



BUDGET REQUEST

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE FISCAL YEAR 2011

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2011

I. Budget Authority and Appropriation Request for FY 2011

The Commission was created on June 3, 1976, pursuant to Public Law 94-304, codified as 22 U.S.C. 3001, et. seq. This statute authorizes and directs the Commission ". . . to monitor the acts of the signatories which reflect compliance with or violation of the articles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, with particular regard to the provisions relating to human rights and Cooperation in Humanitarian Fields." Information on the Commission's activities in 2009 is submitted pursuant to the provisions of 22 U.S.C. 3006.

The Final Act was agreed to in Helsinki in 1975 by 35 countries, including the United States, Canada, West and East European states, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The states which emerged as a result of the breakup of the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia subsequently joined the Helsinki process, at which time each new participating State signed the Helsinki Final Act and explicitly and unconditionally agreed to all commitments of the Helsinki process. In 2006, Montenegro was admitted as the newest participating State, bringing total membership to 56 countries.

Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia are OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation, and Afghanistan, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and Thailand are Partners for Cooperation. In 2009, Australia was granted partnership status. (See Appendix (C) for a list of OSCE participating States and Partners).

As of January 1, 1995, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was renamed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The organization is headquartered in Vienna, Austria. Specialized offices of the OSCE are also in The Hague and Warsaw, and the OSCE maintains field offices in a number of other countries. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is based in Copenhagen, Denmark.

In accordance with section 3 of Public Law 99-7 (March 27, 1985), codified as title 22 U.S.C. 3007(a), there are authorized to be appropriated to the Commission for each fiscal year such sums as may be necessary to enable it to carry out its duties and functions.

For fiscal year 2011, the Commission requests an appropriation of \$2,715, 000 for salaries and expenses, in keeping with the President's budget request for fiscal year 2011.

II. Commission Membership

The Commission is composed of twenty-one Commissioners, nine each from the United States Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, appointed respectively by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. In addition, there are three Commissioners from the executive branch, one each from the Departments of State, Defense, and Commerce, appointed by the President of the United States.

At the beginning of each odd-numbered Congress, the President of the Senate designates a Senate Member as Chairman and the Speaker designates a House Member as Co-Chairman. At the beginning of each even-numbered Congress, the Speaker designates a House Member as Chairman and the President of the Senate designates a Senate Member as Co-Chairman. (See Appendix (A) for the list of Commissioners in the 111th Congress).

III. Commission Personnel

The Commission's staffing consists of nineteen permanent positions. Staff responsibilities are noted in Appendix (B). Over the years, the Commission has benefited from the assignment of a Senior Foreign Service Officer, detailed from the Department of State on a full-time basis. The Government Printing Office also details a printing clerk to the Commission on a full-time basis.

Since its establishment, the Commission has maintained a small but highly motivated and exceptionally capable professional staff. In addition to their expert knowledge in the geographical areas of the OSCE and in the human rights, military security, and economic and environmental dimensions of the Helsinki process, current staff members are proficient in languages including Azerbaijani, Belarusian, Chinese, French, German, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish and Ukrainian.

Moreover, due to the extensive experience and service of the Commission staff and their primary focus on OSCE issues, the Commission provides a continuity and unmatched reservoir of institutional knowledge within the U.S. government on such matters, and helps contribute to the development of a consistent and principled policy in keeping with its statutory mandate. This institutional knowledge has been utilized by the Congress and U.S. government agencies, most especially the Department of State, in its preparation for and participation in a wide variety of OSCE meetings, as well as by non-governmental organizations and private sector institutions and think tanks. The OSCE community has also recognized the Commission's unique leadership, knowledge and talent, consulting with Commission staff in preparation for meetings and drafting of documents, and other OSCE-related initiatives.

IV. Implementing the Commission's Mandate in the 111th Congress, 1st Session

The Commission has the responsibility, the international credibility, and the expertise to make a significant difference on issues that potentially threaten peace, security, and stability in the expansive OSCE region stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Commission engagement at home and abroad offers a unique avenue for promoting U.S. national interests in the security, economic, and human dimensions. The Commission's unique composition allows it to affect both U.S. foreign policy and congressional support for specific policies, while its expert practice of public diplomacy vigorously advances American values, ideals, and principles.

The Commission is mandated to monitor participating States' compliance with provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent OSCE agreements, with particular attention to human rights. These human rights commitments encompass a broad array of issues, including the freedoms of speech, media, assembly, association and movement; religious liberties; and the treatment of ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities. In 1991, the participating States, meeting in Moscow,

specifically recognized “the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension of the [Helsinki process] are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned.”

Of the 56 OSCE participating States, the Commission pays particular attention to those where persistent violations of human rights or democratic norms occur (especially states where authoritarian regimes cling to power); to countries and regions in which there is potential, ongoing or residual conflict; and to countries where particular political developments open windows of opportunity to advance specific human rights improvements. Additionally, the Commission has focused on some aspects of the United States’ own implementation record, engaging with relevant officials with the aim of bringing laws, policies and practices into conformity with OSCE commitments.

Protracted conflicts in the OSCE region, including in Transdniestria, the North Caucasus, and parts of the Balkans, present significant ongoing challenges. In the Caucasus, it seemed as if stability had been restored but in August 2008, war broke out between Georgia and Russia over South Ossetia, a breakaway region. Moscow and Tbilisi traded accusations of responsibility for the hostilities, which followed months of heightened tensions and provocations.

The Commission pursues its mandate in a variety of ways. First, specific instances of human rights abuses or shortcomings are often raised with the country of concern. Members of the Commission may intercede directly with that country's officials and representatives (at home and abroad), and through correspondence. Commissioners occasionally offer relevant legislation, resolutions and Congressional Record statements. When warranted by human rights improvements, Commissioners draw attention to positive developments as well.

Members of the Commission regularly communicate their views to senior officials at the Department of State and other relevant U.S. government agencies and, when necessary, seek to raise or improve the level of U.S. engagement regarding specific countries, cases or issues, including related OSCE policies. Ongoing staff contact with the U.S. Mission to the OSCE, the State Department country desk officers and human rights officers at U.S. Embassies abroad – posts with noticeably high turnover – helps ensure that these offices are kept informed of issues of concern. Significantly, the work of the Commission has resulted in considerable success in helping to resolve individual cases of human rights violations, and in ameliorating specific problems in this fashion.

Hearings and briefings offer the most public forum to highlight violations of human rights and other OSCE commitments. For certain topics, Administration officials testify on U.S. government policies, and Commissioners have also utilized these hearings to press the Executive Branch to take more resolute actions where circumstances warrant. These hearings find an audience among other U.S. government agencies, non-governmental organizations, the media, the general public, and among embassy personnel and other officials from OSCE participating States. Moreover, as a tool for applying international pressure on their own officials, the records of these public hearings and briefings are highly valued by human rights activists in countries which violate human rights. (For a complete listing of Commission hearings, briefings, reports, and articles, see Appendix (D).)

Commissioners or Commission staff members have served as members of U.S. delegations to every major OSCE human rights meeting since the Commission was established, a fact which strengthens the Commission's institutional knowledge and influence. The multilateral context affords the Commission an important venue for advancing its mandate to monitor and promote compliance by OSCE participating States with their freely undertaken commitments. In particular, within the context of OSCE fora, specific violations of commitments are raised directly with the States concerned. Finally, participation in these meetings uniquely enables the Commission to contribute to the process of standard-setting and establishing priorities and goals to advance implementation of the OSCE commitments, and to monitor the organizational development of the OSCE.

Although an independent agency of the U.S. government with Commissioners from both the executive and legislative branches, the Commission's leadership rests in the Congress and its membership is primarily drawn from the Congress. This structure reinforces an understanding in foreign capitals that the Congress and the American people attach significant importance to respect for individual human rights and other aspects of the Helsinki process. The Commission's bipartisan and bicameral nature, its tenure, and its efforts reaffirm that respect for such rights is a matter of basic principle for Americans. Equally importantly, the Commission's work facilitates an understanding by foreign governments of the singular involvement of the U.S. Congress in foreign affairs, an aspect of American politics that is often not well understood overseas. (In fact, no other parliament of any other OSCE country has a body analogous to the Commission.)

The Commission continues to be an active and highly effective proponent of public diplomacy, reaching out to the private sector, think tanks, media, public groups and individuals to explain and promote the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE documents. Members and staff attended public fora, delivered presentations, lectured at the Foreign Service Institute and other venues, participated in panel discussions, made media appearances in both the domestic and foreign press – especially the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty – in an effort to heighten public awareness of Helsinki commitments and of issues involving specific OSCE participating States, and engaged both organizations and individuals in the promotion of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law as essential components of European security and cooperation. Again, these activities reinforce in the public mind the leadership of the Congress on individual rights, issues the American people care about very deeply.

The Commission has been particularly instrumental in introducing private citizens directly into the activities of the OSCE by supporting the inclusion of public members on U.S. delegations to OSCE meetings, seminars and specialized events. Under the guidance and assistance of Commission staff, these individuals have made important contributions to these meetings and have acquired for themselves a unique awareness of the value and mission of the OSCE. The Commission has also been the single most active voice for ensuring that the meetings and processes of the OSCE are as transparent as possible, and that non-governmental organizations can have full participation in OSCE human dimension activities.

In 2009, to meet changes in the media landscape, the Commission launched a new communications strategy that places a greater emphasis on the use of social networking and video and photo sharing sites, like YouTube, Facebook and Flickr.

To move from a traditional communications strategy that relies solely on print and broadcast media to one that calls for the production of original multimedia content, the Commission purchased new assets, including computers, software, and microphones. These assets have enabled the production of videos and slideshows, expanded the Commission's online network, reached thousands of new people and increased traffic to the Commission Web site <www.csce.gov>.

In line with President Obama's Open Government Directive, the creation and distribution of multimedia content has increased the transparency of the Commission, inviting more citizen participation and interaction with the agency. The new content also empowers the Commission to improve its engagement with foreign governments, their embassies, and nongovernmental organizations throughout the 56 countries of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, through the timely sharing of content from the Commission that directly addresses concerns within their country or features their delegation visiting the Helsinki Commission.

The Commission's new communications initiatives reflect a commitment to reach out to people where they are currently (and increasingly) consuming media rather than follow a status quo approach of communicating to traditional news outlets with dwindling audiences.

V. U.S.-OSCE Policy and Engagement with OSCE Leadership

The Commission continues to focus attention on the relationship between U.S. foreign policy, human rights, and the OSCE. Engagement with Senior Department of State officials, including the Secretary of State, provides an important avenue for Commissioners to help influence related U.S. policy. In this regard, regular contact is maintained especially with the Bureaus of European and Eurasian Affairs; South and Central Asian Affairs; and Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. During 2009, a particular focus on these exchanges centered on Kazakhstan's commitments to undertake certain reforms in connection with the decision taken at the 2007 Madrid OSCE Ministerial Meeting designating that country as OSCE chair-in-office for 2010.

Similarly, the Commission leadership has placed importance on direct engagement with the top political leader of the Vienna-based organization, having convened a hearing with the OSCE Chairman-in-Office annually since 2001.

Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis inaugurated her country's 2009 OSCE chairmanship with a major address before the Permanent Council in mid-January focused on the numerous challenges facing the Vienna-based organization. She stressed that the quest for security in the OSCE region had become ever more complex, especially following the August 2008 Russo-Georgian war. Bakoyannis outlined Athens' priorities for the year, including the peaceful resolution of the region's protracted conflicts, underscoring Greece's desire to serve as an honest broker. The cornerstones for the Greek Chairmanship, according to Bakoyannis, would be synergy, symmetry and strategy.

Chairman Cardin and Co-Chairman Hastings were joined by other Commissioners for a meeting with Minister Bakoyannis, in her capacity as OSCE Chairman-in-Office, in late February in Washington during a visit that included consultations with Secretary Clinton. They were able to follow-up on a number of issues raised in her address to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Winter Meeting in Vienna earlier that month. Chairman Cardin had an opportunity to continue discussions with Bakoyannis and other senior Greek officials at the informal OSCE ministerial meeting held in Corfu which focused on European security.

As with several prior chairmanships Greece's underwent changes of ministers, in this case as a result of parliamentary elections. In early October, George Papandreou assumed the office of prime minister as well as concurrently serving as foreign minister and in that capacity as OSCE Chairman-in-Office. Chairman Cardin and Co-Chairman Hastings were among the first foreign officials to meet with Papandreou following the October 4 election as part of a Congressional delegation that included Commissioner McIntyre and Senator Voinovich, a former Commissioner. The delegation was in Athens for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Fall Meeting.

VI. The Parliamentary Dimension of the OSCE

Both Commissioners and Commission staff have continued to participate in the work of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, as well as to solicit the involvement of other Members of Congress in these activities. Representation at these inter-parliamentary events unquestionably demonstrates a solid, ongoing congressional commitment to maintaining and strengthening United States-European relations.

The primary task of the Copenhagen-based OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is to promote parliamentary involvement in the activities of the OSCE and to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation among parliamentarians from the OSCE participating States. Other important objectives of the Assembly are: to assess the implementation of OSCE commitments by participating States; to discuss subjects addressed during meetings of the Ministerial Council and summit meetings of OSCE Heads of State or Government; to develop and promote mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts; to support the strengthening and consolidation of democratic institutions in the participating States; and to contribute to the development of OSCE institutional structures and of relations and cooperation with other OSCE institutions.

A total of 320 parliamentarians, including as many as 17 members of the U.S. Congress, can participate in the Assembly's major meetings, which include a Winter Meeting in Vienna, an Annual Session in changing locations, and a Fall Conference/Mediterranean Forum the venue of which also changes from year-to-year. The Bureau, an equivalent to an executive committee, also meets every April and December. Beyond these meetings, parliamentarians also contribute their political and regional expertise by serving as Special Representatives, members of Ad Hoc Committees and participants on election observation missions undertaken by the Assembly throughout the year.

U.S. participation in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly goes beyond attendance at these

meetings; many Members of Congress have traditionally played an active leadership role in the Assembly. In 2009, Helsinki Commission Chairman Benjamin L. Cardin was re-elected as one of nine Vice-Presidents. Former Commissioner Hilda L. Solis, who was elected Chair of the (Third) General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions in 2008, stepped down upon leaving the U.S. Congress in 2009 to serve as Secretary of Labor. At the Vilnius Annual Session in 2009, Commissioner Robert B. Aderholt was elected to be the new Vice-Chair of the Third Committee. Co-Chairman Alcee L. Hastings, who served as Assembly President from 2004-2006, was reappointed as the Assembly's Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs, and Ranking Commissioner Christopher H. Smith received a new appointment as Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues.

Helsinki Commission Co-Chairs Cardin and Hastings, along with Commissioners Sheldon Whitehouse, Tom Udall, Roger Wicker and Mike McIntyre as well as Representative Gwen Moore, represented the United States at the Winter Meeting held February 19-20, 2009. Three U.S. statements were delivered during a general debate on the Russian proposal for a new European security architecture. Other U.S. statements, mostly in committee sessions, supported OSCE efforts in the Mediterranean region, reported on the latest efforts of the Obama Administration to close Guantanamo Bay as a detention facility, described the delegation's visit to Israel and Syria prior to the Winter Meeting, raised the plight of children in armed conflict, noted the new prospects for U.S. engagement on climate change, called for greater transparency in extractive industries, expressed opposition to greater trade protectionism during the world economic crisis, stressed the need to focus on religious freedom issues, supported the Parliamentary Assembly's important contribution to election observation in the OSCE region and announced an initiative to respond to the problem of maternal mortality around the globe.

The Assembly's 18th Annual Session took place in Vilnius, Lithuania, from June 29 to July 3, 2009. The U.S. Delegation was led Commission Chairman Cardin and included Co-Chairman Hastings, Ranking Commissioner Smith, Commissioners Wicker, Slaughter, McIntyre, Butterfield and Aderholt. They were joined on the delegation by Senate Assistant Majority Leader Dick Durbin, Senator George Voinovich and Representatives Lloyd Doggett, Madeleine Z. Bordallo and Gwen S. Moore. More than 300 parliamentarians attended the session, together with other officials.

The U.S. Delegation actively participated in the work of the Assembly's three general Committees, each of which considered a draft resolution as well as a total of 23 supplementary items. Two additional items were considered in the opening plenary.

Three of the supplementary items were proposed by members of the U.S. Delegation: Freedom of Expression on the Internet (Smith); International Cooperation in Afghanistan (McIntyre); and Prevention of Maternal Mortality (Moore), all of which were adopted. U.S. delegates were also instrumental in garnering support for supplementary items introduced by others, such as a Canadian resolution on combating anti-Semitism. In all, 26 amendments were sponsored by U.S. delegates.

At the meeting, the U.S. Delegation held bilateral meetings with the Georgian and Russian delegations, and, while in Lithuania, met President Valdas Adamkus and other Lithuanian leaders. Prior to arrival in Vilnius, the delegation visited Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and

some members of the delegation also made official visits to Albania, Belarus, Greece and Latvia as part of the delegation's work in Europe.

Co-Chairman Hastings also attended the OSCE PA's Bureau meeting in Lisbon, Portugal, on April 20, where he reported on his work as Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs and helped develop draft amendments to the OSCE PA rules of procedure.

The Helsinki Commission was represented at several other meetings of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. In late May, Co-Chairman Hastings attended the Assembly's Economic Conference in Dublin, Ireland, focused on the world economic crisis.

Co-Chairman Hastings also served as a Deputy Head of the OSCE mission organized by the Parliamentary Assembly to observe the June 28 Albanian elections. Commission staff also participated in OSCE PA election observation activities surrounding parliamentary elections in Albania as well as in Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova and Montenegro in 2009.

Chairmen Cardin and Hastings, along with Commissioner McIntyre and Senator Voinovich, participated in the Fall Conference and Mediterranean Forum, which took place in Athens, Greece, from October 8 to 12, 2009. The Forum discussed a wide variety of security, economic, environmental and humanitarian issues affecting the Mediterranean region.

VII. OSCE Partners for Cooperation and Mediterranean Partners

The 56-nation OSCE now has 12 Partners for Cooperation, including six Mediterranean Partners: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia; and six Partners in Asia: Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, Mongolia, South Korea and Thailand. Partner countries, while not participating in regular negotiating fora of the OSCE, nevertheless attended and participated in numerous OSCE meetings. Since 2007 Partners are seated with the participating States during the weekly meetings of the Permanent Council in Vienna and participate fully in discussions. The OSCE and its Partners for Cooperation maintain close relations and hold frequent seminars to explore ways to strengthen cooperation on issues of mutual interest. The Partners were active throughout 2009 sending representatives to all major meetings and seminars.

The Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE was reformulated in the mid-90s as "Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation" to include Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Morocco and Tunisia. Such "partner" status does not require commitment to Helsinki principles by these countries. In 1998, Jordan was accepted as a Mediterranean Partner, and Afghanistan, which many consider to lie within the broader Middle East region and which borders the Central Asian states of the OSCE, was accepted as a Partner for Cooperation in 2003. In 2009, Australia was accepted as an Asian Partner for Cooperation.

In an effort to broaden and intensify this relationship, the OSCE, including the Parliamentary Assembly, has convened numerous seminars, conferences and forums emphasizing issues of particular interests to both the participating States and the Partner countries from the region. Additionally, two contact groups exist within the OSCE to provide an ongoing opportunity for participating States and the Partners to maintain dialogue. One contact group is for the Asian

Partners, and the other for the Mediterranean Partners; monthly meetings are typically held at the ambassadorial level.

Co-Chairman Hastings was reappointed in 2009 as Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and actively engaged the Mediterranean Partner States throughout the year. On July 22 and 23, Co-Chairman Hastings convened the “CSCE Seminar on OSCE Mediterranean Partner Engagement,” at the United States Capitol Visitor Center in Washington, D.C. The seminar was among the largest events in the history of the Commission and hosted over 50 participants from the OSCE Mediterranean Partner States of Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia, as well as Members of the United States Congress, U.S. government officials, non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives, and special guests. Delegations of the Mediterranean Partner States consisted of parliamentarians and representatives from their Washington-based diplomatic missions. Special guests included representatives of the Greek OSCE chairmanship, and delegates from Kazakhstan, the country slated to assume the OSCE chairmanship in 2010, staff representation of the OSCE and OSCE PA International Secretariats, as well as representatives of the Swedish Presidency of the European Union. The seminar consisted of a Working Meeting on OSCE Mediterranean Partner Engagement, three expert seminars on current regional issues, and an official hearing of the Helsinki Commission. An official report of the proceedings was released in December 2009.

Deeply concerned by the flood of Iraqi refugees into neighboring countries, particularly OSCE Mediterranean Partner Jordan which has accepted more than half a million, and the impact of this humanitarian crisis on the region, on January 15, 2009 Co-Chairman Hastings re-introduced his comprehensive legislation to address this crisis, the “Iraqi Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Security Act” (H.R. 578). Commission staff continues to engage with NGOs and U.S. and foreign government officials on behalf of Iraqi refugees in an effort to address ongoing concerns, resettlement issues and challenges facing this population as the U.S. continues to draw down its military and civilian presence in Iraq. While in Cairo, Egypt, for a regional OSCE security conference in December 2009, Commission staff met with Egyptian government officials, representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and NGOs working on the ground in Egypt to assess the status of Iraqi refugees in that country.

On October 11, 2009 Chairman Hastings delivered the keynote presentation for the Annual Mediterranean Forum during the Fall Meetings of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Athens, Greece, which examined the theme “The OSCE Mediterranean Dimension: Prospects and Challenges.” His remarks reported on the proceedings of the July 2009 Helsinki Commission Seminar on OSCE Mediterranean Partner Engagement and presented an outlook for the future of the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension. The principle themes he illuminated were negotiating a regional role for the Mediterranean Dimension, fostering leadership from the Mediterranean Partners in OSCE related activities, optimizing the OSCE Partnership Fund, and involvement in the Middle East peace process.

On December 14-15, 2009 Commission staff participated in the annual 2009 OSCE Mediterranean Conference on “The Mediterranean Partners and the OSCE: Cooperation Toward Enhanced Security and Stability” in Cairo, Egypt. Conference topics included politico-military aspects of security, the impact of the global financial crisis on migration, and prospects for the

future of the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension. Commission staff presented the official report of the July 2009 Helsinki Commission Mediterranean Seminar to the participants.

Commission staff attended the OSCE's Asian Partners for Cooperation meeting in Tokyo, Japan from June 10 to 11, 2009. The purpose of the annual conference is to discuss how the participating States of the OSCE and the Asian partners can best co-operate to address global security challenges. Given the focus on security issues and the geographical location of the conference, much of the discussion focused on the growing tension on the Korean Peninsula. Both South Korea and Japan, in particular, made urgent appeals for greater involvement of all states in finding a peaceful solution to the ongoing danger posed by North Korea.

VIII. Military Security and Emerging Threats: Twenty-First Century Security in the OSCE Region

In 2009, the Helsinki Commission continued to encourage OSCE work on a wide-range of security issues, including frozen conflict areas in the OSCE region.

In conjunction with the signing of the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) in 1999, and in light of realities associated with the break-up of the Warsaw Pact and the demise of the Soviet Union, Russia made parallel commitments (adopted at the 1999 Istanbul Summit) to withdraw Treaty-Limited Equipment as well as military personnel from Moldova, to withdraw or destroy excess equipment and munitions, and to close two bases and to negotiate the future of remaining Russian bases and facilities in Georgia. To date, these commitments remain unfulfilled; accordingly, NATO allies have been unwilling to ratify the Agreement on Adaptation which would bring the revised treaty into force. Russian intransigence on its Istanbul commitments has, in turn, created a stumbling block to progress on other issues at several OSCE Ministerial Council meetings. Russia unilaterally suspended its compliance with the CFE Treaty effective December 12, 2007.

With respect to frozen conflicts and potential sources of conflict, the Commission has paid particular attention to developments in the Caucasus region. In a demonstration of concern over the tenuous security situation in Georgia, the U.S. delegation offered a resolution at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 2008 Annual Meeting in Astana, expressing concern over the unstable security situation in Georgia and calling upon the participating States to resolve outstanding differences through the consultative and diplomatic process, and to refrain from the threat of, or the use of force, to resolve such differences according to the guiding principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act. The resolution was adopted by a majority of the meeting's representatives.

Barely two months later, Russian military forces crossed into neighboring Georgia in blatant violations of virtually all of the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act. Having earlier granted blanket Russian citizenship to residents of Georgia's breakaway region of South Ossetia, Moscow cited protection of its nationals as the basis for its invasion and occupation of Georgian territory, including the conflict zone and beyond. The French EU Presidency played a leading role in efforts to broker a ceasefire agreement undertaking several rounds of shuttle diplomacy between Moscow and Tbilisi. Ultimately, an agreement was reached that included the deployment of EU monitors to assess the situation on the ground in Georgia. To respond to the

unfolding socio-economic crisis resulting from the August war, Helsinki Commission Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings sponsored legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives to authorize a package of economic reconstruction and humanitarian assistance to Georgia.

During 2009, considerable attention was focused on how to respond to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's call for a new European Security architecture contained in remarks he made in early June 2008 at a conference in Berlin. Medvedev critiqued the shortcomings of leading multilateral institutions and called for a restructuring of the security architecture for Europe. The Russian President decried attempts to isolate and marginalize countries, warning of the consequences of creating zones with differentiated levels of security and abandoning the creation of general regional collective security systems.

That October, at an international security conference in Paris, French President Nicolas Sarkozy suggested that the OSCE should serve as the logical place for further discussion of the idea. Foreign ministers attending the OSCE 2008 Helsinki Ministerial Meeting held an informal luncheon to exchange views regarding the initiative. Many Europeans expressed interest in engaging with Moscow on Russia's proposal for a new European Security Architecture, while others were hesitant to commit to convening a high-level OSCE meeting to launch any negotiations on new European security structures and mechanisms without more particulars.

As a consequence of the war between Russia and Georgia during August 2008, and of Russian President Medvedev's proposal for a new European Security Architecture, the Helsinki Ministerial set the stage for launching an OSCE dialogue on European Security during 2009. The Greek Chairmanship then initiated the so-called Corfu Process to begin this dialogue, with the aim of examining the issues that have eroded trust and confidence among the OSCE participating States and of a component of the key European security architecture, the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE). (In any case, in December 2007 Russia unilaterally suspended its participation in the CFE).

The Commission co-chairs discussed the Medvedev proposal with senior U.S. and foreign officials, including OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dora Bakoyannis, throughout the year. Chairman Cardin participated in an OSCE Parliamentary Assembly delegation to the informal OSCE Ministerial Meeting convened by the Greek chairmanship held in Corfu, Greece in June 2009. Assembly President Joao Soares headed the delegation.

The Helsinki Commission joined the dialogue on the Russian proposal by hosting a wide-ranging and candid discussion with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, Alexander Grushko, in June 2009 to obtain further elaboration as to what Russia envisioned as components of a new security architecture and to examine other security concerns in the OSCE. Russia subsequently distributed a draft European Security Treaty on the eve of the 2009 Athens Ministerial, though it did so bilaterally and outside the framework of the OSCE. The OSCE participating States expressed a willingness to discuss the draft treaty within its Corfu security dialogue.

The issue of European security featured prominently at the Commission's October hearing, "Advancing U.S. Interests in the OSCE Region." Testifying at the hearing were Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Philip Gordon; Assistant Secretary of

State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Michael Posner; and Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Alexander Vershbow.

The Corfu dialogue is expected to continue during 2010 with an aim of enhancing existing conflict prevention and confidence and security building mechanisms.

IX. Cooperation in the Field of Economics and the Environment

The Commission has been instrumental in advancing U.S. initiatives within the OSCE aimed at increasing transparency in resource-rich countries, ensuring a level playing field in developing climate change policies, and enhancing environmental security. These issues will continue to be a focus of the Commission's work, with an emphasis on extractive industries transparency, climate change issues and anti-corruption.

Commission staff actively participated in the 18th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) that focused on "Migration Management and Its Linkages with Economic, Social and Environmental Policies to the Benefit of Stability and Security in the OSCE Region." The four sessions of the Forum focused on migration management with a particular emphasis on reducing illegal migration through implementation of appropriate labor migration policies. The key areas of discussion included how to design labor migration policies that meet the needs of both employers and employees; aspects of these policies that ensure return or allow for permanent migration; attracting high-skilled and low-skilled labor; and enforcement aspects such as anti-human trafficking and anti-human smuggling measures.

In February, at the OSCE PA Winter Meeting, Commissioners were active on several fronts. Commissioner Tom Udall discussed the new prospects for U.S. engagement with Europe on climate change, and Commissioner Sheldon Whitehouse called for greater transparency regarding extractive industries, where corruption limits economic progress in developing countries. Senator Wicker responded to criticisms of the United States related to the economic crisis and pushed back against calls for greater trade protectionism.

In May, at the OSCE PA's Dublin Economic Conference, which focused on the global financial crisis, Co-Chairman Hastings delivered a keynote address on financial regulation, trade protectionism, good governance, and the social consequences of the crisis, in addition to weaving in the need for revenue transparency in the extractive industries as an integral part of creating more transparency in the global financial system overall. The Commission was also instrumental in arranging for the Secretary General of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) to speak at the conference.

In June, at the Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Vilnius, Lithuania Commissioners introduced a number of resolutions and supplemental items on economic and environmental issues. Chairman Cardin sponsored amendments encouraging participation in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and advocating robust participation by all participating States at the December Climate Conference in Copenhagen. Co-Chairman Hastings called for a more comprehensive and balanced approach to migration management in order to

prevent manifestations of xenophobia and other forms of intolerance at country border entry areas.

At the Fall Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Athens, Commission Chairman Cardin gave a keynote speech on energy in which he updated parliamentarians on the status of climate change legislation in the U.S. Congress and laid out his expectations for success at the next round of climate change negotiations in Copenhagen, Denmark, scheduled to be held in early December under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Acknowledging the criticism from others regarding the slow pace of climate change legislation in the United States, Senator Cardin reminded the parliamentarians that “We face an economic crisis, an energy security crisis, and a global climate crisis.”

He also reiterated his call for resource rich countries to proactively report in all areas relevant to revenue transparency on a country-by-country basis; encouraging governments and appropriate regulatory agencies to introduce mandatory revenue transparency reporting for the operations of companies at home and abroad; and encouraging governments from oil and gas producing countries to introduce regulations that would require all companies operating in their territories to make public information relevant to revenue transparency.

In September Chairman Cardin together with Senator Lugar and two Helsinki Commissioners (Senators Whitehouse and Wicker) introduced the Energy Security Through Transparency Act (ESTT, S.1700) in the Senate. The bill is aimed at advancing U.S. efforts to promote good governance of extractive industries through increased transparency at home and abroad by requiring companies listed on U.S. stock exchanges to disclose in their regular SEC filings extractive payments made to foreign governments for oil, gas and mining, and expresses the Sense of Congress that the U.S. should set an example for the world by becoming an implementing country of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), and committing the Department of Interior to enhance public disclosure of extractive industries payments received by the federal government.

In his speech at the Athens Fall Forum, Senator Cardin urged the British and Canadian delegations to take similar action in their own parliaments so that the transparency requirement would apply to the greatest number of listed companies.

In line with his work promoting transparency and combating corruption, Chairman Cardin introduced language into the Senate climate bill to strengthen the transparency of international carbon offsets. Offsets – particularly those tied to reducing deforestation – are an important part of combating climate change. However, because governments with endangered forests could potentially receive \$30 billion a year through offset programs, this may lead to a devastating new source of corruption, similar to that experienced in countries with other natural resource wealth such as oil, gas and minerals.

The Commission was successful in proposing language that was subsequently adopted at the December Athens Ministerial related to energy security in the OSCE region, included a reference for the need for greater transparency in the OSCE region, and encouraged greater cooperation with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

X. Protection of Human Rights

1.

The Annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

From September 28 to October 9, 2009, the OSCE participating States met in Warsaw, Poland, for the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM). The HDIM is Europe's largest human rights gathering, convened to discuss the compliance of participating States, with the full range of human dimension commitments they have previously adopted by consensus.

The HDIM is the only multinational human rights meeting in Europe where non-governmental organization representatives and government representatives have equal access to the speakers' list. The implementation review meetings are intended to serve as the participating States' principal venues for public diplomacy and can be important vehicles both for identifying continued areas of poor human rights performance and for shaping the OSCE decision-making process with respect to human dimension concerns. At the 2009 meeting, Kazakhstan's 2010 chairmanship of the OSCE was an overarching subject of concern – beginning when NGO demonstrators, during Kazakhstan's opening statement, silently stood up wearing t-shirts supporting jailed human rights activist Evgeny Zhovtis. The Kazakhstani delegation was large and high-level, and numerous NGOs from Kazakhstan participated and criticized the country's human rights record in light of its 2010 OSCE Chairmanship. Although Kazakhstani officials started the meeting on a good foot, their efforts at self-restraint failed over the course of the two-week long meeting and, at times, individual Kazakhstan officials demonstrated hostility and contempt towards some NGO participants from their country.

As at past meetings, the Commission's preparations for, contributions to, and participation in the HDIM were substantial. In advance of this meeting, the Commission staff met with Department of State officials regarding the U.S. approach to the meeting, suggested specific human rights concerns to be raised, recommended prospective public members, and provided draft U.S. interventions. In doing so, the Commission was able to draw on its institutional memory of the Helsinki process, its regional expertise, and its specialization in human rights matters to advance U.S. interests. At the meeting itself, Commission staff participated in all aspects of the U.S. delegation's work, including the delivery of U.S. interventions, bilateral meetings with other countries' delegations held to raise specific human rights concerns, meetings with NGO representatives, and consultations on the overall direction of OSCE human dimension activities.

The U.S. Delegation to the 2009 HDIM was headed by Dr. Michael Haltzel, Senior Fellow at the Center for Transatlantic Relations of Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies and former Senior Foreign Policy Advisor to Senator Joseph Biden. Petra Gelbart, Department of Musicology, Harvard University, and Dan Mariaschin, Executive Vice President, B'nai B'rith International, served as expert Public Members on the delegation. Assistant Secretary for Human Rights, Democracy, and Labor Michael Posner – confirmed by the United States Senate just as the meeting opened – participated in the meeting and delivered the closing statement for the United States. Commission staff, including Chief of Staff Fred L. Turner contributed extensively to the preparations for the meeting and played a significant role in the work of the delegation. The United States continued its longstanding practice of naming

specific countries and cases of concern.

The annual HDIM agenda provides a comprehensive review of the implementation of core human rights and fundamental freedoms (e.g., freedoms of speech, assembly and association; prevention of torture; right to a fair trial), as well as rule of law, free elections and democracy-building issues. National minorities, Roma, tolerance and non-discrimination are also on the agenda. The United States continued its longstanding practice of naming specific countries and cases of concern.

In accordance with OSCE procedures, the agenda included three specially selected topics, each of which was given a full day of review. In 2009, those subjects were: 1) human rights education; 2) freedom of expression, free media and information; and 3) Roma/Sinti and, in particular, early education for Roma and Sinti children.

As in the past, the United States faced criticism for retaining the death penalty. In addition, NGOs argued that there should be accountability for instances of torture perpetrated by U.S. officials (including those who ordered or authorized abuse), and access to justice for individual victims of torture.

Other Human Dimension Meetings

In March, Commission staff attended the “Roundtable on Combating Anti-Semitism: Current Trends and Challenges in the OSCE Region” and “Racism in the OSCE region: Old Issues, New Challenges” Roundtable, and “Hate Crime Laws: A Practical Guide” workshop.

The Roundtable on Anti-Semitism was headed by the Chairman-in-Office’s Personal Representative on Combating anti-Semitism, Rabbi Andrew Baker, and reviewed the current situation in the OSCE region and proposed steps the OSCE could utilize to counter the problem. The meeting focused on monitoring the problem, including the role of civil society, the need for increased data by participating States, and prevention, including the role of the internet. The need to increase support for efforts that would decrease anti-Semitic behavior was specifically raised.

The Roundtable on Racism took place as part of commemoration activities for the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and was opened by Ambassador Janez Lenarčič, Director of ODIHR, Eva Smith Asmussen, Chair of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), Anastasia Crickley, Chair of the Management Board of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), and Githu Muigai, UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The meeting focused on recent developments in the OSCE region and best practices for addressing the problem. In particular, the negative impact the economic crisis was having on racism, the rise of racist and xenophobic political platforms, the failure of institutions to respond to racism despite the adoption of anti-discrimination laws, negative perceptions of migrants, and the intersection of racism and anti-Islam sentiments were discussed. The need for participating States to implement and fund current policies and programs designed to address the problem was

highlighted.

The Hate Crimes workshop brought together the ODIHR Hate Crimes points of contact to launch “Hate Crimes Laws – A Practical Guide”, which provides guidelines for developing and implementing hate crime legislation. Data collection and the need for increased education in participating States on hate crimes were raised as major issues.

On July 9-10, 2009, Commission staff participated in the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM) on “Freedom of Religion or Belief,” convened in Vienna at the seat of the OSCE Permanent Council. The meeting opened shortly after the murder of a pregnant Muslim woman in a German courtroom. The victim was in court in connection with a legal action against a man who had called her a “terrorist,” possibly because of her *hijab*, a head covering. The man against whom she was taking legal action stabbed her multiple times, killing her and her unborn child. The German delegation provided information on the government’s condemnation of the crime, and early efforts to investigate and prosecute the perpetrator.

The Commission’s Policy Advisor to the U.S. Mission to the OSCE in Vienna, Austria, participated in the weekly meetings of the Permanent Council (the OSCE’s main decision-making body) as well as its working groups. Additionally, she participated in the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw, the annual OSCE Parliamentary Assembly meeting in Vilnius, as well as the Athens Ministerial. The Commission’s presence in Vienna affords a unique opportunity to provide input into the daily work of the U.S. Mission to the OSCE and fosters understanding by other delegations of the role of the U.S. Congress in foreign affairs.

2. Regional Developments

Central Asia

Still, the situation in the Caucasus was better than in Central Asia, where strongly authoritarian governments continued to control society, marginalizing opposition parties – where they are tolerated at all – and flouting OSCE commitments on fundamental freedoms. Political reform and democratization made no headway in the region in 2009. The region’s ruling elites have consolidated a president-centered political system that permits no serious opposition from institutions (parliaments or independent judiciaries), parties, civil society (especially free media) or individuals.

All these states are accustomed to decades-long rule by strongmen, whose families play key roles in the economy; none has created reliable succession procedures, and with the leaders of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in or approaching their ‘70s, no one knows what will happen when they pass from the scene. The least likely scenario involves a free and fair election.

In addition, the deepening U.S. involvement in Afghanistan and the need for transit through Central Asia to compensate for increasingly dangerous routes via Pakistan has apparently bolstered the conviction among regional leaders that Washington needs them more than they need U.S. assistance. Consequently, efforts to press regional leaders on democratization, reform

and human rights observance encountered correspondingly greater resistance.

The most important developments in the region in 2009 centered on Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. The former, which had been the region's most liberal country, regressed noticeably toward the Central Asian mean of top-down rule by the head of state. At the same time, Kazakhstan prepared to fulfill its dream of becoming Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE.

Little significant change marked 2009 in gas-rich Turkmenistan, which remains the sole one-party state in the OSCE space; all opposition and dissent are banned. Hopes that the country might open up when longtime, quirky dictator Saparmurat Niyazov died in December 2006 have not materialized: successor Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov has only eliminated the oddest policies – such as banning the opera and circus and reducing school hours – while retaining Niyazov's closed, repressive system. There is little or no change for ordinary people; the occasional amnesties have not benefitted political prisoners.

On the other hand, the country is less isolated and Berdymukhamedov has established better relations with neighbors and distant states. He is also trying to loosen Russian control of Turkmenistan's gas by making deals with China, Iran and exploring possibilities with other potential partners.

In February, the Commission organized a screening of the film "Shadow of the Holy Book," directed by award-winning Finnish director Arto Halonen, examining how some of the world's biggest international companies have secured lucrative contracts with late President Niyazov's dictatorial regime, including funding translations of the Ruhnama, Niyazov's so-called "spiritual guide."

Under President Islam Karimov, Uzbekistan is almost as repressive as Turkmenistan. There are five pro-government parties but opposition and dissent are not permitted. Soviet-era censorship remains in effect. The OSCE did not observe parliamentary elections in December, citing the absence of conditions for fair elections. Many human rights activists and Muslims outside government-controlled structures are in jail.

Karimov signed a strategic partnership agreement with the United States in 2003 but relations foundered after the massacre of hundreds of protesters in Andijon in 2005. In 2009, with Central Asia becoming ever more important to the US effort in Afghanistan, bi-lateral ties improved and a prominent political prisoner was released. Tashkent did not, however, respond to a letter from the Commission's leadership on a jailed Protestant pastor.

Tajikistan, which experienced a disastrous civil war in the 1990s, continues to suffer the consequences. President Imomali Rakhmon and his relatives have consolidated control of the country's politics and economy; despite nominal representation of opposition parties in the parliament, Tajikistan's record on elections differs little from the regional norm.

The most worrying development in the human rights sphere was a highly restrictive law on religion, which requires the re-registration of denominations. Those which refuse or fail to register will be effectively illegal. Minority faiths have been targeted, with Jehovah's Witnesses and two Protestant communities having already been banned, but the legislation has also affected

Muslims outside the state-controlled network of mosques.

Kyrgyzstan is the only country in Central Asia where a “color” revolution took place (2005.) Under former President Askar Akaev, parliament was not totally subordinate to the executive branch, journalists were relatively free and civil society was developed enough to threaten the ruling elite with serious street demonstrations. But successor Kurmanbek Bakiev is a much more determined authoritarian leader; his re-election in 2009 was the worst election Helsinki Commission staff has observed, with blatant vote rigging. Bakiev’s supporters dominate parliament and opposition politicians and journalists have been killed or intimidated into virtual political insignificance. In June, the Commission held a briefing on the situation in Kyrgyzstan an advance of the presidential election.

On the other hand, Bakiev masterfully played Washington and Moscow against each other in the matter of the Manas air base: he managed to keep the base while getting more money from both Russia and the US.

A major story in Central Asia in 2009 was Kazakhstan’s preparation for its OSCE chairmanship – the first for a Soviet successor state, for a nominally majority-Muslim country and the first from Central Asia. Ruled by President Nursultan Nazarbayev since the late 1980s, Kazakhstan is the most successful regional state: its huge hydrocarbon resources are coveted by many countries and Kazakhstan is sufficiently liberal, by Central Asian standards, to win the OSCE’s chairmanship – even though parliament is a rubber-stamp institution composed of only members of the ruling party, while journalists risk fines, prison or death if they probe corruption or the royal family too closely.

Moreover, OSCE has not recorded any free and fair elections since the country's independence in 1991. A July 2009 law treats the internet like other media, which are subject to strict controls. Perhaps most controversial was the case of Yevgeniy Zhovtis, Kazakhstan’s leading human rights activist: in September 2009 he was sentenced to four years in prison for killing a man in a car accident. Many human rights groups saw his indictment and sentence as punishment for his human rights work

Kazakh officials, well aware of the country’s problematic reputation and anxious to avert potential problems, actively sought to engage the Helsinki Commission. Hoping to foster a better human rights environment in Kazakhstan and make its OSCE chairmanship as successful as possible, the Commission devoted considerable time and resources to that country. Throughout 2009, Commission leadership met with Kazakh officials, and Commission staff frequently interacted with the Kazakh embassy. In May, the Commission held the third in a series of hearings on Kazakhstan’s OSCE chairmanship. In September, the Commission, at the request of the Kazakhs, organized a seminar-roundtable for Kazakh officials to explicate the intricacies of the OSCE and what could be expected during 2010.

The meeting brought together U.S Government officials and Kazakhstani officials, including the Ambassadors to the U.S. and the OSCE, to exchange ideas about the challenges and priorities awaiting Kazakhstan during its chairmanship. Discussion topics ranged from freedom of speech, media, association, and religion to the role of NGOs, as well as how Kazakhstan would respond to international crises or violations of OSCE commitments and lead institutions within the OSCE

that monitor human rights and elections. Chairman Cardin used the occasion to reiterate concerns regarding the trial of human rights activist Yevgeniy Zhovtis. A session which included participation of human rights NGOs made clear that Kazakhstan had not managed to persuade them that it had implemented reform promises made to the OSCE.

With the outlook for political development in the Caucasus and Central Asia so bleak, many analysts have been pondering how to promote democratization. In July, the Commission held a hearing, “The Iran Crisis and the OSCE Neighbors,” to investigate what impact the bloody confrontations in Iran between protesters and the state's coercive apparatus after the rigged June election might have on the former Soviet republics.

In a statement issued in conjunction with the release of the State Department’s annual Report on International Religious Freedom, the Commission’s co-chairs cited specific concerns in several countries in the region: Kazakhstan, where religious activities by unregistered groups frequently lead to fines and time in jail; Tajikistan, where under a new religion law adopted this year all religious groups must undergo a process of re-registration by next year and Jehovah's Witnesses remain banned since 2007; and Uzbekistan, where Baptists and other Protestants, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Catholics, and Muslim groups have all been targeted by police raids and where laws prevent “illegally producing, storing, importing and distributing materials of a religious nature.”

Developments in Central Asia featured prominently among topics discussed at the Commission’s October hearing with senior officials from the Departments of State and Defense focused on “Advancing U.S. Interests in the OSCE Region.” Among specific issues raised was Kazakh President Nazarbayev’s call for the convening of an OSCE summit in 2010 during his country’s chairmanship.

Russia

U.S.-Russia relations improved markedly in 2009 as the Obama Administration pursued its “reset” policy and Russia’s President Medvedev sought to distinguish himself from his predecessor Prime Minister Putin. While Medvedev’s words gave many in the human rights community hope, his actions left much to be desired.

In June, Commission leaders hosted a lunch meeting for Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko and Russian Ambassador to the United States, Sergey Kislyak. The participants discussed a wide-range of security issues, including the role of the OSCE and Russia’s relationship with NATO and Afghanistan.

Also in June, the Commission held a briefing on the Republic of Dagestan. Dagestan is Russia’s oldest, most ethnically diverse and potentially volatile region. Many experts fear that instability in Dagestan could have a spill-over effect in the North Caucasus region and that the heavy-handed policies used by Moscow to quell the violence further stifle democracy across the entire Russian Federation.

In the lead-up to the first major summit between Presidents Obama and Medvedev, Commission staff traveled to Moscow to meet with the beleaguered human rights community and hear their

accounts of the Government of Russia's lack of compliance with many key OSCE commitments. This travel was followed by a hearing on what many have dubbed "The Medvedev Thaw", and a Commission letter to the White House raising key human rights concerns.

William Browder of Hermitage Capital Management testified at that hearing on alleged "corporate raiding" by senior Russian government officials. Browder's tax attorney, Sergei Magnitsky died in November, under suspicious circumstances, while in pre-trial detention in Moscow. The outcry over the death of a young and healthy attorney in a Russian jail prompted a statement by President Medvedev, the firing of numerous officials, and an investigation into Magnitsky's death specifically and prison conditions in general. The Commission co-chairs issued a related statement.

As the security situation in the North Caucasus deteriorated over the summer and into the fall, the Commission engaged on a wide variety of fronts to highlight the crisis, most notably by holding a series of briefings on the cycle of violence and impunity in Russia, particularly as it erodes the free flow of information by intimidating reporters and human right activists. The second briefing examined Russia's growing and little-understood Muslim community.

In December, Commission leaders welcomed the decision by an international arbitration panel in The Hague that recognized the Russian Federation is bound by the Energy Charter Treaty. The Tribunal's decision demonstrates that Russia's earlier decision to withdraw from provisional application of the treaty has had no bearing on the case because GML Limited filed their claim before Russia's withdrawal. The arbitration proceedings will now proceed on the merits of GML's claim to determine if Yukos assets were illegally expropriated and if shareholders should be compensated. The Commission has monitored this case and recognizes its impact on the broader issues of the rule of law that surround the highly publicized Yukos trials.

Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova

Throughout 2009, Ukraine's political scene continued to be tumultuous, and its democratic, pro-Western leadership was engulfed in an intense political feud between President Victor Yushchenko and his former Orange Revolution ally, Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko. Ukraine continued to be designated as "free," and not merely "partly free," according to Freedom House's widely respected "Freedom in the World" report, the only non-Baltic post-Soviet country to earn that designation. However, the rule of law, including a truly independent judiciary, remains weak and pervasive corruption continues to have a debilitating impact on the political elites and society as a whole.

Throughout 2009, Russia's stance towards Ukraine became more aggressive, the result of the Ukrainian leadership's moves in the direction of NATO and its support for Georgia following Russia's August 2008 invasion and occupation of that country. Ukraine has been especially hard-hit by the global financial crisis, despite a \$16.5 billion loan from the IMF designed to stabilize the financial system, although the IMF has withheld the final tranche due to the government's failure to fulfill loan conditions. Campaigning for the January 2010 elections intensified as the year came to a close.

There was little, if any, real progress in neighboring Belarus' poor human rights and democracy record – the worst in Europe, thanks to Alexander Lukashenka's repressive rule. Commission Chairman Sen. Cardin led a seven-member Congressional delegation to Minsk, which included Commissioners Wicker, Smith, Slaughter, McIntyre, Aderholt, and Senate Majority Leader Durbin. It was the largest and highest ranking U.S. congressional delegation ever to meet with Lukashenka. The delegation helped secure the release of American prisoner Emanuel Zeltser who had been convicted of highly questionable charges in a closed trial. The Commission had been a strong advocate for his release due to his health. The delegation also made clear to Lukashenka, that improvements in human rights and democracy were necessary to improve U.S. relations with Belarus and lift sanctions called for in the Belarus Democracy Reauthorization Act of 2006. While in Minsk, the delegation also met with leading political activists, several of whom had been imprisoned for opposing Lukashenka. The Commission facilitated a November 21-22 art exhibit of Belarusian dissident artists.

Commission staff observed the April parliamentary elections in Moldova, which were followed by violent street protests and ultimately a second round of voting in July. The OSCE noted that these elections met many international standards and commitments, but further improvements are needed to increase public confidence. A briefing was held in early August, "Moldova's recent Elections: Prospects for Change in Europe's Poorest Country", to assess the results of Moldova's parliamentary polls and the prospects for an end to the ongoing political impasse in that country.

The Caucasus

If 2008 was a stormy year in the Caucasus, with nationwide elections and full-blown war, 2009 was quieter: only local elections were held and despite fears of renewed hostilities, the peace held. But the elections did not advance democracy and Moscow did not implement the provisions of the ceasefire which ended the August 2008 war with Georgia.

The most important developments in the region in 2009 were diplomatic: Armenia and Turkey strove to settle longstanding antagonisms, in an initiative applauded by the international community. In October they signed protocols aiming at normalization of relations and the opening of borders. But the process has since hit major roadblocks. Yerevan and Ankara, while not renouncing their goal, now face diminished chances of success. The primary obstacle is a daunting contradiction: Armenia insists on normalization of relations without any preconditions, specifically, linkage with a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute; Ankara, responding to domestic constituencies and pressure from Azerbaijan, demands precisely such linkage. How this circle will or can be squared remains to be seen. The Commission co-chairs issued a statement welcoming steps toward normalization of relations between Ankara and Yerevan.

In other developments on "frozen conflicts," Russian forces remain in Abkhazia and South Ossetia under bilateral agreements with local authorities, consolidating the effective dismemberment of Georgia. In 2009 Moscow worked hard to win international recognition of the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. No other OSCE participating states, including Moscow's closest allies in the CIS, followed Russia's lead to confer recognition. As the year came to a close, Moscow's efforts – and financial inducements – had yielded victories only with Nicaragua, Venezuela and Nauru.

The OSCE was unable to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, despite a flurry of hopeful press releases from the parties involved and the negotiators, which ultimately proved optimistic. At year's end, the 1994 ceasefire remained in effect but the dispute was unresolved.

In Armenia, highly polarized and tense relations continued between the government and opposition in the wake of the bloody post-election events of spring 2008. Pressure by the OSCE and Council of Europe on Yerevan resulted in the release of most of the protesters arrested during that confrontation but hopes that the gulf might be bridged were dashed when observers characterized the first-ever election for Mayor of Yerevan on May 31 as fraudulent. In the fall, the opposition's attention shifted to Yerevan's reconciliation efforts with Turkey, which some parties backed and others anathematized: the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, for example, left the government in protest.

In a statement issued in conjunction with the release of the State Department's annual Report on International Religious Freedom, the Commission's co-chairs cited specific concerns regarding proposed changes to Armenia legislation which would ban people from sharing their faith with others and establish a numerical threshold for groups seeking registration. They likewise expressed concern over developments in Azerbaijan, where foreign-trained clergy are barred from leading prayers at mosques, requiring state approval of Muslim clerics.

In Azerbaijan, the state's assault on the media -- a defining feature of the rule of President Ilham Aliiev -- intensified. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media described Azerbaijan as the leading jailer of journalists in the OSCE space. In the most notorious recent case, the authorities in July charged two youth activist-bloggers with assault in a particularly crude provocation and sentenced them to jail terms. Helsinki Commission leadership, along with several other Members, wrote to President Aliiev to urge him to consider the damage done to Azerbaijan's reputation by its continuing crackdown. Constitutional amendments, passed in March 2009 eliminated term limits for the president, effectively allowing Ilham Aliiev to be president-for-life. A parliamentary by-election in December was characterized by widespread vote-rigging, perpetuating a consistent pattern of flawed voting in Azerbaijan.

In Georgia, society enjoyed relatively more freedom of action than in neighboring states but the opposition and human rights groups inside and outside the country complained of steadily worsening trends. A coalition of opposition parties sought to force President Mikheil Saakashvili from office in the spring by organizing street demonstrations, by which means he had himself come to power in the Rose Revolution of 2003. The organizers apparently hoped the authorities would overreact, as they had done in November 2007. But Saakashvili took a different tack, allowing the protesters to congregate as long as they wanted and the demonstrations eventually petered out, although the opposition reported a campaign of arrests and beatings of their supporters

Helsinki Commission Chairman and Co-Chairman met during the year with high-ranking Georgian officials, including Speaker of Parliament David Bakradze, to convey concerns about human rights problems. Commission leadership and staff also remained in close contact with opposition leaders.

In Georgia, an unprecedented election for the post of mayor of Tbilisi in May 2010 will be an important indicator of where the country is headed; in Azerbaijan, parliamentary elections at the end of the year will serve the same purpose. But in all three Caucasus countries, unhappy experience dictates deep concerns about the poor prospects of holding free and fair elections.

Southeastern Europe/Western Balkans

The countries of Southeastern Europe/Western Balkans continued to make progress in recovering from a decade of conflict which caused major human rights violations, economic collapse and fragile democratic transition. With strong Russian backing, Serbia's effort to block further international recognition of Kosovo's statehood has left further debate on the issue of status in a stalemate. This, in turn, has shifted focus on the increasingly difficult and potentially destabilizing situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina as the international community's leading concern. In April 2009, Albania and Croatia become full members of the NATO Alliance, and Montenegro's progress was recognized by its reception of a NATO Membership Action Plan. Macedonia also continued to move forward, despite the hold on its NATO membership by Greece over the longstanding name issue. All Western Balkan countries have continued their efforts to realize their aspirations for European Union membership, although some made significantly more dramatic progress toward integration than others.

Ongoing Commission efforts sought to encourage further progress through U.S. policy as well as OSCE activity, with a particular focus on holding free and fair elections, combating trafficking in persons, encouraging the return of displaced persons, responding to the plight of Roma, and calling for the prosecution of those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. These efforts were reflected in Commission participation in various seminars, conferences and other events, as well as in engagement with the U.S. State Department, diplomatic representatives of the countries concerned, representatives of OSCE institutions and field missions, various human rights and ethnic non-governmental organizations and the press.

The Helsinki Commission held two hearings on the Western Balkans in 2009. The first took place in April and provided expert analysis on the challenges for U.S. and European engagement. The featured witness was Lord Paddy Ashdown, the former High Representative in Bosnia-Herzegovina, supplemented by testimony from former Yale University history professor and president of the Croatian Helsinki Committee Ivo Banac, National Endowment for Democracy program officer Ivana Howard, and well known Balkan analyst James Lyon from the Democratization Policy Council. While all the countries of the region received some coverage, all of the witnesses expressed the greatest concern regarding the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and they urged the incoming European team of the Obama Administration's State Department to actively engage Bosnia's political leaders.

The second hearing took place in late September and was the venue for the official presentation of U.S. and European views of the situation. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Stuart Jones described U.S. policy responses, and Bjorn Lyrvall of the Swedish Foreign Ministry presented those of the European Union under the Swedish presidency. Like the April hearing, all countries of the region were examined, but Bosnia received the most concentrated attention. About one week after the hearing, in fact, a diplomatic effort known as the "Butmir process" was initiated

jointly by the United States and the European Union in an attempt to foster progress in Bosnia-Herzegovina, including through some modest steps at constitutional reform. While the process did not produce these results, it did improve the international community's coordination of policy responses and preclude premature international disengagement as Bosnian political leaders grapple with the country's future.

Reflecting this increased urgency regarding Bosnia's future and the positive role the United States can play in the region, a congressional delegation organized by the Helsinki Commission visited Sarajevo for two days of meetings in late June. The visit was a reinforcing follow-up on Vice President Biden's visit one month earlier. Led by Commission Chairman Benjamin Cardin, the delegation included Ranking House Commissioner Christopher Smith and Commissioners Roger Wicker, Louise McIntosh Slaughter, Mike McIntyre and Robert Aderholt in addition to Assistant Senate Majority leader Dick Durbin, Senator George Voinovich and Representatives Lloyd Doggett, Madeleine Bordallo and Gwen Moore. While meetings with Bosnian political leaders revealed little willingness to work constructively toward constitutional reform needed for an effective central government, a meeting with English-speaking university students revealed a refreshing desire to overcome ethnic divisions and move the country forward.

In October, following these hearings and the visit to Sarajevo, Chairman Cardin also met in Washington with Zeljko Kosmsic, the Croat member and, at the time, chairman of the tri-partite state Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He also met with the current Deputy High Representative, Dr. Raffi Gregorian. In November, the Chairman met with a visiting delegation of senior officials from the Republika Srpska entity in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In all these meetings, the details of the ongoing Butmir process were discussed, with the Senator continuing to support active U.S. engagement to encourage constitutional and other reforms in Bosnia-Herzegovina so that it can function more effectively as a state and move more quickly toward European integration.

Bosnia-Herzegovina has also been the subject of legislative efforts in the Congress, and the Helsinki Commission leadership has been active in supporting these efforts. First, Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings and Ranking Commissioner Christopher Smith both co-sponsored and supported House Resolution 171, introduced by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Howard Berman and expressing the sense of the House on the need for constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the importance of sustained United States engagement in partnership with the European Union. This resolution passed the House in May. Similarly, Chairman Cardin co-sponsored S.1559, a bill introduced by Senator Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry to consolidate democracy and security in the Western Balkans by supporting the Governments and people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro in reaching their goal of eventual NATO membership. This legislation is pending in the Senate.

While Kosovo has remained a concern for the Commission, Serbia's success in requesting the opinion of the International Court of Justice on the question of Kosovo's independence has led many countries to put the status question on hold. Chairman Cardin and Co-Chairman Hastings have encouraged other countries around the globe that have not done so to recognize Kosovo. At the same time, the Commission has continued to express concern about the treatment of the Serb and other minority communities as well as about the development of democratic institutions in Kosovo. This concern was conveyed in meetings with U.S. Embassy Pristina and other

interaction with the U.S. Department of State, as well as during the above-mentioned hearings on the Western Balkans.

Meanwhile, despite Washington's disagreement with Belgrade regarding Kosovo's status, the Commission has continued to engage Serbian officials and to encourage a consolidation of recently achieved democratic gains. Commission efforts have focused on the need to apprehend and transfer the two remaining at-large indictees, in particular Ratko Mladic, to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), located in The Hague. This remains an issue in bilateral relations, as some assistance to Serbia is conditioned on the degree of Belgrade's cooperation with The Hague. Cooperation has improved markedly in the last year, and Serbian officials meeting with Helsinki Commission staff indicated a strong commitment to action that will help the country overcome the legacy of extreme nationalism to Serbia's benefit at home and abroad.

Although generally further advanced in their NATO and EU prospects than Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia, the Commission monitored and encouraged continued progress in Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro.

Albania held important parliamentary elections in late June 2009. The Helsinki Commission convened a public briefing, chaired by Co-Chairman Hastings, focusing on the election prospects. Speakers included Dr. Elez Biberaj of the Voice of America, who is a leading analyst of Albanian affairs, as well as Rob Benjamin from the staff of the National Democratic Institute and Jonas Rolett from the Washington office of the Open Society Institute. Chairman Cardin co-sponsored and spoke on the Senate floor in support of passage of Senate Resolution 182, introduced by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry which called for transparency and fairness in the Albanian elections. Some of the concerns raised in these efforts were, in fact, addressed in time to ensure that the elections showed a clear improvement over previous years, as assessed by Co-Chairman Hastings and two Commission staff who participated in the international election effort. Co-Chairman Hastings reinforced his encouragement of Albania in a September meeting with the country's Deputy Foreign Minister, Edith Harxhi.

Two members of the Commission staff also participated in the observation of the presidential and local elections in Macedonia in March 2009. These elections avoided the violence and intimidation of voters evident in some parts of the country in the previous year's parliamentary elections, and met most OSCE standards for free and fair elections. The staff used the visit to meet with officials responsible for improving Macedonia's efforts to combat human trafficking, and with those seeking to improve the situation for the country's large Roma population. Chairman Cardin also met with Macedonia's bilateral ambassador to discuss efforts to resolve the name dispute with Greece.

Chairman Cardin, joined by Commissioner Roger Wicker and Senator Barbara Mikulski, also made a brief visit to Montenegro in May 2009, during which the delegation met with the country's president and other senior officials. One Commission staff person observed Montenegro's parliamentary elections in March, which were assessed positively despite the need for further democratic development.

Monitoring and Combating Anti-Semitism, Racism and Xenophobia as well as Intolerance and Other Forms of Discrimination in the OSCE Region

The Commission maintained a focus on efforts to monitor and combat intolerance and discrimination in the OSCE region.

In June, Co-Chairman Hastings convened a briefing entitled, “Hard Times and Hardening Attitudes: The Economic Downturn and the Rise of Violence Against Roma” which focused on escalating anti-Roma violence in the OSCE region. Such violence included the gruesome murder of a father and his five-year-old son in Hungary and a fire-bombing that left a two-year old child in the Czech Republic burned over 80 percent of her body. Four experts working on Romani human rights issues discussed how the weak economy and recent spike in violence could foster inter-ethnic instability and challenges to ending the marginalization of Europe’s largest ethnic minority. Speakers included: Katalin Barsony (Hungary), sociologist, film maker and project manager at the Budapest-based Roma NGO Romedia Foundation; Stanislav Daniel (Slovakia), Research Consultant, European Roma Rights Center; Isabela Mihalache (Romania), Senior Program Manager, Roma Initiatives, Open Society Institute (OSI); and Andrzej Mirga, Advisor on Romani Issues, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

In July, as part of the “CSCE Seminar on OSCE Mediterranean Partner Engagement,” Chairman Cardin and Co-Chairman Hastings encouraged discussion on the role Mediterranean Partners could play in combating intolerance and discrimination.

In October, Chairman Cardin chaired a hearing entitled, “Promoting Tolerance and Understanding in the OSCE Region: The Role of the Personal Representatives.” The hearing focused on the three Personal Representatives established by the OSCE in 2004 to address acts of discrimination and intolerance against Jews, Muslims, Christians and racial and ethnic minorities. The representatives focused on the progress that had been made and remaining challenges in the OSCE region. Witnesses included: Rabbi Andrew Baker (USA), Personal Representative on Combating Anti-Semitism; Ambassador Adil Akhmetov (Kazakhstan), Personal Representative on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims; The Honorable Mario Mauro (Italy), Personal Representative on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination (also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions).

In December, the Commission held a briefing entitled “Russia’s Muslims” focused on the unique history of Islam in Russia and its dynamic reemergence following its brutal suppression in the Soviet period, with the goal of better understanding Russia’s Muslims. Panelists included, Paul Goble, Professor, Institute of World Politics and Dr. Shireen Hunter, Visiting Professor, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service.

Commissioners and staff also led and participated in tolerance and non-discrimination efforts overseas.

At the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Winter Meeting, members spoke in support of continued efforts to combat intolerance and discrimination, including against migrants. At the Annual

Session, Chairman Cardin led efforts to adopt a Supplemental Item supporting efforts to combat anti-Semitism and Co-Chairman Hastings introduced numerous amendments in support of anti-discrimination initiatives for migrant and other minority communities.

In February, Co-Chairman Hastings spoke at the London Conference on Anti-Semitism, which brought together more than 120 lawmakers from over 40 countries spanning the globe to devise an effective framework and forge new strategies to confront anti-Semitism on a global scale.

In April, Co-Chairman Hastings co-convened the “Black European Summit: Transatlantic Dialogue on Political Inclusion” with European parliamentarians as follow-up to two U.S. Helsinki Commission hearings held in 2008, entitled: “The State of (In)visible Black Europe: Race, Rights, and Politics” and “Racism in the 21st Century: Understanding Global Challenges and Implementing Solutions.” Among other issues, the hearings prompted a call for a sustained transatlantic dialogue on minority political participation that included best practices from the U.S. model, resulting in the Black European Summit. The Summit took place in Brussels, Belgium at the European Parliament on April 15th and 16th. The historic 2-day Summit brought together political and intellectual minority leaders from the United States and Europe to exchange information on the roles of Black and ethnic minorities in policymaking. Barriers to political participation and strategies for increasing opportunities for minorities in the political arena were discussed, including developing and supporting policies and initiatives to address racism, discrimination, and inequality.

Following the event in June, Co-Chairman Hastings introduced two pieces of legislation recognizing persons of African descent in Europe and commemorating the Black European Summit. The legislation called for the implementation of Europe’s anti-discrimination laws and the creation of transatlantic partnerships to share best practices on combating racism and instilling equality.

Commission staff also participated in the various OSCE and partner organization meetings and events held throughout 2009 to discuss efforts to combat all forms of intolerance. In March, Commission staff attended the “Roundtable on Combating Anti-Semitism: Current Trends and Challenges in the OSCE Region” and “Racism in the OSCE region: Old Issues, New Challenges” Roundtable, and “Hate Crime Laws: A Practical Guide” workshop.

The Commission has also raised concerns regarding the rise in intolerance and discrimination with interested non-governmental organizations and government representatives from countries including France, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Switzerland, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and European Union.

Additionally, the Commission has maintained a special focus on Roma.

In February, Chairman Cardin traveled to Bratislava, Slovakia, where he discussed the situation of Roma. On the margins of the October OSCE PA Fall Meeting in Athens, Greece, the U.S. delegation, led by Chairman Cardin, visited a Romani village to see firsthand the conditions in which members of this minority group live in Greece. After discussing the need for greater access to education and health care with local Roma residents and touring a few makeshift homes, the delegation donated needed clothing and health supplies to about 40 children and their

families. In December, Mr. Cardin met Hungarian Prime Minister Gordon Bajna in Washington and discussed the situation of Roma with him.

On April 8, International Roma Day, Chairman Cardin and Co-Chairman Hastings issued a statement examining the deteriorating situation faced by many Roma over the past twenty years.

In April, Chairman Cardin, Co-Chairman Hastings and Ranking Commissioner Smith issued a statement welcoming the decision by the European Court of Human Rights to award damages to three Slovak women who had been sterilized without informed consent. Later in the year, they commended the Czech Government for apologizing for the past practice of targeting Roma for sterilization.

In May, they expressed concern over the destruction in Istanbul of the oldest Romani neighborhood in Europe.

In November, the Commission leadership welcomed the unveiling of a Holocaust memorial in Romania. During World War II, Romania's pro-Nazi government of Marshal Ion Antonescu was responsible for the deaths of 280,000-380,000 Jews and more than 11,000 Roma, according to an international panel led by Nobel Peace Prize Winner Elie Wiesel. The Romanian government officially recognized the panel's 2004 findings and recommendations, which included building the national memorial to the victims of the Holocaust in Romania on public property in Bucharest.

Combating the Trafficking of Humans

The Commission continued to address the worldwide phenomenon of trafficking of human beings into slavery-like conditions of forced labor or commercial sexual servitude. Commission staff also worked with the OSCE Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit and the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking to influence the direction and scope of their work.

Many participating States have still not adopted legislation to specifically address trafficking for forced labor purposes. In addition, much of the resources and early efforts to combat human trafficking have been directed at identifying and prosecuting sexual trafficking cases.

Trafficking in human beings remains a critical challenge in the OSCE region and a matter of priority for the Helsinki Commission. The Commission strongly supported the previous adoption of the OSCE action plan to combat trafficking in human beings and the establishment of the position of Special Representative and Coordinator of Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. These mechanisms have given greater focus to addressing this critical challenge in the OSCE region.

Since the adoption of the OSCE anti-trafficking protocols, participating States have made significant strides in combating the sexual dimension of human trafficking. However, there has been a growing consensus that more needs to be done to understand the scope and challenge of humans trafficked for forced servitude.

In February 2009 Commission staff contributed to the International Organization on Migration Final Ministerial Conference on “Guidelines for the Collection of Data on Trafficking in Human Beings, Including Comparable Indicators,” in Vienna, Austria. This event brought together global counter-trafficking experts and European law enforcement personnel to discuss the concurrently titled report released at the conference. The conference discussions illuminated the importance of harmonizing data collection efforts to improve law enforcement cooperation. With research contributions from the report, the European Union has embarked on a unified data collection procedure to begin determining the scope of human trafficking and empower law enforcement. Commission staff engaged in additional meetings with the staff of the OSCE Secretariat trafficking experts regarding the objectives of the conference.

In September 2009 Commission staff attended the 9th Alliance Against Trafficking Conference on “Prevention of Modern Slavery: An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure” in Vienna, Austria. This conference was facilitated by OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Eva Biaudet and featured contributions from the World Bank, International Labor Organization, and IOM. Sessions during the conference examined the economic, social and political root causes of trafficking, as well as means to address the demand for commercial sex and labor exploitation. Commission staff supported the contributions of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly delegation and held additional meetings with the OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit.

During the 2009 OSCE PA Annual Session in Vilnius, Lithuania, Ranking Minority Member Rep. Christopher H. Smith offered five amendments to the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions Resolution to prevent the sexual exploitation of children and combat human trafficking. These amendments specifically call for comprehensive legislation to prevent the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, strengthening of international law enforcement cooperation to deter travel by sex offenders, establishment of national hotlines for trafficking victims, and further efforts by the OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit to address the exploitation of children. Smith, the sponsor of major U.S. anti-trafficking laws, was once again appointed by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) President to serve as Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues.

Attacks on Freedom of the Media and Use of Emerging Technologies in Promoting Democracy and Human Rights

In early January Commission leaders expressed deep concern over the decision of the Government of Azerbaijan to terminate Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Voice of America broadcasts in that country.

In observance of World Press Freedom Day (May 3) the Commission co-chairs made statements touching on various concerns regarding attacks on journalists and attempts to restrict independent media. Chairman Cardin used the occasion to address the murder of journalists in the OSCE region, noting that nearly a dozen journalists and their colleagues had been killed over the course of the prior 12 months. He also noted that 2009 marked the fifth anniversary of the murder of American journalist Paul Klebnikov in Moscow. Co-Chairman Hastings spotlighted

other physical attacks on journalists as well as a variety of forms of harassment, including police raids, spurious court cases, arrests, and forcible psychiatric hospitalization.

In October, the Commission held a briefing, “Twitter against Tyrants: New Media in Authoritarian Regimes,” focused on ways new media and Internet communications technologies affect the balance of power between human rights activists and authoritarian governments. Among issues considered were new media’s role in protests and elections; ways to empower civil society activists; and how regimes use new technology as tools for control and repression.

On November 3, the Commission held a public briefing on “Violence and Impunity: Life in a Russian Newsroom.” At least 32 journalists have been killed in the Russian Federation since the early 1990s.

In December, the Commission’s co-chairs called for a thorough investigation into the death of Gennady Pavlyuk, a journalist and critic of Kyrgyzstan's government, who died in Kazakhstan December 22 after apparently being thrown from a sixth-story window with his hands tied behind his back. Kazakhstan assumed the chairmanship of the OSCE as of January 1, 2010.

Freedom of Religion

The Commission continues to closely monitor violations of OSCE commitments relating to the ability of individuals to freely profess and practice their religion. Notwithstanding a broad commitment by all participating States to ensure that their laws, regulations, practices and policies conform with their obligations under international law and are brought into harmony with OSCE commitments, numerous participating States have enacted restrictive laws governing religion.

In January, Commission leaders wrote to Kyrgyz President Bakiev urging him not to sign into law legislation passed by the parliament which would seriously limit freedom of religion in his country.

In March, Chairman Cardin, Co-Chairman Hastings, Ranking Member Smith and Commissioner Pitts wrote to President Obama urging him to pay an official visit to His All Holiness Bartholomew I, a spiritual leader in the Orthodox Christian Church, while in Turkey.

In June, the Commission’s bipartisan leadership wrote to the President urging him to raise the plight of Russia’s Jehovah’s Witnesses with his Russian counterpart during the Moscow summit. Throughout 2009, a Moscow-directed campaign of harassment against Jehovah’s Witnesses across the federation continued. This sets them apart from other religious groups in Russia that may face regional difficulties that do not appear to be directed from Moscow. Banned in Moscow since 2004, a nationwide campaign of official harassment of Jehovah’s Witnesses began in early 2009 when local prosecutors were instructed to probe actions of branches in their areas. Some 500 investigations are underway examining, among other things, alleged “extremism,” and both private homes and congregational buildings have been raided. Sergey Cherepanov, Deputy Chairman of the Presiding Committee of the Administrative Center of

Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia testified at the Commission's June hearing, "The Medvedev Thaw: Is it real? Will it last?"

In late May, Commission staff traveled to the Republic of Cyprus to assess religious cultural heritage in the occupied northern part of the country, including visits to religious sites in the Keryneia and Karpas regions.

In early July, Commission staff participated in a Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM) on "Freedom of Religion or Belief." Approximately 100 non-governmental representatives participated in a civil society round-table prior to the opening of the SHDM. The agenda was divided into three working sessions, held in succession: 1) from commitments to implementation; 2) status of religious or belief communities; and 3) places of worship.

According to the Church of Cyprus, over 500 religious sites in the region have been seriously damaged or destroyed. Despite clear international commitments on the importance of preserving religious and cultural heritage, hundreds of churches, chapels and monasteries in the northern part of Cyprus remain in peril. Thousands of icons, manuscripts, frescos, and mosaics have been looted from sites in northern Cyprus -- many ending up on international auction blocks.

In late July, the Commission held a public briefing on "Cyprus' Religious Cultural Heritage in Peril," an event focused on the destruction and decay of churches, chapels and monasteries in the aftermath of Turkey's 1974 military invasion and ongoing occupation of the northern part of the country. Expert panelists at the briefing were Dr. Charalampos Chotzakoglou, a professor of Byzantine Art and Archaeology at the Hellenic Open University; Dr. Klaus Gallas, an art historian and Byzantine expert who has focused on international smuggling of religious and architectural artifacts plundered from northern Cyprus; and Michael Jansen, author of "War and Cultural Heritage: Cyprus after the 1974 Turkish Invasion." The briefing also touched on violations of freedom of religion in northern Cyprus, including the difficulties faced by Orthodox Christians seeking to hold religious services in the region. A report prepared by the Law Library of Congress, "Destruction of Cultural Property in the Northern Part of Cyprus and Violations of International Law" was released at the briefing.

At the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Annual Session, held in Vilnius, Lithuania, Commissioner Roger Wicker introduced amendments calling upon all participating States to implement their OSCE commitments and international obligations to ensure the preservation and protection of religious cultural heritage sites, including churches, chapels, and monasteries, as well as monuments and objects of religious origin; to prevent the theft, clandestine excavation, and illicit export, import or transfer of ownership of cultural property; to enhance their cooperation in efforts to prevent the illicit international trafficking in objects of religious origin and other cultural property; and to facilitate the restitution of illicitly exported cultural property.

Concerns over violations of freedom of religion again featured prominently in the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting held in Warsaw, Poland, in the fall. At the single three-hour session devoted to the topic, fifty-eight speakers took the floor to deliver remarks limited to 2 minutes. Commission staff delivered the official U.S. statement.

In November, Chairman Cardin attended a congressional leadership luncheon in Washington for

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I. Following the meeting, the Chairman introduced a resolution calling upon the Government of Turkey to reopen the Halki Theological School outside of modern-day Istanbul.

Appendix (A)

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

111th Congress

Legislative Branch Commissioners

United States Senate

Benjamin L. Cardin, Maryland
Chairman
Christopher J. Dodd, Connecticut
Sheldon Whitehouse, Rhode Island
Tom Udall, New Mexico
Jeanne Shaheen, New Hampshire
Sam Brownback, Kansas
Saxby Chambliss, Georgia
Richard Burr, North Carolina
Roger Wicker, Mississippi

United States House of Representatives

Alcee L. Hastings, Florida
Co-Chairman
Edward J. Markey, Massachusetts
Louise McIntosh Slaughter, New York
Mike McIntyre, North Carolina
G.K. Butterfield, North Carolina
Christopher H. Smith, New Jersey
Joseph R. Pitts, Pennsylvania
Robert B. Aderholt, Alabama
Darrell E. Issa, California

Executive Branch Commissioners

Michael H. Posner, Department of State
Alexander Vershbow, Department of Defense
Vacant, Department of Commerce

Appendix (B)

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
(2009)

Staff Members

Aileen Boniface	Communications Assistant
Douglas Davidson	Senior State Department Advisor
Orest Deychakiwsky	Policy Advisor Belarus, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, NGO Liaison, Security Officer
Shelly Han	Policy Advisor Economics, Environment, Energy Security, OSCE Asian Partners for Cooperation, Labor Migration, Trade, Good Governance
Bob Hand	Policy Advisor Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Serbia, Kosovo, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
Janice Helwig	Policy Advisor Afghanistan, Central Asia, Policing, Combating Sexual Exploitation of Children
Alex T. Johnson	Policy Advisor Environmental Human Rights, Environmental Justice Policy, Trafficking in Persons, OSCE Mediterranean Partners
Edward Joseph	Policy Director
Marlene Kaufmann	General Counsel
Ronald McNamara	Policy Advisor Greece, Cyprus, Media Freedom, OSCE Institutions
Michael Ochs	Policy Advisor Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
Winsome Packer	Representative of the Helsinki Commission to the USOSCE OSCE Structure, Security Issues

Kyle Parker	Policy Advisor Russian Federation, Duma-Congress Inter-Parliamentary Exchange, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova
Daniel Redfield	Office Manager
Erika Schlager	Counsel for International Law Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Romani Minority Issues, OSCE and International Legal Issues, Domestic Compliance Issues
Josh Shapiro	Staff Associate
Neil Simon	Communications Director
Harold Smalley	Printer/Proofreader (Detailee from the Government Printing Office)
Mischa Thompson	Policy Advisor Tolerance; Racism, Anti-Semitism, Xenophobia, Western Europe
Fred Turner	Chief of Staff
<i>(Vacant)</i>	<i>Policy Advisor</i>

Appendix (C)

OSCE Participating States as of January 2010

Country	Participating States
Albania	admitted as observer on June 20, 1990; admitted as fully participating State on June 19, 1991
Andorra	admitted as new participating State on April 25, 1996
Armenia	admitted as new participating State on January 30, 1992
Austria	original participating State
Azerbaijan	admitted as new participating State on January 30, 1992
Belarus	admitted as new participating State on January 30, 1992
Belgium	original participating State
Bosnia-Herzegovina	admitted as new participating State on April 30, 1992 (previously participated as part of Yugoslavia, an original participating State)
Bulgaria	original participating State
Canada	original participating State
Croatia	admitted as observer on January 31, 1992; admitted as fully participating State on March 24, 1992 (previously participated as part of Yugoslavia, an original participating State)
Cyprus	original participating State
Czech Republic	admitted as new participating State on January 1, 1993 (previously participated as part of Czechoslovakia, original participating State)
Denmark	original participating State
Estonia	admitted as new participating State on September 10, 1991
Finland	original participating State
France	original participating State
Georgia	admitted as new participating State on March 24, 1992
Germany	originally participated as two separate countries, the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic; participation as single country began with German unification on October 3, 1990
Greece	original participating State
The Holy See	original participating State
Hungary	original participating State
Iceland	original participating State
Ireland	original participating State
Italy	original participating State
Kazakhstan	admitted as new participating State on January 30, 1992
Kyrgyzstan	admitted as new participating State on January 30, 1992

Latvia	admitted as new participating State on September 10, 1991
Liechtenstein	original participating State
Lithuania	admitted as new participating State on September 10, 1991
Luxembourg	original participating State
Malta	original participating State
Macedonia	admitted as observer as of April 1993; admitted as new, fully participating State on October 12, 1995 (previously participated as part of Yugoslavia)
Moldova	admitted as new participating State on January 30, 1992
Monaco	original participating State
Montenegro	admitted as new participating State on June 26, 2006 (previously participated as part of Yugoslavia, and then as part of Serbia and Montenegro)
Netherlands	original participating State
Norway	original participating State
Poland	original participating State
Portugal	original participating State
Romania	original participating State
Russia	original participating State as the Soviet Union; Russia succeeded to the Soviet Union's seat on January 11, 1991
San Marino	original participating State
Serbia	originally participated as Yugoslavia; suspended from participation in decision making on May 12, 1992; suspended from participating in meetings on July 7, 1992; re-admitted as new, fully participating State November 10, 2000; renamed Serbia and Montenegro on February 4, 2003; Montenegro separated from Serbia by referendum in May 2006
Slovak Republic	admitted as new participating State January 1, 1993 (previously participated as part of Czechoslovakia, an original participating State)
Slovenia	admitted as an observer on January 31, 1992; admitted as new, fully participating State March 24, 1992 (previously participated as part of Yugoslavia)
Spain	original participating State
Sweden	original participating State
Switzerland	original participating State
Tajikistan	admitted as new participating State January 30, 1992
United Kingdom	original participating State
United States	original participating State
Uzbekistan	admitted as new, fully participating State January 30, 1992

OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation

Algeria	affiliated with the Helsinki process since 1973
Egypt	affiliated with the Helsinki process since 1973
Israel	affiliated with the Helsinki process since 1973
Jordan	admitted as a Mediterranean partner for co-operation on May 22, 1998
Morocco	affiliated with the Helsinki process since 1973
Tunisia	affiliated with the Helsinki process since 1973

OSCE Partners for Cooperation

Afghanistan	admitted as a Partner for Cooperation on April 3, 2003
Australia	admitted as a Partner for Cooperation on January 1, 2010
Japan	affiliated with the Helsinki Process from July 10, 1992; formally designated Partner for Cooperation on December 7, 1995
Mongolia	admitted as a Partner for Cooperation on December 2, 2004
Republic of Korea	formally designated Partner for Cooperation on December 7, 1995
Thailand	admitted as a partner for co-operation on Nov. 9, 2000

Appendix (D)

Hearings, Briefings, Digest Articles and Congressional Delegations in 111th Congress, 2nd Session

A. Hearings

Green and Mean: Can the New U.S. Economy be both Climate-Friendly and Competitive? (March 10, 2009)

The Western Balkans: Challenges for the U.S. and European Engagement (April 2, 2009)

Approaching the OSCE Chairmanship: Kazakhstan 2010 (May 12, 2009)

The Medvedev Thaw: Is it Real? Will it Last? (June 23, 2009)

The Iran Crisis and the OSCE Neighbors (July 16, 2009)

The Future of the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation (July 23, 2009)

Moldova's Recent Elections: Prospects for Change in Europe's Poorest Country (August 6, 2009)

The Western Balkans: Policy Responses to Today's Challenges (September 29, 2009)

Promoting Tolerance and Understanding in the OSCE Region: The Role of the Personal Representatives (October 14, 2009)

Advancing U.S. Interests in the OSCE Region (October 28, 2009)

B. Briefings

Human Rights in Afghanistan (March 26, 2009)

Albania's Election and the Challenge of Democratic Transition (June 4, 2009)

Hard Times and Hardening Attitudes: The Economic Downturn and the Rise of Violence Against Roma (June 9, 2009)

Dagestan: A New Flashpoint in Russia's North Caucasus (June 16, 2009)

Kyrgyzstan Before the Elections (June 18, 2009)

Cyprus' Religious Cultural Heritage in Peril (July 21, 2009)

Twitter against Tyrants: New Media in Authoritarian Regimes (October 22, 2009)

Violence and Impunity: Life in a Russian Newsroom (November 3, 2009)

Russia's Muslims (December 17, 2009)

C. Digest Articles

China, Europe and the United States: Implications for the World (January 6, 2009)

Helsinki commission Staff Examine Impact of International Efforts in Kosovo on Human Rights (January 22, 2009)

Co-Chairman Hasting Chairs Meeting in Israel on Countering Discrimination in the Mediterranean Region; Meets with Prime Minister Olmert (January 26, 2009)

International Roma Day Bracketed by Rising Extremism and Violence (April 16, 2009)

OSCE Participating States Convene Meeting on Religious Freedom (July 7, 2009)

Commission Plays Leading Role at Parliamentary Assembly in Lithuania (August 8, 2009)

Scars of 1974 Invasion Abound as Leaders Seek to Reunite Cyprus (August 24, 2009)

U.S. Helsinki Commission Mediterranean Seminar on OSCE Mediterranean Partner Engagement – Summary Digest (October 5, 2009)

Energy Security and the Future of the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension Headline OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Fall meeting in Athens (November 6, 2009)

REPORT: Seminar on OSCE Mediterranean Partner Engagement (December 11, 2009)

Did the OSCE Actually Begin in 1724? (December 18, 2009)

Report on the 17th Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) and the Future of the OSCE's Economic and Environmental Dimension (December 22, 2009)

Corruption: A Problem that Spans the OSCE Region and Dimensions (December 30, 2009)

Congressional Delegations

February

Chairman Benjamin Cardin, Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings, Commissioners Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mike McIntyre, Representative Gwen Moore, Fred Turner, Clifford Bond, Robert Hand, Alex Johnson, Shelly Han, Daniel Redfield to Israel, Syria, and Austria for meetings with top officials to discuss current policy and international affairs. In Austria, the delegation participated in the Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings and Mischa Thompson to London, England, to participate in the London Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism hosted by the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Anti-Semitism (ICAA)

March

Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings, Fred Turner, Mischa Thompson to Brussels, Belgium to participate in the Brussels Forum organized by the German Marshall Fund

April

Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings, Congressman G.K. Butterfield, Mischa Thompson, Alex Johnson to Brussels, Belgium, Paris, France; for attendance of a Commission event on Blacks in Europe

Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings, Fred Turner, Winsome Packer to Lisbon, Portugal, while in Portugal, for attendance of a Bureau Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

May

Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings, Alex Johnson, Shelly Han to Dublin, Ireland, to participate in an Economic Conference organized by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

June

Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings, Janice Helwig, Alex Johnson to Tirana, Albania, to participate in the OSCE International Election Observation Mission as OSCE PA observers for parliamentary elections

Chairman Benjamin Cardin, Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings, Ranking Member Chris Smith, Assistant Senate Majority Leader Dick Durbin, Commissioner Roger F. Wicker, Senator George Voinovich, Commissioners Louise McIntosh Slaughter, Mike McIntyre, G.K. Butterfield, Robert Aderholt, Congressman Lloyd Doggett, Congresswoman Gwen Moore, Fred Turner, Robert Hand, Neil Simon, Winsome Packer, Shelly Han, Edward Joseph, Josh Shapiro, Daniel Redfield

to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lithuania, Belarus, Latvia (Senator Voinovich) and Greece (Chairman Cardin and Fred Turner) for the participation in the Summer Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

October

Chairman Benjamin Cardin, Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings, Senator George Voinovich, Commissioner Mike McIntyre, Fred Turner, Shelly Han, Alex Johnson, Winsome Packer, Neil Simon to Athens, Greece, to participate in the Fall Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

November

Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings, Alex Johnson to Geneva, Switzerland to participate in the Second Session of the United Nations Forum on Minority Issues

Staff Delegations

January

Shelly Han to Vienna, Austria, to participate in the OSCE Economic Forum on migration

February

Alex Johnson to Vienna, Austria, to attend the IOM Final Ministerial Conference on trafficking of persons

March

Mischa Thompson to Vienna, Austria and Brussels, Belgium. In Vienna, she participated in a Roundtable on Combating Anti-Semitism. In Brussels, she held a series of meetings with European Parliament partners on the Minority Parliamentarian Summit

Clifford Bond, to Bosnia and Herzegovina, to participate in a conference sponsored by International Forum Bosnia and meetings with NGOs

Robert Hand and Clifford Bond to Skopje, Macedonia, to participate in the OSCE International Election Observation Mission for parliamentary elections and for a series of meetings to assess developments in that country

Winsome Packer to Zagreb, Croatia and Podgorica, Montenegro, to participate in an arms control seminar and to serve as an OSCE Parliamentary Assembly observer with the OSCE International Election Observation Mission for parliamentary elections in Montenegro

April

Orest Deychakiwsky and Kyle Parker to Chisinau, Moldova, to participate in the OSCE International Election Observation Mission of parliamentary elections as OSCE Parliamentary Assembly observers

Janice Helwig, Shelly Han to Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan, for a series of meetings to assess political, human rights, economic developments and border security issues

May

Alex Johnson to Athens, Greece, to participate in the 17th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (Part 2) on “Migration management and its linkages with economic, social and environmental politics to the benefit of stability and security in the OSCE region.”

Winsome Packer, to Kyiv and Crimea, Ukraine, for meetings on the socio-political climate and on security issues

Kyle Parker to Moscow, Russia, for meetings with officials and NGOs representatives to assess security concerns as well as the political, economic and human rights developments

June

Shelly Han to Tokyo, Japan, to participate in the OSCE Asian Partners Forum

Erika Schlager to Vienna, Austria and Slovakia for participation in the OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension meeting on religious liberties

July

Janice Helwig and Orest Deychakiwsky to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, to participate in the OSCE International Election Observation Mission of the presidential elections as OSCE PA observers

August

Shelly Han to Accra, Ghana and Monrovia, Liberia, to examine the implementation of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and impact of corruption in the extractive industries on the political, social and economic climate

September

Alex Johnson to Vienna, Austria, to participate in the 9th Annual Alliance Against Trafficking Conference on “Prevention of Modern Slavery: An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure.”

Fred Turner, Douglas Davidson, Erika Schlager, Janice Helwig, Winsome Packer, Alex Johnson and Ronald McNamara to Warsaw, Poland, to participate in the 2009 OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Douglas Davidson to The Hague, the Netherlands and Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. In The Hague, he participated in the conference on “The Future of International Involvement in Bosnia and Herzegovina: What is the Strategy?” In Sarajevo, he participated in the annual meeting held by the Balkans Trust for Democracy

October

Shelly Han to Baku, Azerbaijan, to participate in meetings on the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)

Douglas Davidson to Budva, Montenegro and Vienna, Austria, to participate in a conference on “Montenegro and the Western Balkans,” and to hold consultations with the U.S. Mission to the OSCE and representatives of the Greek OSCE Chairmanship

November

Douglas Davidson, Winsome Packer to Athens, Greece, to participate in the work of the 17th OSCE Ministerial Council and the OSCE PA Bureau Meeting

December

Marlene Kaufmann and Alex Johnson to Cairo, Egypt, to participate in the OSCE Mediterranean Conference on “*The Mediterranean Partners and the OSCE: Co-operation toward enhanced security and stability.*”