



# Information Documents

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Reports from the Council of Europe Field Offices  
and Other Outposts\*

June 2005

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\* For a more complete list of activities, see Council of Europe activities database (CEAD) – <http://dsp.coe.int/CEAD>

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# Yerevan

## 1. Political and legislative developments

1. At a press conference on 14 June, National Assembly (NA) Speaker Artur Baghdasaryan announced an initiative to form a **South Caucasus Interparliamentary Assembly**, describing it as a "mechanism for joint discussion of regional problems".
2. On 15 June President Kocharyan held a meeting with the leaders of the ruling coalition to discuss the **draft Constitutional amendments**. A new draft was presented to the Venice Commission Working group on 17 June 2005.
3. On 7 June President Kocharyan signed into law the amendments to the **Electoral Code**. The amendments modify the composition of electoral commissions and voters' lists, and expand the rights of proxies and observers.
4. A representative of the **ARF Dashnaktutyun** (ARFD) announced on 16 June that the party would submit its own candidate for the 2008 Presidential Elections.
5. The Government approved amendments to **the Law on Advocates' Activities** on 17 June. The amendments relate inter alia to the procedure of conducting the meetings of the Assembly, election of the Chairman and members.
6. On 8 June President Kocharyan appointed Aram Tamazyan as **Deputy Prosecutor General**. Mr Tamazyan had previously served as Prosecutor General.
7. By a Presidential decree dated 8 June, Hovhannes Manukyan was relieved from the post of Chairman of the Economic Court of Armenia and appointed Chairman of the Court of Cassation and of the Council of Court Chairmen. On the same date President Kocharyan appointed Eduard Muradyan as Chairman of the Economic Court of Armenia. Mr Muradyan previously served as Chairman of the Securities Commission.
8. Opposition political parties condemned the attitude of the Armenian authorities towards the **Human Rights Defender** (HRD). At a discussion organised by the New Times Opposition party on 10 June, the political parties agreed to issue a document on the matter.
9. On 24 June **the HRD** presented her annual report to the public, with particular reference to Chapter 3 (Violations of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in Armenia) and Chapter 4 (Need for Legislative Reforms). The Ministry of Justice, the Office of the Prosecutor General and the Council of Court Chairmen all responded negatively to her report.
10. In its annual assessment of the state of democracy in the countries of the former Soviet bloc, **Freedom House** (an international NGO) described Armenia as a country with regress in the areas of basic freedoms and in judicial independence.

11. On 27 June the **International Helsinki Federation** published its annual report, which was critical of the situation in Armenia, in particular in the areas of independence of the judiciary and corruption.
12. Yerevan District Court sentenced Andrey Maziev to 12 years of prison for **espionage** and other serious offences, after finding that he cooperated with the Azerbaijan special services from 1999 to 2005. In this context, the Prosecutor General stated that recently there have been three trials involving espionage for Azerbaijan.
13. On 19 June “**parliamentary elections**” were held in Nagorno Karabakh (NK). The pro-governmental Democratic Party of Artsakh and the "Free Homeland" political party won in the single-mandate election districts. The Opposition bloc ARF Dashnaktsutyun (ARFD) appealed the results of “elections” in the Supreme Court of the NK. According to press reports, Pavel Manukyan, candidate of the ARFD Party, was beaten severely in the office of the “Minister of Defence” of the NK. A number of political forces of the NK issued a statement condemning the incident.
14. On 30 June the newly-elected National Assembly of NK held its first session and elected Ashot Gulyan as “Speaker”.

## **2. Council of Europe action**

15. A delegation of the **Venice Commission** discussed the draft amendments to the Constitution in Armenia on 1 June. The delegation held meetings with President Kocharyan, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (NA), as well as with representatives of the ruling coalition and opposition parties.
16. On 23 June PACE adopted its resolution on the **Constitutional reform process** in Armenia. The text was welcomed by the Opposition and several NGOs.
17. The Venice Commission and the Armenian Delegation signed a Joint Memorandum on **Constitutional Amendments** in Strasbourg on 24 June. The two authorities reached mutually acceptable conclusions concerning the disputed provisions in the draft constitution, and agreed to a time-table for follow-up.
18. Shavarsh Kocharyan, Opposition MP and member of the Armenian delegation in PACE, stated publicly that the **Opposition would return to the NA** to discuss the draft constitutional reforms.
19. On 3 June, a seminar entitled “The **Freedom of Assembly**: Legislation and Practice” was organised in Yerevan by the Venice Commission in cooperation with the OSCE/ODIHR.
20. From 13 to 17 June, a **training workshop for police officers** was held in Yerevan concerning the right to assembly under the ECHR; the workshop was organised by DG II in cooperation with the Police of the Republic of Armenia.
21. From 20 to 22 June, the CoE Media Division organised a seminar on «**Right and Accountability of Media**» in Sevan, Armenia, in cooperation with the Yerevan Press

Club. The seminar was attended by participants from media, journalist associations of Armenia, and CoE experts.

22. A Delegation of the CoE Committee of Ministers **Ago Monitoring Group** visited Armenia from 27 to 29 June. The members of the Group held meetings with President Kocharyan, the Speaker of Parliament, the Armenian Delegation to the PACE, representatives of opposition parties and NGOs, as well as with the Human Rights Defender.

### **3. Other action**

23. The Yerevan **School of Political Studies** was inaugurated on 29 June in Yerevan with a four-day conference on Euro-integration, opened by the CoE Director General of Political Affairs. The OSCE Head of Mission and SRSG also made presentations during the conference.
24. SRSG and the OSCE Head of Mission take part in monthly donor meetings organised by USAID/Armenia. At the last meeting (30 June) the SRSG gave a briefing on the constitutional reform process following the PACE summer 2005 session, whilst the OSCE Head of Mission - who hailed the agreement reached between the Venice Commission and the Armenian authorities as a "considerable breakthrough" - highlighted the importance of reform of the Electoral Code.

# Baku

## 1. Political and legislative developments

25. The **political opposition held rallies** in Baku on 4 and 18 June respectively. These were the first authorised opposition rallies since October 2003 and they passed without incident. Some 5,000 people participated in the first rally and between 15,000 and 20,000 in the second. They demanded changes to the electoral code, an immediate start to public TV broadcasts and that those guilty of the murder of journalist Elmar Husseynov be brought to justice.
26. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) on 22 June adopted a resolution on the **functioning of democratic institutions in Azerbaijan**, and another on **political prisoners in Azerbaijan**. The first calls on the authorities and opposition to recognise the importance of the forthcoming elections for the democratic future of the country, to ensure democratic elections and to publicly and officially commit themselves to non-violence and respect for basic human rights. In the second report the Assembly calls on the authorities to release or grant a fair re-trial to 107 presumed political prisoners.
27. Two of the seven **opposition leaders** who were sentenced in connection with the October 2003 events and then pardoned by Presidential decree in March 2005, had their **sentences annulled** by a court decision on 29 June, allowing them to take part in the November parliamentary elections. They are the chairman of the Umid party, Mr Igbal Agazade, and the leader of the Organisation of Karabakh War invalids, Mr Etimad Asadov. The remaining five opposition leaders have also appealed to court for annulment of their sentences.
28. In a meeting on 10 and 11 June in Baku, Azerbaijani authorities and representatives of human rights NGOs decided to establish a task force to address and to try to find a solution to the issue of **political prisoners** or alleged political prisoners in Azerbaijan.
29. On 21 June President Ilham Aliyev signed a **pardon decree**, pardoning 100 prisoners. 37 of them were included in a list with 107 names of alleged political prisoners, assembled by Azerbaijani human rights NGOs and referred to as presumed political prisoners by PACE in its 22 June resolution. Three of the released were considered not to be political prisoners by the Council of Europe experts who examined the “716-list”, but were mentioned among a group of 47 cases, the release of whom PACE requests for humanitarian reasons, given their ill-health.
30. The **Ago-group** visited Baku from 30 June to 1 July. The group held meetings with the President of the Republic, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Furthermore, they also met the Council of Europe Member State Ambassadors to Azerbaijan as well as political opposition parties and NGOs. At the end of its visit, the group issued a statement in which it notes both progress made towards ensuring free and fair parliamentary elections and remaining challenges in this regard.
31. On 1 June the second round of what is referred to as **dialogue between government parties and political opposition parties** took place, hosted by the Popular Front Party. The Musavat party is expected to host the next round of this dialogue.

32. On 28 June the **Azerbaijani Parliament** completed its series of extraordinary sessions, held in addition to the normal spring session. It will resume work again on 1 September. On the last day before the summer break it adopted, in its third reading, a set of amendments to the Electoral Code. The amendments – which were presented to Parliament following discussions between Azerbaijani authorities and the Venice Commission secretariat – will, in the view of the Venice Commission, somewhat improve the law. Nonetheless, the amendments fall far short of the joint Venice Commission-ODIHR 2004 recommendations for amending the code. On 14 June the Parliament adopted amendments to the law on advocates, preparing the ground for all of the some 200 licensed lawyers to become member of the Azerbaijani Collegium of Advocates. Finally, a law on anti-trafficking measures was also adopted by Parliament at the end of June.
33. The respective Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia met in Paris on 18 June for **another round of discussions on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict**. The Presidents of the respective countries are expected to meet at the end of August in Kazan.
34. A **needs assessment mission (NAM) from OSCE/ODIHR** visited Azerbaijan from 6 to 9 June in preparation of a more than 500-member strong mission expected to monitor the November Parliamentary elections. Its report, published later in June, identifies several issues which should be addressed in order to increase public confidence and to provide the basis for an election process that makes progress towards meeting OSCE commitments. The NAM team and the Council of Europe SRSG held several meetings during the four days to ensure proper co-ordination and co-operation between the two organisations in the run-up to the elections in Azerbaijan.

## **2. Council of Europe action**

35. The head of the **Venice Commission** secretariat, Mr Gianni Buquicchio, visited Baku for the 4th meeting of the Joint Council on Constitutional Justice, held in Azerbaijan from 16 to 17 June. During his visit Mr Buquicchio also met the President of the Republic.
36. A staff member from DG I visited Azerbaijan with together with Council of Europe experts for another working group meeting on the **independence, selection, appointment and evaluation of judges**. The first written exams for candidates aspiring to become judges are expected to be held at the end of July.
37. From 14 to 18 June a mission from the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities visited Azerbaijan for the second time to prepare a project in support of the **creation of a local authority association** in Azerbaijan. The project will be officially launched in September.

## **3. Other action**

38. On 9 June the SRSG held a press conference to present the elements of the Council of Europe **Election Action Plan** for Azerbaijan to the press. The presentation received wide media coverage, both in electronic and in print media.

# Sarajevo

## 1. Political and legislative developments

39. June was a tumultuous month for BiH politics, involving amongst other issues confusion and uncertainty over the resignation of BiH Foreign Minister Mladen Ivanic; the resignation amid allegations of abuse of power of BiH Minister of Traffic and Communications, Branko Dodic; the Srebrenica video and Carla del Ponte's visit; the Croat recourse to VNI over the Public Broadcasting Law; continuing difficulties from the RS on Police Reform/Restructuring; problems in Zenica prison and huge media pressure for ethnically-based custody solutions; RS objections to a single BiH military structure; and, of course, the visit of BiH Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, Adnan Terzic to Strasbourg. Higher Education and Ombudsman reforms remained stalled, though progress was made on both prior to the Parliamentary procedure.

## 2. Council of Europe Action

40. On 20-23 June, at the invitation of the BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs, a delegation composed of Mr Damir Karpljuk, Director, Ministry of Sport and Education, Slovenia, Mr Zoran Verovnik, Undersecretary for International Relations, Ministry of Sport and Education, Slovenia, Mr Robert Lupocz, Legal Expert, National Sports Office, Hungary, and a staff member of the CoE Sport Department made an official visit to BiH to assist in the drafting of a new **Law on Sport** on state level. The delegation visited Sarajevo, Travnik and Banja Luka, and had fruitful meetings with Ministry representatives of BiH, FBiH and RS, as well as representatives of NGOs. The visit attracted considerable media interest.

41. Following the presentation by the BiH Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of a draft **Strategy for Roma** in BiH, the Council of Europe gave its opinion and co-signed, together with other international organisations in BiH, a letter to the Ministry indicating that further consideration was necessary before the Strategy could be promulgated.

42. On 30 June, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Steering Group meeting of the **Beacon Best Practices Programme** was held with participation of elected members of Association of Towns and Municipalities of RS, Association of Municipalities and Cities of FBiH, OSCE, CoE, British and Swiss Embassy representatives (CEAD 12196).

43. In the field of **Education**, the higher education project team met with the Ministry of Civil Affairs for an **update on the establishment of the BiH ENIC within the Ministry**. The latter was reminded of the urgency for ENIC staff training (CEAD 7757, 7758, 7759), due to the higher education project's time lines. The CoE team of experts held three consecutive seminars with **teachers of children's rights** in Republika Srpska, Practicum Development Group and group of 40 pilot series secondary school teachers testing the practicum portfolio. (CEAD 11865)

44. On 10 and 11 June in Neum, the **prototype statute for integrated BiH universities** was finalised and endorsed by the drafting group members at the fifth and last

workshop held in the framework of the joint EC/CoE project (CEAD 11140). The universities confirmed the usefulness of the exercise and its product for the ongoing revision and for the harmonisation of university statutes and structure throughout BiH. The drafting group also issued a statement calling on all relevant stakeholders in BiH to provide the necessary framework conditions to implement BiH's obligations in the Bologna Process and to integrate BiH's universities in the European Higher Education Area.

45. In Strasbourg on 16-17 June, the **higher education project team visited the CoE Secretariat** in preparation of the project's final report. It was decided that DGIV would fund participation of ENIC staff from the region in the ENIC trainings (CEAD 7757, 7758), thereby fostering a regional approach to common issues in higher education.
46. On 23-24 June, a **meeting of all the Rectors of BiH** was convened to discuss the joint EC/CoE project and suggestions for the future. The Rectors expressed their appreciation of the efforts of the CoE in the field of higher education and gave their support to a follow-up project. The **OSCE Head of Mission and the CoE Director of School, Out-of-School and Higher Education** (on mission in Sarajevo) and staff discussed further co-operation between the two organisations in education and priorities for the future. The Director also met with the **four Education Ministers** who are part of the Co-ordination Body of the Conference of Education Ministers. The Ministers agreed that meetings of all 14 Ministers of Education should be convened by the state-level Ministry, the Ministry of Civil Affairs, which would constitute a small but significant step in fostering state-level competencies in BiH.
47. On 24-25 June, the **Final Evaluation and Review of the Programmes for Education for Democratic Citizenship**, undertaken in co-operation with the European Commission and the education authorities in BiH, was held in Sarajevo. The Programme has produced teachers' books on children's rights and, for primary and secondary schools, on Democracy and Human Rights. Representatives of Ministries of Education of Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo participated along with representatives from the international community. (CEAD 5779)
48. A training workshop on "**Training of Trainers of Lawyers on the European Convention on Human Rights**" was organised in Mostar (CEAD 9232) as a follow-up to the courses held in 2004/2005 within the framework of the Joint Programme between the CoE and EC on assisting BiH in fulfilling the post-accession commitments.
49. Within the framework of the **CARDS Police and PACO IMPACT** Project, the Local Project Officer participated in the Regional Thematic Seminar "**Application of Treaty Law - CoE and UN Conventions against corruption**" co-organised in Durres, Albania, by CoE, PACO Impact and Stability Pact Anti-Corruption Initiative (SPAI RSLO). Bosnia and Herzegovina was represented by three officials from the Ministry of Justice and one from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Local Project Officer also met with representatives of the Office of the High Representative – Rule of Law Department to present the activities being undertaken within the CARDS Police and PACO Impact projects and with representatives of IOM in charge of other aspects of the CARDS Police project.

50. On 24 June, within the PACO Impact project, a workshop (CEAD 9378) was organised in Sarajevo on “*Initiation of revision of the Anti-corruption strategy and action plan*”. Representatives from the following BiH institutions were present: Ministry of Security, Ministry of Justice, Council of Ministers – Economic Planning and Policy Unit, State Investigations and Protection Agency, Ministry of Interior of Federation of BiH, Ministry of Interior of Republika Srpska.
51. With regard to **Rule of Law and Prison Reform**, on 22-23 June, in the framework of the joint EC/CoE project “*Support to the Centres for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training in Bosnia and Herzegovina*”, the CoE Office organised a train-the-trainers course on the new aspects of the Entities’ Laws on Enforcement Procedure, in cooperation with the Judicial and Prosecutorial Training Centres and with the support of the German Foundation for International Legal Cooperation (IRZ) – (CEAD 11765). Two representatives from the OSCE Mission to BiH attended the course.
52. On 16 June, the **SRSG** launched the CIDA prison project with the State Ministry of Justice (CEAD 11715) where he stressed the need to establish a training service at State level, as well as to ensure the full commitment of local partners to comprehensive prison reform.
53. On 23 June, the second **preparatory meeting for the Penal Policy Conference** (CEAD 11791) was held in Strasbourg in order to fix the list of participants, draft the programme and identify key speakers.

### **3. Other action**

54. On 30 June, the European Commission hosted a meeting of the IC present in Sarajevo to discuss their **Action Plan for the Functional Review of the Education Sector**.
55. The **SRSG** had a number of meetings and consultations with the **OSCE** and national authorities with a view to advancing the progress of the draft law on a single **State Ombudsman Office**.

# Tbilisi

## 1. Political and legislative developments

56. On 3 June the **Parliament approved seven members of the new Central Election Commission**. Gia Kavtaradze was approved with 147 votes to 0 as Chairman. The opposition parliamentarians refused to support nominations, citing that most were affiliated with the ruling National Movement party, allegations strongly denied by the new CEC members.
57. Discussions of the government-backed proposal over the **rule for electing the Tbilisi City Council and Mayor**, which is being opposed by the opposition parliamentarians, were launched at a Parliamentary session on 23 June. The new draft foresees a shift from the proportional, party list-based elections for the council to a first-past-the-post "winner takes all" system. Instead of being appointed by the President, the Mayor would be elected by the City Council.

## 2. Council of Europe Action

58. The SRSG held several meetings with Mr Mikheil Machavariani, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, to discuss the **draft law on Tbilisi**, elections of the city council and the mayor.
59. On 17 June the SRSG met with the **new Chair of the Central Election Commission, Mr Gia Kavtaradze**; they discussed the future plans of the CEC and possible avenues of cooperation.
60. A conference on **“Protection of Property and the Right to a Fair Trial in Accordance with the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and National Legislation”** was organised in Tbilisi on 16-17 June by the Directorate General of Human Rights, the SRSG and the CoE Information Office in co-operation with the Constitutional Court of Georgia. The SRSG delivered the opening speech.
61. The follow-up expert meeting on the **draft law of the National School for Judges of Georgia** was also held in Tbilisi on 17 June. The meeting was organised within the framework of the European Commission and the Council of Europe Joint Programme by the Directorate General of Legal Affairs. The SRSG chaired the meeting and delivered the opening speech.
62. A **training seminar on the European Convention on Human Rights** was held in Kutaisi (Imereti region, Western Georgia) on 20 and 21 June. Organised by the Council of Europe Information Office in Georgia in co-operation with the Georgian Young Lawyers Association, the seminar gathered together representatives of local NGOs, law faculty students and representatives of the local authorities.
63. A **Conference on National Anti-Corruption Strategy of Georgia** was organised on 21-22 June in Chakvi, Adjara, within the framework of the European Commission and

the Council of Europe Joint Programme by the National Security Council of Georgia in co-operation with the Directorate General of Legal Affairs. The SRSG opened the seminar and took active part in it.

64. In the framework of the Council of Europe and the European Commission Joint Programme an **Evaluation conference on “Local Government Leadership Training Project” and “Training of Trainers Project”** took place in Tbilisi on 21 June. The conference was organised by the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) in cooperation with the Directorate General of Legal Affairs - Directorate of Cooperation for Local and Regional Democracy.
65. A **Training of Trainers for prison staff** was held in Tbilisi from 27 June to 2 July. The training course was organised by the Directorate General of Legal Affairs in co-operation with the Ministry of Justice of Georgia. The SRSG made an opening speech and chaired part of the proceedings. The training was followed by press-conference.
66. Throughout the month, the SRSG held intensive consultations and meetings with ruling party members as well as opposition parties regarding **the Law on Tbilisi**.
67. On 28 June the SRSG met with **Mr Zurab Tchiaberashvili, Mayor of Tbilisi**, to discuss possible future cooperation between CoE and the Tbilisi Municipality.
68. A meeting on **“Free legal aid in Georgia”** was held in Tbilisi on 28 and 29 June. The meeting was organised within the framework of the European Commission and the Council of Europe Joint Programme by the Ministry of Justice of Georgia in co-operation with the Directorate General of Legal Affairs.

### **3. Other action**

69. In the course of the month the SRSG held several **meetings with the heads of the OSCE and the EC delegation** to discuss the current situation in the country and to define possible ways for future cooperation.
70. On 30 June the SRSG **met Ms Heidi Tagliavini, Head of the UNOMIG Mission to Georgia**, to discuss issues of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, more precisely the forthcoming international conference dedicated to the problems of South Ossetia, which will take place in July in Ajara.
71. On 6 June the SRSG was represented at an international conference **“Finding Durable Solutions for the Meskhetians”**, which was organised by the European Centre for Minority Issues and State Ministry of Georgia on Conflict Resolution Issues. Research conducted in different countries where Meskhetians currently live were presented at the conference.
72. On 24 June the Office attended a seminar **“From weapon of war to weapon of peace: Veterans for peace”**, organised by International Centre on Conflict and Negotiations. The conference was dedicated to peaceful resolution of the conflict in South Ossetia through the involvement of Veterans in Public Diplomacy.

73. On 25-26 June the SRSG attended the seminar on Democracy and Civil Society organised by the **Tbilisi School of Political Studies** giving a presentation on organised crime and corruption in transition countries.

# Chisinau

## 1. Political and legislative developments

74. The new **Moldovan PACE delegation** has not yet been formed because of the refusal of the majority to include in it the leader of Our Moldova Alliance (AMN) Urechean, on grounds that he had criminal investigations pending. On 30 June, the General Prosecutor sought from Parliament to lift the immunity of 4 MPs, three from AMN, including Urechean, and one Communist.
75. On 25 June, Alliance Moldova Noastra (AMN) held its Congress. Urechean was unanimously elected party chairman for a four-year term. The institute of co-presidents was abolished and Untila elected as first deputy chairman. Urechean spoke in favour of merging with the Social Liberal Party.
76. 10 competitors have been registered for the post of **Chisinau Mayor** in the 10 July elections, among them Finance Minister Grecianii (PCRM). Dumitru Braghis will run as independent candidate – supported by the Social Democratic Party, AMN, and the Centrist Union of Moldova. The Central Electoral Commission obliged public and private media to broadcast electoral advertisements – some had refused to cover the campaign for the parliamentary elections.
77. Throughout the month, the *Euronova Media Group* picketed the headquarters of the **Co-ordinating Council of the Audiovisual (CCA)** and Parliament, demanding the Council's dissolution.
78. On 10 June, the **Parliament** adopted three declarations: On the Ukrainian Initiative to Settle the Transnistrian Conflict; On Principles and Conditions to democratise Moldova's Transnistrian Region; On Principles and Conditions to demilitarise Moldova's Transnistrian Region.
79. On 15 June, the **ECtHR** admitted a request for examination submitted by the newspaper "Moldavskie Vedomosti" (MV) – against the Republic of Moldova. During the month, Tiraspol regime's political prisoners Ivantoc and Petrov-Popa sent one more claim to the ECtHR.
80. On 22 June, "**Radio Sanger**", **ceased activity**, not willing to comply with the terms imposed by CCA - to modify the place of the radio station's transmitter.
81. On 22 June, the **Centre for Investigative Journalism won a case against the Centre for Combating Economic Crimes and Corruption (CCCEC)** at the Supreme Court of Justice. The Court obliged the CCCEC to make public the salaries of a category of their employees.
82. On 23 June, **Parliament ratified Protocol 14** to the European on Human Rights.
83. On 28 June, the General Prosecutor completed an investigation into Moldova's **Eurovision-2005** voting. He revealed that the televoting results, giving maximum points to Romania, were 'doctored' by the national jury in favour of Latvia. The Head

of the jury, chairman of TRM Mr Telescu, was found guilty of breaching competition rules regarding jury membership.

84. On 1 June, 13 “NGOs” founded the Transnistrian youth association “Proryv!” (Breakthrough). On 12 June, Russia’s Independence Day, they organised an activity “We are Russia!”. On 19 June, Mr Kolerov, Head of the Department for Relations with Foreign Countries of the Russian Presidential Administration, visited Transnistria without notifying Moldovan authorities. He met with “Proryv!”. At Tiraspol University, he stated that Transnistria could become a foundry of elites for Russia. The Moldovan MFA invited the Russian Ambassador for explanations.
85. OSCE-facilitated negotiations between Chisinau and Tiraspol on **Latin script schools** took place throughout the month. On 1 July, the Transnistrian authorities gave “permanent registration” to four schools: Ribnitsa, Bender, Tiraspol and Korshevo.

## **2. Council of Europe action**

86. On 2 June the SRSG met EU Special Representative for Moldova Ambassador Adriaan Jacobovits on future CoE –EU cooperation in Moldova.
87. On 7 June, the SRSG met Mr Vasile Sova, Minister of Re-integration, to discuss developments in Transnistria.
88. On 17 June, a CoE customs expert and the Joint Programme Manager went on a border visit to Ukraine, for the Heads of Diplomatic Missions based in Chisinau. A border post at the Transnistrian segment of the Moldovan-Ukrainian Border and the commercial ports of Odessa and Ilicevsk were visited.
89. On 29 and 30 June, the Directorate General of Political Affairs and the CoE Information Office organised a Seminar on “Shaping the Public Agenda in Transition Countries – **civil society and public authorities** in a participatory democracy?”. Conclusions were discussed with participants (members of Parliament and NGO representatives), also in view of organising two follow-up seminars this year.
90. From 27 to 28 June, CoE DG III carried out a workshop on building a national action plan on **mental health** in Moldova, for relevant health professionals and authorities. The experts will be writing a Report (CEAD 8286). This activity is part of the JP Moldova.
91. On 29-30 June and 1 July, as part of the JP Moldova, DG III carried out the second **Training Workshop for managers** of public/social, health and employment services. (CEAD 8413)
92. The Resident Legal Expert was keynote speaker at the conference of the TACIS-funded Civil and Commercial Judiciary project on 29 June. He stressed the need to create a “National Institute for the Judiciary” in order to guarantee a more demand-driven, better structured and more efficient initial and ongoing training.
93. From 6 to 10 June, the JP PACO Moldova organised Risk Assessment meetings and training – in the main law enforcement agencies (CEAD 11980).

### **3. Other action**

94. On 3 June, the SRSB hosted a meeting with APEL, and on 7 June, another one with members of the parliamentary working group on the **audiovisual** to discuss their draft laws. The second was in the presence of the Vice-Speaker, Mr Rosca. OSCE, EU US Embassy representatives were also present at the meeting, which was held in the SRSB's office.

# Belgrade

## 1. Political and legislative developments

95. A video showing civilians being executed in **Srebrenica** by the Serbian paramilitary group Scorpions was broadcasted by the local B92 TV station on 2 June. This seems to have had a profound impact on public opinion. Police reacted promptly and so far arrested ten individuals suspected of being among the authors of the crime. Nevertheless, some political parties, including ruling coalition parties, were not ready to openly condemn without reservation the atrocities documented in the video.
96. The Parliament of Serbia failed to adopt a **Declaration on war crimes**, which was on the agenda for the session in June. Political groups could not agree on the content of the declaration. At the same time, the State Union Council of Ministers issued a statement on the issue of war crimes.
97. According to Natasa Kandic, Director of the Humanitarian Law Centre (HLC), one of the leaders of the Serbian Radical Party, Tomislav Nikolic, was involved in **war crimes** committed in 1991, in Antin, a small village in Croatia. This provoked reactions by several political parties, including the Serbian Radical Party, which announced a legal action against Ms Kandic.
98. On 11 June the Serbian Council of European Integration submitted to the government the **National strategy of Serbia for the Accession of Serbia and Montenegro to the EU**. The Strategy embodies the plan of action needed for the harmonisation of local institutions and legislation to the *EU Aquis*, after the SAA is signed.
99. Serbian Prime Minister, Vojislav Kostunica, visited Brussels on 16 June. He handed over to the EU Enlargement Commissioner, Olli Rehn, statistical data on the number of Montenegrins living in Serbia, arguing for their participation in the eventual **referendum** on the independence of Montenegro.
100. On 27 June, the Presidents of Serbia-Montenegro, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina made a joint statement at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the **Igman Initiative** (regional network of NGOs) in Belgrade, calling for the unconditional extradition of all war crimes indicted by the Hague Tribunal and establishing individual responsibility for the war crimes on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.
101. On 29 June 2005, the constitutive session of the renewed **Coordination body for South Serbia** was held in Bujanovac. Nine working groups, with the full participation of the Albanian ethnic community, presented their action plans for this year.

## 2. Council of Europe action

102. A follow-up meeting on expert assistance on the relevant norms of initial and continuous **judicial training** (CEAD 5638) was held in Belgrade on 2 June. It was agreed that the local working group will review the draft law on initial training in accordance with suggested comments.

103. A Conference on the role and activities of a **Government Agent** was organised in cooperation with the Ministry of human and minority rights on 3 June in Belgrade (CEAD 11998). The appointment of an Agent and a Deputy Agent is expected soon.
104. The CoE organised a meeting on “Better **Law-making** in Serbia – International Experience and Co-operation Perspectives” (CEAD 5649) on 10 June, in order to determine eventual short-comings in the law-making process in Serbia and enable planning of future CoE activities.
105. The CoE’s Confidence-Building Measures programme supported the conference “**Srebrenica – Beyond Reasonable Doubt**“ which was organised by the Humanitarian Law Centre in Belgrade on 11 June (CEAD 11660), with the attendance of the SRSG.
106. **The Monitoring mission** set up by the Committee of Ministers for reviewing compliance with commitments of Serbia and Montenegro, visited the country from 13 to 17 June. In Serbia, the mission held a number of meetings with state officials, international and non-governmental organisations in the capital and in South Serbia.
107. Together with the Serbian Deputy Minister of Education, staff of the Belgrade Office participated in a Conference on Teacher Training in **Education for Democratic Citizenship** and Human Rights, that took place in Strasbourg on 15-17 June. The conference aimed at disseminating best practices and developing initiatives and partnerships in this domain.
108. The CoE, in cooperation with the Parliamentary Committee for European Integration, organised on 21 June a public debate on the draft law on **Ombudsman of Serbia**. The CoE expert suggested further amendments to an already improved draft law regarding appointment procedure and relation with other similar institutions in the Republic (CEAD 9363).
109. The Belgrade office participated in a regional meeting on the review of the **Education for democratic citizenship activities within the Joint Programmes**, which was held in Sarajevo on 21-23 June (CEAD 5779). The basic aim of the meeting was to review and assess implemented activities and foster regional cooperation
110. Training **seminars for lawyers on the ECHR** standards were organised in Belgrade on 16-18 June (CEAD 12015) and Budva, Montenegro, on 24-26 June (CEAD 12014). In addition, a training **seminar on the ECHR for Judges’ Assistants** of the State Union, Supreme and Constitutional Courts of Serbia and Montenegro, was organised on 27-30 June in Igalo, Montenegro (CEAD 12019). All seminars aimed to disseminate the ECHR standards and case law among legal professionals.
111. The CoE organised a seminar on **alternative sanctions and measures** (CEAD 5624), in cooperation with the Minister of Justice on 29 June, in Belgrade. The seminar was an opportunity to exchange relevant information and experiences.

### **3. Other action**

112. At a meeting with the **EC delegation** in Belgrade on 1 June, information on current activities in the judiciary and legislative reforms were exchanged. The need for closer cooperation between the two offices after the adoption of the Feasibility Study was stressed.
113. The CoE Office participated in a round table on the audit institutions and **public procurement** agency organised by the OSCE and Public Procurement Agency on 16 June.
114. The Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs held an International **Conference of the Heads of Police of SEE** on 18 June, with the goal of adopting a Joint Declaration on Police Co-operation.
115. The CoE Office participated in the Third International Seminar on “**Transitional Justice in the Former Yugoslavia**” organised by the Centre for Cultural Decontamination and the Belgrade Circle, on 26-28 June.

# Podgorica

## 1. Political and legislative developments

116. The presentation of material to the EU Administration on 16 June containing the data of citizens of Montenegrin origin residing in the other constituent State who, according to its leadership, should use their **voting rights in the Referendum** for independence in Montenegro, caused mostly negative political reactions including criticism of the method of communication through a third party. This act was also qualified as inappropriate by high-ranking intellectuals and civil society actors from the point of view of the exercise of the human rights of those concerned.
117. The adoption by PACE on 24 June of Resolution 1459 (2005) on **abolition of restrictions on the right to vote** and its misinterpretation by the media produced sharp political dialogue. It reflected the different perceptions concerning the scope of application of the instruments of direct democracy in the context characteristic for Serbia and Montenegro.
118. The Socialists People's Party, led by Mr Predrag Bulatovic, made it known that it would **respect the EU recommendations and attitudes on the international standards concerning the Referendum rules**, although it would prefer organisation of parliamentary elections first. It will also commit itself to achieving prior consensus on the latter with the opposition parliamentary parties.
119. The Parliament adopted the amendments to the **Constitutional Charter** during its third regular session on 23 June.
120. The Government approved the **Draft Law on Free Access to Information** at its session held on 30 June.
121. A Working Group of the Ministry of Interior finalised the first **Draft Law on Access to Secret Files**.
122. The Ad hoc Committee of the Parliament completed the new **draft of the Law on Conflict of Interest**.
123. In the beginning of June the Public Prosecutor initiated **pre-trial proceedings related to the illegal arrest and deportation of Bosniak refugees** in 1992.
124. **To be followed next month:** The Parliamentary Session scheduled for 12 July includes in its agenda adoption of the Yearly Report of the State Prosecutor.

## 2. Council of Europe Action

125. The **CoE Monitoring Mission** headed by the Director of Political Advice and Cooperation, made an official visit on 16 June. The mission reviewed **the fulfillment of commitments** during meetings with the President, Prime Minister, Speaker, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Interior, Minister of Justice, Leader of the Socialists People's Party, Coordinators of the Parliamentary Groups, Presidents of the

Constitutional and the Supreme Courts, and a number of civil society representatives dealing with judicial matters, media, protection of human rights and fight against organised crime and corruption.

126. A second analysis of the **Draft Rules of Procedure of the Parliament** was provided on 9 June.
127. The Office worked towards the preparation of the Montenegrin delegation, composed of one member from each CARPO Working Group as well as CARPO Senior Representative and Module Coordinators, to take part in a Regional Meeting "**Draft Regional Strategy on tools against organised and economic crime**" and in the Third Advisory Board meeting held on 28 and 29 June in Strasbourg. A significant part of these meetings was dedicated to further processing of the Draft Regional Strategy and agreement on the procedure of its finalisation. CEAD 12034 and 12047.
128. An Expert meeting on the **Draft Code of Ethics for Civil Servants** was conducted on 24 June aimed at bringing the Draft Code into compliance with Council of Europe standards. The final version of the Code will be sent to the CoE for further expertise. This should facilitate the Code's approval and application in every day practice soon. In addition, several activities are to be expected: drafting of curricula for education of civil servants, improvement of the mechanism of claim in administrative proceedings, study visits to member states, etc. CEAD 10891.
129. **The Draft Law on judicial training and professional skills development** was reviewed during an Expert meeting that took place on 3 June with the aim of improving the existing text and developing **the legislative structure for initial and permanent education of judges and prosecutors**. Once the working group amends the draft in accordance with the expert's recommendations, it will be sent to the CoE for final review. CEAD 5638.
130. A Round Table on alternatives to imprisonment was organised on 28 June to promote international practice in implementation of **alternative imprisonment measures**. A new CoE-EC initiative on "Development of Probation Service in Montenegro" will contribute to the design and implementation of a **Strategy on community service sanctions** composed of a number of expert assistances and training activities for key target groups including probation officers, judges, etc. CEAD 5625.
131. **A Regional Conference on Sentencing and Execution of Criminal Penalties** was carried out in co-operation with the Judicial Training Centre on 16-18 June. This addressed the participating countries' respective experiences in the implementation of new criminal legislation, in particular obstacles in sentencing and execution of criminal penalties.
132. Within the framework of **the CoE/EAR Second Joint Initiative in the media field**, a round table on Balance between the Freedom of Expression and other procedural guarantees of the ECHR was implemented on 2-3 June. Participating **police officers and media professionals** became more familiar with the rights and duties that should lead to improvement of their mutual **cooperation in pre-trial proceedings**. CEAD 11681.

133. A seminar on **media regulation and self-regulation** for journalists was organised within the same Initiative on 6 and 7 June. This analysed the advantages of both with a view to contributing to the **creation of a positive atmosphere in public information**. CEAD 11805.
134. A training workshop for lawyers on **how to lodge an application with the European Court of Human Rights** was conducted in cooperation with the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (CEDEM) and Bar Association of Montenegro on 24-26 June. It is hoped that such initiatives will serve to improve the functional efficiency of the ECHR protection mechanism. CEAD 12014.

### **3. Other action**

135. Continuing dialogue with the European Agency for Reconstruction about local self-government as one of the fields for priority action could result in a proposal of new **CoE/EAR Joint Initiative to the European Commission - Public Administration Programme for 2006**. Meetings between CoE Secretariat representatives and EAR, Ministry of Justice of Montenegro and other local counterparts on this issue will be organised before the end of September.
136. An Expert meeting on the **Draft Law on Free Access to Information** was carried out **in co-operation with the OSCE** Office in Podgorica on 9 June. The suggestions made could improve the provisions concerning restrictions on access to information, application of the test of necessity, etc. The event was followed by a meeting with Minister of Culture and Media, Ms Vesna Kilibarda, to discuss the possibilities for **urgent adoption** of this piece of media legislation. CEAD 12069.
137. An exchange of information on **Police reform** with representatives of **the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro**, Strategic Development Unit, was held on 15 June.
138. On 23 June, the Head of the Office contributed to a meeting with Walter Kälin, the **Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on the human rights of internally displaced persons**.

## Pristina

### 1. Political and legislative developments

139. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan appointed **Kai Eide**, Norway's ambassador to NATO, to conduct a review that will determine whether talks on Kosovo's final status should begin. The diplomat will examine the efforts to meet an international set of standards in such areas as human rights, security, law and democracy. Eide is considered an expert on the Balkans and has served as a UN envoy to Bosnia and Herzegovina.
140. Mr Eide carried out a one week visit to Kosovo and is expected to submit his Report in August. He said he would spend much time in Kosovo, and also pay visits and hold talks in Belgrade, in Contact Group countries and in neighbouring countries.
141. On 5 and 6 June Ms Louise Frechette, UN Deputy Secretary-General, visited Kosovo as part of a series of visits to different peacekeeping missions in order to reinforce the Secretary-General's **zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation** and abuse for United Nations personnel. It is reported that the UN decided to undertake a 'global auditing' after a chain of accusations by various humanitarian organisations [Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch] addressed to UN staff for exploiting trafficked women for sexual purposes.
142. The UN Secretary-General's representative on the human rights of **internally displaced** people was in Kosovo to discuss the fate of the tens of thousands of Serbs forced from their homes in the province. Walter Kälin met with Ibrahim Rugova and other officials as part of his visit in the region, which has included stops in Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia. Tens of thousands of Serbs and other minorities remain displaced in Kosovo following the 1998-1999 war. They were forced from their homes following attacks by ethnic Albanian extremists.
143. Particular attention was drawn to **debates in PACE on the Current situation in Kosovo**. Provisional Government officials reacted after the adoption of the resolution on Kosovo, which indicates that Kosovo is part of Serbia and Serbia and Montenegro, by declaring that the CoE has been influenced by the Serb delegation and this way it has compromised its authority.
144. Based on guarantees given by UNMIK, ICTY has granted, until the beginning of his trial, **provisional release** to former Prime Minister of the PISG, Mr Ramush Haradinaj, who was indicted by the ICTY in March.
145. The **Bridge over the Ibar river** in Mitrovica was opened for free traffic. It has to be recalled that the bridge was closed for civilians from 1999, cutting thus the city in two parts. The Serbian population of Mitrovica (North) held daily protests against the opening. There were reports of cars being stoned on both sides of Mitrovica region.
146. Members of the **Contact Group** held meetings in Pristina with leaders of institutions, opposition parties and Serb political leaders, with the attendance of Ambassador Kai Eide.

147. A meeting of the **Working Group for Missing Persons in Kosovo** was held in Pristina on 9 June. The Working Group involves representatives of the authorities of Belgrade and Pristina, with ICRC as the mediator.
148. Four radio stations in the Mitrovica region started to produce and broadcast daily **news programmes in the Roma, Bosnian and Turkish languages**, with financial support from the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. The daily news programmes – aired by Radio Ylberi (Mitrovicë/Mitrovica municipality), Radio Mir (Leposavic/Leposaviq), Radio Kosovska Mitrovica (Zvečan/Zveçan), and Radio Vicianum (Vushtrri/Vucitrn) – are produced and anchored by journalists from the respective communities, and are in addition to the news programming currently provided by the stations. The goal of the broadcasters involved is to serve the informational needs of the Roma, Bosniak and Turk communities in the region, while also contributing to inter-ethnic tolerance and co-operation

## **2. Council of Europe action**

149. The Local Project Officer for PACO Impact provided assistance to UNMIK and PISG Institutions in relation to the **Regional Thematic Seminar on Treaty Law against Corruption**, held in Durres, Albania 10-11 June 2005. Through the PACO Impact Project Directors he helped in the *drafting of a compliance matrix* (treaty law requirements) of national legislation in comparison with CoE and UN conventions on fighting corruption.
150. The **Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe** and the EU Committee of the Regions, in partnership with the European Commission and the Stability Pact for South-eastern Europe, co-organised a conference on the “Role of EU Regional and Local Authorities in the Process of Democratic Consolidation in the Western Balkan Regions”, in Pristina on 22 June. The conference, which was widely reported and brought together key actors such as Bajram Kosumi, Prime Minister, Presidents of Municipalities of Kosovo and elected representatives of the European Union and the Western Balkans, highlighted the need for dialogue between the different communities in the region.

## **3. Other action**

151. UNMIK (Department of Justice) and the office of the Prime Minister have established an advisory group on the **Law on courts** to which the Council of Europe is an observer. The work of the group is to a large extent based on the report elaborated by CoE and US experts assessing the Kosovo Judicial System. The office participated in meetings of the group and a CoE expert has been identified who has contributed to the work of the group in a proactive manner.
152. The **Head of Office** addressed welcoming remarks to participants at a conference on local governance reform in Kosovo based on South East Europe experiences, organised by the OSCE together with UNDP and the Association of Kosovo Municipalities on 6 and 7 June.

# Tirana

## 1. Political and legislative developments

153. Public attention during the month of June was totally focussed on the technical preparation of **elections** and the electoral campaign.
154. An **opinion poll** published on 1 June by the Albanian NGO “Mjaft!” was dismissed by the Gallup Organisation which declared it had no relation to the initiative financed by the Dutch and British embassies in Tirana. The name “Gallup” was used by a so-called “Gallup International Association” based in Bulgaria.
155. The candidacy of several senior officials and managers of public companies has raised debate and controversy about **conflicts of interest**, as they had not resigned from their posts and allegedly were using for their campaign financial means available through their position. Pressure of public opinion finally resulted in the resigning of these candidates from their posts.
156. At a meeting of the High Council of Justice on 16 June, President Moisiu appealed to Albanian courts to fulfil their legal obligations for **registering voters** who could not find their names on the voter lists.
157. The **demolition** on 20 June by the construction police of illegal buildings in an archaeologically protected perimeter in Saranda (south Albania) has triggered tensions. The Democratic Party Mayor of Saranda said that the buildings (mainly shops) had licences and that their destruction was politically motivated to intimidate the owners.
158. The Territory Management Council decided on 15 June on the definition of the borders for the **legalisation of two “informal zones”** in the area of Tirana. Informal zones are known as suburban areas where numerous illegal buildings have been erected during the last ten years.
159. The World Bank in Albania renewed its **warning** that a project for building an electric train line between Durrës and Tirana was likely to “generate a large negative financial return”. The Albanian State has signed for commercial loans for this project which will cost over one percent of Albania’s GDP.

## 2. Council of Europe action

160. Secretary General Terry Davis paid a one-day **visit to Albania** on 7 June to help institutions and political forces preparing for the parliamentary elections. He met with the President, the Prime Minister, the Speaker of Parliament, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Chairman of the Central Election Commission and the leaders and representatives of the main political parties.
161. The Special Adviser took part in several activities linked to **awareness-raising among voters**, especially through their children. Such activities, initiated by the CoE

Information Office, were funded with help from the British and Norwegian embassies. The Special Adviser also spoke at the opening of a Seminar on “Women in politics” with the participation of all female candidates in the parliamentary elections.

162. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (**ECRI**) published its third report on Albania on 14 June. It especially pointed at the problematic situation of the Roma and Egyptian communities. The report was given wide coverage in Albanian print media.
163. From 8-9 June, an **expert meeting** on “The **norms governing the profession of lawyers**” dealt in particular with the implementation of the Statute of the National Chamber of Advocates with regard to the governing and management of the chamber and the role of lawyers in the proper functioning of the justice system. This meeting was organised in close cooperation with the Albanian National Chamber of Advocates.
164. From 9 to 11 June, a **workshop** was organised for members of the **Chamber of Advocates** in Vlora on the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and Court jurisprudence. The training was organised in close cooperation with the Centre for European Studies.
165. From 15 to 16 June, a **Seminar on Reform of the Curricula** in Albanian Law Faculties was organised in close cooperation with the Albanian Ministry of Education and Science aimed at the ongoing reform of the Albanian Law Faculties within the framework of the Bologna Process.
166. From 27 to 29 June, two **study visits** were organised, one to Madrid, Spain, the other to London, United Kingdom. The first was designed for the Inspectorate of the High Council of Justice on the Inspectorate functions in the Judiciary activity; while the second enabled a delegation of eight officials to consider the enforcement of court decisions in England, including the role of court clerk, judicial records, management and case management, and inspection of the judicial system.
167. Within the framework of PACO Impact regional project, the Council of Europe and the Office of SPAI/RSLO, a **Regional thematic seminar** on "Application of Treaty Law: **CoE and UN Conventions against Corruption**" took place in Durrës, Albania on 10 and 11 June. The regional seminar brought together about 60 representatives from Ministries of Justice, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Ministries of Interior from 7 project areas of the PACO-Impact and two other delegations from Moldova and Romania.
168. On 13 June, a **roundtable** on the new law "**On prevention of Conflict of Interest**" was held in Tirana, within the framework of PACO-Impact Project and in cooperation with OECD/SIGMA. This activity was aimed at discussing issues of implementation and identification of necessary secondary law legislation.
169. In the framework of the PACO Impact/Pilot Project Activity for Albania, a Working Group from the Prosecutorial Services conducted a **study visit and workshop** sessions in Celle, Germany with respect to the "Improvement of the case management system in Albania aimed at **preventing corruption within the prosecutorial**

**services"**. The visit and the discussions took place in the Prosecutor's General Office in Celle and Luneberg, Lower Saxony, Germany, from 29 June - 2 July.

170. A regional **seminar** took place in Strasbourg on 28 June with the participation of national delegations from seven project areas in the Western Balkans, including Albania, to discuss a regional draft strategy on **combating economic and organised crime** in the region. This event was a major achievement of the CARPO project, leading towards the finalisation of such strategy, which is one of the chief objectives of the project in the area.

171. The third meeting of the **CARPO Advisory Board** was also held in Strasbourg on 29 June, discussing some of the main issues related to implementation of the project, potential obstacles to its implementation and possibilities for extended cooperation with the national counterparts and international agencies. Attendance at both meetings was reduced because participants from the Albanian police were requested to stay on duty in their country during the election period.

### **3. Other action**

172. Co-ordination between the CoE and OSCE Presence in Albania, as well as with the EC Delegation in Tirana, has taken place on a daily basis, especially on preparation of the parliamentary elections.

### **4. Security**

173. An **explosive device** destroyed the car of a chief police inspector in Shkodra (northern Albania) on 17 June when the owner opened the door. The officer was seriously injured.

174. A local **anti-crime chief of police** in Vlora was **shot** in southwest Albania on 29 June and was in critical state. Suspects have been identified but not arrested.

# Skopje

## 1. Political and legislative developments

175. On 3 June, the EUSR Michael Sahlin stressed that the Ministry of Finances should prepare a solution on **how to reduce the large debts of the municipalities** in the light of the transfer of competences, due to officially take place on 1 July. A debt relief plan should allow the fiscal decentralisation to be applied in good time. According to a study of the Ministry of Finance, a large part of the overall municipal debt is to construction companies. The most indebted municipalities are Skopje, Ohrid and Struga.
176. On 11 June, the municipal council of Gostivar adopted a draft decision for the **use of the Turkish language** in the debates of the Council. Even though the Turkish community represents only 10% of the population of the city, good interethnic relations in the city, according to the mayor, facilitated this decision.
177. On 16 June, the **City Council of Skopje** held a session without achieving substantial results. Two months after the elections, the City Council cannot find a way out of the dead-end due to internal political bickering.
178. On 21 June, the Speaker of the parliament Mr Jordanovski announced that by-elections will take place on 21 August in order to elect a new **mayor of the Roma municipality of Suto Orizari**. Amdi Bajram, elected mayor during the last municipal elections, is now serving a four-year prison sentence and consequently, his election has been declared invalid by the Supreme Court. However, there are fears within the international community that these elections might not be held in the best conditions. OSCE/ ODIHR will not be present.
179. In a public statement issued on 22 June, the Heads of the European Union member States' missions in Skopje asked that the ODIHR Recommendations and the standards of the Council of Europe on **electoral matters** be implemented in a timely manner. Among the recommendations are the promotion of an election legislation to be respected by all political actors, a unified electoral code to be ready by the end of the year and the enhancement of the role of women in the electoral process along the lines of the recommendations expressed by the CoE Congress observers. The Statement concludes that "it should be recalled that free, fair and fully democratic elections are a cornerstone of the Copenhagen criteria for the European membership."
180. On 22 June, UNMIK officially confirmed that citizens of my country would be able to enter Kosovo by presentation of a valid travel document.
181. On the same day, the parliament **adopted the Law on Internal Affairs** which regulates the appointment of local police commanders. According to the law, in 38 out of 84 municipalities, the regional commanders will be elected by the municipal councils from three nominees by the Ministry of Interior. The final proposals were settled on as a compromise within the ruling coalition at the expense of the solution

put forward by the Minister of Interior. However, it remains to be seen what will be the final version of the pending draft law on police due to be adopted in the Fall.

182. On 27 June, UNDP delivered its last **Early Warning Report** on the country, dated May 2005. The study shows that almost all of the state institutions “enjoy the confidence of not even half of the citizens” of the country. The Judiciary has the lowest rating with 3%. Only the Police, the Army and the Church enjoy some confidence. Likewise, the report outlined the low level of trust in individual politicians. Unemployment, poverty and corruption are the main concerns of the respondents and the authors note the melting in of the middle class, whereas trends regarding interethnic confidence continue to grow although the perception of ethnic barriers still remains high. Earlier this month, a public poll showed that European membership is supported by 96% of the respondents.
183. Also on 27 June, the Ministry of Justice announced that the debate on the draft law on **use of languages** as requested by the Ohrid Framework Agreement has been postponed since the working group in charge of the text has not been in a position to reach political agreement before the deadline of 1 July. The text will therefore be tabled for adoption by the Parliament at the Fall session.
184. On 28 June, the **law on flags** prompted a heated debate among members of the parliament.
185. On 29 June, the **Hague Tribunal** has postponed the hearing initially set for 30 June until 4 July regarding the temporary release of the former Minister of Interior Boskovski and the former police officer Tarculovski. On 6 June, the Minister of Justice Ms Mladenovska-Gjorgjievska handed over guarantees by the state that the two defendants will be available at the request of the Tribunal at any time.

## **2. Council of Europe action**

186. On 15 June, the Resident Expert attended the opening session of the **Summer school “Education for Democratic Citizenship”** in Ohrid. The Resident Expert took the floor along with representatives of the Ministry of Education and OSCE. The three-day seminar is a part of a Project initiated in 2003 and run by the Council of Europe Information Office in co-operation with the Department for development and promotion of education in the languages of minorities at the Ministry of Education. The project addresses the creation and promotion of multicultural clubs within secondary schools in the country. 170 pupils and teachers already attended the past four events. About 30 members from the 15 existing multicultural clubs gathered for this session.
187. On 24 June, the Council of Europe Information Office in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education organised a launching conference for the “European Year of Citizenship through Education“. The Resident Expert, Mr Zoran Popovski, State Secretary of the Ministry of Education, and Ms Gordana Trajkova-Kostovska, national coordinator for Education for Democratic Citizenship addressed participants. In attendance were teachers in civic education, representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and of OSCE, along with members of NGOs involved in the promotion of education.

188. On 29 June, the Resident Expert took part in the Annual Conference for assessing the implementation of the **State Programme for the Prevention and Repression of Corruption**, held in Ohrid. The two-day event, jointly organised by the Council of Europe/PACO IMPACT Programme and State Anti-Corruption Commission, was officially opened by Ms Radmila Sekerinska, Deputy Prime Minister and Mr Slobodan Najdovski, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament. Two experts of the Council of Europe addressed the conference.

### **3. Other action**

189. The Resident Expert held meetings with the European Commission Delegation in Skopje and the OSCE Spillover Mission on the **ongoing constitutional amendments** related to reform of the judiciary. This consultation is aimed at achieving a common approach on the text which is expected to enter the final parliamentary procedure in Fall 2005.

190. On 13 June, the Resident Expert attended a seminar organised by the Helsinki Committee on “initiating legal changes in the **fight against all forms of discrimination**“. The draft law on this question, prepared in close consultation with parliamentarians, includes definitions of discrimination which are presently lacking and aims to fill the gap between the abstract constitutional definition of discrimination and specific provisions on particular areas. One of the key aspects of the text remaining unsolved is the “non-Discrimination Committee” in charge of processing discrimination cases. The Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee for protection of Civil Freedoms and Rights will further initiate the text into the parliamentary procedure. The event was opened by Ms Radmila Sekerinka, Deputy Prime Minister, and the UN Resident Coordinator in the presence of parliamentarians and Mr Stojan Andov, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Protection of Civil Freedoms and Rights.