



# CSCE Digest

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## In This Issue

<b>Jordan OSCE's New Mediterranean Partner for Cooperation</b> <i>by Ron McNamara</i> .....	44
<b>Elections in Montenegro Observed</b> <i>by Robert Hand</i> .....	45
<b>Commission Maintains Focus on Kosovo</b> <i>by Robert Hand</i> .....	47
<b>Croatia's Record Examined</b> <i>by Robert Hand</i> .....	49
<b>Moscow Synagogue Bombing Condemned</b> <i>by John Finerty</i> .....	51
<b>Duma Elects Communist Human Rights Commissioner</b> <i>by John Finerty</i> .....	51



Photo: E. Wayne Merry

(l to r) Commissioner Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD), Commissioner Rep. Louise McIntosh Slaughter (D-NY), Republika Srpska President Biljara Plavsic, Delegation Chair Commissioner Rep. John Edward Porter (R-IL), Rep. Fortney Pete Stark (D-CA) and Rep. Maurice D. Hinchey (D-NY) meet in Banja Luka

### Commission Delegation Examines Situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina

*by Robert Hand*

Commissioner Rep. John Edward Porter (R-IL) led a Commission delegation to Bosnia-Herzegovina May 25-29. The delegation included Commissioners Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) and Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY), and Representatives Fortney Pete Stark (D-CA) and Maurice Hinchey (D-NY).

Unlike many congressional visits to Bosnia-Herzegovina, which usually are very brief and largely spent with the U.S. contingents of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) and representatives of the international community, this delegation concentrated on meeting with Bosnians from the government and the non-governmental sectors. This additional focus enabled the delegation to stress human rights, election, humanitarian and other concerns of particular importance to the Helsinki Commission, concerns which are also related to the benchmarks which now need to be met if the

**Bosnia, continued on page 48**

### Mediterranean States and the Helsinki Process

*by Ron McNamara*

The question of a role for certain non-European Mediterranean states in the Helsinki process has been a disputatious issue that has consumed a considerable amount of time since the earliest days of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The question arose early in 1972 when Algeria and Tunisia expressed a desire to be associated with the Conference. The issue divided the participating States with Malta, Yugoslavia, Spain, France, and Italy supporting a role for the Maghreb states. Others, including the United States, remained skeptical of such a relationship especially in light of the Arab-Israel conflict. The prospect of divisive discussions on Middle East problems overwhelm-

**Mediterranean States, continued on page 44**

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.

## Jordan Joins Ranks of OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation

by Ron McNamara

On May 22, the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna approved the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's request to become a Mediterranean Partner for Cooperation. The other Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation are: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Morocco, and Tunisia. Japan and the Republic of Korea maintain a similar status with the OSCE as Partners for Cooperation. Various Mediterranean States maintained loose ties with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) dating from the early 1970s, in recognition of "the relationship which exists between security in Europe and in the Mediterranean area." Originally designated as "non-participating Mediterranean States," the group once included Syria, Lebanon and Libya. These states were effectively dropped when the "Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation" rubric was adopted in 1995.

While the designation carries no specific obligations for the Mediterranean States, Jordan's letter requesting status referred to participation "on the basis of its ac-

ceptance of OSCE's principles and objectives." In Article 4 of the 1994 Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty, the two countries committed themselves "to the creation, in the Middle East, of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Middle East" along the lines of the Helsinki process.

The current Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation framework provides for various forms of dialogue between the OSCE participating States and the partner countries. France and several other participating States have been pressing to expand the role of the Mediterranean countries within the OSCE, a move viewed with some trepidation by those concerned with the prospect of Middle East disputes overwhelming the OSCE. A Contact Group for the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation has been exploring a variety of ways to include partners in OSCE activities. Such endeavors might include a role in OSCE election observation and short-term visits by representatives of these countries to OSCE missions. □

### **Mediterranean States**, *continued from page 43*

ing a conference on East-West relations was a source of deep concern. Israel initially had no interest in the process, but insisted on equal status with Arab countries that were seeking an association with the conference. The Israelis did not want yet another multilateral forum for discussion of the Mideast situation. There was also concern among some participating States that including non-European states would make it difficult to turn away other countries seeking to establish or strengthen formal ties with Europe.

Malta stubbornly insisted that certain Mediterranean countries be granted some form of status by the conference. Maltese intransigence reportedly caused some early negotiators to question the prudence of the consensus rule. Once a compromise on status was reached the question arose as to the form of the "contribution" to be made by the "non-participating Mediterranean States." Contributions of these states to relevant subjects before the group's elaborating commitments on Baskets I and II, military security and economic cooperation respectively, were to be in oral and written form. There was no provision for involvement of these countries in the field of humanitarian cooperation (Basket III).

Six Mediterranean states accepted the invitation to make individual contributions during the preliminary phases of the Conference: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, and Syria (Libya and Lebanon did not participate at this stage, though the two were involved in subsequent meetings). It was not long before Malta began to maneuver to expand the opportunities for inclusion of the "non-participating Mediterranean States." The Italians pressed for the inclusion of some form of a declaration on the Mediterranean in the Helsinki Final Act, a proposal that led to months of protracted negotiations. The United States had strongly resisted such a declaration, an initiative it viewed as opening a Pandora's box with respect to the Arab-Israel dispute. Ultimately, a short text on the Mediterranean was negotiated. With a compromise text nearly completed, Malta came forward with new demands on the security front.

Time after time the Mediterranean question has come back to haunt the Helsinki process, having arisen within minutes of the very first gathering of representatives of the participating States, threatened the opening of the 1975 Final Act signing ceremony, and prolonged the

**Meds**, *continued on page 46*

## Commission Observes Elections in Montenegro

by Robert Hand

On May 31, Montenegro held elections for the 78 seats in the Republic's parliament as well as for seats in the local councils of its 21 municipalities. These elections took place in a political environment marked by tension between Montenegro and Serbia, the only two of the six former Yugoslav republics which have established a new federal relationship. At issue is whether the Serbia-dominated federation created in 1992 and dominated by the authoritarian Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic will permit Montenegro to develop economically and politically on its own and, if not, whether Montenegro would make its own move toward outright independence. Milosevic seems unwilling to concede Montenegro's *de jure* autonomy within the federation and would likely resort to some use of force to maintain control over what is Serbia's only access to the sea.

Montenegro's relationship with Serbia is internally divisive for the Republic of less than 700,000 inhabitants, pitting those ethnic Montenegrins with pro-Serb inclinations, especially in the north, against those who stress the republic's distinctness from Serbia and are supported in their position by the sizable Bosniac and Albanian communities. Those favoring a close relationship with Serbia rallied around former Montenegrin President and current Yugoslav Prime Minister Momir Bulatovic, while those advocating a more independent course strongly supported the current President, Milo Djukanovic. Both came to power under the auspices of the former Communist party, now called the Democratic Party of Socialists, but Djukanovic was able to wrestle control of the party and ousted his one-time mentor Bulatovic in presidential elections in 1997. Differences have been so strong in Montenegro in support of one or the other since that time that many predicted the parlia-

mentary elections would be accompanied by significant civil violence.

The elections were carried out in a relatively free and fair manner. The campaign period was marked by openness to differing points of view and a growing independent media. The elections were organized in a manner that was easily understood by the voters, giving them a choice between 13 political parties that would be represented proportionally in the new parliament and a similar choice among a lesser number of parties for proportional representation in municipal councils. Officials from the republic level down to the polling committees administered the elections professionally, with sufficient transparency for all political parties to uncover any attempt at major fraud. Only two polling stations experienced problems in counting the results which forced them to hold the elections over again.



photo: E. Wayne Merry

*The first voter of the day casts her ballot in Ulcinj in southern Montenegro*

The elections were observed comprehensively by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which deployed 11 long-term and 102 short-term observers, including 22 OSCE Parliamentary Assembly parliamentarians, who covered about 65 percent of the polling stations. The core staff had been in the republic longer and followed the campaign and administrative preparations for the elections closely. The OSCE report on the elections was generally positive.

The results of the elections were clearer than anticipated, with the election coalition surrounding Djukanovic's Democratic Party of Socialists winning 43 of the 78 seats compared to Bulatovic's Socialist People's Party, which won 27 seats. Two Albanian parties won three seats together, and the Liberal Alliance, which prior to last year's split within the Democratic Party of Socialists had been the leading opposition party, won five seats. The Djukanovic election coalition would

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**Montenegro, continued on page 52**



## Commission Maintains Focus on Kosovo

by Robert Hand

After a two year respite, the conflict associated with Yugoslavia's disintegration moved into a new phase in 1998 as fighting escalated dramatically in Kosovo. At present, between 250 and 300 persons are dead or missing, while tens of thousands have been displaced—internally or as refugees in Albania, Montenegro and, to a lesser extent, Macedonia—as Serbian security forces destroy whole villages where rebel Albanian forces known as the Kosovo Liberation Army (“KLA” or, in Albanian, “UCK”) are alleged to operate. While frequently cited as a low-intensity conflict, the growing destruction as well as the clear potential for an explosion of violence has caught international attention. Memories of the Bosnian phase of the conflict—during which the regular slaughter of innocent civilians over the course of several years eventually shamed the international community to react—have encouraged a relatively swifter and stronger response now, but the resolve of the international community to intervene decisively remains to be seen.

**Origins of Conflict:** The potential for conflict in Kosovo is not new; it is the one place in the former Yugoslavia where ethnic tensions openly existed in the 1980s prior to the rise of Slobodan Milosevic. Indeed, it was his strong support for Kosovar Serbs complaining about their situation which catapulted Milosevic to the top of Serbia's leadership. Already having control of Kosovo's territory, especially after the revocation of the province's autonomy in 1990, however, hatred and fear of other ethnic groups were incited by propaganda among Serbs to the north, in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, where conflict from 1991 to 1995 lowered the potential for spillover into Kosovo more than it perpetuated the stability of a Kosovar society completely divided between the Serb minority and official Serbian institutions on the one hand and the Albanian majority and their parallel institutions on the other. The Dayton Agreement gave hope that the diplomatic momentum could extend to Kosovo, but that hope soon gave way to frustration as progress was only recorded on the margins. The result was the break up of Kosovar Albanian cohesion as the passive resistance of Ibrahim Rugova's claims of independence was challenged by a more active but still non-violent resistance—coupled,

however, with a greater willingness to compromise on independence—of Adem Demaci as well as Albanian student groups, and ultimately extending to the militancy of the KLA as a guerilla movement with no political platform other than outright independence for Kosovo.

KLA attacks on Serbian police and officials, as well as alleged Albanian “collaborators,” seem to have prompted the Serbian action to wipe out the organization through brutal attacks on stronghold villages first in the central Drenica region and later along the Kosovar border with Albania from Pec through Decan to Prizren. Nevertheless, it also produced the immediate result originally achieved by the conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, enhancing Milosevic's political standing as President of Yugoslavia at a time of outright resistance to Belgrade from Montenegro and growing labor unrest in Serbia itself.

**International Options:** The international community's initial responses clearly reflected weaknesses vis-a-vis Milosevic—from whom the United States in particular was seeking favors regarding implementation of the Dayton Agreement in Bosnia's Republika Srpska. Russia also opposed a strong outright response and other European powers like Italy were compromised by business deals. As the violence has continued, however, greater unity and resolve seemed to have been achieved, especially between the United Kingdom and the United States who had sharply disagreed about proper responses to the Bosnian conflict.

Historical affinities are alleged to be behind Russia's continued support for fellow Orthodox Slavs, the Serbs. In reality, the greater concern is the parallel between Kosovo and situations within the Russian Federation like Chechnya or, more importantly, the prospects for further NATO out-of-area operations in the Balkans. The end result has been Russian opposition to NATO intervention in Kosovo, which is being considered, but also Russia likely is pressuring Serbia not to provoke that intervention which potentially places Moscow in the position of having to confront NATO. Unfortunately, a recent visit to Moscow by Milosevic produced few results. The subsequent willingness not to increase the intensity of the Kosovo conflict probably existed already.

*Kosovo, continued on page 50*



photo: E. Wayne Merry

*Mass gravesite near Zvornik, Republika Srpska*

U.S. military is ever to withdraw from the country. The delegation encouraged the Bosnians to seek their own solutions to the consequences of the 1992-95 conflict rather than depend on the imposition of such by the international community. The delegation also met with American-based non-governmental organizations doing work in the country, including the National Democratic Institute and World Vision.

The delegation also met with most of the leading international players in the Bosnian capitol of Sarajevo, including High Representative Carlos Westendorp, the Bosnian Helsinki Committee, and representatives of the Bosnian Government and many opposition political parties. In Banja Luka, the capital of the Republika Srpska entity, meetings with senior political leaders were supplemented by sessions with independent journalists, the Republika Srpska Helsinki Committee and a representative of a leading opposition party.

The delegation also traveled to Tuzla—the main U.S. base—and visited a cooperative which is providing desperately needed income to women who lost fathers, husbands and sons during the fighting. Nearby, in the disputed Brcko region, the delegation observed the successful efforts of U.S. Ambassador and local administrator Bill Farrand to return displaced Bosniacs and Croats into new housing. Kathryn Porter, wife of the delegation chairman, oversaw the delivery of humanitarian aid to a local hospital that has opened its doors to all, regardless of ethnicity.

The progress in Brcko was in sharp contrast to the tense situation met by the delegation the next day in Drvar, a city which once had a Serb major-

ity but is now controlled by Bosnian Croats. Recent Serb returnees have faced increased harassment—one elderly couple was even murdered—and the delegation stressed in their meetings with various citizen activists that those who want should be allowed to return to their original homes and live in a secure environment.

The final stop in Bosnia-Herzegovina was Srebrenica, the scene of the worst slaughter of the conflict. Declared a “safe haven” by the United Nations in 1993, the town was overrun by Serb militants in 1995, and thousands of people, mostly Bosniac men, were executed and buried in mass graves. The delegation met with OSCE Representative Larry Sampler, who in effect is the town’s executive since the majority of the municipal council elected among the ranks of Srebrenica’s displaced Bosniac population have not been allowed to return. While national and local Serb leaders block their return, the current population—mostly Serbs who fled Sarajevo’s suburbs in early 1996—is believed to genuinely want to return to their original homes. The delegation also visited a mass grave site where bodies were being exhumed, primarily for use as evidence in war crimes prosecutions at the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague.

The delegation’s attention was repeatedly brought to the difficulty of facilitating the return of people to their



photo: E. Wayne Merry

*Delegation meeting with Serb returnees in Drvar, a city in the northwest of the Bosnian Federation*

## Commission Addresses Croatia's Record

by Robert Hand

On May 13, a Commission briefing focused on the latest developments in Croatia. The Voice of America's Croatian Service Director, Ivana Kuhar, provided a political overview of the situation, stressing that Croatia today is at a crossroads. She noted that 1998 is the first time since achieving independence that Croatian authority extends over all of the country's territory, and that fact is producing pressure to accelerate democratic development. In addition, with the international community making refugee returns a priority this year, Croatian authorities are being pressed to provide for the return of significant numbers of Croatian Serbs in a process closely linked with returns in neighboring Bosnia-Herzegovina. Kuhar asserted that Croatian citizens can freely vote, but they have no certainty that the "authoritarian regime of President Franjo Tudjman" will allow those elected to take their seats, local government to function, laws to be indiscriminately enforced and the judiciary to be independent of politics. While the middle class shrinks, she added, a few individuals have amassed immense wealth "through a murky privatization practice and obscure bureaucratic maneuvers that would in any accountable country be considered illegal." Kuhar concluded by noting that the arrest of Dinko Sakic, who admitted to running the fascist-era death camp of Jesenovac in the early 1940s, and his extradition from Argentina to Croatia for trial, may offer "a unique opportunity for Croatia and its citizens to begin an honest evaluation of their past."

Focusing on the treatment of the Serb community in Croatia, Milorad Pupovac, a parliamentarian and president of the Serb National Council, estimated that 350,000 to 400,000 Serbs fled the country during the conflict and getting them back will be a real challenge. He said that the return must be "controlled, organized and carefully done," but, in the process, "parts of the government ... [will try] to avoid real activity [and] their commitments towards the international community." Pupovac highlighted specific problems related to returns, namely a lack of social tolerance of a minority group; legal impediments to reclaiming property, especially property currently occupied by others; hesitancy to return based on the lack of a clear and fully implemented amnesty law covering all of Croatia; the uncertain status of the Serb National Council, the Joint Council of Municipalities in Eastern Slavonia and other minority insti-

tutions; needed readjustment in the proportional representation of minorities in parliament; and the questionable content of educational texts in schools. Pupovac ended his talk by calling for political power to be given to the Croatian parliament as the best place for discussion and decision-making.

Davor Glavas of the *Feral Tribune* newspaper expressed the frustrations of Croatia's independent journalists, due not so much to government pressure or harassment, but to the "passive or almost non-existent public opinion" in the country. He reported that less than five percent of the population read independent or semi-independent newspapers, with little chance for uncompromised reporting to reach the silent majority of the population, while three-quarters of the population rely on state-run television, which the ruling party uses not as a "tool" but a "weapon." He added that the state has more difficulty controlling radio stations, of which over 120 exist, but that controls over frequencies and other aspects of radio broadcasting allow more independent stations to become targets for harassment. Glavas also mentioned that media critics of the government like himself are often called "traitors" who "hate Croatia."

The U.S. State Department's Croatia desk officer Lisa Tepper outlined human rights issues as part of U.S. policy toward Croatia. On Serb returns, she noted some successes, most recently in improved procedures for return, but that outstanding issues regarding a quick yet orderly and organized return still need to be addressed. She noted improved Croatian cooperation in facilitating the surrender of those indicted for war crimes by the International Tribunal in The Hague, and welcomed the Croatian Government's request for the extradition of Dinko Sakic. Tepper regretted, however, that implementation of the Dayton Agreement in Bosnia-Herzegovina was hindered by problems in the Bosnian Federation at a time when Republika Srpska was becoming more cooperative, noting, for example, that Bosnian Croats failed even to show up at a recent Bosnian Donors' Conference. The State Department official said she could only second what previous speakers had said about political developments and the media, but she added that non-governmental organizations and trade unions also have

Croatia, continued on page 53

*Kosovo, continued from page 47*

Consideration of military operations by the United States and many of its allies has come surprisingly quickly, indicating a lesson learned from Bosnia-Herzegovina that diplomacy and dialogue only work with Milosevic if his ability to use force is circumscribed. In addition, while intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina—particularly whether U.S. national interests were at stake—was sharply debated, now that U.S. forces are deployed to implement an American-forged agreement, it seems that few question U.S. interests in the Balkans. Moreover, the threat of a direct spillover of the conflict into neighboring states is greater for Kosovo than for Bosnia-Herzegovina. Nonetheless, Kosovo is not Bosnia-Herzegovina in three very important respects. First, Kosovo is not being recognized as an independent state—that has, in fact, been excluded as a possibility in current U.S. policy—and the situation is complicated by its being an internal matter of grave external concern. Second, attempts to lay blame equally in Bosnia generally failed as Bosnians were more often portrayed as complete victims, whereas the existence of the KLA detracts from support for the Kosovar cause among the world public. Related to this is the fact that Serbia's prevention of close foreign media coverage in Kosovo has meant a dearth in the world press of victims' photographic images which could out of shame lead to international reaction. Third, after the major U.S. investment in a Dayton-structured Bosnia-Herzegovina, some have strongly questioned additional U.S. commitments in Europe.

The bottom line, however, is that only a quickly organized effort to curtail Milosevic's ability to use force for political ends will make a dialogue and negotiations on Kosovo's future meaningful. Military intervention in the form of air strikes would more clearly favor the Kosovars than similar action did the Bosnians. Therefore, NATO consideration of patrolling the Albanian and Macedonian borders with Kosovo—both to prevent spillover and to place limits on the ability of the KLA to sustain itself—seems warranted. Clearly, however, efforts to simply contain the Kosovo conflict by isolating it, as was done in Bosnia-Herzegovina without ending it, would be a serious mistake. Isolating the conflict would only be worthwhile if combined with a serious effort to stop the attacking of Kosovo villages. To paraphrase Defense Secretary William Cohen, NATO would not want to become either a border patrol for Yugoslavia or

an air force for the KLA. Military intervention in Kosovo has risks greater than Bosnia-Herzegovina—including less ideal targets and probably direct engagement with the Yugoslav military—but it may prove to be the only effective option. If so, the sooner Belgrade is confronted, the better the chances of avoiding even larger clashes. In an election year, congressional criticism of such action would be loud, but a core group of Senators and Representatives who follow the Balkans would likely press for action, and the Congress would be unlikely to accept responsibility for blocking an effort to stop the conflict as long as the Administration demonstrates its willingness to accept responsibility for possible consequences of the policy.

This raises one final difference between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. Earlier and stronger intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina likely would have made major restructuring of the country on the order of the Dayton Agreement unnecessary, assuming security for the peoples of that country was genuinely ensured, rather than the threats alleged by Belgrade which instigated problems. The ethnic divides in Kosovo are much wider, and demographics, historical perceptions, language, culture and repression all argue against a similarly workable multi-ethnic society. A Kosovo within Serbia or independent—or both in the event of a partition—seems like an impossible end result without first a conflict with significant killing and ethnic cleansing. Yet, Serbia or the Kosovar Albanians will have difficulty making the compromises necessary, such as the establishment of Kosovo as a third republic in the federation, to avert conflict. Having no clear end result may make the high stakes of international intervention seem more imposing.

*Commission Activities:* The Helsinki Commission has been active on Kosovo well before the plethora of other governmental and non-governmental organizations focused attention on the eruption of violence there. A Commission-organized congressional delegation visited Kosovo in April 1990, and another one returned three-years later. Staff visited in December 1990, February 1993 and April 1996. During the course of the Bosnian conflict, the Commission held hearings on the potential for spillover of the conflict, especially in Kosovo. The Commission also organized many briefings and meetings, both public and for Members of Congress, with Albanian and Serb visitors from Kosovo to the United States.

*Kosovo, continued on page 52*



## **Commission Condemns Moscow Synagogue Bombing and “Atmosphere of Increasing Intolerance and Anti-Semitism” in Russia**

*by John Finerty*

In a May 15 statement, the Commission condemned the bombing of Moscow’s Marina Roshcha Synagogue and called upon the Russian Government to combat an “atmosphere of increasing intolerance and anti-Semitism” in Russia.

Commission Co-Chairman Rep. Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ) stated that “the bombing was not an isolated incident,” and that “anti-Semitism and anti-minority attitudes are thriving in an atmosphere of intolerance and lawlessness.” He noted that in April of this year Vladimir Zhirinovskiy was quoted in the press as claiming that “Jews started the Second World War and the Holocaust.” Smith also called attention to the anti-

Semitic rhetoric and anti-minority policies of the governor of Krasnodar Province, and a statement by the head of the ultra-nationalist Russian National Unity Party, calling for “a little blood to prevent a lot of bloodshed.” The Russian National Unity Party subsequently issued a statement calling the bombing a “provocation set up by the ‘victims’ to cause another outcry about anti-Semitism and alleged repression of Jews in Russia” (*Novoe Russkoe Slovo*, May 18).

Mr. Smith called upon President Yeltsin to “condemn by name the political leaders who promote ultra-nationalism and anti-Semitism and to demand that the police and courts do their job against criminals.” □

## **Russian Duma Elects Communist Party Member as Human Rights Commissioner**

*by John Finerty*

After a two-year delay, the Russian parliament on May 23 elected as the nation’s human rights commissioner Oleg Mironov, a high-ranking official of the Russian Communist Party. *OMRI Daily Digest* (April 17, 1996) says that the human rights commissioner has the right to “demand information from government organs to review complaints about human rights violations.”

Mironov, who currently serves on the Duma Committee on Legislation and Legal Reform, is a former law professor from Saratov. He was first elected to the Duma in 1993.

The position of human rights commissioner had been vacant since former political prisoner and Duma member Sergei Kovalev had been removed from the position by the Duma as a result of his protests over the Kremlin’s conduct of the war in Chechnya. Kovalev,

who had been one of eleven candidates for the current position, called the Mironov election a “shameless deal” resulting from a trade-off between the Communists and the “Our Home - Russia” political faction over committee positions. In an April 1997 vote, Mironov led the field of contenders, but lacked 55 votes to secure the post.

Besides the Duma-appointed human rights commissioner, there exists the executive branch’s Presidential Human Rights Commission, currently headed by Vladimir Kartashkin. The commission is described as an advisory and consultative body, whose duties “include examining human rights violations and drafting an annual report on the human rights situation” (*OMRI Daily Digest*, October 22, 1996).

The Duma sacked its last human rights commissioner, Sergei Kovalev, in March 1995. □

**Kosovo**, continued from page 50

In 1998, these activities continued. As the Contact Group of major European powers, including the United States, sought to respond to the growing violence, the Commission pressed especially for the redeployment of an enhanced OSCE Mission of Long-Duration to Kosovo, the Sandzak and Vojvodina—booted out by Belgrade in July 1993—in order to create a source of reliable information on what was happening on the ground and to deter an escalation by its very presence. Polish Foreign Minister and OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Bronislaw Geremek, pushed for the redeployment along with acceptance of OSCE involvement under the leadership of former Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, but Belgrade found little price to pay in rejecting the offer. The Commission has also pressed for immediate investigation of atrocities which may constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity subject to international prosecution in The Hague, especially incidents like the mass burial by Serb authorities of Kosovar villagers killed in the attack in Drenica. Finally, the Commission supported a ban on foreign investment in Serbia, which recently was adopted by the international community, as well as the mandate extension and enhancement of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force in Macedonia (UNPREDEP). Individual Commission members have called for additional actions, either publicly or privately.

On March 18, the Helsinki Commission held a hearing on repression and violence in Kosovo. Isa Zymberi, London Office Director for the Kosovo Information Center, and Serbian Orthodox Bishop Artemije outlined Albanian and Serb views on Kosovo respectively, with Artemije differentiating between Serb concerns and the interests of the Milosevic regime. Janusz Bugajski of the Center for Strategic and International Studies provided a political overview of the situation, Fred Abrahams of Human Rights Watch documented human rights abuses, and Nancy Lindburg of Mercy Corps International addressed humanitarian needs. The same day, the House of Representatives passed House Concurrent Resolution 235, actively supported by Commission Co-Chairman Christopher H. Smith and Ranking Member Steny H. Hoyer, condemning the violence in Kosovo and calling for several international initiatives to address it. □

**Montenegro**, continued from page 45



photo: E. Wayne Merry

*Ballot boxes for Republic and municipal elections in Montenegro*

likely have the support of these parties in forming a government coalition, but the results have made that unnecessary. On the local level, Djukanovic's coalition won in two-thirds of the municipalities and Bulatovic's party in the remaining one-third except one in which an ethnically Albanian-based political party won a majority.

Proper election conduct, the heavy international presence and decisive results combined to deter an immediate effort by Yugoslav and Serbian officials to challenge the outcome, especially given the Yugoslav military's hesitation to be used to impose Yugoslav control over Montenegro's internal development and the preoccupation with the conflict in neighboring Kosovo, which has been growing in intensity. In the longer term, however, it is improbable that, within a federation, one republic can engage in democratization and market reform while the other stagnates under a corrupt authoritarianism that is half Communist, half nationalist. It is possible for Djukanovic, given his own background, to find a working relationship with Milosevic, but that is unlikely, as are the prospects for Serbia to adopt Montenegro's reformist course in the near future. Thus, a confrontation within the new Yugoslav federation remains a definite possibility, and Montenegro, while receiving significant political support from the international community, must tread carefully in challenging the authority of the much larger and more powerful neighbor with which it is federated. □

**Croatia**, *continued from page 49*

difficulty operating in today's Croatia. She concluded by highlighting what the OSCE and other international organizations are doing to address the situation and suggesting that these issues will all need to be addressed before Croatia is welcomed into the Euro-Atlantic community.

Kresimir PirsI of the Croatian Embassy in Washington concluded the panel discussion, saying that his country is open to constructive criticism but that it must be well intended. He rejected the notion that Croatia only responds when pressured and called for understanding that it is impossible to change political systems overnight. This is especially the case in Croatia, he argued, due to the damaging effects of the war. He addressed Eastern Slavonia's integration into the country as largely an economic challenge and pointed out that more displaced Serbs, which include those that took part in the 1991 rebellion, have returned to their homes than displaced Croats. PirsI argued that the return of displaced Croats and Muslims to Republika Srpska would facili-

tate further returns in Croatia, and he highlighted treatment of the country's other minority populations as well. PirsI argued that there is considerable media, including broadcast media, which is independent in Croatia today, but noted that this media needs to consider its responsibility in shaping public opinion. PirsI also disputed the allegation that the judiciary in Croatia cannot act independently.

Concluding the discussion, the moderator agreed with the assertion that Croatia was at a crossroads, but, affirming that point had been made at a Commission briefing over a year ago, wondered how long the country would remain at this crossroads. Noting that Croatia is a sophisticated country and that its citizens are not all of one mind, the moderator guessed that some people in the country know all too well what democratization means—and that they simply are not happy with what it means in terms of their own power. The Commission will continue to cover and encourage progress in Croatia's transition. □

**Bosnia**, *continued from page 48*



photo: Dorothy Douglas Taft

*Commissioner Hoyer (r.) with Brcko Administer Ambassador William Farrand discussing the situation with local residents outside Brcko*

pre-war homes, and the members frequently heard of the strong desire of many Bosnians to do so. It was hoped that new automobile license plates that do not display where the vehicle is registered would enable Bosnians to move throughout the country more freely. Another priority presented to the delegation was the capture or surrender of all those indicted for war crimes by The Hague, including Bosnian Serb militant leaders Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic. One indicted person, in fact, was arrested by British SFOR forces in Banja Luka the day of the delegation's visit.

On their return from Bosnia-Herzegovina, the congressional delegation stopped in Brussels to share their views with NATO's Supreme Allied Commander for Europe, General Wesley Clark. They were also briefed on the status of The Hague Tribunal and its proceedings. In addition to discussing Bosnia-Herzegovina, members of the delegation urged urgent action to halt the fighting now underway in Kosovo, and for the investigation of possible war crimes committed against the civilian population by Serbian security forces.

A full report of the delegation's visit will be available from the Helsinki Commission in the near future. □



photo: Dorothy Douglas Taft

*Destroyed and rebuilt houses near Brcko*

# Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

234 Ford House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515-6460

E-mail address: [csce@mail.house.gov](mailto:csce@mail.house.gov)

Internet Web Site: <http://www.house.gov/csce/>

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