

DECEMBER 2007



Finland and the OSCE come full circle

Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation
Time to give genuine meaning to the concept of partnership

Making history
First OSCE Junior Professional Officers earn their stripes



The road to Madrid

Seeking consensus on a common vision



The *OSCE Magazine*, which is also available online, is published in English and Russian by the Press and Public Information Section of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The

views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the OSCE and its participating States.

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The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe works for stability, prosperity and democracy in 56 States through political dialogue about shared values and through practical work that makes a lasting difference.

OSCE Chairmanship 2007: Spain

OSCE Structures and Institutions

- Permanent Council, *Vienna*
- Forum for Security Co-operation, *Vienna*
- Secretariat, *Vienna*
- OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, *Vienna*
- Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Warsaw*
- High Commissioner on National Minorities, *The Hague*
- OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, *Copenhagen*

Field Operations

Caucasus

- OSCE Office in Baku
- OSCE Mission to Georgia
- OSCE Office in Yerevan
- The Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference

Central Asia

- OSCE Centre in Ashgabad
- OSCE Centre in Astana
- OSCE Centre in Bishkek
- OSCE Centre in Dushanbe
- OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan

Eastern Europe

- OSCE Office in Minsk
- OSCE Mission to Moldova
- OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine

South-eastern Europe

- OSCE Presence in Albania
- OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
- OSCE Mission to Croatia
- OSCE Mission in Kosovo
- OSCE Mission to Montenegro
- OSCE Mission to Serbia
- OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje

Message from the Secretary General



Each year, at the Ministerial Council meeting, the participating States take stock of what has been achieved over the past 12 months and make important decisions about where the Organization should be going in the future. Taken together, their decisions form the *acquis* of the OSCE, the basis upon which

all our activities — those of participating States and of the Organization’s executive structures — are carried forward.

Following the Ministerial Council meetings in 2005 and 2006, which focused on a series of measures to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization, 2007 has put the OSCE to the test. This year has, indeed, seen vibrant discussions among the participating States on a wide range of tasks, including consolidating long-term stability in Kosovo, building confidence in the politico-military sphere, and strengthening the security and management of Central Asia’s borders with Afghanistan.

Solid political guidance is now required on these crucial concerns. The Ministerial Council meeting in Madrid provides the opportune moment for the 56 participating States to analyze these issues and instruct the Secretariat and other OSCE institutions on the way ahead.

Perhaps more than any other international organization, the OSCE depends on the sustained engagement of all its participants. The OSCE is light and flexible, and thus is also a very sensitive instrument. Ministerial Council meetings are vital because they embody the political will of the participating States and provide the impetus that is so essential for the Organization’s work.

This issue of the *OSCE Magazine* takes a close look at some of the key leaders who will grapple with the task of crafting solid practical guidance based on the intense political negotiations. Some of them came to Vienna earlier in the year especially to share their reflections on emerging topics with the Permanent Council, as an overview on page ten of the *Magazine* shows.

Also in this issue, the outgoing Chairman-in-Office, Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos, describes the road that has led us to Madrid. At the same time, his successor, Finnish Foreign Minister Ilkka Kanerva, gives us an inkling about how the new Chairmanship will lead us, over the coming year, from Madrid to Helsinki.

I look forward to supporting the participating States in this challenging process.

Marc Perrin de Brichambaut
 Vienna
 November 2007

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Cover photo: The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos, meets the press after the OSCE conference on countering intolerance and discrimination against Muslims, which was held in Cordoba on 9 and 10 October 2007. Some 300 people took part in the event, one of the highlights of the Spanish Chairmanship. Photo: Spanish Foreign Ministry

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UN PHOTO/MARCO CASTRO

that challenges affecting security are inter-related and that co-operation is crucial in our globalized and interdependent world.

For Spain, the OSCE is more than a set of institutions that provide assistance to participating States; it is more than 19 field missions in 17 countries; and it is more than a permanent forum for dialogue in Vienna.

The OSCE is, above all, a project of strategic relevance. It embodies the common will of 56 countries to work together for a safer and more prosperous future. This concept, as well as its geographical area, stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok, its wide experience, and the principle of equality underlying relations among the participating States, all make the Organization unique.

Spain is fully aware that some of the OSCE's main objectives have not yet been reached. New challenges have emerged, which have inspired the efforts and activities of this Chairmanship. Europe has, without a doubt, made great progress since the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. Walls have fallen, families have been reunited, wars have ended and dramatic conflicts have been solved. We believe that we have made considerable strides in the direction of the New Europe, as called for in the Charter of Paris.

NOBLE GOALS

Our commitment to building peace and to strengthening democracies guides the actions of States and civil societies in the OSCE area. We pride ourselves in having assumed the responsibility for fulfilling these commitments. Although the task is far from easy, we will not lower our sights, especially at a time when tensions continue to simmer in the heart of the OSCE area.

When Spain sought the OSCE Chairmanship, it was aware of the challenges it was facing. We have invested a great deal, in terms of imagination, efforts and resources, into fostering a climate of trust among 56 States and encouraging civil societies to take an active part in fulfilling the noble goals that are the cornerstone of our Organization.

It has been a year of challenges for the OSCE. We have been reiterating our call to participating States to work together to overcome these difficulties, with the aim of bringing positions closer together and allowing space for a constructive consensus. In the past few years, we have come to the aid of Georgia in several serious incidents, such as in Abkhazia, and in the conflict zone between Georgia and South Ossetia. These events have been of concern to us all and have highlighted the need to generate trust and co-operation.

The challenges of chairing a “delicate political instrument”

BY OSCE CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE MIGUEL ÁNGEL MORATINOS

Thanks to the OSCE's concept of multi-dimensional and co-operative security and the varied instruments it has developed, the OSCE is well placed to assist in the implementation of relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, thus contributing to the co-ordinated responses needed to tackle the security challenges the world faces today.

The United Nations and the OSCE are joined together by their common determination to strengthen a rules-based international order founded in the respect for human rights and in co-operation in matters relating to security among States and societies.

The current OSCE Chairmanship has been strengthening the Organization's overall objective: to construct a Europe that is free and at peace with itself, conscious of the fact

New York, 28 September 2007. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos, addresses the United Nations General Assembly.

As a result of the missile incident in Georgia on 6 August, the Spanish Chairmanship has opted for a forward-looking approach, proposing specific preventive measures to avoid similar incidents in the future. The preparation of the proposals and their approval and implementation has been a priority for the Spanish Chairmanship, as has been close co-operation between the United Nations and the OSCE to stabilize the situation in Georgia and the region.

Throughout 2007, the Co-Chairpersons of the Minsk Group, with the active support of the Personal Representative of the Spanish Chairmanship, Josep Borrell Fontelles, have continued their efforts to facilitate a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Although these intensive mediation efforts have not resulted in any breakthrough, the parties remain committed to continuing the negotiations and finding a common vision to overcome their remaining differences.

The OSCE is continuing to try to bring about a settlement of the Transnistrian issue in Moldova, through its participation in the “five plus two” format of negotiations. The mediators are from the Russian Federation and Ukraine, and the observers are from the United States and the European Union.

During the past year and a half, we have tried to convince the parties to negotiate, as we share the conviction of other OSCE States that negotiations in this format are the most promising avenue to take to achieve a sustainable and lasting settlement. In this way, Moldova would be provided with excellent support, enabling it to develop and prosper at the heart of the European family.

Spain believes that, for peace to take root, it will not be enough to have signatures on official documents and treaties; we need to prepare the ground by working to overcome distrust and to build platforms for dialogue and understanding. The prospect of peace tomorrow requires action today in conflict zones, including the commitment of civil societies.

We are approaching the time for a decision on the future status of Kosovo. The OSCE and the Spanish Chairmanship have thrown their support behind attempts to find a just and lasting formula that will contribute to the stability of the region.

It is true that the OSCE has maintained a neutral position over the years concerning status — a fact acknowledged by all the communities of Kosovo. Being unbiased, however, does not mean being non-committal. Quite the contrary. Although the OSCE is not directly involved in the status negotiations, it

Tiraspol, 8 October.
Chairman-in-Office Miguel
Ángel Moratinos meets
Transnistrian leader
Igor Smirnov.



OSCE/ANDREI CUCUCARU

has been contributing to the process of creating the necessary conditions on the ground for the implementation of the status settlement.

We are ready to stay on in Kosovo and to focus on monitoring aimed at protecting the rights of communities, particularly those concerning decentralization and the protection of cultural and religious sites. Within the OSCE, our hope is that Kosovo’s future status settlement will, in the end, be sanctioned by a new UN Security Council resolution.

The Central Asian States play a relevant and crucial role in strengthening security throughout the OSCE region. The fragility of Afghanistan, the terrorist threat, and drug trafficking and organized crime, along with serious structural difficulties such as those connected with the management of water resources, pose a challenge to our Organization.

SHARED INITIATIVES

We cannot ignore the fact that the situation in Afghanistan has an impact on security throughout Central Asia. Against this background, the OSCE has been actively preparing border management projects, particularly in Tajikistan. We hope to engage Afghanistan in these shared security initiatives.

Kazakhstan’s announcement of its candidature for the OSCE Chairmanship has been welcomed by the Organization for very good reasons: It is the first from a former Soviet Republic and also the first from a Central Asian State. This opens up tremendous opportunities for Kazakhstan, for Central Asia, and for the OSCE as a whole.

There is still no consensus regarding the date of Kazakhstan’s Chairmanship. The OSCE will continue to work closely with the country, and will further assist it in its reform process. Under its Chairmanship, Spain has been actively involved in reaching a consensus among all the OSCE States on this important decision.



Chisinau, 8 October. President Vladimir Voronin of Moldova and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office exchange views.

In this *tour d'horizon* of the OSCE, I feel obliged to mention the issue of military security in its most conventional sense — that is, matters concerning arms control and the disarmament regime that supports security in the transatlantic and Eurasian regions.

The Spanish Chairmanship notes with deep concern the ongoing stalemate regarding the future implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. This Treaty has served as a cornerstone of European security since 1990, and it is imperative that we not allow hard-won gains to be lost.

The Chairmanship is calling upon all States Parties to renew their efforts to display the necessary flexibility towards finding a solution to the deadlock in a spirit of trust, transparency and mutual co-operation. The Ministerial Council meeting in Madrid at the end of November will be an opportune time to move the process forward, with Spain as an active contributor.

COUNTER-TERRORISM

At the helm of the OSCE, Spain has been acting on this array of challenges in a balanced and concrete manner. We have assigned top priority to counter-terrorism, working effectively to support United Nations-led counter-terrorism work, including implementation of the wide-ranging UN Security Council Resolution 1373 and the international legal framework for combating terrorism. In 2001, the OSCE States committed themselves to adhering to the 12 universal conventions and protocols related to terrorism. Today, 48 out of the 56 OSCE participating States are party to all 12 instruments.

This year, we organized four major conferences focusing on specific areas in countering terrorism: legal co-operation in criminal matters, public-private partnership in combating terrorism, travel document security, and assistance to victims of terrorism. In addition, expert workshops were held in October and November examining issues relating to incitement to terrorism and the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes.

The OSCE continues to collaborate with States in their efforts to implement international agreements and conventions, as well as to generate innovative forms of co-operation in key shared security concerns.

The Spanish Chairmanship has also championed the cause of economic and environmental security, with a particular focus on the threat posed by land degradation and water management. I am convinced that the OSCE can act as a platform for dialogue and a network for co-operation in these areas, since they figure prominently in the Organization's comprehensive concept of security.

This year, we have been strengthening the OSCE's human dimension. I believe that we have been making advances in promoting sound values among diverse and pluralistic societies — an issue intimately related to our commitment to deepen democracy in our participating States. Diversity is a fact of life in today's societies. Without respect for diversity, dialogue is useless. This thought should be uppermost in our minds as we move forward in the twenty-first century. The OSCE attaches great importance to the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations initiative as a positive instrument for managing and promoting good practices in areas concerning young people, education, migration and the media.

The OSCE has been making a substantive contribution towards the promotion of tolerance and non-discriminatory policies and practices. After all, the OSCE is itself an alliance of civilizations in action, even though we have to achieve consensus on proposals for action regarding the UN initiative.

The OSCE Chairmanship held a conference on the challenges of Islamophobia in Cordoba in October, in the context of the development of the human dimension. It reflected our conviction of the necessity to promote tolerance and non-discrimination in order to harmonize coexistence in all its dimensions. This event followed an OSCE conference on anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, which took place in 2005, also in Cordoba.

GROWING AGENDA

The OSCE's "to-do" list is not shrinking, and is, in fact, growing as new challenges emerge. It is only natural that our agenda for the 2007 Ministerial Council meeting in Madrid is ambitious. During the run-up to the gathering, the Spanish Chairmanship will be actively seeking to forge consensus on vital decisions, including those aimed at strengthening environmental security, pluralistic societies, co-operation in counter-terrorism, and the fight against human trafficking.

Chairing the OSCE poses a tremendous challenge, since the Organization is a delicate political instrument with a unique character and historical evolution. The task involves managing existing tensions in the OSCE area and the threats to its progress and security. For this reason, leading the Organization calls for a passionate commitment to the responsibility for ensuring that 56 States are united around a shared vision: that of a Europe that is free and at peace.

This article is based on the address of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos, to the sixty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly on 28 September 2007.



INTERVIEW WITH THE INCOMING CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE

Finland and the OSCE come full circle

Finland, situated at the top of Europe geographically, has a much-envied economy and a talent for building strategic networks and alliances. Having concluded a successful EU presidency at the end of 2006, the country is now poised to head the OSCE in 2008. Finnish Foreign Minister Ilkka Kanerva, who became a parliamentarian at the age of 27 in 1975, the year the Helsinki Final Act was signed, will add the role of OSCE Chairman-in-Office to his other responsibilities. He had held several cabinet posts prior to his appointment as Foreign Minister in April 2007. A native of Turku with a master's degree in political science, Minister Kanerva is a keen runner and an official of several sports organizations. In the following interview with OSCE Spokesperson Martin Nesirky, he sets out some of the challenges for the Finnish Chairmanship.

Martin Nesirky: The place of Finland and its capital in OSCE history is arguably already guaranteed, not least because of the Helsinki Final Act. So, what prompted your country to take on the Chairmanship of the Organization in 2008?

Foreign Minister Ilkka Kanerva: I would like to turn the question around and ask: Why not? Of course Finland hosted not only the Dipoli consultations in the early 1970s and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) Summit in 1975, but also the tenth anniversary of the CSCE at the

ministerial level in 1985 and the follow-up Meeting and Summit of the CSCE in 1992. However, we have not yet exercised the Chairmanship of the “modern” OSCE, and we felt that our Chairmanship would provide continuity not only to Finnish foreign policy but also to the OSCE.

Commentators and countries alike have expressed concern about a growing polarization in the OSCE area. What can Finland do to revive the spirit of Helsinki?

There is no way of bringing the 1970s “back to the future”. Finland is proud of the spirit of Helsinki and the CSCE process, which helped Europe, its countries and citizens so much in ending the strict political, economic and military division of the continent. But the challenges are different today. I don't think it is quite correct to speak of polarization in a world which is — and will be — interdependent. I would rather consider that the sometimes heated debates in the OSCE and elsewhere are signs of a free exchange of ideas. Not only governments, but also members of parliaments, non-governmental organizations and civil society at large should be able to take part in our debates. **What priorities does Finland intend to promote and pursue during its Chairmanship? Why have you chosen them?**

I would welcome this question in my next interview. For now, I would like to

Photo: Lehtikuva/VNK

let my colleague and friend, Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos, bring the Spanish Chairmanship of 2007 to a successful conclusion. Finland will present its Chairmanship programme with our priorities in due course next January.

Some argue that each Chairmanship brings with it a new set of priorities for one year, diluting the overall cohesion and effectiveness of the Organization. What's your view?

That is a clear risk. We should avoid jumping from one set of priorities to another. The Secretary General has a key role to play in providing continuity, and so do the heads of OSCE institutions. However, the OSCE Chairmanship is not a bureaucratic exercise, but entails political leadership and guidance. And in setting priorities, any Chairperson-in-Office will use his or her political sense to keep the Organization relevant.

How would you characterize Finland's intended Chairmanship style and approach?

This question is rather forward-leaning and could best be answered by my colleagues when the time comes. I would like to see our Chairmanship as an honest effort to listen to all — but then to use the possibilities of the OSCE to the fullest extent and not get bogged down in the face of difficulties.

The OSCE has a mission statement that speaks of stability, prosperity and democracy and of the OSCE's practical value to its participating States. If you were to build on this and encapsulate Finland's OSCE aims in a slogan, what would it be?

I would like to use a slogan from the world of sports — also taking into account that the Beijing Olympics will be held next year — and say swifter, higher, stronger. There is sometimes room for improvement in our performance, and every athlete knows what it takes: practice.

What do you see as the main strengths and weaknesses of the OSCE?

The broad membership and the comprehensive concept of security are its universally recognized strengths. Another strength is its wide network with other governmental and non-governmental organizations. The OSCE can also take pride in its agility and flexibility when quick action is needed. The consensus principle is of course mainly a strength and a kind of trade mark for co-operative security. At times, however, it may also be a weakness, because decisions can be unduly delayed.

Finland has some world-renowned brands. What, for you, is the OSCE brand image and how could it be better marketed, in your view?

The brand image of the OSCE is known to a fairly small group of politicians, experts and researchers. Its image in Finland still bears the imprint of the 1975 success story. You need a first-class product to create a strong, positive

brand image *à la* Nokia. I call on everybody to join me in marketing OSCE products, which I believe can be first-class.

What do you see as the main challenge for your year in the hot seat, and how do you plan to tackle it?

I would like to pass on to my successor an OSCE which has not only survived the larger and smaller problems, but has also proved its effectiveness. That is the main challenge, and it can be tackled through good co-operation and with determination. I would like to point out that most of the problems concern not only the OSCE but many other organizations as well, so co-operation with them will also be needed.

On a practical note, how does a country of 5 million people prepare to lead an Organization covering so many countries, so many competing views and such a huge population?

This task has been entrusted to Finland by all the other participating States, so we take it that they won't question their own decision. Other smaller and equal-sized countries have had successful Chairmanships, including our Nordic neighbours. Finland is certainly not hesitant to exercise leadership in the OSCE, based on support by others.

What lessons have you learned from your Baltic neighbourhood co-operation that could be applied to the OSCE, for example in working with our Partner countries?

Situations in international relations cannot be compared. In Northern Europe and around the Baltic Sea, an incredible network of co-operation has grown up within a short time. Sub-regional co-operation has shown its strength. The OSCE's relations with its Mediterranean and Asian Partners could benefit from examples in which neighbours make an effort to settle their mutual problems while deepening relations with other countries and organizations at the same time.

Critics argue that the OSCE does not balance its work in the different areas or dimensions of security. Have we got the balance right, and if not, where should more or less emphasis go?

Here, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. I don't think that we can calculate mathematically where the balance between the politico-military, the economic and environmental, and the human dimensions should be. Finland will make an effort to keep the OSCE ready to address issues in all dimensions.

Would you like to see another summit in Finlandia Hall that would not only crown your Chairmanship, but also potentially introduce a new Helsinki generation?

Yes, I would, provided that the leaders of the OSCE countries were to have important decisions to make that would warrant such a lofty occasion. At the moment, I don't see that coming next year.

Varied voices, common concerns at the Permanent Council

“We have certainly helped raise the profile of the OSCE and highlighted its relevance. One needs to look no further than the list of high-level speakers we have had at the Permanent Council,” said Carlos Sánchez de Boado, Spanish Permanent Representative to the OSCE, in a recent interview to mark the Chairmanship’s final phase.

“The culmination of any Chairmanship is the Ministerial Council meeting, and this year in Madrid at the end of November will be no different,” said the Ambassador, who has been serving as Chairperson of the Permanent Council in 2007. “We are firmly on the road to Madrid; we have covered much ground and the

way ahead is clear, but our journey is far from over. We have consulted and informed all the participating States about our ideas and projects. We have done this with all of them equally, because we believe that the Organization belongs to all of us and not to any one country or a group of countries.”

Convening weekly at the Hofburg in Vienna, the Permanent Council is the Organization’s regular body for political consultation and decision-making. The following are excerpts from the addresses of some of the dignitaries who came to Vienna especially to share their views with the representatives of the OSCE’s 56 participating States and 11 Partners for Co-operation.



OSCE/SUSANNA LOOF

Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier of Germany, 18 January 2007. If European integration is a success story, then the OSCE has played an important role in that. During the Cold War, your predecessor organization, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), was one of the main forums in which East and West could come closer together. The CSCE was instrumental in helping overcome the division of Europe and allowing us Germans to reunite our country. Germany will never forget this historic contribution. And, not least, the OSCE has always been a symbol of close transatlantic relations.

The OSCE is the best option when it comes to ensuring security and co-operation in Europe and in neighbouring regions. The OSCE participating States have created the strictest and best interlinked conventional arms control instruments in the world. They made a vital contribution towards the transformation processes which became necessary when the Cold War ended. This security network has to be preserved, further developed and adapted to progress in military technology. It remains a key element in continuous confidence-building for security in Europe.

We should therefore actively promote our arms control successes in other regions. I am expressly in favour of the OSCE discussing this with its Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

The OSCE is the only forum on security policy within the pan-European context. Security and stability must be realized again and again through political commitment and hard work.



OSCE/SUSANNA LOOF

Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian of Armenia, 17 April 2007. Although Armenia may see this Organization as indispensable, there is no denying that its costs and benefits are being assessed very differently in various capitals. Some would like to further empower it; others are reluctant to do so. Our delegation is ready to fully engage in ensuring the robust viability of an OSCE that is very much a pillar of our foreign policy landscape, and also a partner in developing and instituting domestic democratic processes, including election reform.

Foreign Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk of Ukraine, 26 April 2007.

The change in the nature of global challenges has brought about a new agenda in the Organization. Energy security is one of the most prominent examples. Having been undervalued in the past, it deserves our most active and consistent attention today. No clear energy rules exist in the world. We strongly believe that the energy challenge should shift to a certain independence for States and individuals. It should not be a challenge; it should be a safeguard for every country and for every individual.



OSCE/SUSANNA LOOF



Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin of Kazakhstan, 30 April 2007. Assuming the Chairmanship of the OSCE would facilitate further development of the Kazakh political system and help further reform the country's society and political life in the direction of further democratization. A positive outcome regarding our bid for the 2009 Chairmanship could have a multiplicative effect on the modernization of our country and the region as a whole. It would encourage other Central Asian States to move towards liberalization and greater openness of their political and economic systems.

President Valdas Adamkus of Lithuania, 8 March 2007. For my country, the OSCE means "us", not "us and them". The dichotomy of "east of Vienna" and "west of Vienna" has no meaning for us. While much has been done to unite the OSCE area and to overcome the dividing lines of the past, we should recognize that there remain regions characterized by tensions and a lack of dialogue. As long as conflicts remain unsettled in the South Caucasus and Moldova and tensions continue in parts of south-eastern Europe, we will have work to do. Our joint responsibility here is to build confidence by challenging disagreements and to ensure the security, territorial integrity and sovereignty of participating States.

The ideal on which the OSCE is founded is dear to all the people of Lithuania. For many years, the OSCE has been our guide to democratic goals and values, and it has always inspired us to action. After having lived in imposed isolation, Lithuania has rightfully rejoined the family of Europe as a full member of the OSCE, the EU and NATO. The OSCE's values and commitments and the OSCE institutions helped guide us through this process. For this, the Lithuanian people are ever grateful.



Foreign Minister Besnik Mustafaj of Albania, 8 March 2007. In view of Albania's progress in implementing its commitments and the prospect of its continued progress in the coming years, Albania has considered it opportune to offer its candidacy for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2012. With the expected consent by the participating States, a country in the Western Balkans would for the first time assume the Chairmanship of the Organization. Not only would this demonstrate the enhanced capacity of a country that has co-operated with, has been assisted by, and has benefited from the OSCE, it would also serve as an additional means to promote shared values and concerns within the region itself.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov of the Russian Federation, 23 May 2007. It is obvious that the future of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the future of missile defence are very topical issues that have direct relevance to European security and to the security of the entire Euro-Atlantic region.





OSCE/MIKHAIL EVSTAFIEV

Foreign Minister Gela Bezhuashvili of Georgia, 14 June 2007.

We see the OSCE as an important international structure promoting peace and stability in the European continent and worldwide, and we are determined to enhance this role by strengthening the capability of this Organization through a results-oriented reform process. We support a cross-dimensional perspective to create solid linkages between the three OSCE dimensions. This is particularly important in the area of conflict prevention and resolution, and post-conflict rehabilitation. ... The only path we see to peace in the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia is the same path that we see for all the people of Georgia: We must deliver on the promise of individual liberty, economic opportunity, quality of life and human security. This approach, I believe, reflects the spirit in which the OSCE was founded.

Foreign Minister Luís Amado of Portugal, 12 July 2007. In my capacity as President of the Council of the European Union, I would like to underline the importance of designing a complementary agenda with the OSCE. It is essential that we combine our respective instruments and tools in order to face the challenges ahead, especially in some critical scenarios.



OSCE/MIKI CALENTARI

... Although I believe that the most serious challenges to our common security now lie in the Mediterranean Basin, I am also conscious that work still has to be done to ensure the stabilization of the Balkans and the other regions of the OSCE area. In this regard, I would like to highlight how important the transatlantic link has been for the stability of Europe. I firmly believe that such a partnership has to remain central to our agenda. At the same time, Europe has to strengthen its strategic partnership with Russia. I see no better forum than the OSCE to try to bridge the remaining and diminishing gaps.

Vienna, 31 May 2007. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, accompanied by Spanish Ambassador Carlos Sánchez de Boado, Chairman of the Permanent Council.



OSCE/SUSANNA LOOF

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice of the United States, 31 May 2007. When I look at the countries that sit around this table and I think of the circumstances in which this Organization was founded ... I ask if anyone might have thought that this would all happen essentially through a process of peaceful change. And that for me is a great benefit and a great inspiration, as we look at a world that is in considerable turmoil now.

When I look at the important work that is being done in support of elections, in support of peacekeeping, in support of human rights, and in support of the security architecture that is the basis on which a Europe whole, free and at peace is emerging, I want to pledge to you that the United States will remain active in this Organization, intending to continue to play a leadership role, and to use the good offices of this institution for the important tasks ahead.

Prime Minister Ivo Sanader of Croatia, 10 July 2007. Our co-operation with the OSCE was extremely important and helpful in building institutions, in dealing with transition issues and in enhancing the democratic environment. The OSCE played a key role in post-conflict rehabilitation in our region,



OSCE/SUSANNA LOOF

promoting the comprehensive concept of regional security, which also includes protection of human rights and minority rights, democratization of society and the rule of law, support for the development of civil society and NGOs, and strengthening of tolerance and non-discrimination.

The engagement of the OSCE Mission beyond 2007, after 11 years of co-operation, would not be necessary. My Government is offering full and verifiable guarantees for the fulfilment of the remaining obligations.

Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremić of Serbia, 17 July 2007. I want to share with you a sense of pride at being the first Foreign Minister of the Republic of Serbia to address this audience. My country, in a way, symbolizes both the continuity and the change of the past several decades — a continuity and a change that the OSCE itself has experienced. In a way, then, both Serbia and the OSCE have been barometers of change in Europe.

My country — then one of the six constituent republics of socialist Yugoslavia — played a crucial role in advancing what began in Helsinki more than 30 years ago: a process whose first stage culminated in the signing of what remains a fundamental tenet of the international system, the Helsinki Final Act.

... I firmly believe that we all share the same goal in the Western Balkans: the achievement of a solution for Kosovo's future status that promotes the consolidation of democratic values and institutions, a solution that promotes the economic transformation of the Western Balkans and the security architecture of all of Europe.

And I firmly believe that all of us here present — representatives of signatory countries of the Helsinki Final Act — support a solution that conforms to the values and the language of the Act itself.



OSCE/MIKHAIL ENSTAREV

Foreign Minister of Montenegro Milan Rocen (right) and Spanish Ambassador Carlos Sánchez de Boado.



OSCE/SUSANNA LOOP

Foreign Minister Milan Rocen of Montenegro, 25 October 2007. Montenegro is recognized in the region today as a European success story, as well as a concrete success in terms of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy. The role the OSCE played in this is immeasurable. In Montenegro's modern history, it will forever be noted that this was the first international organization we were admitted to as an independent State.

The OSCE Mission is of great importance in this phase of our development, supporting the reform processes in Montenegro. It has a positive role to play in projects related to reform of the police, strengthening of capacities for the fight against organized crime and corruption, building of institutions, reform of the judiciary, assistance to parliament, as well as transformation of the defence sector. Its role is particularly appreciated in the destruction of surplus weapons in Montenegro. We see the engagement of the OSCE as part of its EU agenda. We believe that the synergy and co-operation between EU and OSCE activities is vital.

Nickolai N. Bordyuzha, Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, 13 February 2007. The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), a multifunctional military and political integration structure, has finally become a full-fledged international regional body. Currently, it comprises Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.




OSCE/MIKHAIL ENSTAREV

I am pleased to note a rather high and productive level of co-operation with such an influential European organization as the OSCE. We intend to maintain the momentum in our relations, which are developing positively, and will continue to take an active part in the OSCE's Annual Security Review Conference and in the activities of the Forum for Security Co-operation, the Action against Terrorism Unit and the Conflict Prevention Centre.

At the initiative of the CSTO member States, the OSCE Ministerial Council and the Permanent Council have adopted a number of decisions on combating the threat of trafficking in narcotic drugs.

Our Organization's member States are genuinely interested in seeing more active OSCE structures established in the area of security. We find it useful to engage intensively in issues relating to arms control and confidence-building measures, within the OSCE format, in accordance with the *OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century*.



MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION

Time to give genuine meaning to the concept of partnership

BY AMBASSADOR ANTTI TURUNEN

The long-standing relationship between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation goes back to the beginning of the Helsinki Process. Indeed, the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 stated with conviction:

... security in Europe is to be considered in the broader context of world security and is closely linked with security in the Mediterranean area as a whole, and ... accordingly the process of improving security should not be confined to Europe but should extend to other parts of the world, and in particular to the Mediterranean area...

Since then, dialogue and co-operation have expanded with every summit and with every meeting of the Ministerial Council.

At the Helsinki Summit in 1992, it was deemed essential to establish clearer relations and maintain closer contact with the Mediterranean Partners. This led to the Partners being regularly invited to meetings of the CSCE Council of Ministers and review conferences, and to the launching of the tradition of Mediterranean Seminars. Together with the Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean, the seminars are ideal vehicles for exchanging ideas and experiences.

Another key development was the decision, at the Budapest Summit in 1994, to create an

informal Contact Group under the Permanent Council. The Group, which Finland has the honour of chairing this year, now serves as the main conduit for the ongoing political dialogue with the Mediterranean Partners.

Yet another significant turning point was the adoption by the participating States of the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century at the Ministerial Council meeting in Maastricht in 2003. This declaration was seized upon as an opportunity for both the OSCE and its Partners to strengthen their interaction. It said:

As threats originating or evolving in adjacent regions are of increasing importance, the OSCE will intensify its co-operation with its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation by early identification of areas of common interest and concern and possibilities for further co-ordinated action. We will encourage them to voluntarily implement the principles and commitments of the OSCE and will co-operate with them...

Today, this renewed resolve is evident in the ever-expanding range of co-operation with the Partners, which now encompasses every aspect of the Organization's work — from confidence-building and political dialogue aimed at fostering regional security and shared norms of behaviour, to more specific collaboration in tackling some of the most

Left to right: Ambassadors
Ehab Fawzy of Egypt,
Dan Ashbel of Israel,
Omar Zniber of Morocco,
Taous Feroukhi of Algeria,
Mohamed Daouas of Tunisia
and Shehab A. Madi
of Jordan
Photo: OSCE/Susanna Lööf

pressing themes of our times: growing intolerance and discrimination, the spectre of terrorism, the linkages between economic and environmental well-being and security, and the proper management of migration.

Among the first-time events held this year was a meeting of all 11 Partners for Co-operation — six Mediterranean and five Asian — with their respective Contact Groups. I was pleased to see that it was welcomed by all and I hope that this practice will continue.

This year, too, the Spanish Chairmanship arranged an informal meeting between the three Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office on tolerance and the Mediterranean Partners, who have been highly supportive of the Representatives' work. To maintain the momentum in this crucial area, Finland has proposed combating intolerance as the theme of the Mediterranean Seminar in December 2007.

Unfortunately, the political situation in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the Middle East has hampered us — both participating States and Partners — from enhancing our relations as much as we would have liked to within the framework of the Partners for Co-operation programme.

However, during Finland's presidency of the EU in the second half of 2006, the EU was actively involved in efforts to reinvigorate the Middle East peace process. The adoption of a joint declaration at the Euro-Med Ministerial Meeting in November 2006 reflected the extent to which

Mediterranean States are willing to use regional platforms with a view to forging closer ties with regional partners.

Although the OSCE is obviously not in the driver's seat as far as the peace process in the region is concerned, I believe we should continue looking for windows of opportunity for fostering dialogue and for sharing OSCE norms, principles and commitments in geographical areas outside our current partnership arrangements.

More than three decades have passed since the CSCE/OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners laid the foundations for a mutually reinforcing relationship in the name of security. I believe the time has come to accelerate the exploration of new avenues in our quest to give true meaning to the concept of partnership.

Ambassador Antti Turunen, Head of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the OSCE, has been serving as this year's Chairperson of the Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. He has been involved with the OSCE since 1986. He served as the Deputy Head of his delegation from 1994 to 1997. Prior to his return to Vienna in February 2007, he headed the Finnish Foreign Ministry's Eastern European and Central Asian Unit.



Algeria: Promising prospects on the partnership path

The Helsinki Final Act recognized the importance of co-operation between the two shores of the Mediterranean on issues concerning collective security and its indivisible nature. Since then, Algeria has been actively involved in the establishment of a Mediterranean-OSCE partnership. Our arguments in support of a mutually advantageous relationship remain as valid as ever:

- It provides the Mediterranean Partners with an opportunity to expand dialogue and co-operation in an area that stretches from Vancouver to Vladivostok;
- It allows the Mediterranean Partners to benefit from preventative and normative work on subjects linked with the OSCE's politico-military, economic and environmental, and human dimensions; and
- It encourages both participating States and Partners to pursue common objectives as we tackle problems of a cross-border nature, including terrorism, trafficking in arms and drugs, organized crime, illegal migration, intolerance and environmental degradation.

Some progress — admittedly modest — has been achieved within this partnership, thanks to the efforts of the Mediterranean Partners in adopting an action-oriented approach. This is reflected in the proposals presented within the Mediterranean Partners Contact Group and in the numerous recommendations stemming from the annual Mediterranean Seminars.

These represent encouraging steps forward in the process of ensuring that the Partners are more effectively integrated within the Organization's activities. For example, the Partners have now become a regular presence at

the discussions of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation. In addition, Decision No. 571, adopted by the Permanent Council in 2003, encourages the Partners to voluntarily implement OSCE norms and principles.

However, additional efforts are needed to strengthen the Mediterranean partnership, the potential of which has not yet been fully exploited. For our part, our delegation reaffirms the importance of the initiatives it has proposed on behalf of the Mediterranean Partners. Foremost among these are the establishment of a mechanism to ensure better interaction between the Contact Group and the Permanent Council, and a fund to finance OSCE activities with its Partner countries.

Moreover, in view of the transborder challenges confronting both the participating States and their Partners, Algeria has been encouraging the OSCE to strengthen its Mediterranean dimension and to continue its co-operation with regional organizations and institutions such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the African Union and the League of Arab States.

We believe that the path we have embarked on affords promising prospects. The occasional obstacles that will have to be hurdled along the way should only reinforce our resolve to strengthen our commitment to dialogue and co-operation within the OSCE, which is an irreplaceable forum for promoting the mutual understanding that is so indispensable in today's interdependent world.

Ambassador Taous Feroukhi of Algeria

Egypt: Tolerance and non-discrimination prime areas of concern

Since the launching of the process of European security and co-operation in the 1970s, Egypt has followed this pioneering initiative with avid interest.

Within the concept of “comprehensive security”, which is closely identified with the OSCE, the relationship with Partners along the southern edge of the Mediterranean has been strengthened and a culture of dialogue has been fostered over the years. This stems from a strong conviction on both sides that their security is inextricably linked. As far as Egypt is concerned, this is one of the most significant aspects of being an OSCE Mediterranean Partner.

The Organization’s flexible nature, vast membership and unique geographical profile, as well as the wide scope of its mandate, make it a special forum for enhancing the relationship between the two shores of the Mediterranean, allowing both to engage in areas of common interest.

The Egyptian delegation has always encouraged participating and Partner States to manage their interdependence in a manner that addresses their mutual interests. In light of the global developments of the past few years, we especially commend the Organization’s sharpened focus on issues relating to tolerance and non-discrimination. The OSCE is a key instrument for promoting initiatives in this area of common concern.

We are convinced that the unique role of the Organization as a forum for dialogue and as a laboratory for new

ideas, norms and principles can serve to inspire other regional groups in the Mediterranean.

The annual Mediterranean Seminar speaks eloquently for Egypt’s deep commitment to its partnership with the OSCE. We have hosted the Seminar four times since the partnership process was initiated: at the launching of the series in 1995, and in 1997, 2004 and 2006. Egypt has also been an active participant in events sponsored by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, in the Economic

and Environmental Forum and in the high-level OSCE conferences on tolerance and non-discrimination.

We can continue enhancing our partnership in a variety of ways: by setting out a long-term vision and a plan of action for the Mediterranean dialogue, by implementing the recommendations of the Mediterranean Seminars, and by defining the OSCE’s niche in a prime area of mutual

interest, preferably one focusing on the theme of tolerance and non-discrimination.

Egypt believes that the principle of comprehensive security — the common thread running through OSCE activities — implies the expansion of the partnership process. For this reason, we are calling on the participating States to consider offering Partner status to other countries in the Mediterranean, such as Syria, Libya, Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority.

Ambassador Ehab Fawzy of Egypt



Sharm El-Sheikh, November 2006. Egyptian Ambassador Ramzy Ezzeldin Ramzy (left) with the Egyptian delegation at the Mediterranean Seminar.

Israel: Building on the OSCE’s vision in our neighbourhood

Israel looks to the OSCE as an organization that promotes the common values of democracy, human rights and security among its participating States and its Partners for Co-operation. It is only natural for us, a democratic State with a multifaceted society, to participate in the unique experience of building confidence between peoples and nations.

If there is one concept that sums up the OSCE, it is that of the CSBMs — confidence- and security-building measures. This magic phrase, we believe, holds the key to understanding what the OSCE is all about. At the same time, it embodies a philosophy that *should* and *could* be used in other parts of the world that are experiencing conflict.

We became a Mediterranean Partner for Co-operation because we believed that this group could serve as a forum for sharing common norms and principles, thus working towards mutual understanding. We still hold fast to this conviction.

Being an OSCE Partner also enables us to learn from



Israeli Ambassador Dan Ashbel and Egyptian Ambassador Ramzy Ezzeldin Ramzy exchange viewpoints in Sharm El-Sheikh.

the experience of participating States in various areas, and to share our unique experiences with them.

We are a mixed set of States. Not all of us have diplomatic relations with each other. Moreover, three have not yet recognized the State of Israel. Nevertheless, we meet

regularly at the Hofburg. We exchange views. And we present joint positions on the role of the Mediterranean Partners in the Organization. This dialogue is reinforced by the annual Mediterranean Seminars.

Israel attaches great importance to the OSCE conferences and meetings — in Vienna, Berlin, Paris, Cordoba and Bucharest — that have placed combating anti-Semitism higher on the agendas of governments and societies.

Anti-Semitism is not just an issue of the past; together with other forms of xenophobia, it continues to pose a danger to the societies of both the participating States and the Partners. Tackling the complex aspects of these phenomena is one of the most noteworthy initiatives of the OSCE.

The CSBMs, in their different shapes and forms, represent the common thread running through the different activities of the OSCE. As modest as some of the measures may seem, they have proved important and effective since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975.

I hope that we, the Mediterranean Partners, will not only learn lessons from the OSCE's experience, but will also implement them in our region. It is up to us to build on the OSCE's vision, and to do all we can to build peace, prosperity and human dignity in our immediate neighbourhood.

Ambassador Dan Ashbel of Israel

Jordan: Fresh impetus needed to counter emerging threats

Jordan is deeply committed to exerting every possible effort to enhance its partnership with the OSCE, and to developing the country's relations with it in all areas of mutual concern.

I believe that the OSCE's co-operation with its Partners represents an important pillar for constructive and valuable dialogue on issues of common interest.

Political dialogue promotes mutual understanding, while providing us all with an opportunity to seek a convergence of positions concerning major international developments.

This dialogue has the potential of contributing to regional stability through greater harmony in the way we confront shared challenges relating to peace, security, human rights, democracy, governance and regional development.

In the aftermath of the attacks of 11 September 2001, we have been making vigorous efforts to enhance our partnership at both the political and the practical levels.

We have been meeting more frequently and have been exploring ways and means of translating our priority objectives into more concrete activities.



Melsbroek military airbase, Belgium, July 2005. Mediterranean Partners learn all about the role of the Open Skies Treaty in building confidence among States.

We should, for example, hold expert meetings on crucial issues in response to the evolving international political landscape and to developments within the OSCE itself.

Jordan welcomes a fresh impetus to our co-operation with the OSCE to counter newly emerging global threats, mindful of the fact that regions cannot put up walls

between themselves and that security in the European and Mediterranean areas is indivisible.

We appreciate the OSCE's interest in developing the scope of its political and technical co-operation with its Mediterranean Partners with the aim of building mutual confidence. This trend can only bode well for the future of both the European and the Mediterranean regions.

Ambassador Shehab A. Madi of Jordan

Morocco: Reorienting relations to emphasize concrete action

Morocco's relationship with the OSCE goes back to the early stages of the Helsinki process. Since then, we have been actively engaged in proposing measures to improve the quality of our partnership. These include proposals for raising the political dialogue to a higher level, creating a fund to support Partners' activities, sharing experiences in combating terrorism, promoting gender equality and expanding our co-operation with NGOs.

Morocco has often called attention to the need to reorient this partnership. Instead of co-operation merely serving as a forum for discussion and reflection, it could be made more relevant by emphasizing concrete action.

Specifically, we would like to reaffirm our support for the proposal to create a working group on migration aimed at establishing an experts' overview of the shared challenges and the responsibilities in this area. This would serve to follow up the decision on migration and all its complex facets adopted by the Ministerial Council at its thirteenth meeting, and other related recommendations emanating from other forums.

We also wish to draw attention to the concrete achievements of other similar institutions and organizations, such as the EU and NATO, within the framework of the broader Mediterranean dialogue. We are confident

that the OSCE's willingness to strengthen its co-operation with its partners will also bear fruit.

We believe that the participating States and their Partners should seize the opportunity to implement an effective policy to combat intolerance and discrimination in all its forms. We commend the work of the OSCE through the three Personal Representatives of its Chairman-in-Office and through the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations initiative.

We are particularly worried about the growing phenomenon of discrimination against Muslims within the OSCE area. This is why we welcomed the Spanish Chairmanship's initiative to organize a conference on fighting intolerance and discrimination against Muslims in

Cordoba in October this year. The event enabled us to follow up the implementation of the recommendations of the conferences in Berlin and Cordoba focusing on anti-Semitism, which we also consider a matter of top priority.

Morocco greatly appreciates the efforts of the OSCE's Spanish Chairmanship and the Contact Group's Finnish Chairmanship to strengthen the OSCE's co-operation with its Partners. I am referring not only to matters of protocol or symbolism, but also to the introduction of practical measures, such as the recent invitation extended to the Partners to contribute to the shape and content of the crucial document, "The Road to Madrid".

Ambassador Omar Zniber of Morocco

Tunisia: Increased interdependence calls for new vision

The geopolitical upheavals of recent years have had a considerable impact on both the perceptions and the variables of global security and stability. This new climate has led to a multitude of constraints, and especially to reduced freedom of movement.

However, any attempt to hem in the European space is doomed to failure. This is because of the world's increasing interdependence, and growing interconnectivity, and the nature of the new challenges we are all facing: poverty, radical extremism, organized crime, terrorism, unsustainable development, faltering economic partnerships and developmental gaps between regions.

The decision adopted at the Lisbon Summit in 1996 to further develop the dialogue between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners serves as an essential framework for co-operation in such mutual interests as security and stability in the Mediterranean. It also underlines a shared spirit of promotion of universal values and principles aimed at promoting sustainable peace in this part of the world.

Given the slow progress so far, we need to revive the dialogue and adapt it to the nature of the challenges and expectations of our region. This means:

- Incorporating the Mediterranean's strategic concept in its entirety into the fundamental objectives of the OSCE, while taking an individualized approach based on each specific Partner's characteristics;
- Defining a lasting vision for the region and for the relations between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners that would revive the concept of multilateralism;
- Ensuring that OSCE enlargement is not used as a pretext to exclude people, but rather is used as an opportunity to foster peace, openness and creativity among them; and

- Recognizing the political, cultural, socio-economic and environmental characteristics of the Partner countries as vital elements in the global system, with a view to fostering co-operation and genuine sustainable development.



A Belgian military officer briefs experts from Mediterranean Partner Countries on the verification system of the Open Skies Treaty.

The achievement of these goals calls for:

- Drawing up a plan of action directed towards a partnership for peace and security in the Mediterranean region, so that OSCE meetings with the Partners have a relevant agenda reflecting common concerns and action-oriented goals;
- Establishing an implementation committee that would be responsible for following up on all decisions at the political level;
- Engaging in a dialogue to consider an adequate framework that could create

conditions for stability and security, relying on confidence-building, transparency, conflict-prevention and similar mechanisms; and

- Initiating co-operation between the Mediterranean Partners and the Conflict Prevention Centre through an exchange of information and provision of assistance;
- Considering the possibility of establishing a Mediterranean Conflict Prevention Centre;
- Engaging the Mediterranean Partners in the work of the Forum for Security Co-operation; and
- Establishing a partnership fund to provide genuine support for co-operation in the social, economic and environmental spheres.

Security and stability in the OSCE and the Mediterranean area will always be dependent on a relationship of mutual trust, a sharing of responsibilities and respect for the integrity and sovereignty of States.

Ambassador Mohamed Daouas of Tunisia



Making history

First OSCE Junior Professional Officers earn their stripes

BY SUZANNE BLAHA

The six Junior Professional Officers beamed proudly as they received their certificates of service from the OSCE's Director for Human Resources, Sergei Belyaev, at a low-key ceremony in Vienna at the end of June. Two had just flown in from Baku and Osh the day before. The others had arrived slightly earlier from Pristina, Podgorica and Tbilisi.

In a room filled to overflowing, several representatives from participating States and former colleagues in the Secretariat listened intently and asked questions as the "JPOs" took turns recounting their vivid impressions of what it was like to be a staff member in the world's largest regional security organization.

The JPOs — from Albania, Azerbaijan, Greece, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Portugal — had good reason to feel special. They were making OSCE history as the first

group of young professionals to take part in a new nine-month programme initiated and administered by the Department of Human Resources.

During the orientation phase, from October to December 2006 at the Secretariat in Vienna, they performed set tasks and assumed assigned responsibilities under the guidance of a supervisor and a mentor. Some became regular observers at the meetings of the Permanent Council. In addition, each JPO benefited from a wide range of training courses.

In January 2007, following the three-month orientation period, the JPOs were deemed ready for deployment to a field operation for the following six months. In taking the decision as to who was going to be assigned where, an attempt was made to balance certain considerations: a sound geographical mix of field missions, the security situation, the missions' willingness and capacity to take part in the programme, and the JPOs' expertise and personal preference.

Our call for candidates had attracted an encouraging 191 nominations from 33 countries. The vacancy notice was aimed at participating States that had low staff representation in the Secretariat and in the field — or none at all. Following a screening of applications, a panel in the Secretariat carried out the final selection, taking great

Khodi Sakiqi (Albania),
Nuno Luzio (Portugal),
Christina Kipou (Greece),
Chynara Ibraimova
(Kyrgyzstan), Nigar
Huseynova (Azerbaijan) and
Dinmukhamed Jamashev
(Kazakhstan)
Photo: OSCE/Nasi Calentaru

care to balance considerations of nationality, gender, language and expertise.

The term “Junior Professional” aptly describes the six young and talented men and women who were judged to be the cream of the crop. All came from excellent academic backgrounds. They were intellectually curious, possessed strong analytical and interpersonal skills and were open to new and unexpected challenges. Later on, they were to demonstrate the ease with which they could adapt to difficult working circumstances.

As the co-ordinator of this first JPO programme, I was initially apprehensive about this venture into uncharted waters. But as the elements fell into place, my tasks proved both rewarding and pleasurable.

I was impressed by the extent to which the JPOs supported each other during their three months in Vienna — whether it was a matter of carrying out such mundane activities as cooking meals and doing the laundry in their residential quarters on the outskirts of Vienna, or of learning how to confront security challenges in the field at a mock hostage-taking exercise in Germany.

Above all, it was their shared hopes and ambitions, fuelled by the JPO programme, that cemented this bond.

Director Sergei Belyaev and his team agree that, judging from the overwhelmingly positive feedback, the JPO programme, despite its modest scale, holds great promise for both participants and the OSCE alike.

“It’s a vehicle for developing a gender- and geographically-balanced pool of young, qualified candidates for future applications,” Mr. Belyaev says. “While the JPO programme does not guarantee future employment, we believe that it enables participants to gain the skills and abilities needed to give them a competitive edge in case they do consider working for the Organization.”

Suzanne Blaha is a Recruitment Officer in the Department of Human Resources.

Introducing the new Junior Programme Officers for 2007-2008

Henriette Henriksen, Denmark
Jana Kasarova, Belgium
Elsevar Mammadov, Azerbaijan
Ivana Radenković, Serbia
Jelena Semjonova, Latvia
Maria Tsiarta, Cyprus

Capitalizing on young people’s fresh perspectives

The JPO pilot programme made it possible for qualified young people to gain self-confidence through their first international professional experience. And the OSCE’s agenda is so diverse and comprehensive that, within a span of several months, these junior professionals managed to gain exposure to a vast store of knowledge.

Elchin Huseynli, Third Secretary,
Delegation of Azerbaijan



Elchin Huseynli with JPO Nigar Huseynova

It’s a fantastic programme. JPOs capitalize on their youth by bringing a fresh perspective, and often an infectious sense of energy, into their assignments. They also have the academic background and professional experience that add depth, breadth and quality to the Organization’s work. Because they spend three months at the Secretariat, they become familiar with the OSCE and its policies, issues, and yes, bureaucracy. As a result, very little orientation is needed once the JPO arrives, other than the provision of mission-specific information. The JPO fits in immediately and quickly becomes a member of the team.

Jennifer N. Ober, Senior Assembly Adviser, Central Assembly Unit, Department of Good Governance and Democratic Institutions, OSCE Mission in Kosovo

Currently, the preponderance of Western European and North American staff members in the field does not reflect the national diversity of the Organization and detracts from its potential. The JPO experience opens a window, not only on the world of the OSCE, but also on any international environment. Participants are likely to be encouraged to pursue a career in this area, or, at least, to lobby their own authorities to look more favourably on secondment. Certainly, the programme acts as a showcase for some of the outstanding postgraduates from underrepresented participating States.

Robin Seaward, former Deputy Head,
OSCE Office in Baku



In front of "The Dacha", the OSCE Mission to Georgia: Xhodi Sakiqi (centre) with colleagues Matthieu Goodstein, Executive Adviser to the Head of Mission, and Ilona Kazaryan, National Professional in the Press and Public Information Office.

An Albanian in Georgia

An intimate look into that "strange" organization

By Xhodi Sakiqi

I was a 17-year-old high-school student during the politically hot Albanian winter of 1997 when I first heard about the OSCE, the Danish Chairman-in-Office, and his special envoy, former Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky. I couldn't fully grasp what the issues were all about. I only knew that my family had to leave Tirana to go to a safer place in the countryside for a few days, and that the OSCE was seeking to negotiate peaceful ways out of the political crisis that had hit Albania at the beginning of the year.

It was only much later that I understood the magnitude of the events that had led to the breakdown in law and order: Simply put, a network of fraudulent pyramid companies had collapsed, wiping out the life savings of thousands of Albanian families who had invested in these get-rich-quick schemes. Some 2,000 people lost their lives in the unrest and anarchy that followed. Thanks to the OSCE's timely mediation and its co-ordination of the international community's response, a civil war that was on the verge of flaring up did not materialize; a national unity government was formed; and parliamentary elections were held.

Ten years after that dramatic chapter in our history, I found myself working for that "strange" organization. As an insider, I began to understand just how the OSCE had been able to mobilize its various mechanisms in support of my country's efforts to recover and strengthen its democratic institutions.

Tbilisi, where I was posted from January to June 2007, presents a different security agenda for the OSCE, driven mainly by the frozen conflicts in Abkhazia and in South Ossetia. I would often turn over in my mind comparisons between conflicts in the ex-Soviet and ex-Yugoslav areas. And, every step of the way, I sought to identify differences and similarities between the tense situations in Georgia and Kosovo.

It was also tempting to compare press operations in the field with those in the Secretariat. Vienna targets mainly the international media in world capitals, whereas a press release issued in the field at just the right time can have a beneficial impact on the

Mission's position between the parties in conflict. This can contribute towards defusing tension in the area.

Having been exposed to press duties in both Vienna and Tbilisi gave me a better insight into the differences and convinced me that more joint efforts are needed to co-ordinate and satisfy the needs of both the Secretariat and the Mission.

Field work was where the action was. One day I would be assigned to assist in covering activities focusing on dismantling old ammunition stores; the next day it would be anti-trafficking and environmental issues.

The Mission was also seeking to build confidence between journalists based in Tbilisi and their counterparts in Tskhinvali so that their reporting on the protracted conflict in the Tskhinvali region would be fairer and more unbiased. This was one of the areas where I could feel the conflict-related tension on both sides.

Fortunately, most of the local journalists I met were genuinely concerned about providing the widest possible coverage of the mission's different activities. I found most of them quite dynamic and professional, constantly working to improve the freedom of the media in the country.

All in all, it was a pleasant surprise to discover how much Georgians and Albanians resembled each other in terms of generosity, friendliness, hospitality and pride in their country and their unique heritage.

Xhodi Sakiqi. Born in 1980 in Tirana, Albania. Masters degree in political science, major in international politics, Università degli studi di Roma, "La Sapienza" (2005). Three months in the Secretariat's Press and Public Information Section. Six months in the Press and Public Information Office, OSCE Mission to Georgia. Returned to his post of Desk Officer for Kosovo, Albanian Foreign Ministry, and hopes to be assigned to the Albanian Delegation to the OSCE in the future.

After internships in two international organizations and an international NGO, and a master's degree in Japan, I thought it was time to get out into the real world and try to put academic theory into practice. In August 2006, just as I was starting to lose faith in pursuing a career in my chosen specialization, I got a phone call from the OSCE in Vienna saying that I had been chosen to be a Junior Professional Officer.

I was familiar with the OSCE from my graduate studies, and was thrilled at the thought that I was going to be assigned to the Secretariat's Conflict Prevention Centre — the perfect match for my background, I thought. On my 26th birthday, I boarded a Lufthansa flight from Lisbon to Vienna. My new life was about to unfold.

Still, I had mixed feelings upon arrival. It was not my first time to live abroad, so I was not worried at all about getting along with people from different cultural backgrounds. I realized that what I was anxious about was being able to live up to the responsibilities of a staff member of an international organization.

The other JPOs and I became fast friends. Every morning, we ventured off to the office from our temporary living quarters. We would take the bus, then the train, and finally the subway, and return home together at the end of the day. Most Saturdays nights were spent "clubbing". The most enjoyable part, though, was whipping up a meal and sitting down to dinner, when we would share dreams and frustrations and discuss everything from history and politics to art, which provided insights into our native roots.

At work, I had to absorb masses of information within a short time. Fortunately, I was taken seriously and was also able to build friendships with colleagues. But I knew that the real challenge was still to come: mission time!

Destiny was leading me on in a strange way: Having lived in Strasbourg, Tokyo and Vienna, I would now have Pristina as my new address. It was the last place I had imagined as my first field assignment and as the source of so much learning.

I arrived in Kosovo on a cold and dark afternoon in January. The road from the airport to the city was depressing, with a strange fog veiling Pristina. I was completely lost for the first few days. I had to search for a desk, a computer and a phone. People in the Mission, especially national staff, were incredibly friendly. I immediately sensed that it was difficult for them to foster relationships with "internationals" because of the constant comings and goings in such a large operation.

I found it amazing that a place that was struggling with so many difficulties could have such a wide variety of restaurants and bars. I would soon discover that, in the middle of seemingly insurmountable problems, food and fun were, in fact, often at the core of everyday life in the Balkans.

As time passed, my professional assignments became more interesting. One of my main achievements was writing an article for a publication on Kosovo's Anti-Discrimination Law, which is considered by experts to be one of the most progressive pieces of European legislation of its kind. The initiative had followed a round-table meeting in April 2007 which had attracted some 70 participants. I felt privileged to serve as the moderator of the first panel, but it also felt a bit daunting to direct the flow of discussions among leading experts.

I was responsible for co-ordinating the production of the 50-page publication and for launching its three versions — Albanian, Serbian and English. For the first time, I had to manage a project and find

my way through the bureaucracy of a huge mission. It was well worth it, and extremely satisfying to be part of a clear-cut effort: to raise official and public awareness of the individual rights set out under a crucial law that, since its adoption in 2004, had been poorly implemented.

I was also able to forge friendships with people from the Albanian and the Serbian communities — the most challenging aspect of my stay in Kosovo in terms of human relationships. Both shared their reflections on the events of the recent past and their hopes for the future. It may sound paradoxical, but I felt that each one was right and wrong at the same time.

I found it unfortunate that, in more ways than one, the members of the two communities actually didn't know each other. Expressing my views was a delicate balancing act, as I didn't want to hurt anyone's feelings.

They are not the only communities in Kosovo, but the ones with the highest degree of mutual mistrust. I could feel this especially whenever I crossed the bridge at Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, which divides the city into two different worlds. I would like to see the day when the bridge serves its original purpose of bringing people closer together.

Barely a week after arriving in Portugal after completing the JPO programme, I was packing again to return to Kosovo. I had been offered a contract as a Political Officer the day before my departure. I would like to believe that this was the Organization's way of acknowledging the work achieved by its first generation of JPOs and that each one of us represented a wise investment.

Nuno Luzio. Born in 1980 in Coimbra, Portugal. Bachelor of Laws, University of Coimbra (2003), and master's degree in international studies and peace and conflict studies, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (2006). Three months in the Conflict Prevention Centre. Six months in the Central Assembly Unit, Department of Good Governance and Democratic Institutions, OSCE Mission in Kosovo. Currently serving as Political Officer, Office of Political Affairs, OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

Nuno Luzio at a panel discussion on Kosovo's Anti-Discrimination Law, with Melissa Stone, Head of the Good Governance Unit, and Head of Mission Werner Wnendt.



To Kosovo and back

A wise investment

By Nuno Luzio

As the 15-seater plane from Bishkek approached Osh one freezing day in January 2007, and later, on the ride to the town centre, I tried hard to take in a vastly different world from my own. I was greeted by stunning snow-covered mountains, colourful women's garb, and an exotic blend of Kyrgyz, Tajik, Uzbek and Russian influences everywhere I looked.

I had come to a special place, and I was determined to surmount every obstacle and inconvenience that might stand in the way of my making the most of this rare experience. I knew my time in Osh was limited, so to make my life simpler, I chose an apartment not too far from the commercial area and arranged for a private driver to transport me to and from the OSCE's field office every day. I wasted no time in immersing myself in Russian-language lessons.

It took me a bit longer to settle in at work, but once I was assigned specific tasks by the Centre in Bishkek, I was ready to take on my role as the contact person of the police reform programme.

I considered myself fortunate: My assignment in the field was a logical continuation of my three months with the Strategic Police Matters Unit in Vienna. How often can one complement work in the Secretariat with practical experience in the OSCE's pioneering and most comprehensive policing scheme?

By the end of the second month, I was sufficiently comfortable with my structured working procedures and had established useful contacts in most of the local police directorates in the South. I kept in touch with key police staff through regular meetings, monitored policing activities and assisted in several police reform projects, usually focusing on community policing. I also worked with the OSCE's implementing partners and helped organize police events and training.

I was always accompanied by an interpreter, and I used a computerized translation programme for drafting e-mail correspondence and documents. Backed up by my Russian lessons, this somehow helped me break through the language barrier.

With the encouragement of Jerome Bouyjou, the Head of the Field Office in Osh, I also contributed to projects with a strong human rights element. This focus, a vital part of our work in South Kyrgyzstan, also underlies many of our reform efforts in policing. Being involved in these key areas was an ideal way of keeping track of current local developments.

Before I knew it, I was responding to a variety of requests from different police directorates in the South, and co-ordinating them with the programme managers in Bishkek. I wrote a report setting out the basic requirements for improved meetings between the police and the public, which was translated into Russian and distributed as guidelines to police stations throughout the country.

I also drew up recommendations on how to involve Osh residents more closely with policing. These, I felt, were received well by the managers in Bishkek, who are thinking of using them as a basis for a project proposal.

At the beginning of every month, I would visit my colleagues in the police reform programme in Bishkek and report on the progress of activities in the South. Although this meant a two-day absence from the office in Osh, it was important for us — both in Bishkek and in Osh — to compare the pace of developments in the capital and in the country's second largest city and be ready to make any necessary adjustments to our strategy.

Perhaps what gave me the greatest satisfaction was being contacted by the different NGOs, heads of police units and residents to seek assistance in policing-related matters.

These requests, I felt, reflected a stark reality, pointing to the significance of the OSCE's long-term efforts to develop the professionalism and the operational capabilities of Kyrgyzstan's police.

In fact, although my role was to liaise between the South of the country and the capital, there were times when I found myself acting as the contact point between the community and the police. There were two issues that had to be reconciled: the public's concern about corruption in the police force, and the police's lack of resources to address people's demands for improved law and order.

This realization led me to invest all my energies in helping the Osh police to create a crime-awareness campaign emphasizing the joint responsibilities of the public and the police and seeking to strengthen their relations. This initiative is expected to be launched soon.

By the time six months had passed, I had become attached to the place and the people and especially to my constant interaction with the local police. I had gained valuable insights into the challenges faced by police forces in countries of the former Soviet Union. I will never forget how positively people would respond to every little measure the Government would take to upgrade the Kyrgyz police into a public service. More than anything else, this convinced me that an engaged citizenry can be the driving force behind many improvements in everyday life.

Christina Kipou. Born in 1978 in Katerini, Greece. Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology, American College of Thessaloniki (2002) and a Master of Science degree in criminology and criminal justice, Cardiff University (2004). Three months in the OSCE Secretariat's Strategic Police Matters Unit and six months in the Osh Field Office of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek. Plans to pursue further work in police reform.

Christina Kipou (centre, right) at a football match between police and students, organized by the NGO, *Every Child*, with the support of the Osh Field Office.



Feeling the pulse of the people and the police in Osh

By Christina Kipou

As a JPO in the Gender Section of the Secretariat, I would often listen to the debates on Kosovo in the Permanent Council. After three months in Vienna, there I was, at the Pristina airport, eager to discover the sights and sounds of one of the most intensively discussed places on earth.

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo has five regional centres, and I was extremely lucky to have been assigned to the one in the northwestern city of Pejë/Peć, which is the hub of the municipality with the same name. It is one of the most attractive tourist spots in Kosovo, offering a great deal more than views of KFOR vehicles and military checkpoints camouflaged by artificial leaves.

Located at the foothills of the “Accursed Mountains”, this city of 125,000 inhabitants rises above the spectacular Rugova Valley. Just as remarkable was the residents’ joyful nature, despite the tragic legacy of the conflict of 1999. The remains of destroyed houses and monuments still dotted the landscape. Even today, despite the improved security situation, there is still much to be done to reconcile the Albanian and Serb communities.

I remember being inundated with information when I reported for work. A colleague told me: “I start my day by reading the news, and when I am done, I realize that the day is over.” This was precisely how I felt during my first few days.

Eventually, though, I began to learn how to sift through the information, to get a firm grasp of the political issues, to analyze the implications of current events for future developments — and, yes, to perceive a clear role played by the Organization in its biggest field operation.

I was appointed as the fifth member of the Municipal Team of Pejë/Peć, which is one of 33 such teams covering every municipality in Kosovo. Fittingly, we were a model of multi-ethnicity: Two of my colleagues were Kosovar Albanians, one a Kosovar Bosniak and the fourth a Canadian. I was responsible for planning and implementing small-scale projects aimed at promoting standards of good governance.

As a lawyer specializing in human rights, I found it exciting to put my skills to good use at the very basic level of democratic governance, which is where it all begins. We actively monitored meetings of the Municipal Assembly and its committees as well as the municipal working group on returns. We observed developments unfolding at the grass roots. In that way, we were able to act as a primary source of reliable, first-hand information and to serve as a link between the central structures in Pristina and the municipality.

To feel the pulse of our communities, our routine — if it could be called that — included attending monthly meetings of the Municipal Assembly and interacting with representatives of different com-

munities, school administrators, political groups and NGOs.

However, our role was not limited to monitoring and advising; we also implemented practical on-site initiatives to promote good practices within self-governing institutions. For example, we initiated a publication on the cultural and religious sites in the municipality, aimed at fostering the culture of tolerance and understanding among different communities and respect for each other’s cultural and religious heritage.

We had to be aware of the full range of issues — from educational rights to financial accountability. We also had to be thoroughly familiar with relevant legislation since we were there to provide

guidance in the interpretation of laws and decisions.

Without a doubt, this entailed professional expertise and demanded a generous dose of patience and a sound understanding of local issues. It required us to be flexible, too. Measures that worked in another municipality were not necessarily effective in Pejë/Peć. We sometimes had to set our plans aside, and that could be frustrating. For example, we were told by a municipal official that a complaints box, which proved extremely effective elsewhere in Kosovo, would not quite work in Pejë/Peć.

Although results were not achieved overnight, they were there for all to see and feel. Institutions were functioning better; the security situation was

improving; and more internally displaced people were returning at last.

While getting ready to leave Pejë/Peć, I browsed through my papers and came across a slim brochure, entitled *My Life as a JPO*, which the Secretariat’s Department of Human Resources had included in our “starter kit”. I dipped into it again, and that made me realize how much I had grown personally and professionally over the past nine months.

My parting thoughts, though, revolved around the people of Kosovo. I had arrived in mid-January 2007, when the recommendations of the United Nations, based on the findings of UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari, were expected to bring clarity to Kosovo’s future status after eight years of international administration. Alas, it was not to be; the people of Kosovo are still anxiously awaiting their fate.

Nigar Huseynova. Born in 1980 in Baku, Azerbaijan. Master of Laws degree from Baku State University. Three months in the Secretariat’s Gender Section and six months in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Pejë/Peć Regional Centre. Returned to post of senior attorney specializing in human rights and gender issues, American Bar Association Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative, in Baku. Hopes to get an assignment in an OSCE field mission.

Nigar Huseynova and colleagues Kendall Palmer (left) and Faik Balic donate Bosnian-language books to a multi-ethnic school in the municipality of Pejë/Peć.



Promoting professional governance in Pejë/Peć

By Nigar Huseynova

"Are you from China?"
"No."
"From Japan?"
"No, I'm from Kazakhstan."

This was how my conversations with people in Vienna usually started. It reminded me of an article I once came across, about most westerners thinking of the "Stans" as one big entity. It seemed to me that, whenever people would hear the last syllable of my country's name, they would look somewhat puzzled, probably confusing it with Afghanistan, which dominates the news every day.

At least I didn't have that problem in the Secretariat, where I spent three months in the Action against Terrorism Unit, and at the Hofburg, where weekly meetings of the ambassadors of OSCE participating States set the stage for my first broad exposure to an international environment.

We JPOs were advised against choosing an assignment in a field mission close to our country of origin, so after some deliberation, I decided on Azerbaijan. I was curious about similarities with my country, but I actually found more differences than likenesses. For example, the kind of Islam that is practised is different — Azerbaijan follows Shia Islam, while Sunni Islam is prevalent in Kazakhstan. Both countries, however, consider themselves secular.

My first task at the OSCE Office in Baku was to collect information about the country's political parties — 48 in all — to provide a sound basis for our efforts to revive contacts with political leaders. Through this assignment, I met key party heads, most of whom were former members of parliament (Milli Mejlis).

We held meetings with parliamentarians and committee chairpersons to explore ways in which the OSCE might become involved in an assistance programme for the parliament. During the discussions, Democratization Officer Ingrid Gossinger asked me to interpret between Russian and English. I must confess that I did not feel up to the task, given my lack of experience in this specialized field. Now I no longer take the challenges faced by interpreters for granted.

In early May, during my fifth month in Baku, I joined the economic and environmental team, and was immediately assigned by Torbjorn Bjorvatn to visit the Guba region in the north. Over two days, I gathered information on 10 out of 24 international organiza-

tions and local NGOs and dropped in on the Anti-Corruption Centre, part of a dynamic countrywide network operating under the auspices of the OSCE and Transparency Azerbaijan.

This was followed by a trip to Mingechevir with a group of experts, journalists and OSCE staff. The area, site of a hydroelectric power station, lies on the banks of the Kura River — the largest and longest one in the South Caucasus — which runs from Georgia through Armenia and Azerbaijan, and flows into the Caspian Sea.

For the past five years, the OSCE, the NATO Science for Peace and Security Programme and Norway's StatOil have been carry-

ing out a project to monitor the river, which, along with the Aras River, serves as a major source of water supply. The Baku Office has been deeply involved in helping national experts to standardize water sampling and unify laboratory analysis techniques. This is a vital contribution to the project, as the quality and quantity of these water resources have a huge impact on the region's socio-economic development planning.

I also got to know what "Aarhus Centres" were all about. These are meant to promote the Aarhus Convention, which advocates the concept of "environmental democracy" — bringing environmental issues closer to people. The activities of Baku's Aarhus Centre, unfortunately, had slowed down. To help revive its role, an assistant and I met with representatives of environmental NGOs to learn about their activities and their political and social agendas, and to seek advice on how the Centre could be made more useful and interesting to them.

Before I ended my assignment, I took a few days off to visit Georgia and Armenia. It was a fitting conclusion to my JPO experience, as Kazakhstan has strong economic and political

relations with the Caucasus. I discovered that, however small the area is, the countries are completely different from one another. This is a valuable insight that I will always carry with me as a diplomat.

Dinmukhamed Jamashev. Born in 1982 in Shymkent, Kazakhstan. Degree in international relations, Kazakh National University (2004). Three months in the Secretariat's Action against Terrorism Unit, and six months in the OSCE Office in Baku. Returned to position of Attaché, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kazakhstan. Plans to carve out a diplomatic career.

Dinmukhamed Jamashev takes water samples from the Kura River.



Gathering insights, from the Milli Mejlis to Mingechevir

By Dinmukhamed Jamashev



Chynara Ibraimova (left) and a colleague, Vukosava Braicic, at a national anti-terrorism workshop organized in Kolasin, by the Mission to Montenegro.

Discovering the role of economic and environmental issues in diplomacy

By Chynara Ibraimova

I couldn't have wished for a more relevant beginning at the OSCE Secretariat. One of my first assignments in the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities was to help organize and prepare an international conference on land degradation and soil contamination held in mid-November 2006 in Bishkek, my home town. The event, which dealt with a worrying set of issues I was thoroughly familiar with, paved the way for the Fifteenth OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum in January and May 2007.

I also helped organize an expert workshop examining the transit and transportation problems of land-locked countries, held in Vienna in mid-December 2006. Again, this topic hit close to home: Kyrgyzstan is 3,600 km away from the sea. The meeting was designed to prepare for a high-level conference in Dushanbe, focusing on the development of transit transportation throughout Central Asia.

Listening to the OSCE delegations' deliberations on current global issues in meetings of the Permanent Council provided a perfect opportunity for a young diplomat like myself to gain an understanding of the art of persuasion and negotiation.

I had always wanted to be a witness to the behind-the-scenes negotiations among countries in both the political and the economic spheres — including those relating to my country — and the JPO Programme satisfied this yearning. I did find myself in the unique situation of having to take a more objective position whenever my country was being discussed.

It was also interesting to experience the transition of the OSCE Chairmanship from Belgium to Spain. Obviously, the Organization continues to pursue its basic mission, but I saw, through the prism of the economic and environmental dimension, how activities are strongly influenced by the chosen priorities of each new Chairmanship.

After my time in Vienna, I was assigned to the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, with offices in Podgorica. It was a fascinating time to be there as Montenegro had just declared its independence on 22 June 2006. In fact, the Government had not yet managed to set up a proper visa system.

Each OSCE field operation has a different mandate, and I was pleasantly surprised to discover that I was in a mission whose mandate mirrors the Organization's emphasis on security in all its aspects. The Economic and Environmental Section where I was assigned dealt with poverty reduction, anti-trafficking, prevention of sexual exploitation, corruption, awareness-raising in ecological matters, promotion of the Aarhus Convention and eco-tourism.

Overall, my assignments both in the Secretariat and in the field made me realize how vital the role of economic and ecological matters is in the world of diplomacy and politics.

My fellow JPOs and I all agree that, despite the limited length of our assignments, we felt one with the OSCE community every step of the way. Every member is made to feel very much at home, regardless of cultural and religious background and political views. I have been hearing occasional talk about the OSCE model serving as an inspiration for other areas of the world. I must say the idea is very appealing.

Chynara Ibraimova. Born in 1977 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Bachelor's degree in international economic relations and oriental studies. Three months in the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities. Six months in the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, Economic and Environmental Section. Previously Assistant to the Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan; recently appointed Adviser at Bishkek-based International Agency for Development and Policy.

Appointments



OSCE/DAVID KHIZANISHVILI

Terhi Hakala, an expert on South Caucasus and Eastern Europe, has been named **Head of the OSCE Mission to Georgia**, starting 15 October. At the time of her appointment, she was serving as Finland's roving ambassador to Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Prior to this, Ambassador Hakala headed the Foreign Ministry's Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. From 1995 to 1996, she served on the Finnish co-

chairmanship team of the OSCE Minsk Conference, which is seeking a solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

She joined Finland's diplomatic service in 1988, later carrying out various assignments in her country's embassy in Moscow, General Consulate in St. Petersburg and Permanent Mission to the OSCE in Vienna.

Shortly after assuming her OSCE post, Ambassador Hakala welcomed representatives of all the sides in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict to the Mission's headquarters in Tbilisi. The occasion was a meeting of the Joint Control Commission on 22 October — the first time in a year that representatives of Georgia, South Ossetia, North Ossetia and the Russian Federation had met.

"At the core of the

Mission's mandate is assisting the peaceful resolution of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict," she told the *OSCE Magazine*. "We've been taking an intensive cross-dimensional approach, so as well as assisting in the political process and military monitoring, we're also moving forward with the OSCE's internationally-funded economic rehabilitation programme for the zone of conflict."

Equally important was the Mission's work elsewhere in Georgia in all three OSCE dimensions of security, Ambassador Hakala said. "I hope to build on the work of my predecessor, Ambassador Roy Reeve, and look forward to many more milestones in Georgia's reform agenda, including major events such as presidential elections."



OSCE/KHANSAN SOPA

Tim Guldemann, a Swiss diplomat, assumed the position of **Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo** on 1 October, succeeding Werner Wnendt of Germany.

"I'm pleased to be in the field again with the OSCE after three years of teaching," he said. He led the OSCE Assistance Group in Chechnya from 1996 to 1997 and was Head of the OSCE Mission in Croatia from 1997 to 1999.

After serving as Switzerland's Ambassador in Tehran from 1999 to 2004, he taught political science at a number of universities, mainly in Frankfurt.

In an interview with the Swiss press, Ambassador Guldemann said that the OSCE's top priority in Kosovo was to assist the authorities in the parliamentary, municipal and mayoral elections on 17 November. "It's important that these elections are held, as Kosovo needs democratically elected institutions — whatever happens concerning status," he said.

Kosovo's Central Election Commission, which is responsible for the conduct of elections, is chaired by the OSCE Head of Mission in his capacity as Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Institution-Building.

"Although we don't know what the results of the ongoing discussions on Kosovo's future status will be, our task is to prepare the OSCE Mission for the new — only assumed — circumstances next year," he added. "The OSCE Mission is a pillar of the UN Mission; in case an EU Mission is deployed, our Mission could become a more independent operation, if all OSCE participating States agree to maintain the OSCE presence."

Sergey Kapinos, Deputy Director of the Caucasian Department in the Russian Foreign Ministry, has been appointed **Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan**, starting on 1 October.

He had been assigned in Armenia once before — as Minister-Counsellor at the Russian Embassy, from 1999 to 2003.

"Joining the OSCE, one of the most important multilateral political organizations in the region, is both a challenge and an honour for me," Ambassador Kapinos said. "I do hope that my previous extensive diplomatic experience, including my knowledge of Armenia and the South Caucasus area, will prove useful and give fresh impetus to the activities of the OSCE Office in Yerevan."

Between 1978 and 1997, he held a series of diplomatic posts in Islamabad, Bombay and New Delhi. He was Senior Counsellor in his Foreign Ministry's Department of International Security and Disarmament from 1997 to 1999, before moving on to his Armenian assignment.

Born in Lviv, Ukraine, Ambassador Kapinos graduated from the Economic Faculty of the Moscow Institute of International Relations in 1978. He completed studies in social and political science at the Russian Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic Academy in 1992. Among the languages he speaks are French, Polish, Ukrainian, Urdu and Hindi.

Ambassador Kapinos succeeds Vladimir Pryakhin, also a Russian national, who is now Head of the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe.



OSCE/KAREN MINASYAN

Paul Fritch of the United States assumed the post of **Director of the Office of the Secretary General** on 10 September, succeeding Didier Fau of France.

Mr. Fritch has been a member of the U.S. diplomatic service for over 16 years, and served most recently as Head of the Russia and Ukraine Relations Section of the NATO International Secretariat. He has completed diplomatic postings in Russia, Germany and India.

He participated in negotiations to launch arms control and confidence-building measures in the former Yugoslavia following the Dayton peace process, and in negotiations on the adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). He was a member of the United States delegation to the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in 1999, where he worked with Russian, Georgian and Moldovan representatives to resolve issues related to the CFE Treaty.

In 2001, Mr. Fritch worked with the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs on the enhancement of practical NATO-Russia co-operation in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. He was instrumental in the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council in May 2002.

Mr. Fritch speaks all six OSCE official languages: English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish. He is a graduate of Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.



OSCE/MIKHAIL LEVSTARIEV



OSCE/FABIOLA HAHILLARI

Robert Bosch is the new **Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania**, starting on 25 October. He succeeded Pavel Vacek of the Czech Republic.

A senior diplomat, Ambassador Bosch had been serving as Deputy Head of the Netherlands Delegation to the OSCE for the past two-and-a-half years.

“My outlook on life is optimistic and I am bringing this optimism to Albania,” he said.

He was his country’s Special Representative to the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Reduction and Special Adviser to the Netherlands Presidency of the EU. At the Foreign Ministry, he was acting Deputy Director for south-eastern and Eastern Europe. As Special Adviser in the Security Policy Department, he assisted, in 1999, in the international efforts during the Kosovo crisis.

Ambassador Bosch’s overseas assignments have taken him to Mozambique, Indonesia, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Austria (also covering Slovenia) and Portugal.

He holds a Master of Science degree in general civil engineering with a strong emphasis in economics.

Esther Stern, a Canadian national who worked with the United Nations for nine years, is the new **Director of the OSCE’s Office of Internal Oversight**. She succeeds George Bartsiotas of the United States.

Ms. Stern places great emphasis on the role of the Office as an internal resource that provides assurance and advice to management, while helping to ensure that the OSCE’s work is effective and produces the desired results.

“Auditing is not just about compliance but effectiveness and efficiency,” she says. “If it cannot be measured, it cannot be managed. We have to be able to assess the impact of our work.”

Ms. Stern served as the Director of the United Nations’ Internal Audit Division, covering all the UN Secretariat’s programmes and funds. Later, as Interregional Adviser, she was responsible for technical co-operation and policy advice in areas concerning audit and control, fraud detection and anti-corruption.

Prior to joining the UN, Ms. Stern was the Principal Director in the Office of the Auditor General of Canada.

A Certified Government Audit Professional with an MA in linguistics from the University of Ottawa, she has written and lectured extensively on auditing for social change.

She advocated that audits go beyond written records to involve stakeholders in the field, so as to better assess the impact of projects on the ground.

The Office of Internal Oversight reports directly to the OSCE Secretary General, supporting the Secretariat, institutions and field missions through independent audits, inspections, evaluations and value-for-money assurance.

The Office also investigates allegations of fraud, waste and mismanagement of resources. Establishing an ethical framework for the complex environments in which the OSCE operates is critical to preventing such violations, Ms. Stern says. The Office will soon release a handbook giving practical guidelines on how to handle ethical dilemmas, and is also working with the Secretariat’s Training Section to introduce ethics courses for OSCE officials in early 2008.



OSCE/MIKHAIL LEVSTARIEV



Photos: OSCE/Susanne Löb

Tackling intolerance and discrimination against Muslims was the subject of spirited discussions at a conference in Cordoba, Spain, on 9 and 10 October 2007.

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