

## **Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2007**

### **I. Budget Authority and Appropriation Request for FY 2007**

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." The Helsinki Final Act was agreed to by thirty-five countries, including the United States, Canada, West and East European states, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The states which emerged after the break up of the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia and joined the Helsinki Process in the 1990s each signed the Final Act and subsequent commitments underscoring their unqualified acceptance of all existing provisions.

As of January 1, 1995, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe was renamed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The organization is based in Vienna, Austria. The participating States of the OSCE now number 55. Yugoslavia, suspended from participation in the Helsinki process beginning in 1992, was admitted as a new participating State in November 2000 and, in February 2003, was reconstituted under the name Serbia and Montenegro. Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia are OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation while Afghanistan, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and Thailand are Partners for Cooperation. See Appendix (C) for a list of OSCE participating States and Partners.

The countries that joined the process in the 1990s, for the most part, continue to lag far behind in their implementation of OSCE commitments on democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. The increase in the number of independent countries has likewise increased the competing domestic and foreign policy objectives in the expansive OSCE region. Certainly the welcomed political changes in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan are indicative that the evolution toward greater respect for the rule of law and truly democratic institutions requires persistent vigilance and engagement. Protracted conflicts in the OSCE region, such as Transdnistria, Chechnya (where the most egregious violations of international humanitarian law in the region are occurring), and other unresolved conflicts in the Caucasus, also present ongoing challenges.

Perhaps the greatest challenge has come from Central Asia, where strongman regimes have become entrenched in four of the region's five countries and fundamental freedoms and basic human rights are routinely violated. After September 11, 2001 and the related intensification of ties between Central Asia and Washington, the region's leaders have become convinced of their own impunity. For the most part, the result has been further consolidation of power and the steady elimination of vestiges of genuine political opposition. At the same time, this intensified engagement provides an opening for possible change within societies which have largely lost the hope for transition to democratic governance, supported by the rule of law. Events in Kyrgyzstan in late February and early March, following flawed parliamentary elections, demonstrate that the political winds, begun in Georgia and continued in Ukraine, have now spread into Central Asia.

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 2007, the Commission requests an appropriation of \$2,110,000 for salaries and expenses, in keeping with the President's budget request for fiscal year 2007.

## **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 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

## **III. Commission Personnel**

The Commission's staff presently consists of sixteen permanent staff positions. The responsibilities of each staff 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 next officer is scheduled to begin in August 2006. 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, economic and legal dimensions of the Helsinki process, current staff members are proficient in languages such as Azerbaijani, Belarusian, French, German, Polish, Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian.

Moreover, due to the extensive service of the majority of the staff and their primary focus on OSCE issues, the Commission provides a continuity and unmatched reservoir of institutional knowledge within the U.S. Government, 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 NGOs 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 the drafting of documents, and other OSCE-related initiatives.

#### **IV. Focus of Commission in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

Of the 55 OSCE participating States, the Commission pays particular attention to those countries and regions in which there is potential upheaval or where persistent violations of human rights or democratic norms occur.

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, press, assembly, association and movement; religious liberties; and the treatment of ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities. Although many of the abuses associated with the communist era have diminished, a number of OSCE participating States continue to flaunt their OSCE human dimension commitments. Accordingly, the Commission continues to focus particular attention on those countries where fundamental human rights violations are the most egregious, particularly the states in Central Asia where authoritarian governments prevail. The Commission also monitors trends in Central and Eastern Europe, where significant progress with respect to human rights has been made, but where democracy development is far from complete and the rule of law does not yet have strong roots in numerous countries. Increasingly, the Commission has also followed human rights developments in Western Europe, focusing largely on protection of the freedom of religion and significant manifestations of anti-Semitism, racism, and intolerance, including toward Muslim populations in the region.

The Commission pursues this mandate in a variety of ways. First, specific instances of human rights abuses or shortcomings are raised with the violating country. Members of the Commission intercede directly with that country's officials and representatives (at home and abroad), and through correspondence. Commissioners offer relevant legislation, resolutions and *Congressional Record* statements. Over the past year, concerns have been communicated to senior officials from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia-Montenegro, Slovak Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. When warranted by improvements in the human rights situation, Commissioners drew positive attention to these developments as well.

Members of the Commission communicate their views to the Department of State and other relevant U.S. Government agencies and, when necessary, seek to raise or improve the level of official U.S. engagement with specific countries, cases or issues, or on 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. This, in turn, facilitates full reporting in human rights reports issued by the Department of State. 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. 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 necessary. These hearings find an audience among other U.S. Government agencies, non-governmental organizations, the media, the general public, and among the embassies and other officials of 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.

Commissioners or Commission staff members have served as members of every U.S. delegation to every major OSCE 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 consistently raised directly with the States concerned.

At OSCE meetings, Commission staff participates as full members of the official U.S. delegation and have regular contact with delegations from other OSCE participating States. They convey the concerns of the United States in presentations at the formal, multilateral OSCE meetings, as well as in bilateral meetings on the margins of the larger gatherings. 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.

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 provided by the Congress. This structure reinforces an understanding in foreign capitals that the Congress and the American people attach high priority to respect for individual human rights. The Commission's bipartisan and bicameral nature, its tenure, and its relentless 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 legislature 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 documents. Members and staff attended public fora, participated in panel discussions, made media appearances in both the domestic and foreign press in an effort to heighten public awareness of the 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 an important contribution 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 NGOs can have full participation in appropriate OSCE activities.

The Commission's Internet web site <[www.csce.gov](http://www.csce.gov)> has been a portal for public diplomacy and serves as an important distribution point for the Commission's message at home and abroad. Technology has enabled the integration of publications by issue- and country-specific topics including hearing and briefing transcripts, periodic *CSCE Digest* articles and press releases. The cross-referencing feature allows individuals to view a more thorough display of the Commission's work and access an extensive archive of materials on the Helsinki process.

An increasing number of individuals and officials around the globe have subscribed to receive Commission materials via the Internet. The Commission continues its outreach to U.S. Government employees, foreign government officials, NGOs, scholars and other individuals monitoring the countries and issues central to the Commission's mandate. The Commission has bolstered its utilization of information technology to enhance its automated e-mail distribution system with the aim of offering a more effective, user-friendly message delivery system. The subscriber base has expanded significantly as a result of these initiatives. Data collection reveals a diverse audience for Commission materials extending well beyond the OSCE region.

#### **A. Basket I – Principles, Military Security and Emerging Threats in the OSCE Region**

The Commission monitors implementation of the fundamental commitments of the Helsinki Final Act, including those provisions in the field of military security.

From its inception in the early 1970s, the Helsinki process – which includes the original Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), follow-up activities after 1975 and, since 1995, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) – has been a multilateral, politically binding security arrangement. The original focus was on enhancing security through transparency. Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs) – such as prior notification of troop maneuvers and observation of military exercises – form the core of this work on military aspects of security overcame barriers of secrecy and diminished the threat of surprise attack or misunderstanding of military activity.

Having addressed successfully the challenges of the Cold War, the OSCE has maintained its relevance by combining a uniquely comprehensive definition of security with flexibility and innovation of response, which includes maintaining an active dialogue on security issues, addressing issues like the trade in small arms and light weapons as well as excess stockpiles of arms and

ammunition, addressing regional conflicts and training civilian police. Many of these activities are integrated into a larger OSCE effort to combat terrorism.

The underlying principle of security in the OSCE region is that true stability is based on upholding the human rights and freedoms of the individual. Besides human rights, the principles encompass key aspects of relations between states which have gained new urgency in the post-Cold War period: refraining from the threat or use of force; inviolability of frontiers; territorial integrity of states; peaceful settlement of disputes; non-intervention in internal affairs; equal rights and self-determination of peoples; cooperation among states; and fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law. Traditionally the OSCE has worked to develop agreements that increase confidence and cooperation between states, forming a web of mutual interests that is not easily broken.

In early 2005, the Commission developed a paper describing the OSCE approach to security issues to facilitate better understanding of, and appreciation for, the military security dimension of the Helsinki process.

Other Commission activity regarding the security dimension of the OSCE was shaped by the need to address current or potential conflicts in the OSCE region. Of greatest concern is the ongoing conflict in Chechnya, where the Russian military's brutal conduct continued despite criticism by major international organizations as well as numerous human rights NGOs. The Commission co-chairs, Senator Brownback and Representative Smith, were joined by fellow Commissioners Chambliss, Cardin, Pitts, Slaughter and McIntyre in a February letter to President Bush urging him to raise concerns regarding Chechnya in meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The Helsinki Commission also continued to emphasize the instability created in Georgia and Moldova by Russia's lingering military presence in those independent countries. In conjunction with the signing of the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) in 1999, taking into account realities associated with the break-up of the Warsaw Pact and the demise of the Soviet Union, Russia made parallel commitments 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, making it impossible for the NATO allies to ratify the Agreement on Adaptation in order for the revised treaty to come into force.

Russian intransigence on these issues, known as the "Istanbul commitments", has proven a stumbling block to progress on other issues at several OSCE Ministerial Council meetings, as Russia has refused even the mere reference to these provisions it agreed to in 1999. The Commission has continued to press for implementation of Russia's Istanbul commitments with senior U.S. policymakers and the Chair-in-Office. Differences on this issue did not prevent more concrete decisions from being taken at the 2005 Ljubljana Ministerial regarding the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, border security and management, criminal matters relating to counter-terrorism, measures to enhance container security and further efforts regarding small arms and light weapons and ammunition stockpiles. When Russia blocked that extension of the OSCE's Border Monitoring operations along the Russia-Georgia border, the Commission leadership urged the Secretary of State to devise an alternative plan to maintain an international presence in that sensitive region.

## **Rogue Regimes and Emerging Threats to Security in the OSCE Region**

A theme evident in Commission activity in recent years but more pronounced in 2005 was the shift in the threat to the security of the participating States posed by factors outside the OSCE region. Previously, the primary threat to peace in Europe had been the Cold War's artificial division of the continent. Today, rogue regimes as well as terrorist organizations around the globe are viewed not just as emerging but increasingly potent threats.

This growing threat was raised frequently in Commission hearings on the OSCE and U.S. policy regarding the organization. Indeed, Chairman Brownback has made this threat a particular focus of the Commission beginning in 2005. At an October hearing, Chairman Brownback stated: "First, while there is plenty of work to do on building democracy within OSCE States, the OSCE also needs to look at the world around it. Terrorism is a global threat and the OSCE can shape a common, regional response. The same can be said about weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery. Certainly, human rights abuses are a problem in the OSCE and around the globe. The OSCE can respond to these external threats by ensuring participating States adhere to OSCE commitments to combat terrorism and to safeguard everything from small arms stockpiles to nuclear materials from rogue regimes and groups. The OSCE can also serve as a model and resource to address instability and human rights violations in other regions, like the Middle East and East Asia."

Specific Commission activities addressed this two-fold response to external threats. First, it has looked at commitments undertaken by the OSCE dealing with external actors and the degree to which certain participating States fail to implement these commitments. For example, in March 2005, the Commission held a hearing on Russia's relationship with Syria – a base of operations and training for terrorist organizations – in light of OSCE commitments to combat terrorism. In June, the Commission held a hearing on a transatlantic response to the threat posed by Iran, during which attention was drawn to the extensive ties many European countries have maintained with the regime in Tehran.

Additionally, the Commission has advocated the OSCE as a model for dealing with the regional instabilities in other regions. For example, Chairman Brownback participated as a guest speaker at the "OSCE-Korea Conference on New Security Threats and a New Security Paradigm" held in Seoul, Korea, in April 2005. In his videotaped address, the Chairman focused in particular on the confidence-building aspect of OSCE security efforts, as well as the importance of comprehensive definition of security that includes human rights. He encouraged Asian countries to use the OSCE security concept and to develop a forum where regional tensions like the Taiwan Straits, China's increased military capabilities generally, North Korea's weapons of mass destruction program and other issues, can be forthrightly addressed. The Commission also maintained an active dialogue on developing multilateral diplomacy in the Middle East based on the OSCE experience in Europe.

The Commission also addressed developments in Lebanon by holding a briefing on May 5, "Lebanon: Developments and Prospects," focused on passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 on September 2, 2004, at the initiative of the United States. The resolution called upon Syria to end its occupation of Lebanon, remove Syrian troops from Lebanese territory and

cease and desist in arming terrorist organizations in Lebanon.

## **B. Basket II - Cooperation in the Field of Economics and the Environment**

The Commission has been instrumental in advancing U.S. initiatives within the OSCE to strengthen efforts to combat corruption and organized crime and to suppress terrorist financing in the region. These issues will continue to be a focus of the Commission's work in 2006, particularly in the States of the former Soviet Union, where corruption undermines democratic and economic development.

Members of the Commission, working with the Department of State and through the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, will continue to support implementation of the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension, adopted by the Ministerial Council in Maastricht in December 2003. That document, the first major elaboration of economic and environmental commitments for OSCE States since the adoption of the Bonn Document in 1990, calls *inter alia* for development of a comprehensive and long-term OSCE anti-corruption strategy, implementation and enforcement of legislation and regulations on combating money laundering and corruption, criminalizing the financing of terrorism, the ratification and implementation of international conventions on combating corruption, in particular those developed by the Council of Europe and the OECD, promoting small business and investment, and formulating strategies for sustainable development.

The theme of anti-corruption and promotion of the rule of law was further advanced during the 14th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held in Washington, DC, in July. As Chair of the Assembly's Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, Ranking Member Representative Cardin continued the focus on combating corruption and money laundering during the OSCE Winter Meeting in Vienna, Austria, from February 23-24, 2006. This focus feeds into the ongoing work of the OSCE Office of the Economic Coordinator. During the Winter Meeting, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee urged PA delegates to work in their own countries to ratify the United Nations Convention against Corruption which took effect on December 14, 2005. In addition, the Committee discussed the issue of energy security and sustainability from the aspect of consumer countries and supply countries, as well as coordination of disaster relief. Commission staff will continue to support the work of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee on these and other issues as preparations are made for the OSCE Economic Forum in May 2006 in Prague and the OSCE PA 15th Annual Session in Brussels in July.

The Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum was convened in Prague, Czech Republic, May 23-27, 2005. Forum participants from 52 of the 55 OSCE participating States met under the broad theme of "Demographic Trends, Migration and Integrating Persons belonging to National Minorities: Ensuring Security and Sustainable Development in the OSCE Area." The Economic Forum, replicating what has been a growing trans-Atlantic public debate, gave particular attention to efforts to increase birthrates and to enhance migration from other regions that – for now – are experiencing population growth (at least relative to job availability). Forum participants discussed topics such as (1) environment and migration; (2) providing services for migrants; (3) economic integration in countries of destination; (4) economic and social integration of national minorities; and (5) principles of integration of national minorities.



The Commission was actively engaged with the Department of State in seeking public members for the delegation to the Economic Forum. Members of the U.S. delegation participated fully in all aspects of the Forum by chairing working groups, actively engaging in discussions regarding migration issues, and by networking with business representatives and government officials from the participating States.

### **C. Basket III - Protection of Human Rights**

In 2005, the Commission held numerous public hearings and briefings on human rights and democratic development in the participating States, including the situation of the Greek Orthodox Church in Turkey; Albania's parliamentary elections; the status of the Schneerson Collection of Jewish religious texts in Russia; revolution in Kyrgyzstan; religious freedom in Turkey; unregistered religious groups in Russia; unrest in Uzbekistan; human rights in Kosovo; human trafficking in the United States; human rights and political prospects in Russia; the Yukos affair in Russia; Romania's ban on inter-country adoptions; war crimes trials in Bosnia-Herzegovina; and religious freedom in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

Other vehicles used to raise concerns regarding human rights and democracy-building are the Commission's authoritative implementation reports, statements by Commissioners printed in the *Congressional Record*, and public appearances by individual Commissioners and staff, as well as Commission staff input to U.S. statements made in the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna and in other OSCE meetings. The Commission also fulfills its monitoring mandate through on-the-ground assessments. The Commission diligently interacts with non-governmental organizations and relies on information and expertise provided by the NGOs. At the same time, the Commission, through its events, contacts, reports, initiatives, statements and other means, brings appropriate issues before NGOs and the public, and provides interested experts and leaders from outside the government the opportunity to comment upon, discuss and recommend courses of action. The Commission is uniquely positioned to bring the OSCE-related concerns of private citizens and groups to the attention of U.S. officials, the Congress, and especially representatives of other OSCE participating States. Finally, Commissioners and staff, through their interaction with OSCE institutions and as members of U.S. delegations to various OSCE meetings, ensure that human rights concerns are raised and reviewed in keeping with the Commission's mandate.

### **Political Reform and Revolution and Resistance to Democracy**

About one year after the Rose Revolution in Georgia, which launched a democracy dynamic that redefined state-society relations in the former Soviet Union, Ukraine's Orange Revolution set the stage for another victory for popular sovereignty: Viktor Yushchenko, former Prime Minister and candidate in the October 2004 presidential election, rallied hundreds of thousands of demonstrators to Kiev's central square to protest vote fraud. The dramatic assemblies drew the rapt attention of the international community and resulted in new elections which Yushchenko won handily, paving the way for his inauguration in January 2005.

Co-Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Cardin visited post-Orange Revolution Ukraine on February 26-27, 2005, meeting with Ukrainian officials, non-governmental organizations and

religious leaders, discussing a wide panoply of issues pertaining to human rights, human trafficking, rule of law, corruption, U.S.-Ukrainian relations and Ukraine's political and economic integration with the West. Meetings included Ukraine's State Secretary, Foreign Minister, Justice Minister, Transportation Minister and the Chair of the Parliament's Committee on Organized Crime and Corruption. Foreign Minister Tarasyuk expressed gratitude to the Helsinki Commission for its active work in support of democracy and free and fair elections in Ukraine.

Commission staff participated as OSCE observers in the Kyrgyz parliamentary elections in February 2005. The OSCE concluded that the elections "fell short of OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections in a number of important areas." Once the March 13 runoffs were held and the Central Election Commission announced that pro-government forces had won about 90 percent of the vote and that some of the best-known opposition figures had failed to win seats, protests began in the southern part of the country and by March 24, the protests had spread to the north and President Akaev had fled the country. One of the leaders during the weeks of protest and long-time politician, Kurmanbek Bakiev was appointed interim president and subsequently elected president in July 2005, in the first free and fair election in the history of Central Asia. Felix Kulov, who spent 5 years in jail as a political prisoner, emerged to become prime minister.

The Orange Revolution sent a chill down the spine of most of the leaders of former Soviet states, particularly neighboring Belarus' strongman, Alexander Lukashenka, and evoked a negative reaction in Moscow and other capitals. Russian policy toward its neighbors has traditionally been based on a system of alliances with repressive rulers, while characterizing criticism of authoritarianism by the United States and other Western countries as geo-politically motivated interference in Russia's internal affairs. From Moscow's perspective, the Rose and Orange Revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine and the March 2005 Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan were not only unwelcome achievements of democracy but marked a new, historic "invasion" of Western influence into regions Moscow has considered within its sphere of influence.

Shock waves from Kyrgyzstan's Tulip Revolution continue to reverberate throughout the former Soviet Union. The largely peaceful, successful protest movement demonstrated that "people power" is not limited to European parts of the former USSR. In Central Asia, authoritarian leaders have taken steps to ensure that their rule is not threatened by similar uprisings. They have been uniformly supported by Moscow, which has moved quickly to warn them of the dangers of "U.S.-backed revolutions."

In Armenia and Azerbaijan, however, where flawed elections were held in 2005, no colored revolution of the sort that shook Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan took place. The authorities in both countries remain in command of the political arena and despite problematic elections in both countries, there is little reason to expect revolutionary events in either.

Commission staff monitored Azerbaijan's November 6, 2005 parliamentary elections for the 125 single-member constituency seats in the parliament (Milli Majlis) – the first held under President Ilham Aliyev. These elections provided an important opportunity for the Azerbaijani leadership to demonstrate its commitment to bringing the country's election practices into closer conformity with OSCE standards. Azerbaijani authorities, most prominently the President, had repeatedly proclaimed their intention to hold an election that would meet those norms.

Helsinki Commissioner Hastings, President of the OSCE PA, was appointed by OSCE Chairman-in-Office as Special Coordinator to lead the short-term observers in Azerbaijan. Despite a number of steps taken by authorities at the highest levels, including two presidential decrees, implementation fell short with serious election day violations reported. The International Election Observation Mission Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions noted, “While voting was generally calm, the election day process deteriorated progressively during the counting and, in particular, the tabulation of the votes. The general atmosphere in the polling stations deteriorated sharply during the count.”

Commission staff monitored Kazakhstan’s December 4, 2005 presidential election, which resulted in President Nazarbayev receiving 91% of the vote. With Kazakhstan pursuing the Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2009, the election provided an opportunity for the government to demonstrate its commitment to free and fair elections. Unfortunately, fraud and intimidation spoiled the election, therefore questioning Kazakhstan’s commitment to respect democratization and human rights.

Russia has responded to the colored revolutions by trying to undermine the democracy commitments that have helped define the OSCE since 1990. Beginning in 2004 and continually since, Russia has voiced stark disagreement with existing OSCE and internationally accepted election observation. Specifically Russia has attacked those standards at the OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings, “Electoral Standards” in 2004 and “Challenges of Election Technologies and Procedures” in 2005, both held in Vienna. The Commission leadership has communicated its concern over the importance of preserving OSCE elections standards and observation activities in the face of sharp criticism from Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and others former Soviet states.

### **Developments in the Caucasus**

Unresolved conflicts (Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia) remained unsettled in the three Caucasus countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, but no major outbreaks of military hostilities took place. International mediators of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute were publicly optimistic about prospects for a settlement in 2006, after the cycle of elections in Armenia and Azerbaijan comes to an end.

In Georgia, the November 2003 Rose Revolution brought to power a young, new leadership under President Mikhail Saakashvili (elected in January 2004). Since then, Saakashvili has shaken up Georgia’s domestic politics, gaining in the last two years a commanding position. He has moved to reform Georgia’s economy and tried to strike at corruption. Opposition parties, which have little representation in parliament, accuse Saakashvili of running roughshod over dissenting viewpoints.

Throughout 2005, Georgia sought, with U.S. backing, to broaden international arbitration of its longstanding conflicts with the secessionist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia beyond the OSCE and UN arrangements, which are vulnerable to Russian manipulation. Moscow has rejected these overtures and, throughout the year, Russian pressure on Georgia remained constant. Though Tbilisi has presented a peace plan for South Ossetia, the authorities of that region refuse to consider it and observers worry about the possibility of violence.

In Armenia, while international financial institutions praised continuing economic growth in 2005,

the fundamental relationship between state and society remained unchanged. Opposition parties, hoping to emulate Georgia's Rose Revolution, tried to rouse the public against President Robert Kocharian's regime. These efforts proved unavailing – the opposition does not enjoy great popularity or trust and Kocharian, backed by law enforcement agencies, is solidly entrenched. A boycott of parliament by an opposition bloc to protest the ruling coalition's unwillingness to discuss a referendum on Kocharian did not succeed in getting the issue on the legislative agenda or weakening the head of state.

The most important political event during the year was the November 27 referendum on constitutional amendments, which, *inter alia*, were designed to strengthen the parliament at the expense of the executive branch and to introduce dual citizenship. Though the OSCE and the Council of Europe, as well as the U.S. Government, backed the amendments, opposition parties rejected them as not far-reaching enough and called for a boycott. According to official tallies, however, over 65 percent of eligible voters participated, with more than 93 percent voting in favor of the amendments, which entered into force on December 7, 2005. Yerevan did not invite the OSCE to monitor the voting, and there were many complaints of irregularities. These led the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation, which is providing substantial assistance to Armenia, to voice "concern about the government's lack of transparency and commitment to open and fair elections in the recent referendum."

Also in 2005, Armenia's human rights ombudsman came into serious conflict with the government, which disapproved of her critical report on the state of human rights. In January 2006, she was relieved of her duties.

In Azerbaijan, throughout 2005 attention was focused on the November parliamentary election – the first important election since Ilham Aliev, inheriting the post from his father Heydar Aliev, came to power in October 2003 in a disputed election marred by violence. Aliev pledged to conduct a free and fair contest, issuing in May a decree that promised to permit rallies and demonstrations, which had been banned since October 2003. But Baku refused to accept changes to the election law recommended by the Council of Europe and the OSCE, such as adding more opposition representatives to election commissions at all levels. The atmosphere surrounding the election was tense – police violently dispersed several opposition rallies and just a few days before the balloting, Baku arrested some high-ranking officials and accused them of complicity in a plot by an opposition leader in exile to stage a coup d'état.

OSCE monitors concluded that while there were some improvements, especially in regard to candidate registration, the election failed to meet "a number of OSCE commitments." Especially problematic was the vote count, which international observers characterized as "bad or very bad" in over 40 percent of precincts monitored.

Ultimately, opposition candidates won only a few of parliament's 125 seats. The election failed to bridge the deep divide between government and opposition, perpetuating and worsening Azerbaijan's poor record on elections.

## **Developments in Central Asia**

The Commission continued to pay particular attention to the human rights situation in Central Asia,

where “strongman” regimes have become entrenched. However, in 2005, events took contradictory directions in Central Asia. On the one hand, Kyrgyzstan became the latest former Soviet republic to experience a “colored revolution.” On the other hand, an already bleak human rights situation in Uzbekistan deteriorated significantly, after government forces massacred demonstrators in the Fergana Valley city of Andijon. The Kyrgyz events generated a bit of guarded optimism, while Uzbekistan-watchers were brought near to despair.

The revolution in Kyrgyzstan, whose people rose February-March 2005 to oust a corrupt leader (Askar Akaev), his family and his cronies, was a milestone in Central Asia. Subsequently, the OSCE gave high marks to the presidential election which brought his successor, Kurmanbek Bakiev, into office – a first in the region. The Commission held a hearing during the interregnum between governments to discuss the revolution and its impact on Kyrgyz politics.

However, since then, the bloom has faded on the Tulip Revolution. Not only have many promises of reform not materialized but the criminalization of the country’s politics and economy has taken on alarming proportions. President Bakiev’s ability to realize his reformist goals remains in doubt. Also troubling are Bishkek’s waffling about possibly returning four Uzbek refugees and the recently introduced Putin-esque plans by the Ministry of Justice to investigate all NGOs that receive foreign funding. Such moves betray the hopes born a year ago as the “colored revolutions” spread to Central Asia. Kyrgyz officials met with Commissioners and staff both in Bishkek and Washington to discuss these issues, and a hearing “Kyrgyzstan’s Revolution: Causes and Consequences” was held on April 7.

At the other extreme is Uzbekistan, where President Islam Karimov has ruled since 1989. He has maintained Soviet-era censorship and allowed no political opposition since 1992. Claiming that the danger of Islamic radicalism necessitates strict control of society, Karimov has created a repressive police state. Already aghast at the revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine, Karimov was appalled when the Kyrgyz events brought the virus of revolution into his neighborhood and was clearly determined to permit no recurrence in his own country.

Uzbekistan’s dreadful human rights record deteriorated even further in 2005 after a government massacre of demonstrators in Andijon in May, the subject of a Commission hearing and briefing and other initiatives. Since then, the regime has intensified its crackdown, repeatedly violating the rights to freedom of religion, expression, association, and assembly. Uzbekistan also closed the Coalition airbase in Kharshi-Khanabad (K2) after the United States called for an international investigation of the Andijon shootings and worked diligently to see that the 400+ Uzbek refugees in Kyrgyzstan were sent to a third country via UNHCR and not repatriated back to Uzbekistan.

Moreover, Tashkent has continued to target international NGOs, forcing the BBC, Freedom House, IREX and others to cease operations in Uzbekistan. Nor is there any reason to hope for good news in the foreseeable future – in late February 2006, Uzbek prosecutors sentenced a moderate would-be opposition activist to 13 years in prison on blatantly political charges. Commissioners wrote President Karimov on several occasions to raise concerns about human rights. Commission staff also met with Uzbek Embassy representatives.

Turkmenistan – the only remaining one-party state in the former Soviet bloc – competes mightily with Uzbekistan for the booby prize of worst human rights violator in the OSCE region. Under

president-for-life Saparmurat Niyazov, Turkmenistan is one of the most repressive and closed countries in the world. All opposition groups are banned and the country's citizens enjoy no political freedoms. No opposition is permitted and media – operating under Soviet-era constraints – concentrate on glorifying Niyazov.

In June 2005, several defendants received lengthy prison terms, including one life sentence, for allegedly conspiring to assassinate the president in November 2002. They join more than fifty others previously convicted on similar charges, many whose whereabouts are unknown. While the situation for religious freedom has improved, reports continue to surface of registered and unregistered religious groups being raided by police and local authorities. The Commission held a briefing to discuss religious freedom in Turkmenistan, and Commissioners and staff met with Turkmen officials in Ashgabat and Washington to raise these concerns and others.

In the middle is Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, but both display negative trends. In Kazakhstan, political opponent Galimzhan Zhekiyanov was released from jail. But President Nursultan Nazarbayev won the December 2005 election with an implausible 91 percent of the vote. Despite promises that the election would be free and fair, government harassment of the opposition, tight control of the airwaves and election-day vote fraud caused the OSCE observation mission to conclude that the election “did not meet a number of OSCE commitments.”

Even more alarming is the pattern of execution-style murders of opposition figures. In December, police sought to explain away the shooting death of a high-profile critic as “suicide” – even though he was shot three times. In late February 2006, another opposition leader was killed; employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs have been charged with the killing.

Also troubling is Astana's forcible return of Uzbek refugees to Uzbekistan, which raises serious concerns about Kazakhstan's commitment to reform and expansion of political freedoms. Yet Kazakhstan continues to pursue its bid to chair the OSCE in 2009. The decision must be made this year, and Washington will have to take a stand on whether to support or oppose Kazakhstan's candidacy. Commissioners and staff met with Kazakh Government officials to raise concerns about the election and respect for human rights.

Tajikistan, where scores of thousands were killed in a civil war in the 1990s, remains the only country in Central Asia where the government was forced to come to terms with opposition parties as part of a peace settlement. Tajikistan is also the only country in the region where an Islamic party functions legally, and where opposition parties have representatives in government. But President Imomali Rakhmonov has been consolidating his grip on power. In 2004, he orchestrated a referendum to extend his tenure in office until 2020, if he wins this year's presidential election – a foregone conclusion barring miraculous circumstances. To remove potential challengers, his government has also jailed opposition figures; one was sentenced last fall to 23 years in prison on politically motivated charges. At the same time, Rakhmonov has been muzzling the media – for instance, suspending the BBC in January – and clamping down on independent Muslim groups. On several occasions, Commission staff met with Tajik Embassy representatives to raise concerns about religious freedoms there.

Co-Chairman Smith also introduced the Central Asia Democracy and Human Rights Act, and Commissioners Pitts and McIntyre have joined as cosponsors. The bill would provide specific

foreign assistance to support democratization and human rights in all five countries, while conditioning all non-humanitarian U.S. assistance to the individual governments of Central Asia, both economic and military, on whether each is making “substantial, sustained and demonstrable progress” toward democratization and full respect of human rights in keeping with their OSCE commitments.

### **Developments in Southeastern Europe**

Countries of southeastern Europe formerly part of the former Yugoslavia – Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia-Montenegro as well as U.N.-administered Kosovo – continued their slow but steady progress in recovering from a decade of conflict which caused major human rights violations, economic collapse and fragile transitions to democracy. Commission activities in 2005 sought to encourage further progress, with a concentration on particular areas of concern: 1) efforts to combat trafficking in persons; 2) laws and practices regarding religious freedom; 3) encouraging the return of displaced persons, especially those comprising ethnic minorities; 4) responding to the segregation of, and discrimination against, Roma; 5) cooperating in the prosecution of those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide; and 6) undertaking reforms needed for European integration, especially NATO membership. Some of these issues were also raised by the Commission regarding other countries in the region as relevant, including Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Slovenia.

In addition to specific actions noted below, these issues came up regularly in meetings and correspondence with high-level officials and prominent persons from these countries, which in 2005 included Albanian politicians who subsequently were chosen to be the country’s new prime minister and government ministers, the foreign policy advisor to the President of Serbia, the chief prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the current and a former prime minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the head of the Serbian committee responsible for issues relating to Kosovo, political leaders from the Serbian province of Vojvodina, and a variety of political activists and diplomats.

Beyond these ongoing activities, the Commission focused attention in 2005 on several important events. The first was the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the massacre of approximately 8,000 people, mostly innocent men and boys, by Serb forces that overran the UN-declared safe haven of Srebrenica in July 1995. Commission Co-Chairman Smith and House Ranking Member Cardin introduced House Resolution 199, commemorating this tragic event, the worst single atrocity to occur in post-World War II Europe and considered to constitute genocide. The House resolution was co-sponsored by Commissioners Wolf and Slaughter. Commissioner Senator Gordon Smith introduced a Senate version of the resolution, Senate Resolution 134, which was cosponsored by Chairman Brownback. Both resolutions passed in their respective chambers and received considerable attention for expressing the view that the massacre was genocide and that Serb forces who had outside help from Serbia itself were responsible. The resolutions were considered just as a 1995 video was suddenly released of Serb paramilitaries executing innocent Bosniak youths from Srebrenica. Co-Chairman Smith also hosted a photo exhibit of Srebrenica at the annual OSCE Parliamentary Assembly meeting, and on behalf of Commission leadership staff traveled to Srebrenica to attend the official commemoration ceremonies.

The tenth anniversary of the “Dayton Agreement,” a U.S. initiative which ended the 1992-1995 conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was also commemorated in 2005. Given the compromises of that agreement, which achieved a peace settlement at the price of acknowledging some of the results of ethnic cleansing, the Commission chose not to make major initiatives on this anniversary. Instead, Co-Chairman Smith and House Ranking Member Cardin each gave sober assessments of the accomplishments of the agreement in *Congressional Record* statements. In addition, the Commission hosted a public briefing with the presiding judge and other representatives of Bosnia’s newly established War Crimes Chamber, which focused on the successes in providing justice for the crimes committed during the conflict which the Dayton Agreement brought to an end.

A third development in 2005 was Albania’s holding of parliamentary elections. Commission staff had observed all such elections in Albania since 1991 and each time judged the elections to be far short of the free and fair standards defined by OSCE commitments. These elections, however, were particularly important, because a failure to have demonstrable improvements in election performance would hinder the country’s prospects for European and Euro-Atlantic integration. In order to encourage Albania to make these improvements, the Commission held a public briefing in March which assessed the current situation and focused on areas of continued concern to election experts. This briefing received considerable press in Albania. Chairman Brownback and Commissioner Clinton introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution 34, urging the Albanian Government to ensure that the July elections are conducted in accordance with international standards. This effort was the result of a telephone conversation between Chairman Brownback and a leader of the Albanian youth movement, “MJAFT!” Companion legislation, House Concurrent Resolution 155, was introduced by Co-Chairman Smith and co-sponsored by Commissioners Wolf, Cardin and Slaughter. Commission staff participated in the OSCE election observation mission that recognized certain improvement over past elections in Albania, a fact likely to lead to that country’s further integration into European and Transatlantic institutions.

Human rights in Kosovo remained the major regional concern for the Commission in 2005, even as the international community as a whole moved closer to considering the question of Kosovo’s future status. Chairman Brownback met with a high-level delegation from the Serbian Orthodox Church concerned primarily with Kosovo in April, and in May he chaired a Commission hearing which looked at the status of human rights in Kosovo in light of diplomatic efforts to resolve status questions. Chairman Brownback also co-sponsored Senate Resolution 237 regarding the future status of Kosovo.

The continued UN operation of camps in northern Kosovo for about 600 displaced Roma despite the fact that these camps suffer from severe lead contamination was a matter of particular concern. Chairman Brownback raised the issue during the Kosovo hearing in May, and Commission staff visited one of the camps and discussed the problem with international officials in July. Later that month, the Commission Co-Chairs wrote to both the State Department and the United Nations urging that emergency efforts be undertaken to relocate the camp population and to rebuild their original neighborhood in the southern section of the Kosovo city of Mitrovica as quickly as possible. Finally, in December, the Commission hosted a briefing during which State Department officials updated those present of the latest developments. While there has been some progress on this issue, by the end of 2005 a new site for relocation had only just been designated, and none of the displaced Roma had yet been moved from the three existing camps.



Other activities related to southeastern Europe undertaken by the Commission included efforts to maintain the conditionality on assistance to Serbia, especially the link to Belgrade's cooperation on war crimes issues. Co-Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Cardin wrote House appropriators of foreign operations on this particular issue in April. While there was considerable progress in this regard early in the year, allowing this assistance to continue, the failure to apprehend key persons indicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide compelled the Congress, at Commission urging, to maintain the conditionality for yet another fiscal year. On the other hand, Commission Co-Chair Smith welcomed the progress occurring in Croatia as he co-sponsored and supported the passage of House Resolution 529, recommending Croatia's integration in the NATO alliance. The Commission leadership also wrote to the Macedonian Ambassador to the United States regarding the case of an Orthodox cleric for "inciting religious hatred" in apparent violation of OSCE norms for freedom of expression and religious freedom.

### **Developments in Russia**

Moscow's regressive human rights policies and a growing hostility by the Putin administration to the promotion of democracy in that country as well as states of the former Soviet Union dominated much of the Commission's work and initiatives relating to the Russian Federation in 2005. Throughout the year manifestations of Russia's slide toward authoritarian rule translated into increased pressure on independent – especially opposition – political activity. Amendments to Russia's law on elections limiting the transparency of the process were adopted as Russia prepares for crucial parliamentary elections in 2007 and a presidential contest a year later. Concerns over troubling trends in Russia culminated toward the end of the year with the adoption of a series of amendments to Russian law that would increase the ability of the officials and security services to interfere with the activities of independent non-government organizations. Consideration of the law on NGOs took place against the backdrop of well-publicized allegations against several leading human rights NGOs, including an attempt to insinuate espionage by the Moscow Helsinki Group.

Commissioners wrote to State Duma Speaker Boris Gryzlov to convey concerns regarding the proposed amendments. In response to international reaction, modest modifications to the draft were made before the parliament approved the legislation in late December. President Putin signed the measure into law in early January 2006. Proponents of the changes claimed that the amendments are a necessary element in the war against terror and extremism.

In this connection, the Russian Duma is reportedly considering draft amendments to the law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations that, similar to the NGO legislation, would permit Russian authorities to "re-inspect" registered religious organizations, and seek court-ordered liquidation of those organizations allegedly engaged in illegal or extremist activities.

Ironically, both the Putin Administration and the opposition view combating "extremism" as a major public policy issue. The difference is that the former attempt to tie certain NGOs to radicalized political groups (i.e., elements of the Chechen resistance or militant Islamic groups), while the latter accuse the authorities of being lax in dealing with the genuine threats of extreme nationalism and anti-Semitism. An example is the criminal prosecution of Stanislav Dmitrievsky, executive director of the Russian-Chechen Friendship Society for publishing appeals by Chechen rebel leaders, while

police frequently underplay skinhead and neo-Nazi violence.

Several other high-profile judicial cases (Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Mikhail Trepashkin, Igor Sutyagin, et al.) reinforced the impression that if the Kremlin or the security services – and some would claim that the two groups are indistinguishable – want to secure a conviction they will apply every stratagem, legitimate or otherwise, to do so.

Open conflict in Chechnya has subsided, but draft-age Chechen males continue to “disappear,” and most evidence points to the federal forces or, increasingly, the pro-Moscow paramilitaries led by Deputy Prime Minister Ramzan Kadyrov as the perpetrators. Some victims survive, some are found dead, and others are never seen again. According to Amnesty International, quoting official figures, there were more than 140 disappearances in the first nine months of 2005 (the independent human rights NGO “Memorial” cites higher figures).

During a February 2006 visit to Chechnya, UN Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour said she was “deeply disturbed by accounts of torture and kidnappings” taking place in the region, and the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg has received hundreds of petitions from residents of Chechnya claiming to have suffered human rights violations at the hands of Russian forces and pro-Moscow paramilitaries.

Corruption, incompetent governance, poverty and the inability of Chechen rebels to gain a firm position in Chechnya itself have led to outbreaks of violence in neighboring North Caucasus regions. Over 100 persons were killed when anti-government forces raided government facilities in Nalchik, capital of Kabardino-Balkaria, in October 2005. Dagestan appears to be a powder keg waiting for a match, although the tensions there may or may not be Chechnya-induced.

Chechen separatist forces have also committed human rights violations and, as their fortunes on the battlefield have suffered, the current leadership has stepped up the rhetoric of Islamic radicalism and jihad. Moderate elements have been removed from positions of authority in the separatist leadership.

There are numerous electronic and print media outlets in Russia. Many of these are controlled or influenced by one or another layer of government; however it is possible to obtain a wide range of viewpoints and stay informed. The nationwide television networks rarely question federal government policies, and the head of the only nationwide independent TV network having been hounded out of Russia by lawsuits and threats of criminal prosecution.

At the OSCE, Moscow continues to complain about “double standards” in human rights standards and seeks to undermine election monitoring efforts undertaken by the ODIHR. The Russian delegation blocked the re-appointment of ODIHR Director Christian Strohal until a compromise shorter tenure was agreed to.

Russian authorities continue to disregard a court ruling of 1991 ordering the return of the “Schneerson Collection” to the Lubavitcher Chasidic Jewish community in the United States. This collection of sacred writings by Lubavitcher rabbis from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was seized by the Soviet government following the Bolshevik Revolution and hidden from its rightful claimants

(and the reading public) until the collapse of the Soviet Union. Chairman Sam Brownback, Co-Chairman Smith, Ranking Members Dodd and Cardin wrote Russian President Vladimir Putin asking that he return the Schneerson Collection of sacred Jewish books. The Helsinki Commission held a hearing to follow up on the Schneerson Collection and Russian intransigence on April 6, 2005.

### **Combating Anti-Semitism, Racism and Xenophobia in the OSCE Region**

In 2005, the Commission maintained a high level of activity focused on anti-Semitism, as well as racism and xenophobia, in the OSCE region. In January, Co-Chairman Smith submitted a *Congressional Record* statement commemorating the “60th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz.”

In April, Chairman Brownback, Co-Chairman Smith, Ranking Members Dodd and Cardin, as well as Commissioners Feingold, Clinton, Pitts and Hastings wrote Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany urging him to open Hungarian archives to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum for research. In May, Chairman Brownback along with 16 other Senators wrote the British Association of University Teachers to express their concern about its boycott of two Israeli universities.

In response to the significant rise in anti-Semitism and related violence that broke out in 2002 in much of the OSCE region, but especially in Western Europe, Commissioners and staff played a leading role in urging participating States to comply with their Berlin commitments on reporting on anti-Semitic crimes and hate crimes. Commissioners and staff also participated in the June OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance convened in Cordoba, Spain. A video presentation by Chairman Brownback was aired at a special seminar convened on the eve of the Cordoba conference. The U.S. delegation was led by New York Governor George Pataki, and Commissioner Hastings played an active role in the conference in his capacity as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

At the July Washington OSCE PA Annual Session, Co-Chairman Smith and a German parliamentarian cosponsored a resolution on combating anti-Semitism, which was unanimously approved. Co-Chairman Smith was invited to speak at a special side event on anti-Semitism in the OSCE region.

Concerns over the rise in anti-Semitism and intolerance have also been raised with interested NGOs and government representatives from countries including the Russian Federation, Belarus, Ukraine, Turkey and France. The Commission will continue to closely monitor related developments in the OSCE region, including implementation of relevant commitments by the participating States.

The OSCE Chair-in-Office has also appointed three Personal Representatives, one of which focuses specifically on anti-Semitism. Commissioners and staff worked with the Personal Representative on Anti-Semitism to bolster his work and to increase his effectiveness. Commission staff also worked with the Personal Representative on Discrimination Against Muslims and the Personal Representative on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions.

## **Combating the Trafficking of Humans**

The Commission continued to be deeply engaged in addressing the worldwide phenomenon of trafficking of human beings into slavery-like conditions of forced labor or commercial sexual servitude.

Throughout 2005, Commissioners and/or Commission staff met with international visitors, government officials, and representatives of NGOs from throughout the OSCE region and beyond to share expertise regarding the most effective means for combating human trafficking. Members of the Commission also frequently engaged representatives of foreign governments – particularly those whose insufficient efforts to combat trafficking resulted in the country’s placement in the Tier 2 Watch List or in Tier 3 of the U.S. Department of State’s annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* – to step up their efforts to prevent trafficking, prosecute trafficking crimes and provide assistance to victims. The Commission held a hearing entitled “Exploiting Americans on American Soil: Domestic Trafficking Exposed” which explored the extent, nature and governmental response to the trafficking of American citizens within the borders of the United States.

In February, Co-Chairman Smith introduced the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005, which reauthorized appropriations set forth in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000. Commission staff played a significant role in drafting the bill for introduction and later negotiating the bill through the House and Senate. Chairman Brownback facilitated passage of the bill in the United States Senate, and it was signed by President Bush on January 10, 2006.

Co-Chairman Smith continued to serve as the OSCE PA’s Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues in order to ensure the continued attention of the Parliamentary Assembly to this issue and to motivate legislative actions against trafficking and oversight by national parliaments of governmental responses to trafficking. Smith was first appointed to this position in 2004. In this capacity, the Co-Chairman engaged in direct dialogue with parliamentarians and authored a Resolution on “Combating Involvement in Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by International Peacekeeping Forces” which was adopted by the OSCE PA at its Annual Session held in Washington, DC. In February, Co-Chairman Smith was joined by Ranking Member Cardin in meetings with Ukrainian Government officials and non-governmental organizations in Kiev in which trafficking was a major topic of concern.

Commission staff participated on the U.S. delegation to an OSCE conference on: “Effective Assistance and Protection to Victims of Trafficking,” held in Vienna, Austria, February 28; and participated as a panelist in a conference on “Sharing of Experiences in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings,” co-hosted by the OSCE and the Government of Thailand, in Bangkok, Thailand, June 16-17.

The Commission also continued its leadership in pressing the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to address the military’s role in creating a demand for women trafficked into prostitution in South Korea, the Balkans, and other places worldwide where the U.S. military has a large presence. Several years of advocacy by the Commission and other concerned organizations regarding military personnel, contactors and peacekeepers contributing to the demand side of the trafficking cycle, or engaging in or facilitating trafficking in human beings, led the Department of Defense in 2005 to

amend the Manual for Courts-Martial to expressly prohibit patronizing a prostitute.

The Commission also continued to press multinational organizations, specifically the OSCE, NATO, and the UN, to implement zero-tolerance policies for personnel participating in peacekeeping operations under their auspices. For the second year in a row, at the Commission's suggestion, the United States proposed that the OSCE Ministerial Council adopt a decision "on Ensuring the Highest Standards of Conduct and Accountability of Persons Serving on International Forces and Missions" that would commit participating States to ensure that military forces stationed abroad on peacekeeping missions do not engage in trafficking in human being. The decision was agreed to by consensus of all 55 participating States; a previous attempt in 2004 to reach consensus on a similar U.S.-proposed decision was blocked by the Russian Federation.

Commission staff also worked with the newly-created OSCE Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit and the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking to influence the direction and scope of their work.

## **Religious Freedom**

Throughout 2005 the Commission continued to closely monitor developments affecting the rights of individuals to freely profess and practice their religion or belief. In this regard, the situation in Central Asia remains particularly poor. Instances of government authorities arresting or harassing individuals for religious activities persist in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Commissioners wrote Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urging her to designate both countries as Countries of Particular Concern under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.

The Uzbek Government continues to interfere with certain Muslim groups, especially those operating independent of direct government control. Repression against independent or unregistered religious groups has only increased since the May 2005 shootings in Andijon. Government continues to incarcerate roughly 5,500 individuals for their religious affiliations or beliefs. In addition, minority religious communities continue to experience harassment, police raids and jail time for "illegal" religious activity. Commissioners wrote President Karimov about these specific problems, raising concerns about individuals imprisoned for their beliefs and religious organizations seeking registration.

While the Commission has enjoyed moderate success in urging the Government of Turkmenistan to make some reforms, the situation remains difficult, as both registered and unregistered religious groups continue to experience police raids and harassment. Commissioners wrote the Chairman of the Human Rights Committee of the parliament and raised a variety of religious freedom concerns. In addition, Commission staff visited Turkmenistan and conveyed Commissioner concerns with officials at the Ministry of Justice and Foreign Ministry, while also meeting with religious leaders.

Elsewhere, problems continue to arise in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. Commissioners wrote and met with the Kazakh ambassador to express concern about the draft law on extremism and its potential effects on the free practice of religion, and Commission staff met with religious leaders in Kazakhstan. Commission staff also participated in a discussion at the European Parliament in

Brussels on EU-US Coordinated Future Strategies on Central Asia.

In France, government efforts continued to ban young women from wearing the Muslim headscarf in public schools. Commissioners wrote the President of the French National Assembly to express their concerns about the ban, and Commission staff met with French officials and NGOs in Paris. Commissioners wrote the Belgian Minister of Justice to raise their concerns about inappropriate state involvement in the selection of Muslim leaders in Belgium. Similar intrusive policies were practiced in several countries through specialized government agencies such as Turkey's Directorate of Religious Affairs and Office of Foundations, Azerbaijan's State Committee on Religious Associations and the Muslim Board of the Caucasus, Armenia's Council on Religious Affairs, and Kazakhstan's Muslim Spiritual Association. These entities often exert a troubling degree of control in determining which religious communities are permitted to exist legally.

In addition, Commissioners engaged officials from Slovakia, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Kosovo, Turkey and Romania to express concerns about existing or draft religion laws. Commissioners wrote Romanian officials and elected leaders on several occasions to express their concern about the draft law on religion, which would create a registration threshold of 23,000 people if passed, the highest threshold in the OSCE region. In May, Co-Chairman Smith traveled to Romania and expressed these concerns with the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs, as well as Members of the Romanian Parliament. The Commission will continue to urge elected leaders and government officials to amend portions that are inconsistent with OSCE norms. Commissioners also wrote the Macedonian ambassador to express their alarm about the treatment of a Serbian Orthodox priest, as well as wrote the President of Armenia to discuss the treatment of conscientious objectors to military service. Commission staff followed up with a meeting with the Armenian Embassy.

Registration issues in the Russian Federation have generally improved for minority faith groups, despite the concern over the re-registration campaign in 2000. While the overall number of visa denials does not mirror the high in 2002, there were notable instances involving high profile religious leaders in 2005. (In a similar fashion, Belarus has also denied visa renewals to Catholic priests.) While religious freedom in Russia is generally protected at the federal level, many unregistered religious groups throughout the Russian Federation must regularly overcome obstacles at the local level to enjoy the free practice of religion. Seemingly uncoordinated, problems faced by these communities range from acts of violence to prohibitions on public meetings. On two occasions, Commissioners wrote local officials to raise their concerns about the treatment of minority religious communities by local authorities and police.

Religious freedom concerns were raised by Commissioners and Commission staff, in meetings with officials from Belgium, Croatia, France, Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Sweden, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Uzbekistan as well as with NGOs and religious groups from throughout the OSCE region.

At the July OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Washington Annual Session, Commission Co-Chairman Smith successfully offered two amendments strengthening religious freedom commitments to the Assembly's declaration. Commission staff also discussed religious freedom concerns with the Personal Representative of the Chair-in-Office on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and

Discrimination, also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions, and the Personal Representative on Discrimination Against Muslims.

The Commission will continue to monitor the unfolding legal situation in the OSCE region regarding religious freedom, as well as the broader societal manifestations of intolerance toward minority religious groups. Commission staff is currently serving as one of the two U.S. members on the OSCE/ODIHR Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion. Ancillary issues, such as restrictions on speech relating to religion and registration requirements tailored to limit religious association, will also be followed closely.

### **Romanian Adoptions**

In 1989, when Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown and communist rule ended, an estimated 100,000 children were discovered to be living in 600-700 squalid and inhumane institutions in Romania. Fifteen years after Ceausescu's demise, child abandonment in Romania continues unabated. According to the most recent estimates, more than 80,000 children live in institutions or temporary foster care arrangements; an unknown number live in maternity and pediatric hospitals; and still others live on the streets.

On January 1, 2005, law no. 273/2004 took effect prohibiting the adoption of Romanian children outside of Romania, by anyone other than a biological grandparent. The law, passed in conjunction with others addressing children's issues, was intended to encourage the adoption of children by Romanian families in the country, or if that is not possible, placement in foster care. At the time of the law's enactment, hundreds of international adoption applications were registered with the Romanian Government, but had not yet been finalized. In approximately 200 cases, children had been matched with parents in the United States. Approximately 1000 other children were matched with parents in Western Europe, Israel, Australia and elsewhere. Many of the pending cases involve older children, Roma children, and children with special medical needs who are unlikely to be domestically adopted in Romania.

On September 14, the Commission held a hearing entitled "In the Best Interest of the Children? Romania's Ban on Inter-Country Adoption" which examined the new law's effects on Romanian children and addressed Romania's failure to meet obligations as a party to the Hague Convention on Inter-Country Adoption. The hearing also examined the linkage between Romania's ban on inter-country adoption and its accession to the European Union. Dozens of prospective adoptive parents traveled to Washington, DC to attend the hearing.

Following the hearing, Co-Chairman Smith introduced H. Res. 578, concerning the Government of Romania's ban on inter-country adoptions and the welfare of orphaned or abandoned children in Romania. The hearing and resolution resulted in significant press coverage of adoption issues, and the pending cases, in the Romanian press.

Members of the Commission and Commission staff also engaged in direct advocacy with the Romanian Government and Members of Parliament, the European Commission, and the U.S. State Department on the need to finalize the pending adoption cases.

## **Providing Leadership at the 2005 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting**

From September 19-30, 2005, the OSCE participating States met in Warsaw, Poland, for the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM). Each year, the OSCE convenes a forum to discuss the compliance by the participating States with the full range of their freely undertaken OSCE human rights commitments.

As at past meetings, the Commission's preparations for, contributions to, and participation in the HDIM was 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 questions 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 was headed by Lorne Craner, President of the International Republican Institute (and formerly Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor and Helsinki Commissioner). He was joined by Ambassador Julie Finley, Head of the U.S. Mission to the OSCE; Ambassador Glyn T. Davies, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; Ambassador Edward O'Donnell, Department of State Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues; Paul S. DeGregorio, Vice Chairman of United States Election Assistance Commission; Joseph K. Grieboski, Founder and President, Institute on Religion and Public Policy; Felice D. Gaer, Co-Vice Chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom; and Michelle Kelso, U.S. Fulbright Fellow, Bucharest. Staff of the Commission also participated in the delegation.

Regional events cast into sharp relief many of the human rights problems that were addressed during the HDIM meeting. For example, on September 20, show trials began in Uzbekistan of individuals arrested following the May 13 government massacre in Andijon. On September 27, Pinchas Goldschmidt, Chief Rabbi of Moscow, was denied re-entry to Russia after he had made a visit to Israel, thereby depriving his congregation of their spiritual leader just before the Jewish High Holy Days. Also on September 27, Bulgarian Government plans to destroy a section of Romani homes were temporarily stayed by the courts, but the threat of large-scale and potentially destabilizing evictions of Roma loomed in several countries. At times, the meeting also mirrored tensions between two camps in an ongoing debate about "reforming" the OSCE, with countries like Russia and Belarus seeking to water down existing standards on free and fair elections, and another group of countries, anchored by the United States, willing to entertain changes but not at the expense of core values.

The "re-Sovietization" of Belarus and the deplorable state of human rights in Chechnya, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan were recurring themes throughout the meeting. During the meeting's mid-way plenary session, the United States focused on the particularly desperate state of human rights in Turkmenistan. (Following the November 25, 2002, attack on the motorcade of President Saparmurat Niyazov, Turkmenistan authorities responded with a widespread human rights crackdown marked by torture, disappearances, and an escalation of "Stalin-era" practices.) In contrast to other recent



HDIMs to which Turkmenistan had declined to send representatives, this year the Head of Turkmenistan's Mission to the OSCE participated in the HDIM – as did several Turkmenistan non-governmental organizations in exile.

Non-governmental representatives pleaded with the OSCE participating States to conduct an independent investigation into the massacre in Andijon and to observe the trials of those persons who were accused by the Government of Uzbekistan in relation to those events. They expressed special concern for the lawyers representing the accused in Andijon.

In accordance with the OSCE procedures, the meeting also included focus on three special topics. This year, those topics were: 1) the situation of the media in the OSCE region and the role of state and non-state actors in promoting media freedom; 2) methods to prevent and combat torture; and, 3) the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination (following up on extra-ordinary conferences held earlier this year on anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination).

The Commission helped facilitate a side-event at which U.S. Fulbright grantee Michelle Kelso presented a documentary she produced entitled "Hidden Sorrows." The film is about the deportation of Roma from Romania to Transnistria during World War II. (Side events may be organized at the site of the HDIM meeting by non-governmental organizations, OSCE institutions or offices, other international organizations, or participating States. They augment the implementation review by providing an opportunity to examine specific subjects or countries in greater depth.) A separate side-event, organized by the OSCE, focused on teaching about the genocide of Roma during World War II.

On the margins of the HDIM, the OSCE hosted a special round-table focusing on challenges faced by Muslims. Also, a newly formed "Central Asian Congress" met with the goal of preparing for the eventual demise of dictatorships in their region.

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 are 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.

### **Other Human Dimension Meetings**

The Commission's Staff 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. She also participated in the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw, the annual OSCE Parliamentary Assembly meeting in Washington, Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings as well as the Ljubljana Ministerial. Her presence in Vienna affords the Commission 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.

From June 8-9, 2005, the OSCE held a Conference on Anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance convened in Cordoba, Spain. The conference, the third since the Helsinki Commission's 2002 groundbreaking hearing on "Escalating Anti-Semitic Violence in Europe," was well attended with many participating States represented by senior-level officials. New York Governor George E. Pataki headed the U.S. delegation. There was also a video presentation by Commission Chairman Brownback.

Commission staff participated in the OSCE's three 2005 Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings: Challenges of Election Technologies and Procedures," in late April; "Human Rights and the Fight Against Terrorism," in July; and "The role of defence lawyers in guaranteeing a fair trial," in early November. Although Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings have traditionally been held in Vienna, the Commission has supported moving them to different countries to make them more accessible to a wider segment of the public. Accordingly, the November meeting was held Tblisi, Georgia.

Commission staff also participated in meetings on: "Effective Assistance and Protection to Victims of Trafficking," organized in Vienna on February 28 by the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings; on "Sharing of Experiences in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings," held in Bangkok, Thailand, June 16-17; and on "women in conflict prevention and crisis management," held June 20, Vienna.

#### **D. US-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. Senior Department of State officials testified at hearings on the OSCE, while other hearings and briefings examined observance of OSCE commitments in various participating States.

The Commission's hearing in October on the "United States and OSCE: A Partnership in Advancing Freedom" featured Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia Daniel Fried. He noted the important role of OSCE as a tool in advancing American foreign policy priorities, citing as an example the OSCE's – with strong U.S. support – rapid infusions of OSCE election observers, experts, advisors, and political leadership in response to calls for assistance from Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan during their political transitions. Fried also cited the OSCE's work on keeping the spotlight on anti-Semitism as well as other tolerance issues – racism, xenophobia, and anti-Muslim and anti-Christian discrimination. At the hearing, Commissioners expressed concerns over the attempt by Russia to water down and weaken the OSCE.

At a hearing in March, Dmitrij Rupel, Foreign Minister of Slovenia and OSCE Chairman-in-Office (CIO) for 2005, testified about efforts to promote security, stability and human rights in Europe and Eurasia. He discussed efforts to strengthen the OSCE and maintain a cooperative spirit, despite attacks on the OSCE by the Russian Federation. He noted the uniqueness of the OSCE as the only organization providing a comprehensive security model founded on the values of respect for human rights and promotion of democratic institutions. The CIO reviewed the OSCE's efforts to end conflicts such as in Transdniestria and in the Caucasus and further post-conflict rehabilitation

in societies in the Balkans, especially Kosovo and efforts and initiatives to promote democracy Belarus and Central Asia.

While working with the 2005 CIO, the Commission also initiated contacts with Belgian officials in light of their countries' assumption of the chairmanship. Throughout the year Belgian officials met with Commission staff in Washington and Vienna to begin developing their leadership strategy for the organization for 2006.

In direct consultations with U.S. and OSCE officials as well as representatives of other participating States, the Commission contributes substantially to the OSCE process by providing regional expertise and information and specific recommendations on how best to advance U.S. interests. Similarly, the Commission provided expert advice in the formulation of U.S.-sponsored resolutions for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's annual sessions.

Building on the OSCE strategy to address threats to security and stability in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, at the December 2005 Ljubljana OSCE Ministerial Council meeting, ministers strengthened their commitment to use the organization to fight terrorism, taking several decisions that make it more difficult for terrorists to operate in the region. These strategies are examples of the OSCE responding to new economic and political-military security challenges. These include decisions on enhancing legal co-operation in criminal matters to counter terrorism and on measures to enhance container security. This supplements previous initiatives such as to bring the OSCE States into compliance with recommendations of the OECD Financial Action Task Force to combat money-laundering and terrorist financing, to implement stricter issuance procedures for travel documents and develop machine-readable passports, and to control the spread of MANPADS.

## **E. OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**

In February, Co-Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Cardin and Commissioner Hastings participated in the Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, held in Vienna. Smith serves as the Assembly's point person for collecting information on human trafficking in the OSCE region; promoting dialogue within the OSCE on how to combat human trafficking; and, advising the Assembly on the development of new anti-trafficking policies and delivered his report on these activities. Commissioner Hastings serves as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and as such presided over the meeting. Ranking Member Cardin serves as Chairman of the Second Committee, the Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology, and the Environment.

Commissioners participated in the Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (an institution in which the Commission has played a substantive role since the Assembly's inception in the early 1990s) which was held for the first time in Washington, DC. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice delivered a keynote address to the session. Chairman Brownback addressed the opening plenary in his capacity as head of the U.S. delegation. Commissioner Hastings was re-elected President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly by an overwhelming margin, and Ranking Member Cardin was re-elected to a second one-year term as Chair of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Second Committee. In cooperation with the House International Relations Committee, the Commission staff provided significant substantive support for the delegation's work in pressing human rights concerns and other matters of particular interest to the United States, and in preparing

for bilateral meetings with other delegations. Members of the U.S. delegation were active in the work of the Assembly's three committees and were successful in securing adoption of several supplementary items and amendments. A key accomplishment of the U.S. delegation was the defeat of a Russian effort to gut OSCE international election observation efforts, a hallmark of the OSCE and the Helsinki commitments.

#### **F. OSCE Partners for Cooperation and Mediterranean Partners**

The 55-nation OSCE now has 11 Partners for Co-operation, including the six Mediterranean Partners and five other Partners in Asia – Afghanistan, Japan, Mongolia, South Korea and Thailand. The partners, while not participating in regular political negotiating fora of the OSCE, nevertheless maintain close relations and hold frequent seminars to explore ways to strengthen co-operation on issues of mutual interest and meet OSCE principles, goals and values. The Partners of the OSCE were active throughout the year 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. It should be noted that 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 an effort to broaden and intensify this Mediterranean relationship, the OSCE, including the Parliamentary Assembly, has convened numerous seminars, conferences and forums emphasizing the issues of the Mediterranean and allowing full participation of Partner countries from the region. Additionally, a contact group exists within the OSCE to provide an ongoing opportunity for participating States and the six Mediterranean Partners to maintain dialogue on pertinent Mediterranean issues. Periodic meetings of the group are typically held at the ambassadorial level.

The Commission held a briefing on October 12, 2005 that examined Egypt's September 7, 2005 presidential election and then ongoing parliamentary elections. The presidential election was the first in Egyptian history to be open to opposition candidates, while the parliamentary elections were held in three phases over a six-week period that concluded in early December.

Given the growing interest of Asian countries in OSCE activity, the organization sought to strengthen its relationship with partners from the region. Among the most notable developments in this regard were the meetings on trafficking in humans held in Bangkok, Thailand and a seminar on the applicability of the OSCE security model to Asia, held in Seoul, Korea. The Commission staff participated in the U.S. delegations to these meetings, and Chairman Brownback delivered videoed remarks to the seminar in Seoul.

## **VII. Hearings, Briefings, Digest Articles and Congressional Delegations in 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session**

### **A. Hearings and Briefings**

Religious Freedom in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan (Briefing, December 14, 2005)  
Bringing Justice Home: The War Crimes Trials in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Briefing, November 15, 2005)  
The United States and the OSCE: A Partnership for Advancing Freedom (Hearing, October 25, 2005)  
The Meaning of Egypt's Elections and their Relevance to the Middle East (Briefing, October 12, 2005)  
In the Best Interest of the Children? Romania's Ban on Inter-Country Adoption (Hearing, September 14, 2005)  
The "Yukos Affair" and its Implications for Politics and Business in Russia (Briefing, July 13, 2005)  
The Uzbekistan Crisis: Assessing the Impact and Next Steps (Hearing, June 29, 2005)  
Russia: Human Rights and Political Prospects (Briefing, June 24, 2005)  
The Iran Crisis: A Transatlantic Response (Hearing, June 9, 2005)  
Exploiting Americans on American Soil: Domestic Trafficking Exposed (Hearing, June 7, 2005)  
The Future of Human Rights in Kosovo (Hearing, May 26, 2005)  
Unrest in Uzbekistan: Crisis and Prospects (Briefing, May 19, 2005)  
Lebanon: Development and Prospects (Briefing, May 5, 2005)  
Unregistered Religious Groups in Russia (Hearing, April 14, 2005)  
Religious Freedom in Turkey (Briefing, April 12, 2005)  
Kyrgyzstan's Revolution: Causes and Consequences (Hearing, April 7, 2005)  
The Schneerson Collection and Historical Justice (Hearing, April 6, 2005)  
Albania's 2005 Parliamentary Elections: How Free and Fair Will They Be? (Briefing, March 21, 2005)  
The Greek Orthodox Church in Turkey: A Victim of Systematic Expropriation (Briefing, March 16, 2005)  
The Russian-Syrian Connection: Thwarting Democracy in the Middle East and the Greater OSCE Region (Hearing, March 9, 2005)  
Slovenia's Leadership of the OSCE (Hearing, March 8, 2005)

### **B. CSCE Digest Articles**

Missed Opportunity in Kazakhstan (December 15, 2005)  
Democracy Denied (November 30, 2005)  
The Meaning of Egypt's Elections and Their Relevance to the Middle East (November 23, 2005)  
American Agenda Moves Forward at the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (August 19, 2005)  
Human Rights in Iran: Prospects and the Western Response (August 12, 2005)  
Helsinki Commission Examines Current State of Human Rights and Democracy in Russia (August 12, 2005)  
Progress and Challenges: The OSCE Tackles Anti-Semitism and Intolerance (June 21, 2005)  
Meeting the Demographic Challenge and the Impact of Migration (June 21, 2005)

Helsinki Commission Examines Russian-Syrian Connection (April 21, 2005)  
Ankara's Efforts to Undermine the Greek Orthodox Church in Turkey (April 11, 2005)  
Helsinki Commission Leaders Visit Ukraine (March 4, 2005)  
The Mediterranean Dimension Today: Seeds of Hope (January 18, 2005)  
Democratic Change in Ukraine Provides a Backdrop of Success at the 12th OSCE Ministerial  
(January 12, 2005)  
Religious Freedom in Southeastern Europe (January 5, 2005)

**C. CSCE Reports**

Report on the 2005 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (November 9, 2005)  
OSCE Commitments on Trafficking in Human Beings (May 5, 2005)  
Report on Slovakia's Religion Law (April 29, 2005)

**D. Congressional Delegations (authorized by the Commission)**

Commissioners Smith, Cardin and Hastings participated in the Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Vienna, Austria, and had meetings in Kiev, Ukraine, February 22-28, 2005.

Ranking Member Cardin participated in the Expanded Bureau Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Copenhagen, Denmark, April 16-19, 2005.

Co-Chairman Smith held meetings in Timisoara and Bucharest, Romania, May 29-June 3, 2005.

## Appendix (A)

### Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

109<sup>th</sup> Congress

#### *Legislative Branch Commissioners*

##### *United States Senate*

Sam Brownback, Kansas  
Chairman  
Gordon Smith, Oregon  
Saxby Chambliss, Georgia  
Richard Burr, North Carolina  
David Vitter, Louisiana  
Christopher J. Dodd, Connecticut  
Russell D. Feingold, Wisconsin  
Hillary Rodham Clinton, New York  
*Vacant*

##### *United States House of Representatives*

Christopher H. Smith, New Jersey  
Co-Chairman  
Frank R. Wolf, Virginia  
Joseph R. Pitts, Pennsylvania  
Robert B. Aderholt, Alabama  
Mike Pence, Indiana  
Benjamin L. Cardin, Maryland  
Louise McIntosh Slaughter, New York  
Alcee L. Hastings, Florida  
Mike McIntyre, North Carolina

#### *Executive Branch Commissioners*

*Vacant*, Department of State  
*Vacant*, Department of Defense  
*Vacant*, Department of Commerce

## **Appendix (B)**

### **COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

#### **STAFF MEMBERS**

Orest Deychakiwsky	Staff Advisor Belarus, Bulgaria, Ukraine Security Officer
John Finerty	Staff Advisor Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russian Federation
Quena D. Gonzalez	Staff Assistant/Systems Administrator Website Manager Budget Officer
Chadwick R. Gore	Staff Advisor International Media Issues Mediterranean Partner States Cyprus, Greece, Turkey Secretary, U.S. Delegation to OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
Robert Hand	Staff Advisor Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia Security Issues
Janice Helwig	Staff Advisor U.S. Delegation to the OSCE OSCE Structure
Mark E. Kearney	Staff Assistant Hearings & Briefing, Publications, Travel
Ronald J. McNamara	International Policy Director
Michael Ochs	Staff Advisor Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
Shelly Han	Senior Advisor Basket II - Economics, Trade, Technology, Environment



Erika Schlager

Counsel for International Law  
International War Crimes Tribunal  
Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia  
Roma Issues  
OSCE Structure

Dorothy Douglas Taft

Deputy Chief of Staff

H. Knox Thames

Counsel  
Religious Liberty  
Migration and Refugee Issues  
Hungary

Maureen Walsh

General Counsel  
Domestic Violence, Trafficking in Humans,  
Equality of Opportunity for Women and Men

Sean Woo

Chief of Staff

*vacant*

Communications Director  
*CSCE Digest* Editor

## Appendix (C)

### OSCE Participating States as of January 2006

Albania	Observer as of June 1990; admitted as new, fully participating State June 19, 1991
Andorra	admitted as new participating State April 25, 1996
Armenia	admitted as new, fully participating State January 30, 1992
Austria	original participating State
Azerbaijan	admitted as new, fully participating State January 30, 1992
Belarus	admitted as new, fully participating State January 30, 1992
Belgium	original participating State
Bosnia- Herzegovina	admitted as new, fully participating State April 30, 1992
Bulgaria	original participating State
Canada	original participating State
Croatia	Observer as of January 1992; admitted as new, fully participating State March 24, 1992
Cyprus	original participating State
Czech Republic	as Czechoslovakia, original participating State; Czech Republic admitted as new, fully participating State January 1, 1993
Denmark	original participating State
Estonia	admitted as new, fully participating State September 10, 1991
Finland	original participating State
France	original participating State
Georgia	admitted as new, fully participating State March 24, 1992
Germany	originally participated as 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, fully participating State January 30, 1992
Kyrgyzstan	admitted as new, fully participating State January 30, 1992
Latvia	admitted as new, fully participating State September 10, 1991
Liechtenstein	original participating State
Lithuania	admitted as new, fully participating State September 10, 1991
Luxembourg	original participating State
Malta	original participating State
Macedonia	Observer as of April 1993; admitted as new, fully participating State October 12, 1995
Moldova	admitted as new, fully participating State January 30, 1992

Monaco	original participating State
Netherlands	original participating State
Norway	original participating State
Poland	original participating State
Portugal	original participating State
Romania	original participating State
Russia	succeeded Soviet Union (original participating State)
San Marino	original participating State
Serbia and Montenegro	as Yugoslavia, admitted as new, fully participating State November 10, 2000; renamed Serbia and Montenegro February 4, 2003
Slovak Republic	as Czechoslovakia, original participating State; as Slovak Republic, admitted as new, fully participating State January 1, 1993
Slovenia	Observer as of January 1992; admitted as new, fully participating State March 24, 1992
Spain	original participating State
Sweden	original participating State
Switzerland	original participating State
Tajikistan	admitted as new, fully 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  
Egypt  
Israel  
Jordan  
Morocco  
Tunisia

#### **OSCE Partners for Cooperation**

Afghanistan  
Japan  
Mongolia  
Republic of Korea  
Thailand