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A New Day Dawns in Romania

In milestone national elections on November 17, the Romanian people turned out ex-Communist incumbent Ion Iliescu and elected as their president former geology professor Emil Constantinescu. Iliescu, a member of the leftist Party of Social Democracy of Romania (PDSR), had held power since the violent revolution which overthrew former dictator Nicolae Ceausescu who was executed. This election marked the first time in history that Romanians changed their leader through the ballot box, past leaders having died in office, been deposed by force, or were killed or banished.

Constantinescu won the November 17 run-off balloting, beating
Romania, continued page 4



Monument to the Discoveries, Lisbon

1996 Lisbon Summit Produces Results, Controversy

On December 2-3, representatives of fifty-one countries participating in the OSCE gathered in Lisbon for the organization's biennial summit meeting. Vice President Gore led the U.S. delegation and had meetings with Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin of the Russian Federation, President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine, Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany, President Jacques Chirac of France and Prime Minister António Guterres of Portugal. He also met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, an OSCE Mediterranean Partner for Cooperation.

In his summit statement, Gore pointed out that the United States was willing to help develop cooperative relationships between OSCE states and NATO, and, as NATO enlargement was not a threat to anyone, there should be strong cooperation between Russia and NATO. Chernomyrdin, however, reiterated Russia's rejection of NATO enlargement, averring that enlargement could create new fault lines in Europe, thereby undermining security and stability in the region.

Representatives from several countries criticized President Alyaksandr Lukashenka of Belarus, accusing him of trying to create a dictatorship.
OSCE, continued page 3

Inside

Belarus' Holds Illegitimate Referendum	2
Biennial Review Conference Held ...	3
Moldova Holds Presidential Election	7
Serbian Opposition to Milosevic Aroused	8
Croatian Media Restrictions Decried	8
Uzbekistan Urged to Protect Religious Liberty	9
Chechen Elections Scheduled	9
1996 Digest Index	12

The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, by law, monitors and encourages progress in implementing the provisions of the Helsinki Accords. The Commission, created in 1976, is made up of nine Senators, nine Representatives, and one official each from the Departments of State, Defense, and Commerce. For more information, please call (202) 225-1901.

Lukashenka's Illegitimate Referendum Passes Amid Fraud Allegations, Western Criticism

On November 24, Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka's draft constitution which greatly expanded his already considerable powers at the expense of the parliament and the constitutional court, won with 70.5 percent of the vote. The turnout was reported to be 84 percent, a figure challenged as "impossibly high" by former Central Election Commission Chairman Viktor Hanchar, whom Lukashenka had fired a week before the election. On November 22, a last minute compromise agreement between Lukashenka and Parliament Speaker Syamyon Sharetsky, brokered by Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Russian parliamentary leaders, collapsed when it was rejected by the Belarusian parliament.

The referendum process and results—widely regarded as a farce—were condemned by Belarus' opposition. According to OMRI Daily Digest, members of the now-defunct parliament alleged various violations, including the inability to establish how many ballot papers were issued, because Lukashenka's administration had printed them; early voting, which began before the publication of the final drafts of the constitution; funding for the referendum from unknown sources rather than the Central Election Commission; and state control over the media. Many Western countries and organizations also criticized the referendum. The Helsinki Commission expressed grave concerns about the referendum at an October 30 briefing on the political crisis in Belarus, and in a November 21 letter to the Belarusian Government. These concerns focused on the content of Lukashenka's draft constitution, many provisions of which contradict domestic and international human rights obligations, and on the legitimacy of the referendum process itself. Especially troubling was Lukashenka's flagrantly ignoring the Constitutional Court and parliamentary decisions that the constitutional referendum be of an advisory character, and not legally binding. As a result, the Helsinki Commission decided not to participate as international

observers of the referendum, despite an earlier request from the Belarusian Government inviting observers from the U.S. Congress. The OSCE also refused to send monitors.

Following the referendum, Lukashenka wasted no time in consolidating his dictatorial powers, setting up a new, largely loyalist House of Representatives and pre-

venting the remnants of the old parliament—while accusing them of being traitors—from meeting in their main meeting hall and sealing their offices under the pretense of renovations. On November 28, he signed into law his new constitution, which grants him almost total control over the parliament and the judiciary, and extends his term until 2001. The new powers include the right to declare a state of emergency even for vague reasons, to disband parliament, and to appoint most members of the Constitutional Court as well as many legislators to an upper chamber of parliament yet to be



President Lukashenka

formed, judges and election officials. Under the new constitution, members of parliament could be punished for "insulting the president." Meanwhile, Lukashenka would be immune from prosecution for life and would have a permanent seat in the cabinet after leaving the presidency. On December 3, Constitutional Court Chairman Valery Tikhinya resigned, along with his deputy and two other judges, and accused Lukashenka of setting up a dictatorship and destroying democracy.

During the December 2-3 Lisbon OSCE Summit, a defiant Lukashenka came under a stream of criticism by many participants, including Vice-President Gore, the European Union, and Belarus' neighboring states of Poland, Ukraine and Lithuania. Only Russia came to Lukashenka's defense. Leaders of the OSCE—the so-called "troika"—issued a rare statement rebuking Belarus and urging the Belarusian Government "to take action without delay" to respect its commitment to OSCE norms and principles, including ensuring freedom of the media and beginning a dialogue with the opposition. ☞ Orest Deychakiwsky

Biennial Review Conference Held in Vienna

From November 4-22, the participating States met in Vienna, Austria for the biennial meeting to review the implementation of commitments by the OSCE states. This was followed by a one-week preparatory meeting held in Lisbon, Portugal which culminated in a meeting of Heads of State and Government on December 2 and 3. The Vienna Review Conference commenced ten years to the day after the opening of the historic Vienna Follow-up Meeting, an earlier OSCE meeting which coincided with and helped support the process of dramatic transformation in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

The U.S. delegation to the meeting was led by Sam Brown, who serves as Head of Delegation to the OSCE in Vienna. During the course of the meeting, the delegation was also joined by Undersecretary Timothy Wirth (a former Helsinki Commissioner) and several public members or expert participants from the U.S. Government or government affiliated agencies. Four Commission staff also served on the delegation. All together, 33

participating States attended the meeting, along with 8 international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

During the course of the Review Conference, delegations discussed the implementation of commitments in all three main areas of the OSCE: military security, economic and environmental cooperation, and the human dimension. In addition, during the third week, delegations discussed OSCE structures and miscellaneous subjects, such as the Stability Pact, the Court on Arbitration and Conciliation, and cooperation with other international organizations. The U. S. delegation also held a number of bilateral meetings on human dimension concerns on the margins of the meeting.

The Review Conference continues the OSCE practice of convening meetings to review implementation of agreed commitments in all areas of the Helsinki process. Between 1975 and 1990, these were open-ended, sometimes lasting years, and called “follow-up meeting.”
Review, continued page 9



OSCE, continued from page 1

Lukashenka pointedly denied these charges and claimed that the recent referendum in Belarus was completely democratic. Lukashenka stressed that other OSCE states should not interfere in Belarus’ internal affairs.

At its conclusion, the summit adopted two main documents: the Lisbon Summit Declaration [herein referred to as the Declaration], an overall political statement from the heads of state; and, the Lisbon Declaration on a Common and Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the Twenty-First Century. In addition, the thirty states that are parties to the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE) signed an agreement to launch negotiations to adapt the treaty to the new security architecture.

Reflecting the overall focus of the Lisbon Summit, the political Declaration concentrated heavily on security and stability in the OSCE region. At the same time, the Declaration recognized the fundamental importance of OSCE principles as well as the need for improvement and con-

stant review of the implementation of these commitments by the participating States. The Declaration also underscored the fundamental role of human rights to democracy—and to the democratization process. These were all points that the Commission pressed strongly, points that were at risk of being buried under the Summit’s emphasis on security issues.

The Declaration also paid tribute to the accomplishments of the OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and reaffirmed the need for the full implementation of the Peace Agreement, including a weak reference—at Russia’s insistence—on cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal on the Former Yugoslavia. Noting the OSCE decision to prolong its mission mandate through 1997, the leaders pledged to provide all necessary resources for the mission to fulfill its tasks.

Other regions also received attention as foci of security concerns. The Declaration called for the reestablishment of
OSCE, continued page 10

Romania, continued from page 1

ing Iliescu 54.4% to 45.6% percent. Almost 76% percent of Romania's 17.3 million voters cast their ballots in the historic face-off between the top two winners of the first round of elections with 16-candidates November 3. Less than one percent of the votes cast were declared invalid, despite widespread pre-election fears of vote rigging and technical problems.

Constantinescu's win completed the rout of Romania's leftists in 1996. Opposition candidates, including many from Constantinescu's Democratic Convention of Romania (CDR), ousted Iliescu's PDSR from most major city halls in the local polls last June, and from the national government in the first round's parliamentary elections. The



President Emil Constantinescu

CDR won the largest number of seats in the Romanian parliament—30% in the Chamber of Deputies and nearly 31% in the Senate. Prior to the election, the CDR had reached an agreement with former Prime Minister Petre Roman's Union of Social Democrats (USD) to join forces in the parliament. The election results gave the coalition a clear majority, placing President Iliescu's PDSR in opposition for the first time. Under Romanian law, President Iliescu was permitted to run for parliament on the party list as well as for the office of President. He was elected to the Senate, where he will serve in opposition along with many members of his former cabinet who were also elected to parliament.

Pre-election Jitters:

A number of organizational and administrative inadequacies in the electoral process which had been cited during the local elections in June remained unresolved weeks before the November 3 balloting. Prior to its adjournment in the fall, the Romanian parliament had failed to enact a new electoral law covering the national elections. Consequently, the process was undertaken using the guidelines from the 1992 elections. A key concern among many observers, particularly Romanian NGOs,

was the restriction on the number of domestic election monitors permitted at the polling stations. By law, the major political parties are represented on the election committees at each site, however, non-partisan observers are limited to one per polling station and are further restricted from moving between stations on election day. This restriction had been waived in the 1992 election. No such restrictions apply to international monitors.

Several issues arose at the eleventh hour. First, two established NGOs, Pro Democracy Association (PDA) and the League for the Defense of Human Rights (LADO), planned to run a parallel vote count, and to this end had been training several thousand volunteers since the 1992 elections. The week before the elections, the Central Election Bureau (BEC) announced its intention to permit three recently certified "NGOs" to provide domestic monitors on election day. The established NGOs alleged that the new groups—known by their acronyms as GADDO, AROLID and LIRDOCT—were actually phantom NGOs, that they listed as monitors individuals who were in fact unaware of their supposed involvement, and that these groups had been organized by the ruling PDSR in an attempt to foil the vote count. The "imposter" NGOs claimed to have 16,000 observers—substantially more than those prepared by PDA and LADO—to be assigned to polling stations on election day, and a sufficient number to effectively prevent a broad-based parallel vote count. PDA threatened to cancel its vote count. In the end a complex procedure that would allow alternate observers from exist-



Ex-President Ion Iliescu

ing organizations to enter the polling sites if, as expected, monitors from the newly formed groups did not show up was agreed. Nevertheless, fearing that even this last minute compromise would prevent effective broad-based election monitoring by PDA and LADO, Commission Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Steny Hoyer sent a letter to President Iliescu on October 30, asking that he lift restrictions on the number of domestic observers, as was done in the local elections.

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Perhaps even more critical was the fact that less than 48 hours before the polls were scheduled to open, the BEC took up debate on whether or not it would permit the single non-partisan domestic monitor permitted at each polling site to stay after the polls closed to observe the vote count. Concerned that such a crucial change in policy was being considered at the eleventh hour, Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Hoyer, joined by long-time Commissioner Frank Wolf dispatched a letter on October 31 to Judge Costica Ionescu, President of the BEC, expressing concern that such a change in policy at the last minute could seriously compromise confidence in the Romanian electoral process.

Commission staff, in Bucharest for the elections, sought a meeting the next day with Judge Ionescu and members of BEC. They were advised that a decision had been made to permit the domestic monitors to be present for the vote count at the local level as had been the case in previous national elections. However, monitors were restricted from observing the tabulation of the results at the county (judet) level. Because this decision was made less than 48 hours prior to election day, the BEC issued no formal written decision and instead relied on a press conference and dissemination of the information by the media to inform county and local election officials of their decision.

The BEC is hampered in its difficult and critical work by the fact that it is a temporary entity. The Bureau, composed of representatives of all major political parties, is constituted prior to each election. There is no permanent election commission in Romania. This, combined

with a vaguely written and sometimes contradictory electoral law, serves to make the work of the BEC members trying at best. Commission staff had the opportunity to discuss this and other issues at length with several members of the BEC, a justice of the Supreme Court of Romania among them, in a meeting on election eve. The consensus among the BEC members

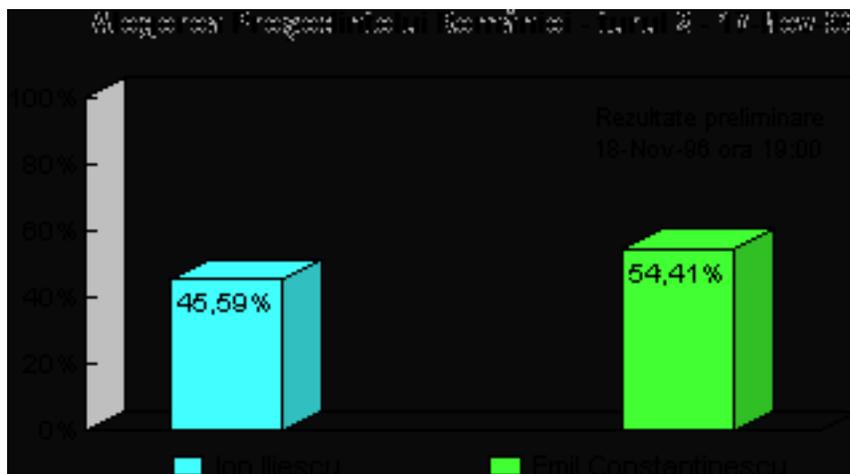
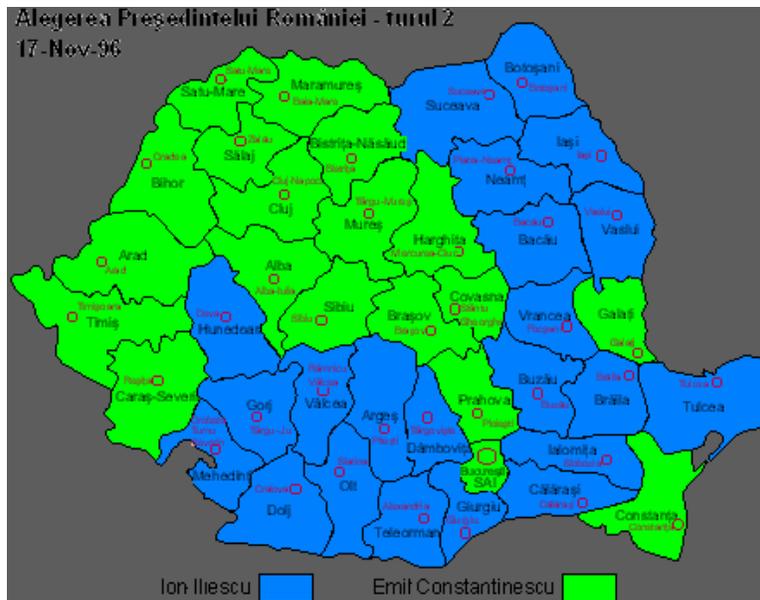
present at this meeting was that a permanent Central Election Commission should be established and that the electoral code under which it operates should be revised and strengthened—an idea long promoted by many

R o m a n i a n
N G O s .

E l e c t i o n
D a y :

Generally the balloting proceeded effectively although several local officials complained about inaccurate or incomplete voter registration lists—a problem

identified at the June local elections but not corrected—and the fact that, in many instances, corrected ballots had not been delivered until the night before. All of the major parties were represented on the polling station committees in Bucharest and domestic observers were



Romania, continued page 6

Romania, continued from page 5

present. The same was not uniformly the case in the rural locations, and several serious irregularities were noted in some areas, although these were deemed to be isolated incidents.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly fielded a delegation of 20 observers including parliamentarians from Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Moldova, Spain and Turkey. On election day, the delegation deployed into 8 groups which monitored the elections, including opening, closing and ballot counting in the polling stations, in cities and towns as well as in rural areas. The OSCE's Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) also coordinated the efforts of international observers as it had during the local elections in June, and fielded teams to monitor the run-off balloting on November 17. Despite the noted isolated irregularities, most observers believe the elections were free and fair.

The Road Ahead:

Two main issues in the campaign were the economy and corruption. The average monthly income in Romania is \$100, eaten away by inflation which is projected to top 45% by the end of the year—up from a somewhat hopeful 27.8% in 1995. Romania is potentially one of Europe's richest farm areas and has ample crude oil supplies. With a population of 23 million, Romania is the second largest country in the region behind Poland—a potential market not lost on investors. Nevertheless, foreign investors have put only \$2 billion into Romania in the past seven years. The International Monetary Fund initially enjoyed good relations with Romania, but suspended credits this year after the government failed to meet its commitments. The souring economy, combined

with charges of rampant corruption at all levels of government spelled doom for Iliescu and the PDSR.

President Constantinescu and his coalition government are under no illusions about the road ahead. Speaking to his supporters after Iliescu conceded defeat, the new president roused the crowd, "We have fought for our dignity, for understanding and for supreme freedom. It is the victory of millions of Romanians." In the same breath, however, he warned that in order to improve their economy, Romanians would have to endure a period of "very difficult reform."

As part of his election campaign, Constantinescu proposed an American-style "Contract with Romania" under which he and the CDR have promised speedy reforms, tax cuts, economic revitalization, a battle against corruption, a strong social safety net for Romania's most vulnerable citizens, and long-term credits for farmers. Continuing the effective coalition-building that spelled success for the CDR and its allies in the election, the USD and the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR), negotiations for ministerial portfolios for the respective parties are being concluded and joint action plans to tackle economic and other issues are being developed. Significantly, the UDMR, representing Romania's substantial Hungarian minority, will be represented in the new government. Exit polls revealed that the Hungarian community voted essentially en bloc for Constantinescu in the second round, supporting him with almost 95% of their vote.

The people of Romania are to be congratulated on their peaceful, democratic transition to a new government. The road ahead holds both great challenge and unlimited promise for a brighter future in a strong, democratic and prosperous Romania.

☞ Marlene Kaufmann

Review, continued from page 3

ings." In 1990, at the Paris Summit, it was agreed that such meetings would be held every two years, not to exceed three months, and would culminate in summits of heads of state or government. In 1992, at the Helsinki Follow-up Meeting, States agreed that these follow-up meetings would, henceforth, be called "review conferences."

In three significant ways, the 1996 Vienna Review Conference fell far short of the work of previous imple-

mentation review meetings. First, the physical facilities were inadequate for their intended purposes. The meetings were held in Vienna's Hofburg Palace, where permanent delegations to the OSCE conduct on-going negotiations and day-to-day oversight of OSCE operational activities. This site, however, was insufficient for the expanded activities of the Review Conference. Unlike at previous conferences, there were no facilities at

☞ Review, continued page 11

Moldovan Presidential Election Held Despite Transdniestrian Obstructionism

On November 17 and December 1, 1996, Moldovan voters went to the polls to elect their first President under the 1994 Constitution. The December runoff followed a first round which featured nine candidates on the slate. Chairman of the Parliament Petru Lucinschi, running as an independent, unseated President Mircea Snegur who had established last year the Party of Revival and Accord. Luchinshi's margin over Snegur in the runoff was 8 percent, 54 to 46. Mr. Snegur had split from the Agrarian Democratic Party, whose candidate in the first round was Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli. Mr. Sangheli polled an unexpected fourth behind Communist Party candidate Vladimir Voronin.

For both rounds, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) organized a sizeable delegation of international observers who dispersed throughout Moldova, including the Transdniestrian territory. [Though not recognized by the international community, Transdniestrian authorities have called their "government" the Transdniester Moldavian Republic.] Generally, the conduct of the elections was orderly and peaceful. While there were a number of deficiencies including the accuracy of the voter registration lists and the need for a clearer, consistent understanding by local election officials about secrecy and validity of ballot papers, the ODIHR observers were "confident that [Moldovan citizens were] able to express their will... and the results reflect the opinion of the voters."

The most significant inadequacies during the polling process were the obstacles posed by Transdniestrian authorities to prevent the elections from taking place in

areas under their control. They prohibited polling sites from being set up on the left bank of the Dniester River, which for the most part establishes the demarcation line. Therefore, Moldovan officials designated certain polling stations on the right bank at which these voters could cast their ballots. Obviously this required significant travel, potential and actual harassment by Transdniestrian authorities, and confusion for the voters. The number of voters who made the trek from the left bank increased in the second round, but the total represented only about 2% of those eligible to vote.

The election was seen as a contest between factions favoring a more conciliatory attitude toward Russia represented by Lucinschi and his backers—in the runoff, Lucinschi was backed by the Agrarian Democrats and the Communists—and an ostensibly pro-Romanian policy represented by Snegur. Snegur, who had been elected in 1991 as an opponent of pro-Romanian re-unification forces, had since fallen out with his



erstwhile Agrarian Democratic allies and sought support from pro-Romanian factions; in the runoff, Snegur was endorsed by the major pro-reunification party. Prior to the runoff, Snegur called for unity in "the struggle against communist leftism." (OMRI Daily Digest, November 20, 1996)

During a press conference following his victory, President-elect Lucinschi said that he favors forming a cabinet of "national trust" made up of technocrats." (OMNI Daily Digest, December 3, 1996). He is scheduled to begin his term on January 15. Parliamentary elections for Moldova are scheduled for 1998.

✉ Dorothy D. Taft

Opposition to Milosevic Aroused in Serbia

Massive demonstrations in major cities in Serbia, including daily crowds that have sometimes numbered well over 100,000 in Belgrade, suggest that Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic's iron grip on power may be slipping.

Having relied on ethnic tensions, repression and the instigation of conflict to maintain power, Milosevic made a swift turn from nationalist to reborn Communist in 1996, following the Dayton Agreement signed one year ago. He was able to cast to the side potential rivals from the nationalist wing, but the absence of open conflict and the easing of sanctions revealed weaknesses in his own government's performance, especially in the economic development of the country. The spark which ignited the open anger of large segments of the Serb population, however, were recently held municipal elections in which the struggling Serbian opposition was able to unite and win in fifteen major cities. Election officials proceeded to annul the results, prompting demonstrations in Belgrade, Nis and elsewhere beginning November 18. One week later, university students went on strike and the crowds in Belgrade swelled to more than 100,000. In some towns, election officials were surrounded by large crowds outside their offices, occasionally pelted with eggs and stones.

As the demonstrations continued day after day, the authorities generally avoided a major confrontation. Instead, independent radio stations in Belgrade were closed to limit coverage of the rallies, and officials sought to divide the opposition coalition—called Zajedno (Together)—and entice students back to class. On December 4, Yugoslav Foreign Minister Milan Milutinovic promised Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott that the

government would not resort to force to stop the protests. Some speculate that Milosevic will not restrain himself from instituting a major crackdown if necessary to remain in office.

Early in the protests, Commission Chairman Rep. Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ) said he was “deeply troubled” by the Serbian authorities’ refusal to recognize the municipal election results, adding that “not even ethnic Serbs can exercise their basic human rights and fundamental freedoms in Serbia, rights which include holding public office or choosing who shall.” Expressing concern about the potential for violence that can occur in any confrontation between police and demonstrators, he called on the authorities “to respect—and defend—the right of peaceful assembly” and the Serbian Government “to stop using and abusing people so that the current political leadership can maintain power.”

As the demonstrations revealed Milosevic's vulnerability, they also have reestablished some faith in an opposition that has, throughout the period of Yugoslavia's violent disintegration, been divided, ineffectual and inept. The coalition may be based on political necessity and not common outlooks, with nationalists angry with Milosevic's leftist turn in 1996 while political liberals hold him responsible for the ethnic tensions and conflict in the former Yugoslavia, especially in neighboring Bosnia-Herzegovina. Whatever differences and problems exist with the opposition parties, however, it is the growing public dissatisfaction with the apparently dead-end road onto which Milosevic has driven the country economically and politically that could be the first sign of Serbia's return to Europe.

✉ Robert Hand

Commission Co-Chairs Decry Media Restrictions in Croatia

Commission Chairman Rep. Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ) and Co-Chairman Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY) expressed concern about the Government of Croatia's commitment to OSCE human rights standards in light of the decision by authorities in late November to reassign the radio frequency currently used by independent radio station “Radio 101.” The co-chairs saw the decision as “another major step away from freedom of expression in Croatia. From journals to newspapers—and now to radio—the expression of opposing views has been attacked by the authorities under the transpar-

ent guise of either legal technicalities or privatization. State policy, however, is clear, no matter how much it may be denied—to restrict freedom of expression when the views being expressed can lead to any erosion of support for the party in power.”

The action against Radio 101 prompted several days of protest in Zagreb, Croatia's capital, indicating increasing popular frustration with the overbearing rule of the party in power, the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ). In addition to media restrictions, for example, the Croat-

Croatia, continued page 11

Commission Urges Uzbekistan to Protect Religious Liberty

Throughout the year the Commission (CSCE) has received reports that minority religious groups are experiencing increased harassment, intimidation and imprisonment by Government of Uzbekistan authorities. A letter from Commission Chairman Rep. Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ) and Co-Chairman Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY) urging the Government of Uzbekistan to respect the religious liberty of minority religious groups was sent to President Islam Karimov on November 27.

The reports have indicated that Word of Faith, one of the largest Protestant Christian churches in Uzbekistan, has been unable to obtain legal status as a registered church, despite repeated attempts to comply with the registration laws. Those working closely with Word of Faith suspect that registration has been denied because Word of Faith distributes religious materials in the Uzbek language. In addition, the Commission has learned that Mr. Denis Podorozhny, an Uzbek citizen and the senior pastor of Word of Faith, was imprisoned recently in Tashkent, was denied both a hearing and a lawyer, and was held incommunicado for over a week.

Others report that Mission of Mercy, a nonprofit organization engaged in religious activities and humanitarian relief, also has been denied legal registration status. Organized in 1990, Mission of Mercy has developed close contacts with many other benevolent organizations and has conducted numerous joint projects with the Red Crescent Society, the Children's Fund, and the Invalid Society. Tens of thousands of people have reportedly received assistance through the mission. Ms. Olga Avetisova, Director of Mission of Mercy, has re-

peatedly sought an official explanation for the denial of registration, but has received no official response to date. Most recently, the Commission learned that Ms. Avetisova received death threats from Uzbek officials, apparently flagrant attempts to intimidate her into ceasing her humanitarian and religious activities.

In addition to reports of imprisonment and threats by Uzbek officials, leaders of minority religious groups are regularly contacted by the Uzbek security forces and alternately cajoled or threatened into becoming "consultants" or informers on their religious communities. Such attempts by the Uzbek Government to co-opt religious organizations is eerily reminiscent of the tactics used by Communist authorities during the Soviet period.

In the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent OSCE agreements, particularly in the Vienna Concluding Document §§ 16.3 and 16.4, the participating States commit to grant communities of believers official status within the state's constitutional framework and to respect the community's right to assembly and worship. Additionally, in § 16.6 of the Vienna Concluding Document, the participating States pledge to respect the right of everyone to give and receive religious education in the person's language of choice.

The denials of registration for Word of Faith and for Mission of Mercy, as well as the imprisonment, threats and harassment of Pastor Denis Podorozhny and Ms. Olga Avetisova, violate the commitments Uzbekistan has made under the Helsinki Accords. The CSCE will continue to monitor the situation of minority religious groups in Uzbekistan and call upon the Government of Uzbekistan to meet its obligations under international law.

✉ Karen Lord

Elections in Chechnya Scheduled for late January 1997

Despite concerns about logistics and the accuracy of voter lists, presidential and parliamentary elections in Chechnya are scheduled for January 27, 1997. According to the December 3, 1996, issue of the Jamestown Foundation's Monitor, Chechnya's Central Election Commission (CEC) chairman Mumadi Saydaev has denied reports that the elections might be postponed. Saydaev has, however, called for all Russian troops to be withdrawn prior to elections. In a satellite telephone conversation with participants at a recent Carnegie Foundation conference on Chechnya, OSCE Head of

Mission Tim Guldemann also expressed his commitment to seeing the elections proceed as scheduled.

According to the OMRI Daily Digest, several influential political figures, including acting Chechen President Zelimkhan Yandarbiev and Russian human rights activist and Duma member Sergei Kovalev, have called for postponing the elections. Kovalev said that it would be "unbelievably difficult" to hold the elections within the planned schedule. An estimated 400,000 residents of Chechnya who would be able to vote have been dis-

Chechnya, continued page 11

OSCE, continued from page 3

the OSCE Mission in Serbia and Montenegro, specifically to foster democratization, independent media, and free and fair elections. OSCE support for the territorial integrity of Georgia was reaffirmed, and the destructive acts by separatists in Ossetia and Abkhazia were condemned. OSCE leaders also cited their concern that the agreement between Moldova and Russia on the withdrawal of Russian troops had not been implemented, and called for an early and complete withdrawal of those troops. While welcoming the very recent steps toward a peaceful settlement between the Chechens and the Russian Federation, the summit reaffirmed support for the OSCE Assistance Group in Chechnya. The States also committed themselves to developing increased OSCE involvement in Central Asia.

While most issues were fairly non-controversial, one section of the document addressing the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh threatened to undermine agreement on the entire Declaration. Armenia refused to accept a reference to the basic principles for a peaceful settlement as set out by the Minsk Group, which is composed of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the Slovak Republic, Sweden, Turkey, the United States and the country of the OSCE Chair-in-Office (CiO). Azerbaijan, however, would not accept the document without such a reference. The compromise—which the U.S. Vienna head of delegation played a major role in crafting—was to provide an annex at the end the final text of the summit document as a CiO Statement supported by all countries but one.

The Declaration also tasked the Permanent Council with responsibility to create a mandate for an OSCE free media issues representative, appointing a Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities, and extending the work of the ODIHR Migration Advisor to deal with problems of forced migration.

The accompanying Declaration on the Security Model for Europe in the 21st century underscores OSCE's concept of comprehensive security—which goes beyond military security to also encompass commitments to human rights, democracy and the rule of law, market economy, and social justice. The Declaration strives to create a common "security space" in which all states are equal partners with the right to choose and change security arrangements, including treaties and alliances. These arrangements, how-

ever, should be made transparently, i.e. with full knowledge of all other states, and not at the expense of the security of another state. While bilateral and regional initiatives are encouraged, the implementation of all OSCE commitments relating to ethnic minorities is considered particularly important. Cooperation among international organizations is to be enhanced within the security space, with arms control continuing to be central to OSCE regional security.

The Summit leaders also outlined an agenda for future work on the new Security Model, including a continuous review of implementation of OSCE commitments, development of ways to jointly address non-compliance with these commitments, and the development of tools for preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention. Additionally, these new commitments and structures within the OSCE are to maintain the flexible nature of the organization. At this stage, despite a concerted effort to give concrete shape to the Security Model, the Declaration remains largely an amorphous collection of generalized commitments, old and new, rather than a plan of action.

Parallel to the Summit meeting, the thirty participating States that are parties to the CFE defined the scope and parameters of negotiations to adapt the Treaty to any new security arrangement. The CFE was signed in 1990, and entered into force in 1992. Since then, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union have changed the political reality of the region. Rather than dividing states into two alliances, adaptation of the Treaty will seek to define the limits of military equipment on a national basis, in order to promote the security of all CFE Party States equally. The adaptation negotiations will begin in January, and should be completed in 1999. The current Treaty remains in force until any agreed adaptation enters into force.

The Summit Declaration also laid out plans for the future leadership and meetings of the OSCE. Poland will become the CiO in 1998 (succeeding Denmark, which takes over the CiO duties from Switzerland in January). The next Ministerial meeting will be held in Copenhagen in December 1997. Participating States took note of but did not accept Turkey's offer to host the next summit in 1998; both the venue and timing of that summit will be decided at the Copenhagen Ministerial. [The Lisbon Summit Declaration may be obtained electronically at "<http://www.fsk.ethz.ch/osce/>"]

✉ Janice Helwig

Review, continued from page 6

the meeting site for delegations' offices. Technical support at the site was also inadequate; for example, there was only one photocopy machine available for 54 participating delegations. In the conference hall itself, used for plenary and other meetings, space was so cramped that delegations were unable to sit in the customary circular formation which enables them to see each other. Instead, a "theater" formation was used. This meant, for example, that the U.S. delegation made its interventions facing a row of flags rather than other delegates; representatives of non-governmental organizations were forced to present their interventions toward the backs of the heads of everyone in the room. And during the third week of the meeting, construction noise from a neighboring site was so loud proceedings had to be suspended.

Second, the work of the implementation review was severely compressed, undermining delegations' abilities to prepare effectively and to engage in a thorough discussion on all issues. For example, 13 human dimension meetings were crammed into a two-week period. In contrast, these discussions were held over a three-month period at the 1992 Helsinki Follow-up Meeting and over a nine-week period at the 1994 Budapest Review Conference.

Finally, although the Review Conference is intended to be the principal forum for OSCE countries to review compliance with their existing commitments—which, in turn, is to guide the overall direction of OSCE work—the Vienna Review Conference was treated as a mere diversion from routine activities. In fact, none of the regularly scheduled OSCE meetings that are held throughout the year were suspended to accommodate the implementation review. During the 1992 Helsinki Follow-up Meeting, in contrast, all other negotiations were suspended; during the 1994 Budapest Review Conference, Mondays were set aside to enable delegations to attend Permanent Council meetings (which oversee the necessary day-to-day operations of, for example, on-going missions). In Vienna, there were times when as many as

four or more meetings were being held simultaneously with meetings of the Review Conference. Reflecting the priority attached to the Review Conference relative to the other work, many smaller delegations would simply forego participation in the implementation review.

At the Review Conference itself, discussions in the military security area were perhaps the least eventful, since those issues are also the subject of negotiations on a regular basis. In the economic dimension, the participating States assessed developments since the first meeting convened specifically to review the implementation of economic commitments contained in the 1991 Bonn Document, held in Geneva in January 1996. These discussions also focused on developing means by which the participating States could anticipate and address potential economic threats to security, as well as improve cooperation with international organizations, financial institutions and regional entities in order to assist countries undergoing economic transition.

In the human dimension, countries continued the practice of engaging in a generally frank and specific discussion of concerns. More specifically, issues relating to the media, free and fair elections, and national minorities generated the most lively discussions. The discussion on tolerance and non-discrimination was broadened this year to include preventing aggressive nationalism and ethnic cleansing. Interestingly, this led some delegations to portray their governments as the victims of abuses stemming from separatist elements.

Non-governmental organizations (NGO) also actively participated in the human dimension discussions. In comparison with the implementation review at Warsaw held last year, NGO representatives had greater latitude for their involvement; only in one instance was a complaint raised by a government representative against an NGO speaker and, in that instance, she was permitted to finish her intervention. NGO representatives also participated in the economic dimension discussions and several submitted written contributions regarding the military security field as well.

☞ Erika Schlager

Chechnya, continued from page 9

placed by the conflict and now reside outside of Chechnya.

Nineteen candidates have registered with the CEC to run for the presidency and have until December 27 to file petitions with at least 10,000 signatures of support.

The OSCE in Vienna is expected to discuss the upcoming elections soon, and what assistance the OSCE may render to the Chechnya Mission in this regard.

☞ John Finerty

CSCE Digest

1996 Index

Index by Volume, Author

December 1996: Volume 19, Number 12

A New Day Dawns in Romania	Kaufmann, Marlene
1996 Lisbon Summit Produces Results, Controversy	Helwig, Janice
Lukashenka's Illegitimate Referendum Passes Amid Fraud Allegations, Western Criticism	Deychakiwsky, Orest
Biennial Review Conference Held in Vienna	Schlager, Erika
Moldovan Presidential Election Held Despite Transdnistriean Obstructionism	Taft, Dorothy Douglas
Opposition to Milosevic Aroused in Serbia	Hand, Bob
Commission Co-Chairs Decry Media Restrictions in Croatia	Hand, Bob
Commission Urges Uzbekistan to Protect Religious Liberty	Lord, Karen
Elections in Chechnya Scheduled for late January, 1997	Finerty, John

November 1996: Volume 19, Number 11

Turkish Human Rights Abuses Continue Amid Promise of Reforms	McNamara, Ronald
Armenia's President Re-elected Amid Controversy	Ochs, Michael
Commission Holds Briefing on Deteriorating Belarus Situation	Deychakiwsky, Orest
ODIHR Director Reviews Activities, Challenges	Schlager, Erika B.
OSCE Bosnia Head-of-Mission Provides Candid Commission Briefing	Hand, Bob
Albania's Local Elections Held Amidst Controversy	Hand, Bob
Bulgarians Elect Democratic Opposition Candidate as President	Deychakiwsky, Orest
Russian Foreign Ministry Upset By Congressional Call for Russia's Withdrawal From Moldova	Finerty, John
Uzzell of Keston Institute Briefs Commission on Religion Law in Russia	Lord, Karen

October 1996: Volume 19, Number 10

Congress Approves Major Overseas Funding Package	McNamara, Ron
Commission Staff Observe the September Elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina	Commission Staff
Belarusan President Attempts Latest Power Grab	Deychakiwsky, Orest
War Crimes Update	Schlager, Erika B.
Commission Appeal For Property Restitution	Schlager, Erika B.

September 1996: Volume 19, Number 9

Turkey: New Government, Same Old Repression	Amitay, Mike
Lebed, Chechens Reach Cease Fire Agreement	Finerty, John

Kosovar Albanians and Serbian Government Agree on Education	Hand, Bob
Status of the OSCE Convention on Arbitration and Conciliation	Schlager, Erika B.
Available 1995-96 CSCE Publications From the 104th Congress	Gore, Chadwick R.
Lebed-Maskhadov Statement And Principles For Determining The Fundamentals Of Relations Between The Russian Federation And The Chechen Republic	

August 1996: Volume 19, Number 8

Commission Urges Yeltsin to Resume Chechnya Negotiations	Finerty, John
Turk Government Crackdown on Kurdish Party Threatens Reconciliation Prospects	Amitay, Mike
Bedlam in Belarus?	Dechakiwsky, Orest
CSCE's 20th Anniversary Noted	Editorial
Looking Toward Vienna: OSCE Review Conference and the State of Religious Liberty in the OSCE	Lord, Karen
Diane Orentlicher Briefs Members on War Crimes Tribunal	Schlager, Erika B.
Russia's Presidential Elections	Ochs, Michael
New Publication Announced: Parliamentary Responsibility for Economic Transition in Central and Eastern Europe	Gore, Chadwick R.
Chairman Comments on Hungary's Relations with Her Neighbors	Gore, Chadwick R.

July 1996: Volume 19, Number 7

Commission Holds Russian Elections Hearing	Finerty, John
5th Annual OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Meeting Held	Commission Staff
Belarus Update	Deychakiwsky, Orest
New CSCE Web Site Announced	Gore, Chadwick R.
Commission Appeals on Behalf of Kosovar Albanian Human Rights Activist	Hand, Bob
U.S. Resolution on Tribunal Focal Point for Bosnian Debate	McNamara, Ron
CSCE NGO Delegation Examines Human Rights in Turkey	Amitay, Mike
Commission Hearing Focuses on September Bosnian Elections	Hand, Bob
Commission Holds Briefing on War Crimes Trials	Schlager, Erika B.
Sergei Kovalev Suffers Heart Attack, Commission Secures U.S. Consultation	Finerty, John
OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Adopts Resolution on Turkey	Amitay, Mike
Helsinki Commission to President Yeltsin: "Rein in Your Attack Dog!"	Finerty, John

June 1996: Volume 19, Number 6

Albanian Elections Raise Questions on Commitment to Democracy	Hand, Bob
Chairman: "Human Rights Key NATO Expansion Criterion"	McNamara, Ron
Czechs Amend Citizenship Law; Violations of International Commitments Persist	Schlager, Erika B.

Bulgarian President Zhelev Loses in Primary
Suspicious Death in Slovakia Overshadows Other News
New Secretary General Appointed
Commission Staff Attends ODIHR Trans-Caucus Media Conference
Atwood Details U.S. Role in Bosnia Reconstruction Effort
Commission Staff Evaluates Azerbaijan Political Situation

Deychakiwsky, Orest
Schlager, Erika B.
OSCE Press Office
Gore, Chadwick R.
McNamara, Ron
Ochs, Michael

May 1996: Volume 19, Number 5

Commission Protests Russian Move Against Jewish Agency
Anniversary of Chornobyl Nuclear Disaster Focus of Hearing
Commissioners Take Stand on Human Rights in Belarus
Peace Talks on Chechnya Announced in Moscow, Cease Fire Inked
Follow-Up on Deputy Anatoli Savitsky's Death
Conference on Religious Liberty Held in Warsaw, 16-19 April 1996
Commission Staff Delegation Travels to Serbia and Montenegro
Commission Examines Status of Turkish Minority in Greece
Commission Protests Turkish Government Campaign to Criminalize
Human Rights Foundation and Its Torture Treatment Efforts
Dudayev Killed in Chechnya, Vice-President Takes Over
Dissidence Chronicler Cronid Lubarsky Dies

Finerty, John
Deychakiwsky, Orest
Deychakiwsky, Orest
Finerty, John
Finerty, John
Lord, Karen
Hand, Bob
Amitay, Mike
Amitay, Mike

Finerty, John
Finerty, John

April 1996: Volume 19, Number 4

Commissioner Meissner Dies in Plane Crash
Turkish Presidential Visit: Human Rights Left Off Public Agenda
Smith to Albright- "Why Does Turkey Block Mine Sweeping in
Northern Iraq"
Andorra Becomes 55th Participating State
Belarus and Russia Agree to Form Political Union
Senior Council Meets
Challenges to Democracy in Albania Examined
Fourth OSCE Economic Forum Seeks to Define Economic Aspects of 21st
Century Security Model
UNCHR Report Says Czech Citizenship Law Violates International Law;
Council of Europe Experts Say Czechs Violate Rule of Law
Congress Acts to Uphold Bosnia's Right to Self-Defense

Editorial
Amitay, Mike
Amitay, Mike

Gore, Chadwick R.
Deychakiwsky, Orest
Wise, Sam
Hand, Bob
Kaufmann, Marlene

Schlager, Erika B.

McNamara, Ron

March 1996: Volume 19, Number 3

Bosnia Elections: A First Look
Deployment of U.S. Forces in Bosnia Complete

Hand, Bob
McNamara, Ron

Death in St. Petersburg: Accident, or Old Style Revenge?	CSCE Editorial
The OSCE Conducts its First Implementation Review of the Economic Dimension	Kaufmann, Marlene
Hearing Held on Chechnya and the Development of Russian Democracy	Finerty, John
Commission Chairmen Urge Czechs to Amend Citizenship Law	Schlager, Erika B.
High Commissioner Requests OSCE States Recognize Estonian Non-Citizen Travel Documents	Finerty, John
Belarus: Accelerated Integration with Russia?	Deychakiwsky, Orest
Podrabinek: Time to Bring Back "Political Prisoners" Column?	Finerty, John
Serbia's Democratic Development Remains Bleak	Hand, Bob
Slovak Official Briefs Commission Staff on Human Rights, Minorities, and the Press	Schlager, Erika B.
Freedom House Releases Survey of Freedom	Deychakiwsky, Orest
Ukrainian President Visits Washington	Deychakiwsky, Orest
War Crimes Update- Highlights of Breaking News	Schlager, Erika B.

February 1996: Volume 19, Number 2

Sergei Kovalev Quits Russia's Human Rights Panel	Finerty, John
Communists Prevail in Russia Duma Elections	Finerty, John
Concern For Russia's Future Expressed	Livingston, Richard
Turkish Politics Unsettled After Elections	Amitay, Mike
Confidence Building Measures Agreed to by Bosnian Parties	McNamara, Ron
Commissioners Call For Russian Force Withdrawal From Moldova	Finerty, John
Alien Passport for Non-Citizens Approved in Estonia	Finerty, John
Dayton's Impact on Other Yugoslav Hot Spots	Hand, Bob
Polish Official Briefs Commission on Remembering the Past, Filling in the "Blank Spots" in Polish History	Schlager, Erika B.

January 1996: Volume 19, Number 1

Seminar Examines OSCE Relevance to Other Regions (Part Two of Two)	Amitay, Mike
Bosnian Security Talks Open Under OSCE Auspices	McNamara, Ron
OSCE Ministerial Meeting Held	Wise, Sam
Senator Feingold Appointed	Gore, Chadwick R.
The OSCE in Post-Dayton Bosnia	Hand, Bob
Azerbaijan's November 1995 Parliamentary Elections	Ochs, Michael
Repeat Parliamentary Elections Held in Belarus, Ukraine	Deychakiwsky, Orest
Pro-Islamists Prevail in Turkey's Elections	Amitay, Mike
Swiss Chair-in-Office Calls Meeting on Humanitarian Standards	Schlager, Erika B.
Religious Liberty: Established Churches and Minority Faiths	Lord, Karen

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