radicalism and the growth of *Hizb ut-Tahrir* in the area", the imam remarked.



OSCE/Kathleen Sammel

*The Conference on Freedom of Belief and Expression served as a dialogue based on viewpoints, not official positions*

Echoing this view, Mr. Mamayusupov of the State Commission on Religious Affairs said: "Many poor people here are waiting for a miracle and *Hizb ut-Tahrir* supporters are promising miracles. They claim that the State doesn't care and they promise paradise."

Sanavbar Alifovna Nurova of the Committee on Religious Affairs under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan called for a more intensive dialogue between religious groups, including the *Hizb ut-Tahrir*, and the authorities. She also urged that religious-based political parties be examined more closely – an idea that was rejected by several delegates. Referring to a presentation by Anna Kreikmeyer on a recent study of the Tajik

peace process by the Centre for OSCE Research at the University of Hamburg, she warned that the Tajik experience of civil war involving secular and Islamic forces could not be ignored and that such a situation could arise anywhere.

Mukhiddin Kabirov, Deputy Head of the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan, pointed to the changes in his own party as proof of the benefits of inclusive dialogue. "I've been a member for three years, and over time it has changed from a military and political organization to a political party", he said. He asserted that it was easier to contain and influence radical groups when they were legal than when they were operating underground.

The plan of action proposed by the participants reaffirms international commitments in this area and calls for intensified dialogue between religious communities and governments as well as among the faiths themselves, with a view to fostering tolerance. The plan also calls on the OSCE to support this dialogue through its various institutions.

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*Michael McNamara is a Monitoring/Public Affairs Officer with the OSCE/ODIHR*

## Demystifying the issue of freedom of religion and belief

As well as focusing on the growth of Islamic extremism in Central Asia, the Conference on Freedom of Belief and Expression also looked at the broader issue of freedom of religion and belief in the region. It became apparent that the countries perceive the threats posed by the various groups differently, and adopt differing legislative and administrative responses.

The participants discussed the priorities for action that have been emerging from special OSCE/ODIHR activities in the region over the past year.

### Some highlights:

- In early 2002, ODIHR's Advisory Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief carried out a review of the newly-adopted Law on Freedom of Religion and Religious Associations in Kazakhstan, following a round table organized by the

OSCE Centre in Almaty last year to solicit the views of representatives of religious organizations and NGOs.

- A review of Kyrgyzstan's draft law on the subject was discussed on 13 February at a round table in Bishkek; Jeremy Gunn, member of the ODIHR's Advisory Panel, presented an analysis of the draft law following an earlier review and a round table in 2000.
- At the suggestion of the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan, the ODIHR sponsored round tables in Dushanbe and Khujand to examine the situation in the country. The consensus was that it was satisfactory in the context of Central Asian standards; nevertheless, religious education and promotion of the values of tolerance through education remained crucial.

# Sharing the waters for a safer world

## Seminar in Zamora paves the way for the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum

*How can regions co-operate most effectively in the sustainable use of shared waterways and in protecting water quality to avoid conflict and ensure stability? This was the subject of scrutiny and debate at a seminar in Zamora, Spain, on 11 and 12 February, following a similar event in Belgrade in November 2001. Both seminars have helped shape the agenda of the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum, to be held on 28 to 31 May in Prague.*

In his keynote address, Professor Ashok Swain, Director of the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University, Sweden, underlined the potential of international agreements on water to contribute to harmonious regional co-operation by addressing the future water needs of countries that shared a river basin. Such agreements were not, however, sufficient in themselves to maintain stability, he added; the favourable conditions they created also had to be made lasting and progressive.

The Director General of the Spanish Ministry of the Environment, Ramon Alvarez Maqueda, said that water-related issues were on the political agenda of several countries and pointed to the need to develop better water-sharing mechanisms that would benefit all levels of society. Professor Goncalves Henriquez, Director General of Portugal's Ministry of the Environment, suggested that, in cases of an international river basin extending beyond the boundaries of the European Union, member States should aim to produce a single international river-basin management plan.

In five working group sessions, some 100 participants explored a variety of institutional and legal mechanisms for water resource management. Thirty-two OSCE participating States were represented, as well as the Organization's Partners for Co-operation, its Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, its field offices, and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Presentations were made on the challenges faced in the transboundary management of basins in the distinctive regions of the Danube, the Aral Sea, the Nile River Basin and the Mekong, as well as the bodies of water shared by Canada and the United States and the Duero River, which runs through Portugal and Spain. In each case, the methods available for enhancing co-operation, preventing conflicts and increasing the shared benefits were underlined.

The European Union Water Framework Directive was discussed as a refer-

candidates for EU accession, and, indirectly, for partner countries, provided a sound basis for analysis and debate and resulted in concrete recommendations. The speakers represented Algeria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Ukraine.

Recognizing that carrying out the EU Directive involved a complex process and that engaging the public was essential to obtaining better results, the seminar devoted a working session to the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in promoting the implementation of the Directive at the national and international levels. Representatives of NGOs, enterprises and consumers called for the closer involvement of civil society in all aspects of water management.

Marc Baltes, Acting Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, concluded the sessions by saying that the forthcoming Economic Forum and its preparatory meetings represented the OSCE's efforts to identify and increase awareness of potentially destabilizing factors relating to the Organization's economic and environmental dimension. But it was not enough to talk about the threats to security posed by the lack of co-operative regional management, he added. The opportunity to foster confidence through consensus-building among states should also be addressed through "win-win" and forward-looking solutions, such as facilitating the signing and implementation of co-operative agreements.

The seminar was organized by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities on behalf of the Portuguese Chairmanship of the OSCE, in collaboration with Spain's Ministries of the Environment and of Foreign Affairs and the City of Zamora. The Black Sea Environmental Programme, the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe, the Interstate Co-ordination Water Commission of Central Asia, and the Mekong River Commission were represented.



ence model. Participants proposed that the EU and the international community provide training as well as technical and financial assistance for the work of river basin commissions, which are considered vital to water management.

Presentations on the implications of the EU Directive for countries that are

# Parliamentary Assembly's first winter meeting focuses on OSCE interaction and the fight against terrorism

*The role of the OSCE in the global fight against terrorism and the closer interaction between the governmental and parliamentary dimensions of the OSCE dominated the discussions during the first winter session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Vienna. The increased dialogue between the two OSCE dimensions was also discussed at a retreat in Salzburg between selected members of the OSCE Permanent Council and the leadership of the Parliamentary Assembly.*

More than 230 parliamentarians from 50 OSCE participating States met in Vienna on 21 and 22 February to discuss current international developments and to be briefed by senior representatives of the OSCE's governmental dimension. The winter meeting also served as an opportunity for parliamentarians to listen to presentations by the Rapporteurs of the three General Committees, Theo van den Doel, Barbara Haering and Svend Robinson, and to discuss their draft reports on the role of the OSCE in the fight against terrorism, which will be the theme of the OSCE PA Annual Session in July.

In his opening address, the President of Austria, Thomas Klestil, said: "I see the holding of the first winter meeting in the premises of the OSCE as a further step towards strengthening the parliamentary dimension of OSCE activities." He also addressed the fight against terrorism, stressing that it should not be allowed to undermine human rights and democratic principles.

OSCE Chairman-in-Office (CiO), Portuguese Foreign Minister Jaime Gama, said in his address to the parliamentarians: "...the Portuguese Chairmanship sees the first winter meeting as a clear expression of the vitality of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly." He added: "Enhancing the role of the Parli-



*Austrian President Thomas Klestil, OSCE PA President Adrian Severin and OSCE Chairman-in-Office Jaime Gama at the Parliamentary Assembly's winter meeting*

mentary Assembly is an objective that the Portuguese Chairmanship fully endorses. This is not a bureaucratic aim. On the contrary, and as a founding member of this central institution, I believe that our goal is to allow the Parliamentary Assembly to perform the ambitious role it has been entrusted with, thus contributing to the development of a pluralistic parliamentary culture in the OSCE area."

The opening meeting was chaired by the OSCE PA President, Adrian Severin, who pointed out that the principal objectives of the winter meetings were to allow increased interaction with the governmental dimension of the OSCE and to prepare for the Annual Session in July. He argued that the fight against terrorism "should not in any way undermine the basic principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms that form precisely the foundation of our civilization." Drawing attention to the concept of "multicultural security", he said: "We, the OSCE parliamentarians, could con-

tribute to the fight against terrorism not only by adopting the necessary legislation, but also by networking across various cultures and by promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue through interparliamentary dialogue."

The delegates also heard presentations by OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis and other senior OSCE officials relating to politico-military affairs, economic development and human rights.

## **Informal talks at OSCE retreat**

On 23 and 24 February, a retreat was held at Schloss Leopoldskron in Salzburg, with the participation of members of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Transparency and Accountability; representatives of the OSCE PA Bureau, including its President and its Treasurer; and representatives of the OSCE Permanent Council and the Secretariats of the OSCE and the OSCE PA. Neither side had the authority to forge formal agreements, so the aim was to have an informal exchange of views on

how to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination between the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the governmental institutions and structures in Vienna.

Participants shared the view that the Parliamentary Assembly was an important and integral part of the OSCE and that increased interaction between representatives of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and officials from the governmental dimension would strengthen the Organization and help promote the implementation of OSCE commitments. Several participants emphasized the role that OSCE parliamentarians could play in raising public awareness in the participating States and attracting political support for the OSCE and its activities.

One of the key issues raised by members of the *Ad Hoc* Committee was how to ensure that there was a response by the OSCE governmental structures to Parliamentary Assembly resolutions and recommendations. It was suggested that the PA President be invited to address the Permanent Council after each of the Assembly's Annual Sessions. The main purpose would be to give members of the Permanent Council an opportunity to make their views known on PA resolutions and recommendations.

There was also unanimous agreement that the OSCE PA be consulted on budgetary issues. A proposal that the OSCE PA be asked to comment on the Organization's draft budget early in the prepara-

tion process was positively received. To enable the views of the Assembly to be taken into account, the OSCE Secretary General would send the draft budget to the Assembly at the same time as to the participating States, and he would brief the Parliamentary Assembly on the draft budget at the Assembly's autumn meeting.

The participants supported the idea of regular meetings between the OSCE PA President and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, including the two Secretaries General, to discuss policy and to co-ordinate concrete efforts. The participants from the governmental dimension welcomed the initiative to set up a Parliamentary Assembly liaison office in Vienna.

## OSCE AGENDA

**19 April, Copenhagen. Seventh OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy.** To be announced by OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

**23 to 25 April, Warsaw. Human dimension seminar on the judicial system and human rights.** Organized by OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and OSCE Chairmanship

**14 and 15 May, Vienna. Expert meeting on combating terrorism with OSCE politico-military dimension.** Organized by Forum for Security Co-operation

**28 to 31 May, Prague. Tenth meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum.** Co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of quality of water. Organized by the Portuguese OSCE Chairmanship and Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

**14 and 15 June, Czech Republic. Observation of parliamentary elections.** OSCE/ODIHR

### RECENT EVENTS

**7 April, Hungary. Observation of parliamentary elections.** OSCE/ODIHR

**31 March, Ukraine. Observation of parliamentary elections.** OSCE/ODIHR

**25 and 26 March, Paris. Seminar on the socio-economic impact of disarmament.** Organized by OSCE Chairmanship, French Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

**18 and 19 March, Vienna. Meeting to prevent and combat violence against women.** Organized by ODIHR in co-operation with OSCE Chairmanship

### 2002 SCHEDULE OF ELECTIONS TO BE OBSERVED BY THE OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

	Type of election	Date		Type of election	Date
France	Presidential	21 April	Republic of Montenegro/ Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	Presidential	October*
Republic of Montenegro/ Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	Municipal	15 May	former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Parliamentary	Autumn*
Czech Republic	Parliamentary	14-15 June	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/ Serbia and Montenegro	Parliamentary	Autumn*
Republic of Serbia/ Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	Partial Municipal	15 June*	Federal Republic of Germany	Parliamentary	Autumn*
Slovakia	Parliamentary	September*	Republic of Serbia/ Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	Presidential	December*
Latvia	Parliamentary	5 October	Georgia	Local	2002*
Bosnia and Herzegovina	General	5 October			

\* to be confirmed





## News from the field

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

### **Armenian women urged to participate in public life**

Local government representatives from all over Armenia gathered at a seminar in Yerevan on 11 and 12 February to discuss measures to integrate women into political activities. They also explored ways of strengthening co-operation between civil society and political bodies, especially at the local level. Leading Armenian specialists on gender and civil society, members of parliament and ministry officials were among the speakers.

The seminar was part of an OSCE project to call attention to the inadequate representation of women at round tables and seminars, help change existing attitudes towards women in politics and serve as a bridge between local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to make their work more effective. The event was organized by the Association of Women with University Education, the OSCE Office in Yerevan and the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, with financial support from the Canadian International Development Agency.

### **Tuzla set to improve cantonal administration**

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina signed a memorandum of understanding with the Tuzla canton in February, paving the way for the introduction of measures that will encourage more efficiency, transparency and accountability in the canton's administrative and legislative structures. Posavina, Zenica-Doboj and Middle Bosnia were the first cantons to sign the memorandum, as part of the OSCE's Canton Administration Project (CAP). "The OSCE Mission is pleased to provide support to proactive canton governments in their efforts to implement reforms", said Robert Beecroft, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. "The



OSCE/Lubomir Korek

*The Kosovo Law Centre: dedicated to enhancing the professionalism of Kosovo's legal practitioners with the help of the OSCE*

CAP project is a key component of the OSCE's efforts to promote good governance and to make government officials more accountable to their constituencies."

The Mission has launched a series of activities in Tuzla in the area of organizational management, focusing on the restructuring of the canton's Ministry of Justice and Administration. Better management and administration of human resources, finance and cultural activities will be the goal of future reforms.

### **Enlarged Kosovo Law Centre announces 2002 strategy**

On the occasion of the opening of its new, improved premises in Pristina on 8 February, the Kosovo Law Centre (KLC) presented its strategic programme for 2002. The Centre was established in June 2000 by the OSCE to serve as a legal, non-governmental think-tank dedicated to enhancing the professionalism of the legal community through technical and material support.

The KLC has taken on the crucial task of improving the ability of the staff of the new Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to carry out Kosovo's educational reforms. The Centre's Ministry Empowerment Project, supported by the World Bank, will provide basic and specialized training to the Ministry's incoming professional staff to ensure their proficiency in the applicable law on education. The Centre will also launch a "street law" project to educate vulnerable groups on the roles and functions of the state, society and the individual. Other successful activities of the KLC include practical legal clinics for law students and continuing education for legal professionals.

### **Ukrainian lawyers briefed on international standards in human rights**

A seminar for a select group of 50 post-graduate lawyers was held in Kharkiv on 20 and 21 February to provide them with thorough briefings on the

case law of the European Court on Human Rights. Ukraine has legally adopted the European Convention on Human Rights. Faculty members of the Kharkiv Law Academy, which offers a mandatory one-year post-graduate study programme for lawyers who intend to become professional judges, gave lectures on the freedom of expression, freedom of movement and property rights.

The seminar is expected to improve the courts' observance of international human rights standards, in turn reducing the number of cases brought against Ukraine at the European Court of Human Rights.

The seminar was organized by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, in co-operation with the Ukrainian Ministry of Justice and the Kharkiv National Law Academy.

In March, another seminar focused on the new judicial laws. A seminar in May will deal with citizens' rights during court proceedings.

### **New initiatives for Roma launched in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia**

The Roma community's involvement in the political and social life of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) was discussed by some 50 participants at the first meeting between officials of the Federal Ministry for National and Ethnic Communities and representatives of the Roma community.

"The quality of the discussions was a testament to the new Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities and the timely decision to

specifically include Roma as a national minority in Serbia", the OSCE Head of Mission to FRY, Ambassador Stefano Sannino, said.

Among the issues raised were: the inclusion of Roma in the coming nationwide census, employment opportunities for Roma in the civil service and in the private sector, and long-term educational programmes for Roma children.

The event, held in Novi Sad on 10 March, was co-organized by the OSCE Mission to the FRY with the help of Roma contact points Stevan Nikolic and Srdjan Sain. Funding came from the Council of Europe. Similar meetings will be held in Nis, Bujanovac, Podgorica and Belgrade.

### **Rockets are exchanged for computers in Georgia**

The OSCE Mission to Georgia has handed over three computers to a secondary school in South Ossetia, where parents had organized the voluntary hand-over of 30 rockets in response to a weapons collection campaign conducted by the Joint Peace Keeping Forces (JPKF) and the OSCE in the Georgian-Ossetian zone of conflict.

Ivar Vikki, Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission, said at a ceremony on 26 February that the Mission had "responded to a direct request from parents of students, who wished to have educational equipment in exchange for arms".

Under the arms collection programme, the European Union, Norway, the United Kingdom and other donors have made a number of compensation

projects possible – for example, the clean-up of an irrigation tunnel running through Georgian and Ossetian villages.

So far, 1,270 units of arms and 205 kilograms of pure explosives have been turned in since the programme began in 2000. The arms are collected mainly by a tripartite observer group of Russian, Georgian and Ossetian peacekeepers. The weapons are then destroyed by the JPKF.

### **Partners join efforts in the fight against human trafficking in Ukraine**

Two training seminars, held from 28 February to 1 March in Kyiv, explored intensified co-operation between regional government, law enforcers and citizens to counter trafficking in human beings in the Ukraine.

The first seminar, organized by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, with the non-governmental organization, Winrock International, trained personnel on servicing the regional "hotlines" which will provide information on human trafficking. Representatives from countries in the region were invited to speak on issues ranging from work and residence permits for foreign citizens, to laws on citizenship and marriage.

The second seminar focused on bringing traffickers to justice. Ukrainian prosecutors, investigators and anti-trafficking police officers benefited from the expertise of specialists from Scotland Yard and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation. The training sessions were co-organized by the American Bar Association and the International Organization for Migration.



**Marcin Swiecicki (Poland)** assumed his position as **Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities** on 2 April. From September 2000 until February 2001, Mr. Swiecicki was Adviser on Economic Reforms to the President of the Republic of Lithuania. In his own country, he was Minister for Foreign Economic Relations from

September 1989 until January 1991, and Deputy Minister of the Economy from September 1999 to August 2000. Mr. Swiecicki was Mayor of Warsaw from November 1994 to March 1999. Between 1989 and 1996, he served for several terms as a member of parliament.

Mr. Swiecicki holds a master's degree in economics from the University of Warsaw and a doctorate in economics from the Institute of Planning in Warsaw. He took up post-graduate studies at the George Washington University and was

a visiting scholar at Harvard University in the United States, in both instances as a Fulbright Fellow.



Commenting on his appointment, Mr. Swiecicki said: "In 2004, with the enlargement of the European Union, the Yalta division of the continent will have come to an end. The challenge

of the OSCE's economic activities is to address the specific sources of any threat of economic polarization within OSCE countries – because other types of divisions will simply not serve anybody's security interests. To meet the expectations of all sides will require a lot of good will, effective co-operation and grim determination."

**Herbert Salber (Germany)** took up his duties in February as **Special Adviser to the Portuguese OSCE Chairmanship on Central Asia**, based in Vienna. Ambassador Salber served as the Head of the OSCE Centre in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from August 2000 to August 2001. Between his two OSCE assignments, he was assigned at the German Federal Foreign Office in Berlin, where he headed the division dealing with the European Union's relations with South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

After studies in French and Russian philology in Bonn and Toulouse, Mr. Salber started his career in his country's

foreign service in 1981, which has included postings in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, and Managua, Nicaragua. His later assignments led him to specialize in matters relating to security policy and arms control. From October 1995 to May 1996, he served as a Commissioner in the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM).

From June 1996 to August 2000, he was assigned to Vienna with the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the OSCE, and was appointed as its Deputy Head of Mission from 1997.

"The international community as a whole, and the OSCE in particular, have accumulated a solid knowledge of what needs to be done in Central Asia and which challenges have to be met", said Ambassador Salber in his first address to the Permanent Council on 14 March. "The complex task is to assist the republics in Central Asia in their continued efforts to manage the various processes of transition."

As a whole, conditions for such co-operation were favourable, he was pleased to report: "The five republics are not an area of acute crisis or conflict. OSCE involvement in this region is



related to conflict prevention in the broadest sense of the comprehensive concept of security. Assisted by the OSCE, participating States in Central Asia should make sure that their

further transition towards democratization, the rule of law and market-oriented economy is on track."

Acknowledging that "in the past there were misunderstandings and disappointments which had and have their roots in differing expectations", he urged that "in our co-operation, more efforts should be made to take into consideration the ambitions and concerns of the partners in the region."

## PRESS PROFILE

Direct excerpts from a selection of articles on the OSCE and its activities in February

### ROLE OF THE OSCE

#### *Novosti, 1 February*

[quoting Russian Parliamentarian Andrei Nikolayev, en route to the 38th Conference on Security Policy in Munich] "It is necessary to have a brand-new system of European security, the main role which must belong to the OSCE as a mouthpiece of the interests of all European countries."

#### *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 5 February*

The Europeans are more interested in quietly adding new members to the alliance and achieving the smoothest possible working relationship with Russia ... If NATO limits itself primarily to European concerns and gaining new

members, it would be following in the footsteps of the OSCE.

#### *Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 15 February*

Today, the OSCE is neither involved in co-operation (there is blatant dictate instead) nor, even less, in security since the very presence of the OSCE has become a warning for any country of the imminent loss of its sovereignty, whether in full or in part. There is already even a kind of popular saying: first the OSCE, and then NATO (or more precisely, the USA) ... today, it is not Russia at issue, or it is not only Russia. What is at issue is a dramatic "change in the destiny" of the OSCE just as of Europe as a whole: how long will Europe be an assistant to an aggressive and irresponsible Uncle Sam?

#### *Reuters, 24 February*

[quoting a report of the Washington-based Center for Defense Information on the future of NATO] "Eventually, NATO will become the central security organization for all of Europe, most likely replacing many of the activities that are

currently undertaken by the 50 plus-member OSCE."

#### *Der Spiegel, 25 February*

[quoting NATO Secretary General George Robertson] "The credibility of the NATO relies on its military capabilities ... If we lose this capability of fast and effective deployment, there will indeed be the danger of becoming a second OSCE. But the OSCE already exists."

### OSCE BUDGET

#### *Der Standard, 20 February*

The reason for the budget crisis is Russia's refusal to approve the OSCE budget for 2002. The Russians are angry that the OSCE Missions to Estonia and to Latvia, which were to monitor the protection of the political rights of Russian minorities, had been closed down. But the European Union diplomats see this as a pretext. Russia holds the view that it pays too much to the OSCE without being able to simultaneously control its work well enough.



## FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

### *Reuters, 8 February*

[quoting the Director of the ODIHR, Gerard Stoudmann, on the rights of the prisoners from Afghanistan at Guantanamo Bay] “We call on the US government to respect its international obligations and allow a competent tribunal to determine the application of the Geneva Convention in practice and treat all detainees as prisoners of war until a judgement is issued.”

### *Kurier, 21 February*

[quoting Austrian President Thomas Klestil at the Parliamentary Assembly’s winter meeting in Vienna] “Due to its global approach to security and its widespread membership, the OSCE, together with other international organizations, can make a significant contribution to the fight against terrorism.”

## CHECHNYA

### *Kurier, 22 February*

Russia is now threatening openly that the OSCE mandate in Chechnya would also be allowed to expire by the end of this year. Similar threats can also be heard from the Moscow-friendly State of Belarus and other Central Asian countries: the OSCE missions might be closed.

## BELARUS

### *Reuters, 5 February*

Belarus said ... it would not let the OSCE’s new representative into the country, in the latest of a series of clashes between Minsk and the rights group. Belarus’s Foreign Ministry said it had to examine the OSCE’s mandate before Eberhard Heyken could come to Minsk.

### *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 2-3 February*

The dictator now wants to disable the largest troublemaker in the country, i.e., the mission of the OSCE. The new chairperson of the parliamentary working group of the OSCE for Belarus, SPD deputy Uta Zapf, speaks about the threat of a “new giant ice age” between the West and Belarus if [President Alexander] Lukaschenka does not move away from this policy.

## MOLDOVA

### *Novosti, 21 February*

Eventually, the Chisinau-based mission of the OSCE joined the political pressure on the Moldovan leadership in February. Its assessment of the situation in Gagauzia (the area of residence of a Turk-speaking minority in the south of the country) is evidently tendentious.

## SOUTH SERBIA

### *Reuters, 7 February*

Stefano Sannino, the Head of the OSCE Mission to [the Federal Republic of] Yugoslavia hailed the decision to hold the elections around two years ahead of schedule. He said it was an “essential element of the ongoing democratic process in south Serbia”.

### *Die Presse, 8 February*

[Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic] is also responsible for the integration of the Albanian minority in southern Serbia. He reported progress in this project to the OSCE in Vienna. As recent as only a year ago, there were still skirmishes between Albanian rebels and Serbian security forces. Now it is quiet.

## INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

### *Die Presse, 15 February*

[reporting on an ARD TV documentary on the NATO campaign against Yugoslav targets] It is claimed that the West lied to be able to justify the NATO attacks. Two former OSCE officials ... are quoted in the programme as saying that the events in Kosovo would not have justified a NATO intervention.

# UPDATE

## from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

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



### ELECTION

#### **Long-term election observation mission set up in Hungary**

Following an invitation from the Government of Hungary to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to consider observing the parliamentary elections scheduled for 7 April, the ODIHR sent a needs assess-

ment mission to Budapest from 18 to 20 February. On the basis of the mission’s findings and conclusions, the ODIHR has decided to establish a long-term election observation mission without short-term observers to monitor the administrative preparations for the elections, the election campaign and the situation concerning the media. The ODIHR has requested the participating States for the secondment of six long-term observers.

#### **ODIHR assesses preparations for elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

An ODIHR delegation, headed by the Director of the ODIHR, Gerard Stoudmann, was in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia from 26 to 28 February to assess preparations for this year’s parliamentary elections. The delegation met with the Prime Minister and representatives of the presidential admin-



istration, the Government, the international community and civil society.

In view of the importance of the elections, the ODIHR plans to deploy an observation mission that will stay longer in the country and will be larger than previous missions. The ODIHR will coordinate its activities with the non-partisan domestic observer organization, "Citizens for the Citizens", and other representatives of civil society. The delegation welcomed the ongoing discussions among political parties on the date of the elections and the adoption of a new election law, but urged the parties to solve the pending issues as soon as possible to ensure adequate preparations for the elections.

### **Presence in Albania and ODIHR urge follow-up of election report**

Two ODIHR election experts visited Tirana from 18 to 26 February to support the OSCE Presence in Albania in following up on the recommendations in the ODIHR's final report on the parliamentary elections held in 2001. The experts joined Geehrt-Hinrich Ahrens, Head of the OSCE Presence, in meetings with high-level Albanian politicians. The discussions focused on the establishment of a bipartisan committee to investigate concerns surrounding the elections, with a view to developing remedial proposals for the future.

Representatives of the Socialist Party and the Democratic Party reconfirmed their full acceptance of the ODIHR's conclusions on the elections and agreed that its report should be used as the basis for the committee's work. The ODIHR looks forward to an agreement being reached between the Albanian parties on the committee's membership, mandate, procedures and time frame, and is ready to provide advice and technical assistance.



### **Project on legal status of IDPs in southern Caucasus completed**

The ODIHR organized round tables in February on the legal status of inter-

nally displaced persons (IDPs) in Tbilisi, Georgia, and Baku, Azerbaijan, in cooperation with the Project on Internal Displacement of the Brookings Institution, a US non-governmental organization (NGO), and the OSCE offices in Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The two round tables served to conclude an ODIHR project which was designed to review the compliance of the region's domestic legislation with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and to develop recommendations on improving the normative framework for the protection of IDPs. The reviews were carried out by two local NGOs – the Georgian Young Lawyers Association and the Azerbaijan Centre for Legal and Economic Education.

Concerning Georgia, the recommendations call for the clarification and amendment of existing legislation on IDPs, focusing on the right to own property, freedom of choice of residence, registration and benefits.

Key recommendations for Azerbaijan highlight the need to elaborate and adopt separate laws on refugees and on IDPs, in conformity with international standards, to replace the existing single law on the status of refugees and forcibly displaced persons. Other recommendations call for changing the definition of IDPs in the relevant legislation to refer to general violence and human rights violations, adopting new legislation on emergency cases, and allowing the full participation of women IDPs in the planning and distribution of food supplies, medicines, shelter and industrial goods.

The legal reviews will serve as a basis for future discussions between government agencies, NGOs, the international community and OSCE offices in the southern Caucasus on improving legislation. In Armenia, meetings on this subject are already taking place regularly. This is the first time systematic reviews are being carried out in the region.

### **Legislative online database is improved ([www.LegislationLine.org](http://www.LegislationLine.org))**

The ODIHR has launched an improved version of *LegislationLine*, an online database that collects and provides easy access, free of charge, to national

legislation related to OSCE commitments dealing with the human dimension. The new site replaces the pilot version that went on line in May 2001.

*LegislationLine* was designed as a "library without walls" to help legislators and government officials, especially in south-eastern Europe, to access information that would otherwise be difficult to locate and obtain. The web site seeks to facilitate legal reform in the region by providing lawmakers, legal practitioners and others involved in the legislative process with information showing how the different OSCE participating States address the same issues. Unlike conventional databases, *LegislationLine* provides cross references between national legislation and international standards and instruments.

The web site's format and navigational system have been upgraded, and users will find new features and more data. So far, the database features legislation on national citizenship, elections and action to combat trafficking in human beings, in as many as 38 OSCE participating States. Laws and international documents on issues concerning gender and the Roma and Sinti are currently being entered. Eight other topics are to be added in the course of 2002 and 2003.

### **ODIHR facilitates co-operation between Baltic States and Caucasus on gender issues**

In line with its support for women leaders in the Caucasus, the ODIHR organized a workshop in Tallinn, Estonia, from 14 to 17 February, on development of leadership skills for women in parliament, government and civil society in the Baltic States and the Caucasus.

The workshop, which was the first initiative of its kind, provided a suitable forum for an exchange of gender-related experiences and expertise among women in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In this way, post-transition countries were able to share with countries still in transition the know-how they had gained concerning the role of women in decision-making, co-operation between civil society and government, and lobbying for the development of gender policy.



*Women from the Baltic States shared their leadership skills with their counterparts in the Caucasus*

The meeting succeeded in generating initial networks between women leaders from the six countries and in laying the groundwork for concrete co-operation

on gender issues within and between the two regions. It also helped to promote the development of the leadership skills of the participants from the Caucasus, and to highlight common experiences during and after the transitional phase.

#### **Assistance for women's legal support centre in Tajikistan continues**

The ODIHR and the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan held training sessions and a round table on legal-clinic education in Dushanbe on 3 and 4 February. The training was designed especially for the students and directors of the ODIHR-supported legal support centre at the Russian Tajik Slavic University. The centre is a "street-law" legal clinic that provides several primary schools and high schools in the Dushanbe area with legal education, focusing on gender equality and women's rights.

The round table brought NGOs and

international and local women's organizations together with others involved in legal-clinic education in Tajikistan. With an eye towards better co-ordination, the staff of the legal clinic as well as other participants presented their goals and activities.



## ROMA & SINTI

#### **ODIHR supports creation of network of local Roma community workers**

In January and February, the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues continued preparations for the establishment of a network of local community workers to serve as Roma contact points throughout the countries of south-eastern Europe.

The task of these mediators and community advocates will be to facilitate contacts between Roma communities and local and regional authorities on issues relating to social, educational and human rights concerns, as well as policy measures specific to the Roma. In recent months, the ODIHR has organized a series of regional and local training workshops to prepare the Roma contact points for their future role.

#### **New on [www.osce.org/odihr](http://www.osce.org/odihr)**

The ODIHR web site now features pages with wide-ranging information and documents on each of the ongoing ODIHR election observation missions. The special pages, which are accessible

from the front page of the ODIHR web site, are designed to provide observers, co-operation partners and the general public with key information and resources related to current election observation activities. Another new feature on the web site is a database of

election experts. Experienced election experts who are interested in working for election observation missions or technical assistance projects can submit their *curriculum vitae* on line to the ODIHR Election Section for consideration.

### **Antonio Martins da Cruz is new OSCE Chairman-in-Office**

Following parliamentary elections in Portugal, resulting in a change in government, Foreign Minister Antonio Martins da Cruz has been appointed as the new OSCE Chairman-in-Office. The appointment, which took effect on 6 April, was announced from Lisbon on 8 April [as the *OSCE Newsletter* went to press].

Before he was assigned to the post of Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister da Cruz, 55, had been serving as his country's Ambassador to Spain since 1999.

One of his major tasks in his 30-year career with his country's Foreign Service was establishing the Portuguese Embassy and consulates in Mozambique, before its independence. He

served at Portugal's representations in Cairo (1976-1979) and at the United Nations in Geneva (1979-1984). He was the Ambassador and Permanent Representative to NATO and the Western European Union (1995-1999).

Minister da Cruz worked as the Director of the European Integration Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (1984-1985) and as Diplomatic Adviser to Prime Minister Cavaco Silva from November 1985 until January 1995.

The new Chairman-in-Office received a law degree from the University of Lisbon and completed post-graduate studies at the University of Geneva. He taught international relations for six years at the Lusitana University of Lisbon.

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### **Inter-ethnic relations is theme of visit to Ukraine**

To gain a broader understanding of inter-ethnic relations in Ukraine, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Rolf Ekeus, visited the country from 3 to 5 February, and met President Leonid Kuchma, Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko and other government officials and minority representatives. The discussions focused on issues relating to language (Russian and Ukrainian), legislation on minorities, inter-ethnic integration, Ukraine's bilateral relations with its neighbours and the plight of the formerly deported peoples of the Crimea. In Kyiv, Mr. Ekeus also met with Nina Karpachova, the Ombudsperson of Ukraine. The High Commissioner plans to help develop the capacity of the Ombudsperson's office to deal with issues related to national minorities in the country.

### **High Commissioner deepens involvement in Georgia**

On a visit to Georgia from 6 to 9 February, Mr. Ekeus was briefed on inter-ethnic issues in Georgia by President Eduard Shevardnadze, Speaker of the Parliament Nino Burjanadze and other senior officials. He also met with a number of leaders from the Jewish, German, Yezidi, Russian, Ukrainian, Greek, Armenian and Azeri communities and with representatives of Meskhetian non-governmental organizations. The Meskhetians, a Muslim community that was deported from Georgia by Stalin in 1944, are seeking to be repatriated to Georgia and to be reintegrated into society. The High Commissioner encouraged the Georgian Government to facilitate the process.

Linguistic issues were of special concern to Mr. Ekeus. Over the past months, the High Commissioner's office has been closely co-operating with the Georgian

Government to provide legal advice and assistance concerning the draft Law on the State Language. The High Commissioner is also supporting the implementation of the State Programme to ensure the Full Functioning of the State Language of Georgia.

As well as learning more about the situation in all parts of Georgia, including South Ossetia, the Pankisi Valley and Abkhazia, the High Commissioner paid special attention to Armenians living in Samtskhe-Javakheti, which borders on Armenia and is populated mainly by Armenians. The area's relatively isolation from the mainstream of Georgian society has been a constraining factor in the community's socio-economic development. The High Commissioner visited Akhalkalaki, the region's main town, to familiarize himself with the situation. He intends to intensify his involvement in Georgia, mainly through specific projects and by providing advice on legislative reform. Two of the basic projects will involve teaching the Georgian language to public servants in Samtskhe-Javakheti and helping to integrate the region into the Georgian State.

### **Ekeus meets with former CiO**

On 26 February, Mr. Ekeus met with Romania's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mircea Geoana, who was on an official visit to the Netherlands with Prime Minister Adrian Nastase. The High Commissioner and the Foreign Minister, who was the OSCE Chairman-in-Office in 2001, discussed issues of concern to the Government of Romania, including the Act on Hungarians Living in Neighboring Countries, the developments in Moldova and the situation of Romanian-speaking groups in Europe.

### **Praise for Law on Minorities in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia**

The High Commissioner issued a

statement on 28 February praising the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for adopting the Law on the Protection of National Minorities. In a letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Goran Svilanovic, Mr. Ekeus said that the Law was "a positive endeavour to ensure comprehensive protection of national minorities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia". He hailed the Law as an important step by the Yugoslav Government in its efforts to avoid the types of inter-ethnic conflicts that had scarred Yugoslavia's recent history.

The Law is designed to provide a stronger legislative framework for the protection of persons belonging to national minorities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which is one of Europe's most ethnically diverse states.

Over the past year, the High Commissioner's Office has been working closely with the Ministry for National and Ethnic Communities in preparing the draft Law. In his letter to Foreign Minister Svilanovic, Mr. Ekeus noted the importance of implementing the Law, and offered his assistance in the process.

### **Ekeus stresses importance of adopting Law on Minorities in Croatia**

The High Commissioner visited Croatia from 27 February to 1 March to gain an overview of inter-ethnic relations and minority rights in the country, and meet with President Stipe Mesic and other senior officials, minority representatives and members of the diplomatic corps. He turned his attention in particular to the Government's recent decision to withdraw the draft constitutional law on the rights and freedoms of national minorities.

Mr. Ekeus also travelled to the Danube region of the country to meet with officials of Vukovar-Srijem County, the mayor of Vukovar and representatives of the Joint Council of Municipalities

ties, which represents Serb interests in the region. In Zagreb, the focus of the High Commissioner's meetings was the draft constitutional law on the rights and freedoms of national minorities, which had recently been withdrawn from parliament. The High Commissioner's Office regarded the law as important and

had provided legal advice on it. In meetings with the President and the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, the High Commissioner was informed that a new draft law would be prepared and submitted to parliament by the coming summer. Ambassador Ekeus expressed his hope that the process of adopting a law on

national minorities would continue, since that constituted a commitment undertaken by Croatia upon joining the Council of Europe in 1996. He offered the continued support of his Office in the preparation of the draft law and other legislation relating to persons belonging to national minorities.

## REPORT from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

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### Standing Committee meets in Vienna

The Standing Committee of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) met on 21 February in Vienna prior to the first winter meeting of the Assembly. Addressing the delegates on the role of parliamentarians in the fight against terrorism, the Speaker of the Austrian Parliament, Heinz Fischer, said: "We need a strong, common and credible statement against terrorism. At the same time, we also need the ability and determination to tackle the real causes and roots of terrorism through a just and sophisticated policy."

The OSCE PA President, Adrian Severin, reported on the Parliamentary Assembly's activities since the last Standing Committee Meeting in Portugal, and on his visits to Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bulgaria and Norway. OSCE PA Treasurer Jerry Grafstein (Canada) told the delegates he was pleased to report that, in the past fiscal year, the International Secretariat had been run extremely efficiently and within the allocated annual budget. KPMG, the external auditors retained by the Assembly, had found the PA finances to be in good order.

The Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly, Spencer Oliver, reported on the preparations for the next Annual Session, to be held in Berlin in July, as well as on continuing efforts to establish a Vienna sub-office of the



*At the International Secretariat of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen: PA Deputy Secretary General Vitaly Evseyev, Secretary General Jan Kubis, PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver and PA Deputy Secretary General Pentti Vaananen*

International Secretariat to strengthen communication between the parliamentary and governmental dimensions of the OSCE. Mr. Oliver's report gave an overview of the main activities of the Assembly since the Tenth Annual Session in Paris, including the specific work of officials of the International Secretariat.

The Standing Committee also heard presentations by the Chair of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Transparency and Accountability, Congressman Steny Hoyer (United States) and the Chair of

the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Belarus, Uta Zapf, MP (Germany). Mr. Hoyer outlined the work carried out by the Committee at recent meetings in Bucharest and Washington, D.C., as well as at the retreat in Salzburg with selected representatives from the OSCE governmental dimension (see story on page 12). Ms. Zapf reported on the recent visit of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Belarus to Minsk and on the current situation and latest developments in the country.

On behalf of the United Kingdom Delegation, PA Vice-President Bruce

George offered to host the Annual Session in 2004. The Committee agreed to accept the United Kingdom's offer.

### **Chairman-in-Office meets US Delegation**

OSCE Chairman-in-Office Jaime Gama met with Senator Ben Nighthorse-Campbell and Congressman Steny Hoyer of the US Delegation in Washington, D.C., on 6 February. They reviewed developments relating to the OSCE, as well as the role of the Parliamentary Assembly within the Organization, with Mr. Gama emphasizing the importance of its parliamentary dimension. Dis-

cussing the relationship between the Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE's governmental dimension, the Chairman-in-Office and Mr. Hoyer agreed that it was appropriate that the Parliamentary Assembly's relationships should be at the political level, with ministers and other political leaders. Mr. Gama cited PA President Severin's participation in the OSCE Troika as an example of the Parliamentary Assembly's involvement at the political level.

### **Secretary General Jan Kubis visits OSCE PA International Secretariat** OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis

paid a working visit to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly International Secretariat in Copenhagen on 6 March. He had meetings with OSCE PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver, Deputy Secretaries General Vitaly Evseyev and Pentti Vaananen and other staff. The discussions focused on strengthening co-operation and contacts between the OSCE governmental and parliamentary dimensions. At a reception held in his honour, Mr. Kubis met with the Ambassadors of Portugal and the Netherlands and the *chargé d'affaires* from the Russian, Romanian and US Embassies in Copenhagen.

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

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### **Journalist in Croatia receives support of RFOM**

Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, addressed Tonino Picula, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Croatia, on 4 February, on the controversy over *Latinica*, a programme on Croatian television, which dealt with the state of the country's judiciary. Mr. Duve understood that the State Prosecutor had planned to file charges against the host, Denis Latin, under article 309 of the Croatian Criminal Code.

"Your country has made considerable progress recently in the media field and it would be very disturbing if this progress would now be undermined by the decision of the State Prosecutor to pursue its case against Denis Latin", the OSCE Representative wrote in his letter to the Foreign Minister on 4 February. "Such a measure may have a negative effect on the media and on journalists investigating cases of corruption."

Mr. Duve wholeheartedly welcomed the decision of the State Prosecutor in late February to drop the plans to file charges against the television journalist.

### **Russian journalism is focus of activities in Moscow and St. Petersburg**

Freimut Duve visited Russia in February, where he had meetings with senior government officials and several journalists.

On 12 February, he opened a two-day Workshop on Security of Journalists Working in War Zones, at the Moscow House of Journalists, which was organized by the Centre for Journalism in Extreme Situations (CJES) of the Russian Union of Journalists. Funded by voluntary contributions from the United Kingdom and the United States under the auspices of the Representative, the Workshop focused on survival techniques in conflict areas. A manual had been produced especially for the seminar. Seventeen journalists from the regional Russian media outlets took part, including newspapers and television stations working in southern Russia and the Volga and Ural regions. All the participants had had experience working in Chechnya or Afghanistan or are currently on assignment as war reporters. They agreed that the Workshop was a success because its

agenda embraced the full scope of information and skills vital to journalists in conflict areas. The CJES engaged outstanding war reporters and legal, medical and military experts for the Workshop.

The OSCE Representative opened a two-day Seminar on Freedom and Responsibility in Russian Journalism in St. Petersburg on 13 February. It was funded by the United Kingdom and organized by the St. Petersburg Union of Journalists under the auspices of the Representative. Thirty-four journalists from St. Petersburg and several cities in north-west Russia, as well as eight young journalists from the Baltic States, discussed the new relationship between journalists and media proprietors, the difference between journalism and public relations, and the need for objectivity in Russian journalism. Russian media experts as well as the Vice Governor of St. Petersburg, the British Consul-General, the US Consul for Press and Culture, and the President of the Nordic Federation of Journalists made presentations.

The Seminar upheld the view that only economic independence guarantees

freedom of information, and called attention to the survival difficulties being encountered by journalism in small Russian cities. Two educational video films were produced on the results of the Seminar. Pamphlets in Russian outlining the main provisions on freedom of expression and freedom of the media in CSCE/OSCE texts were distributed to the participants, and were

printed in their entirety in the local St. Petersburg press.

#### **Freimut Duve calls attention to impact of 11 September on human rights**

Mr. Duve addressed the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly on 22 February. In his remarks, he focused on the consequences of the events of 11 September. He warned that human rights issues,

including freedom of expression, which had previously received wide attention by many governments and international organizations, might recede into the background with the emergence of new challenges in the fight against criminal terrorist acts. The Representative stressed that terror should not kill freedom in general and freedom of expression in particular.

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

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### **Council of Europe hosts meetings in tripartite format**

The well-established tradition of Tripartite Meetings, aimed at better co-ordination of action in areas of common concern, was continued this year in the form of the annual Target-Oriented Tripartite Meeting (experts' level) on 7 February and the High-Level Tripartite Meeting on 8 February. The Tripartite Meetings, hosted this year by the Council of Europe (CoE) in Strasbourg, are chaired on a rotational basis by the OSCE, the United Nations (led by the United Nations Office at Geneva) and the CoE. The European Commission, the International Organization for Migration and the International Committee of the Red Cross also participated.

The theme of the Target-oriented Tripartite Meeting was confidence-building measures in south-eastern Europe. On the basis of case studies, participants looked closely at how to improve interaction between the international organizations in this region and how to best assist the countries. Among the topics raised were: refugees and internally displaced persons, the rule of law, the legal framework for NGOs and freedom of the media, the rebuilding of infrastructure, and trafficking in human beings.

The Meeting afforded representatives from both headquarters and field operations of the various organizations



OSCE/Michael Olsjarnik

*Secretary General Jan Kubis received the new Head of Delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the OSCE, Ambassador Emina Keco-Isakovic, on 26 February*

an opportunity for a concerted dialogue on how to improve the co-ordination of efforts for the benefit of peace and stability in south-eastern Europe.

The High-Level Tripartite Meeting on 8 February, chaired by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Walter Schwimmer, was attended by high-ranking delegations from all the partner organizations in the tripartite process. The discussions focused on the fight against terrorism, intercultural and interreligious

dialogue, and co-operation in the field, including research and training.

The OSCE delegation included representatives of the Portuguese Chairmanship, the OSCE Secretary General, Jan Kubis, and other senior officials from the Secretariat. Among those representing the United Nations were Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Petrovsky; the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson; and the Assistant High Commissioner for Refugees,

Kamel Morjane. The European Commission, the International Organization for Migration and the International Committee of the Red Cross were represented at a senior level.

The participants agreed to meet again in the tripartite format in Geneva in early 2003. The Chairman's conclusions are available on: [www.osce.org/ec](http://www.osce.org/ec).

### Secretary General visits Istanbul

At the personal invitation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Ismail Cem, the Secretary General attended the Joint Forum on Civilization and Harmony: The Political Dimension of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the European Union, which was held on 12 and 13 February in Istanbul. The Secretary General chaired a Panel on Confronting Common Challenges in Today's Environment, in which Foreign Ministers Ahmed Maher El-Sayed of Egypt and Kamal Kharrazi of Iran participated.

### Secretary General addresses OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

The Secretary General addressed the first winter meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, which was held in Vienna on 21 and 22 February. The meeting succeeded in bringing the inter-governmental dimension of the OSCE – including its Secretariat – closer to the Parliamentary Assembly. The Secretary General also took the opportunity to

meet with the President and the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly and several Assembly members, notably from the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Transparency and Accountability.

### Heads of Missions in Central Asia meet in Almaty

The five Heads of OSCE Missions in Central Asia – covering Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – met in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 4 March for their biannual discussions. Chaired by Marton Krasznai, the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, the meeting focused on two challenges: how to best contribute to the adoption and implementation of the OSCE's road map for combating terrorism, and how to strengthen the economic and environmental dimension in the field.

Significant events in the region were discussed, including the meeting of the Presidents of four Central Asian countries in Tashkent on 28 December 2001, and their establishment of the Central Asian Co-operation Organization at a meeting in Almaty on 28 February.

The Heads of Missions recognized that, in line with the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security, they would continue to be engaged in activities dealing with the human dimension, politico-military aspects and economic and environmental activities. They welcomed the recent establishment of an economic and

environmental sub-committee of the Permanent Council, as this would facilitate the flow of information on work in the field to the participating States.

The Heads of Missions reviewed and discussed the contribution of the Conflict Prevention Centre to the OSCE Secretariat's road map for combating terrorism, following up on the Bucharest Plan of Action. There was general consensus that the OSCE concentrate its efforts on institution-building, and that it could offer assistance to Central Asian states in such areas as the training of the judiciary, the police, and border and prison guards.

The meeting continued on 5 March with representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Organization for Migration, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Commission and the Asian Development Bank. The participants expressed satisfaction with the co-ordination in the field and made known their willingness to continue this co-operation in Central Asia.

Also taking part in the meeting were the economic and environmental officers of OSCE field operations; Herbert Salber, the new Special Adviser to the Chairman-in-Office on Central Asia; representatives of the Chairmanship and the OSCE institutions; and Marc Baltes, Acting Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

## Eleventh OSCE Ball nets 21,000 euros for charity

About 1,000 guests chose to celebrate Valentine's Day, 14 February, by taking part in the traditional OSCE Ball, held in the historic premises of the Hofburg as in previous years. The long evening (and early morning) of music, fine dining and camaraderie resulted in net proceeds of almost 21,000 euros, which have been earmarked for various charities.

In his opening remarks, the OSCE Secretary General, Jan Kubis, welcomed staff members and diplomats, along with their families and friends. Among the

guests of honor were Slovakia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Eduard Kukan; the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Adrian Severin; the Deputy Mayor of the City of San Remo, Giovanni Berrino; and Manuel da Silva Alexandre and Pedro Aires de Abreu of the Icep Portugal Office in Austria.

The City of San Remo donated 7,000 flowers, which added touches of red and green in the royal halls. The Portuguese Chairmanship donated generous amounts of wines, including bottles of port which were sold to raise part of the proceeds for

charity. Music was provided by the Ladies Orchestra, the Modern Dance Orchestra, the Wolfgang Wehner Jazz Quartet and the Beatles Revival Band. The last waltz was danced at 3.30 a.m.

Contributing to the ball's success were: organizer and co-ordinator Micky Kroell of the Secretariat's Conference Services, the Hofburg Kongresszentrum, the Vienna Intercontinental Hotel (buffet), Casino Austria (roulette for charity), Roemerquelle (1,200 litres of mineral water) and Fred and Lydia Mas-taire (artistic support).