Austrian Foreign Policy Yearbook 2005

Report by the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs

Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Minoritenplatz 8  
A-1014 Vienna  
Austria

Tel: During office hours on work days between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.:  
050 11 50-0  / int.: +43 50 11 50-0  
For general information:  
0802 426 22  
(free of charge; cannot be dialled from outside Austria)

Fax: 050 11 59-0  / int.: +43 50 11 59-0

E-Mail: einlaufstelle@bmaa.gv.at

Internet: www.bmaa.gv.at

Service:

In cases of emergency abroad, the Service is available around the clock:

Tel: 050 11 50-4411  / int.: +43 50 11 50-4411  
or:  
(01) 90 115-4411  / int.: +43-1 90 115-4411

Fax: 050 11 59-4411  / int.: +43 50 11 59-4411  
or:  
(01) 904 20 16-4411  / int.: +43-1 904 20 16-4411

E-Mail: bereitschaft@bmaa.gv.at

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Edited and coordinated by:
Thomas Schlesinger
Monika Hofer, Manfred Kohlbach and Elisabeth Reich

English translation coordinated by:
Sabine Hübler

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PREFACE

The year 2005 was a year of commemoration, changes and course setting for Austria and the European Union at large.

For us, the commemoration of the recovery of Austria’s freedom was one of the leitmotifs. In this “year of thought” we looked back, gratefully, and not without pride, at the reestablishment of an independent Austria on 27 April 1945 and the successful course the Republic has steered in the past 60 years. We commemorated the signing of the State Treaty on 15 May 1955 by the then Foreign Minister Leopold Figl, which gave the Austrians the freedom they had been yearning for so long. We were well aware of the huge confidence and trust the world had vested in the Austrian people in those eventful times and used it with great responsibility. Later that year, on 14 December 1955, we joined the United Nations, and shortly afterwards the Council of Europe. As a member of the international community of states Austria thus bore joint responsibility for maintaining peace in the world, and over the past 45 years we have participated actively in numerous peacekeeping missions launched by the United Nations. The next chapter in the Austrian success story was opened by our country’s decision to accede to the European Union. Now, ten years later, we know that it was a step in the right direction which opened up a wide range of new development opportunities for our country.

For us, the year 2005 was both an opportunity and a mandate to play our part in co-shaping the future of Europe. On 29 October 2004, Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel and I had signed the “Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe” in Rome. The ratification process for this constitutional treaty was to be completed within two years of signing. In Austria the constitutional treaty was adopted by an overwhelming majority in the National Council and the Federal Council alike. However, the approval process for the treaty started to flag following the negative referendums in France and the Netherlands in spring 2005. The rejection of the new European treaty by these two founding states confronted the European Union with a tough test. The European Council of Heads of State and Government reacted promptly and in June called for a period of reflection during which open, thought-provoking and awareness-raising debates were to be held among the Member States, actively involving the citizens of Europe and all groups of society.
In Austria we made intensive use of this pause for reflection by listening to the citizens of Europe and considering their worries and concerns in great detail. With the “Europe is listening” information campaign I launched a very concrete contribution to a large-scale discussion on the future of Europe. By setting up the joint website www.zukunfteuropa.at, the Federal Chancellery and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs created a platform for direct dialogue and increased the involvement of the EU citizens in a constructive debate on our common future in Europe. Making Europe more understandable and tangible to its citizens is a special concern of mine, for we will only succeed in developing common goals and reaching concrete results when we have created a sound basis of trust to build on and raised awareness of the added value of European integration.

For a long time Austria was situated directly on a dividing line which stretched right across our continent. We felt and experienced the disadvantages of this division of Europe very directly and acutely. Following the historic enlargement in 2004, Austria moved back into the dynamic centre of our continent. But as long as there are still people on this continent for whom stability, security and opportunities for economic development cannot be taken for granted, the process of European reunification will be far from complete. A united Europe is therefore one of the primary goals of Austrian foreign policy. In the “year of thought 2005” we not only looked back on 60 years of peace and stability but also addressed the issue of the neighbourhood we want to live in in the future – and an integral part of the European peace project is precisely this involvement of our neighbours in South East Europe. For this reason we consciously want to offer these countries a credible European perspective. Because the accession perspective is an indispensable engine for driving people’s willingness to engage in reforms in the fields of democracy, the rule of law and the economy, and a decisive factor in establishing peace, stability and development in South East Europe. The goal is to introduce these countries to European standards in a well-directed manner through concrete measures. I would like to see the entire Western Balkans, every single country, contributing as a stakeholder to shaping the peace project of Europe.

In April, my counterparts in the European Union and I signed the EU accession treaties of Bulgaria and Romania in Luxembourg. Austria is supporting Bulgaria and Romania in their efforts towards the timely fulfilment of the criteria required for accession. We are giving them
practical assistance, for instance by dispatching Austrian experts to help both countries in further developing a functioning judicial system and raising environmental standards.

Croatia’s accession to the European Union is a special item on Austria’s foreign policy agenda. The many shared historical and cultural experiences and intensive political and economic relations represent a bond that closely links Austria with Croatia. The EU Task Force on Croatia, whose work I personally supported, was established at Austria’s initiative and considerably facilitated the start of membership negotiations on 3 October. Croatia is acting as an important role model for the countries of the Western Balkans and for tracing out the road towards European structures.

Politically, economically and strategically Turkey is another important partner country we want to link as closely as possible to Europe. Austria therefore strongly supports the process of reform in Turkey. With respect to the question of Turkey’s accession to the EU, I successfully advocated that explicit account should also be taken of the Union’s capacity to absorb new members.

Under the European Security and Defence Policy, Austria, as a reliable and respected partner assumes a wide range of responsibilities aimed at building up stability and the rule of law. By taking part in EU missions, we conduct foreign and peace policy in very concrete terms by dispatching experts to South East Europe, the Middle East and other crisis regions around the globe, for instance as part of the Aceh Monitoring Mission deployed by the EU in Indonesia. I am particularly pleased that numerous Austrian women also participate in these missions.

One of the central tasks my Ministry is concerned with is the consular dimension of Austrian foreign policy. Foreign policy in concrete terms also involves providing swift, efficient and solution-oriented assistance to citizens who stay abroad either permanently or temporarily and are faced with an emergency or crisis. I therefore emphatically support the further intensification of European cooperation in crisis situations by means of enhanced coordination with our European partners and the further expansion of the network of assistance.
The devastating tsunami disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa on 26 December 2004 caused destruction of unprecedented dimensions and also brought much personal distress to many Austrians. In managing this crisis a deep solidarity with the countries affected by this disaster became apparent. Thanks to the Austrians’ exemplary readiness to help it proved possible to give humanitarian assistance and implement reconstruction programmes in the affected regions. Let me take this opportunity to thank our numerous relief organisations, charitable associations and the many private individuals for their all-out efforts and the hard work they have invested in the economic and social reconstruction of the regions hit by the disaster.

With its professionally organised Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe programme, Austria makes a contribution towards reducing the inequality between rich and poor worldwide, safeguarding peace and preserving natural habitats. What is more, Austria also contributes to promoting economic, social and ecological development in her immediate neighbourhood, in South East Europe. Since the successful reorganisation of the development cooperation programme, these important goals have been implemented and put into practice by the Austrian Development Agency. In the field of development cooperation, too, I emphatically advocate the advancement of girls and women and their enhanced involvement in the developing countries’ societies.

The United Nations plays an indispensable role as a forum for global dialogue where people can reach out to one another. The United Nations’ reform process launched by Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the final document adopted by the General Assembly in New York this September represent important steps towards strengthening the organisation. I strongly support the efforts towards reform initiated by Kofi Annan. As an international organisation, the United Nations must be able to continue working in a credible and sustainable manner to realise its global goals. It fills me with pride that, as one of the four official UN headquarters, Vienna has developed into an important centre for the promotion of international security within the United Nations’ family. Austria is willing to assume responsibility in this context. In autumn 2008 we will therefore stand for election as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the period 2009 to 2010.
Worldwide respect for and strengthening of human rights is a cornerstone of Austria’s foreign policy. In pursuing this goal Austrian foreign policy acts hand in hand with the European Union, the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. A matter of particular importance to me in this connection is that of strengthening the role of women in conflict or post-conflict situations. Women play a significant role in organising the reconstruction or restructuring of a country’s society during and/or after conflicts. I am therefore convinced that it is absolutely essential to involve women increasingly in concrete political, economic and social decision-making processes in order to guarantee stable societies.

Austria’s commitment to the Dialogue among Cultures and Civilisations has a long-standing tradition and forms an integral part of our peace and foreign policy. At the conference entitled “Islam in a Pluralistic World”, organised by the Foreign Ministry at the Vienna Hofburg in November, eminent personalities including leading spiritual dignitaries engaged in this dialogue at a very practical level and in the interest of mutual understanding.

In the field of international cultural policy, I attach particular importance to drawing international attention to Austria’s contemporary cultural activities and to our everyday culture of life. After all, Austria’s image in the world is decisively influenced by her traditions and achievements in the field of culture. For people all over the world these traditions are something they can relate to: they serve as a point of reference for our country. The Austria Institutes and Austria Libraries, for instance, rank among the central institutions of international cultural policy and I would like to specifically mention the recent opening of the Austria Institute in Wroclaw.

After 286 years on Ballhausplatz, in 2005, the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs moved to its new, modern, state-of-the art premises at No. 8 Minoritenplatz. For me, the glass bridge which connects the two buildings is at the same time a symbol of the enhanced transparency we have gained thanks to spatial proximity and modern infrastructure. I believe that transparency specifically means communicating the central guiding principles and constitutive elements of our foreign policy activities to interested citizens. Only if we succeed in making the entire spectrum of our foreign policy activities understandable and tangible will we find the necessary support among the citizens.
In conclusion, I would like to thank all the staff of my Ministry who work dedicatedly on behalf of Austria at our headquarters in Vienna and in the representations abroad for their commitment and personal efforts in tackling the challenges of an active foreign policy every day anew.

Dr. Ursula Plassnik
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
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A. Austria in the European Union

I. The Enlargement of the European Union

The historical enlargement round leading to the accession of ten new Member States in 2004 did not include Bulgaria and Romania, two countries which had been actively involved right from the outset in the accession process which had started in 1998. Both countries were able to conclude their accession negotiations in December 2004. The European Commission approved the accession of Bulgaria and Romania in its opinion of 22 February. In April, the European Parliament approved the signing of the Accession Treaty after a large majority of the members of the Parliament’s Committee on Foreign Affairs had voted in favour of the accession of both countries. On 25 April, the Accession Treaty was solemnly signed in Luxembourg by representatives of the Member States of the Union and the two acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania. Austria was represented by Vice-Chancellor Hubert Gorbach and Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik.

On 25 October, the Commission presented its Comprehensive Monitoring Reports which had examined the state of preparations for the accession of both countries. These reports clearly revealed that although both candidate countries made some progress in the period of observation, extensive efforts have to be made in order to meet the targeted accession date of 1 January 2007. On 7 November, the Commission sent “warning letters” to Bulgaria and Romania indicating those problems which need to be urgently solved before their accession. The Commission established an urgent need for action particularly in the areas of justice and home affairs, agriculture, corporate law and regional policy. Moreover, it announced that it would issue another monitoring report in April/May 2006 which could also contain the recommendation to postpone the accession date for one or both acceding countries for one year in the event of a serious risk that Bulgaria and/or Romania would not be able to take on the obligations of EU membership on 1 January 2007.

In order to become effective, the Accession Treaty has to be ratified by all parties by 31 December 2006, regardless of a possible postponement of the accession date to 1 January 2008. In Austria, the ratification process started on 30 November with the initiation of the consideration procedure for the Federal Constitutional Enabling Act, which provides the legal basis for the ratification.

Further enlargement steps concerned Croatia and Turkey, which were granted candidate status in 2004 and 1999, respectively. In its Conclusions, the European Council of 16 and 17 December 2004 set the dates for the commencement of negotiations with both countries in 2005. As early as 22 December 2004, the Austrian National Council decided that a referendum
should be held on a possible Accession Treaty with Turkey. The date set for Croatia was 17 March. However, this date was made contingent on Croatia’s unrestricted cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague. For this purpose, Croatia would have to assist as far as possible in establishing the whereabouts of the former Croatian General Ante Gotovina, and in arresting and extraditing him to The Hague. For Turkey, the date for the start of accession negotiations was set for 3 October on the condition that by then Turkey would have passed essential legal acts, particularly in the field of criminal law, and signed the protocol on the extension of the customs union with the EU to the new Member States (Ankara Protocol).

On 17 March, the EU Member States agreed the negotiating framework for Croatia. However, the consensus required to open negotiations was not reached, since the EU foreign ministers, acting on the basis of the relevant report of ICTY Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte, were not able to confirm Croatia’s full cooperation with the ICTY. On Austria’s initiative, the European Council of 22 and 23 March decided to establish a high-level task force consisting of the Presidency (Luxembourg), the two subsequent Presidency countries (United Kingdom and Austria), the High Representative of the Council and a representative of the European Commission to evaluate Croatia’s cooperation with the ICTY.

In June, the European Commission presented a draft negotiating framework for Turkey. Turkey’s signing of the Ankara Protocol, which had been repeatedly demanded by the EU, was effected on 29 July. However, Turkey simultaneously issued a unilateral statement declaring its non-recognition of the current Republic of Cyprus as a subject of public international law. On 21 September, the EU replied to this statement emphasising among other things that Turkey’s statement did not have any effects on its legal obligations under the Protocol and that the recognition of all EU Member States was a necessary element of the accession process.

At their Council meeting on 3 October, the EU foreign ministers decided to commence accession negotiations with Croatia, as Carla Del Ponte had confirmed Croatia’s full cooperation with ICTY shortly before (also see Chapter A.IV.3.1.1.). The negotiations were officially opened at an Accession Conference with Croatia.

On the same day, the EU foreign ministers decided to open accession negotiations with Turkey, as they had agreed on a negotiating framework which sets out the basic parameters for negotiations with Turkey. After intensive negotiations, Austria had achieved significant changes to the draft submitted by the European Commission. These changes concern primarily the establishment of the EU’s absorption capacity as one of the accession criteria, a
reference to the required acceptance of Turkey’s potential accession by the EU citizens and the equal distribution of the financial costs of an accession among all Member States. An Accession Conference with Turkey was also held on the same evening.

The negotiating framework also states clearly that the negotiations are an open-ended process whose outcome cannot be guaranteed in advance. If Turkey is not able to meet all the obligations connected with membership, including fulfilment of all the Copenhagen political criteria, the candidate country should still be embedded as firmly as possible in the European structures. Moreover, the negotiations with Turkey can be concluded only after the passing of a resolution on the financial period starting in 2014 and will probably require a number of financial reforms. The negotiations will be accompanied by a political and a civil dialogue. Turkey must remedy the deficits indicated in the progress report of the European Commission and will continue to be closely monitored by the Union.

Similar to the negotiating framework for Croatia, the framework for negotiations with Turkey stipulates that negotiations will be conducted in the context of an Intergovernmental Conference and will be divided into individual ‘negotiating chapters’, in line with the procedure followed for the countries that joined the EU on 1 May 2004. A new element is the use of special criteria (benchmarks) for the preliminary conclusion and, if required, the opening of individual chapters referring to the harmonisation and implementation of legislation and the fulfilment of existing commitments vis-à-vis the EU. The text mentions the possibility of long transition periods, derogations, special regulations and permanent safeguard clauses forming the basis for the relevant measures in the fields of the free movement of persons and structural policy and agriculture, which can be activated at any time. In addition, the Member States will have the greatest possible say in decisions relating to the free movement of persons. Another new element is the possibility of suspending the negotiations in the event of a serious and persistent violation of European values.

On 9 November, the European Commission positively assessed the overall state of political and economic reforms and the degree of regulatory convergence in its progress report on Croatia submitted in the context of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP). The report concluded that Croatia was a functioning market economy, but that it still needed to modernise its administration and justice systems.

In view of its intensive political and economic relations with Croatia, Austria has a great interest in Croatia’s admission to the EU. Austria welcomed the general tenor of the European Commission’s detailed analysis on the reform
efforts in the country, which confirmed Austria’s assessment that Croatia was well on its way to EU membership.

The progress report on Turkey that was also presented on 9 November was relatively critical of the situation in the country. Although the Commission confirmed that the country “sufficiently” met the Copenhagen political criteria, it stated that the reform process had slowed down in general and that there was a substantial need for reform in sensitive areas such as the rights of trade unions, the right to the free exercise of religion, the status of women and the status of minorities. On the other hand, the report noted fundamental economic progress and for the first time considered Turkey to have a functioning market economy.

After it had opened the accession negotiations with Croatia and Turkey, the European Commission started the Acquis screening process for some of the negotiating chapters at the end of the year, examining to what extent legislation in the candidate countries complies with the Acquis Communautaire. This process, which will indicate the efforts candidate countries still have to make in order to implement the Acquis Communautaire, will probably last until autumn 2006.

Austria again supported the enlargement process through its active participation in twinning projects. Having already stepped up its commitment in the previous year, Austria continued with this pro-active approach, which led to a record outcome. Austria was awarded a total of 40 twinning projects with an overall volume of more than 20 million euros, the geographical focus being on Bulgaria, Romania, Malta and Hungary. Since the launch of the first twinning programmes in 1997, Austria has been able to establish 157 such partnerships totalling more than 70 million euros.

II. Reform of the European Union and Its Institutions

1. The EU Constitutional Treaty

On 18 June 2004, the Heads of State and Government agreed on a Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, which was signed in Rome on 29 October 2004. The compromise that was achieved was largely based on the draft constitution prepared by the European Convention. The subsequent Intergovernmental Conference essentially made adaptations to institutional provisions of particular importance.

The Constitutional Treaty combines all previous treaties in one uniform instrument. Europe commits itself to common goals such as peace, security
and solidarity and to values such as freedom, democracy and the rule of law. Further common goals include environmental protection, economic growth and price stability, full employment and social progress, the fight against poverty and the protection of children’s rights. The Charter elaborated by the Convention on Fundamental Rights was integrated into the Constitution and for the first time firmly established fundamental and civil rights at European level.

2. Overview of the Ratification Process

In order to enter into force, the Constitutional Treaty requires ratification by all Member States. It is laid down by the Treaty that it shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the deposit of the instrument of ratification by the last signatory state. In the event of problems with ratification, the following (partial) precautions have been taken: a joint declaration states that if, two years after the signature of the Treaty (end of October 2006), four-fifths of the Member States have ratified it and one or more Member States have encountered difficulties in proceeding with ratification, the matter will be referred to the European Council.

2.1. Ratification in Austria

In Austria the Constitutional Treaty was adopted with a clear majority by both the National Council (only one dissenting vote) and the Federal Council (three dissenting votes). After the instrument of ratification had been signed in June by Federal President Heinz Fischer and countersigned by Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel, it was deposited in Rome on 17 June. Austria was the fifth Member State of the Union to deposit its instrument of ratification, after Lithuania, Hungary, Slovenia and Spain.
Overview of the Ratification Process in Austria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratification steps</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>29 October 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Unanimous) adoption of the Federal Constitutional Enabling Act at the plenary session of the National Council</td>
<td>2 March 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Unanimous) adoption of the Federal Constitutional Enabling Act at the plenary session of the Federal Council</td>
<td>17 March 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication of the Federal Constitutional Enabling Act in the Federal Law Gazette I/12</td>
<td>29 March 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Ministers: Government bill on the EU Constitutional Treaty</td>
<td>30 March 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adoption (with one dissenting vote) of the Government bill on the EU Constitutional Treaty at the plenary session of the National Council</td>
<td>11 May 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approval of the bill (with three dissenting votes) at the plenary session of the Federal Council</td>
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<td>Ratification by the Federal President</td>
<td>14 June 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deposit of the instrument of ratification</td>
<td>17 June 2005</td>
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2.2. The Ratification Process in other Member States

While Austria’s constitutional law provides for ratification by parliament, other Member States followed a different procedure. Ten Member States (the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom) planned to hold a
referendum in the course of their ratification processes. In four Member States (Denmark, Ireland, Poland and Portugal) the outcome will be legally binding.

The first referendum on the Constitutional Treaty was held in Spain on 20 February, with 77% of the voters supporting the Constitution. However, the two referenda in France on 29 May and in the Netherlands on 1 June resulted in a rejection of the Constitutional Treaty (with about 55% negative votes in France and about 62% negative votes in the Netherlands). As a consequence, some Member States postponed their referenda. Luxembourg held its referendum according to plan in July, with a majority of about 57% voting in favour of the Constitution.

By the end of 2005, the ratification of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe had been approved by the parliaments of 13 Member States: Austria, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. However, Germany and Slovakia have not yet signed the instruments of ratification, since their national supreme courts still have to decide on the lawfulness of the ratification procedures.

Belgium, Estonia and Finland expect their ratification processes to be concluded in 2006. The Czech Republic, Denmark, Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and the United Kingdom have postponed their ratification processes for an indefinite period of time.

3. A Period of Reflection

The European Council of 16 and 17 June decided to assess the national debates in the first half of 2006 and subsequently to agree on the next steps in the process. During this period of reflection, a majority of the Member States intends to actively involve their citizens in the public debates on the future of Europe. The British Presidency, together with Austria as the subsequent Presidency country, submitted an interim report on the state of the national information campaigns to the European Council in December.

On 15 September, Austria launched the large-scale “Europe is listening” information campaign on the future of Europe, which will continue until the end of the Austrian Presidency. A central element of the debate on the future of Europe is the interactive website www.zukunfteuropa.at. It will provide citizens with a platform for information and exchange of opinions. From the middle of October to the middle of November, a Europe Bus toured 35 municipalities in five federal provinces to bring Europe closer to its citizens.

The Austrian National Council intensified the public debate on EU issues. In May, the Austrian Parliament decided to dedicate four full-day sessions per
year exclusively to European issues. The first “European Day” took place on 29 September, the second on 7 December. The debates were broadcast live on TV. Moreover, the members of the Austrian Federal Government drew public attention to European issues, notably by addressing them on television. Both members of the government and representatives of EU institutions participated in numerous TV debates on EU topics. The other Member States of the Union also used the reflection period to develop concepts and launch campaigns, which involve their citizens in the debate on the future of Europe and provide them with comprehensive information on the European project.

On 13 October, the European Commission presented its contribution to the period of reflection by launching its Plan D (Democracy, Dialogue and Debate). The plan focuses on topics which are currently of great interest to Europe’s citizens, such as the economic and social development of Europe. Another objective is to raise citizens’ awareness of the EU’s added value. Together with the Commissioner from the respective Member State, the President or one of the Vice-Presidents of the European Commission will visit the Member States of the Union in order to meet representatives of government, parliament, the social partners, civil society and the media. Members of the European Parliament will also participate in these encounters. The Representations of the European Commission in the Member States are to increase their visibility for the citizens and to provide the Commission with information about the public debates in the countries visited. The European Parliament held several debates on the period of reflection. MEPs Johannes Voggenhuber and Andrew Duff submitted a draft report on this matter to the Constitutional Committee of the European Parliament.

III. The Policies of the European Union

1. Austria’s Role in the European Institutions

Since 22 November 2004, former Minister for Foreign Affairs Benita Ferrero-Waldner has been the Commission Member responsible for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy. On 14 January 2005, Hubert Weber, who started his second six-year term as a member of the European Court of Auditors in 2002, was elected President of this body for a period of three years. Peter Jann and Josef Azizi are the Austrian judges at the European Court of Justice (ECJ) and the European Court of First Instance (ECFI), respectively. Azizi was re-appointed in 2004. On 6 October, Christine Stix-Hackl, who had held the office of Advocate-General at the ECJ in Luxembourg since 2000, was elected First Advocate-General at the European Court of Justice. In October 2004, Anne-Marie Sigmund was elected President of the European Economic
and Social Council. Since 2003, Gertrude Tumpel-Gugerell has been the Austrian member of the Executive Board of the European Central Bank.

1.1. European Parliament

After intensive informal deliberations in the first half of the year, the European Parliament agreed on a common statute for its Members to which the Council gave its consent on 18 July. In a declaration, Austria stated that the European Parliament would need to continue to find an adequate solution to the issue of MEPs’ contributions to their pension entitlements.

Since 26 September, 18 observers from the Bulgarian Parliament and 35 observers from the Romanian Parliament have been taking part in plenary sessions, meetings and working groups of the European Parliament. As observers, these members have neither speaking nor voting rights in the plenary sessions, yet they can join the parliamentary groups represented in the European Parliament and contribute to the work of the various committees.

1.2. European Court of Justice and Court of First Instance

Austrian courts initiated 13 preliminary ruling procedures in 2005.

By the end of the year, 12 proceedings for alleged infringements of Community law were pending against the Republic of Austria. These infringement proceedings concern restrictions on the provision of cross-border services in the context of the posting of third-country workers in accordance with Section 18 of the Foreign Nationals Employment Act; the conservation of wild birds (Birds Directive) with regard to the Lauteracher Ried conservation area and the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive) with regard to the authorisation of the construction of the Bodensee Schnellstrasse (Lake Constance expressway); the implementation of Directive 89/391/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work; the obligation to correctly and fully implement Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds; the obligation to correctly and fully implement Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora; the exemption from taxation of taxable persons not established in Austria who transport passengers; the failure to notify the measures taken to implement Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation; the rejection of visa applications in relation to nationals of third countries who are members of the families of citizens of the Union; the implementation of Directive 96/82/EC on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances (Seveso II); the provision that only applicants having a head office in Austria may be approved as a boiler inspection body pursuant to the Boiler Act; the
implementation of Directive 2001/19/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications for various medical professions and the conditions for the recognition of private inspection bodies in the field of organic farming.

In ten proceedings the European Court of Justice issued a judgement establishing an infringement of Community law by the Republic of Austria. These judgements concerned the inadequate implementation of Directive 75/439/EEC on the disposal of waste oil; the implementation of the principle of equal treatment of men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions in connection with the prohibition of the employment of women in underground work in mining or in a high-pressure atmosphere or in diving work; the submission of the report on the reduction of the sulphur content of certain liquid fuels; the timely transposition of Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment of persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin; legislation on admission to higher and university education in Austria; the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of the formal qualifications of dentistry practitioners; the improvement of the safety and health protection of workers potentially at risk from explosive atmospheres; the coordination of procedures for the award of public service contracts in relation to the contract for the collection and treatment of waste awarded by the municipality of Mödling; the introduction of traffic-restricting measures on the A 12 Inntal motorway, and the protection of workers from the risks related to carcinogens and mutagens at work.

As a result of the streamlining of proceedings by the Court of Justice, one case against Austria resulted in a conviction within a period of one year (concerning the equal treatment of persons irrespective of racial or ethnical origin).

In September, Austria brought an action against the European Commission for annulment of the decision taken by the European Commission on 15 July regarding the exclusion from Community financing of certain expenditure incurred by the Member States within the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF).

In October, the action brought in November 2003 by the Federal Province of Upper Austria and the Republic of Austria seeking annulment of the decision 2003/653/EC taken by the European Commission on 2 September 2003 regarding national legislation banning the use of genetically modified organisms in the Province of Upper Austria (Act Banning the Use of Genetically Modified Crops) was dismissed.
1.3. European Economic and Social Council

Austria is represented in the European Economic and Social Council (EESC) with 12 members. At the EESC’s plenary meeting of 27 and 28 October, the Austrian member Anne-Marie Sigmund was elected president for the next two years.

1.4. Committee of the Regions

In the Committee of the Regions, Austria is represented with 12 members. The national delegation is composed of the nine Governors of the Federal Provinces and three representatives of the Association of Cities and Towns and the Association of Municipalities. On 22 November, the Council of Ministers proposed the following members for the new term 2006-2010: Governor Hans Niessl (Burgenland), Governor Jörg Haider (Carinthia), Governor Erwin Pröll (Lower Austria), Governor Gabriele Burgstaller (Salzburg), Governor Franz Voves (Styria), Governor Herwig van Staa (Tyrol), Governor Josef Pühringer (Upper Austria), Governor Michael Häupl (Vienna), Governor Herbert Sausgruber (Vorarlberg), Mayor Markus Linhart (Bregenz), Municipal Councillor Walter Zimper (Markt Piesting) and Mayor Heinz Schaden (Salzburg). The following alternate members were appointed: the President of the Parliament of the Province of Burgenland Walter Prior (Burgenland), Province Councillor Josef Martinz (Carinthia), Province Councillor Johanna Mikl-Leitner (Lower Austria), the former Governor of the Province of Salzburg Franz Schausberger (Salzburg), Vice-Governor Hermann Schützenhöfer (Styria), Province Councillor Viktor Sigl (Upper Austria), Vice-Governor Sepp Rieder (Vienna), the President of the Parliament of the Province of Vorarlberg Gebhard Halder (Vorarlberg), Mayor Bernd Vögerle (Gerasdorf), Mayor Helmut Mödlhammer (Hallwang), City Councillor Andreas Schieder (Vienna). The Austrian delegation is headed by the Governor of the Province of Tyrol, Herwig van Staa, who also holds the office of Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions.


The cooperation between the government, parliament and federal provinces in matters relating to European integration is based on the participation rights of the National and Federal Council laid down in Article 23e of the Federal Constitutional Act, which grants these bodies the right to be informed about plans concerning the EU and the right to give an opinion on them. If the Main Committee of the National Council or the Standing Sub-Committee on matters relating to the EU resolves to give an opinion, to make a statement on an EU-related matter or to pass an immediately applicable EU legal act relating to
matters to be regulated by federal law, the competent member of the Federal Government is bound by this opinion and can only deviate from it for compelling foreign or integration policy reasons. On 17 November, the Standing Sub-Committee welcomed the intention of the Heads of State and Government to intensify European integration in the sphere of internal security with the votes of the governing parties. On 17 November, the Sub-Committee also unanimously supported the plan to develop an EU programme to protect critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks.

The participation rights of the provinces and municipalities laid down in Article 23d of the Federal Constitutional Act include the right to be notified of and comment on issues falling within their sphere of responsibility, analogous to the rights of the National and Federal Council. In 2005, the provinces delivered several uniform opinions pursuant to Article 23d, Paragraph 2 of the Federal Constitutional Act, commenting on the following issues: the proposed Directive on access to justice in environmental matters; the Natura 2000 network of protected sites; the Community list of the Atlantic region; and the request by the European Commission to comment on and propose a Directive on services in the internal market.

At the request of the Presiding Committee of the National Council, the Federal Government had already decided on 17 November 2004 that the individual ministries should submit reports on their working programme and planned legislation at EU level to Parliament at the beginning of each year. These reports constitute a source of information for the members of parliament and enable them to take part in the political opinion-forming process at a very early stage. Moreover, Austria’s positions in the Committee of Permanent Representatives are coordinated by a weekly coordination mechanism chaired by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, thereby ensuring the continuous involvement of the federal ministries, the social partners, the National Bank, the Federation of Austrian Industry and the provinces and municipalities in the opinion-shaping process in Austria.

3. Economy and Finance

3.1. Economic and Monetary Union

After a relatively strong growth of 2.1% in 2004, the economic dynamism in the euro zone weakened, generating an increase of only 1.3% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2005. The development in the EU-25 followed the same pattern, but was somewhat more favourable: in 2004 the increase in GDP was 2.4%; in 2005 it amounted to 1.5%. The development of the government budgets reflects that of the economy as a whole. In the euro zone their balance amounted to -2.9% and had fallen by 0.2 percent compared to 2004, while in
the EU-25 their balance reached -2.7% which is equivalent to a decrease of 0.1%. The unemployment rate decreased both in the euro zone and in the EU-25 by 0.3% to 8.6% (euro zone) and to 8.7% (EU-25), respectively, reflecting the typically delayed response of the labour markets to the dynamic economic developments in 2004. The inflation rate slightly increased to an annual average of 2.3%, and the exchange rate between the euro and the US dollar, which started at a high level, nominally decreased by 15% over the year.

Both the euro zone and the EU-25 pursued a cyclically balanced budget policy, while monetary policy tended to support economic activity. The structural reforms to increase the growth potential in the medium term and safeguard the sustainability of public finances made significant progress: at Member States level the reforms to introduce a higher level of flexibility into labour markets and protect social security systems were continued, while at EU level the adoption of the Directive on capital requirements which implements the Basel II Accord (capital adequacy for banks) marked an essential step towards a modernisation of financial market regulations. And finally, the entering into force of the Savings Directive in July constituted an important measure to close the gaps in the mechanism ensuring the comprehensive and fair taxation of all income in the EU.

The European Council of 22 and 23 March adopted a reform of the stability and growth package. Key changes include a strengthening of preventive measures to avoid excessive deficits, increased consideration of country-specific circumstances and the extension of maximum periods granted to correct excessive deficits. At the end of 2005, an excessive deficits procedure had been launched against five countries of the euro zone (France, Germany, Greece, Italy and Portugal), the United Kingdom and six new Member States (the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Hungary, Malta, Poland and Slovakia).

3.2. Financial Perspective 2007–2013


The Financial Perspective was one of the central issues of the negotiations at the Council. The thematic and budgetary legislation proposed by the European Commission in the previous year was discussed in detail at several Councils. While the time was not yet ripe to reach a political agreement during the Luxembourg Presidency in June, the British Presidency was able to live up to expectations and succeeded in securing a compromise of the Heads of State and Government in Brussels on 17 December. The major cornerstones of the
agreement on an overall expenditure ceiling of 862 billion euros include a clear increase in expenditure for enhancing the competitiveness of the EU, the continuation of the agricultural reform of 2002 and the focusing of cohesion expenditure on the new Member States. With regard to the Union’s own resources, the Financial Perspective is to ensure the fair distribution of the enlargement costs among all Member States and to avoid excessive burdens being imposed on some Member States, including Austria. In addition, it contains a comprehensive revision clause which will facilitate the process of modernising the EU budget. Austria was able to achieve the inclusion of a number of issues in the final document, such as the promotion of rural and border areas, a focus on research and development and an appropriate net position. The agreement on the Financial Perspective 2007-2013 reached at the European Council of 15 and 16 December will serve as the point of departure for further efforts in this field. On the basis of a proposal from the European Commission, the Council will commence negotiations on a new inter-institutional agreement with the European Parliament, which is to be concluded by June 2006. This agreement will be in accordance with the Conclusions of the European Council of December.

Simultaneously, work on various legislative acts forming the basis for the funding of the European Union’s political activities in the next funding period was continued.

4. Employment and Social Policy

At their spring summit, the Heads of State and Government agreed on a re-orientation of the Lisbon strategy as a “partnership for growth and jobs”. In June, they adopted 24 integrated guidelines for growth and jobs for the period 2005–2008. As the implementation of the strategy mainly falls within the responsibility of the Member States, they had to submit national reform programmes by autumn, the assessment of which by the Commission will form the basis for further deliberations of the European Council.

Under the British Presidency, the Heads of State and Government selected research and development, universities, energy and demography as topics for an in-depth discussion at their informal meeting in Hampton Court in October.

In Austria, the reform dialogue was launched in May and was concluded in October with the submission of the National Reform Programme to the European Commission. At the centre of Austria’s efforts for more growth and jobs are, additionally, activities in the fields of infrastructure, research, work placement, export and internationalisation as well as measures to reduce bureaucracy, increase flexibility and safety, implement initiatives to improve
the balance between work and family life, and increase the flexibility of working hours. In addition, labour market goals are complemented by measures of the European Social Fund (ESF) and the EQUAL Community Initiative.

In the sphere of social policy, cooperation among Member States under the open method of coordination was continued. Austria submitted to the Commission its report on the implementation of the National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2003–2005, its report on the challenges and reform strategies in the fields of healthcare and long-term care and its report on the Austrian pension strategy 2005, which explains in great detail the Austrian pension reforms of 2003 and 2004. These reports constitute the basis for the Joint Report of the Commission and the Council on Social Protection and Social Inclusion which is presented to the Spring European Council each year.

5. Single Market

The Services Directive was a central issue at the Competitiveness Council meetings. Although all Member States supported a liberalisation of the services sector in the near future, their opinions on the draft directive presented diverged considerably. The Member States called for clear and specific exceptions in sensitive areas, particularly with regard to employee protection, without undermining the core of the directive, i.e., the provision of a legal basis for the free movement of services. Another issue discussed at all Council meetings was the question of how to achieve “better lawmaking”.

As regards the implementation of the Single Market Directives, the Commission reported on 11 October an average implementation deficit of all Member States of 1.9% (Austria: 1.8%). Eleven countries achieved the target of bringing their implementation deficit down to 1.5%. Austria improved the state of implementation with regard to those directives that should already have been implemented two or more years ago, and was able to reduce the number of its infringement procedures.

On 6 April, the Commission presented a new strategy in the field of health and consumer protection entitled “Healthier, safer, more confident citizens: a health and consumer protection strategy” and an integrated action programme in the fields of health and consumer protection. On 7 October, it published a proposed Consumer Credit Directive, which is to replace the currently valid directive in order to take account of recent developments with regard to credit instruments. In addition, the Commission started its review of the Acquis communautaire in the sphere of consumer protection.
6. Transport

In December, the European Parliament informally agreed to the Eurovignette Directive at its second reading. The new directive improves the directive in force. It foresees a future calculation method for external costs (even though they cannot be charged yet), as well as fees to combat damage to the environment apart from cross-financing (allocation of funds from increases in toll charges to finance other transport infrastructure of high European interest in the same corridor or in the same transport region). Efforts to shift freight transport from road to other transport modes are also at the centre of the Marco Polo programme, whose extension into the funding period 2007-2013 (Marco Polo II) was principally approved by the Council in April. The third Informal Ministerial Conference (Verona III) on “Lifelong Learning for Road Safety” was held in November. The conferences on road safety are to become a fixed annual event.

The first reading of the Third Railway Package put forward in March 2004 was concluded in December. In July, the European Commission published the second revision to its proposal for a Regulation on public passenger transport services by rail and by road.

The envisaged Commission Communication on the prospects of inland navigation was delayed. In November, the Commission presented the Third Maritime Safety Package, which comprises seven legislative proposals that are to improve the quality of ships flying the flag of a Member State, without sacrificing competitiveness for increased safety standards.

Complying with the Open Skies judgements rendered by the European Court of Justice in 2002, Austria and the other EU Member States as well as the European Commission continued their efforts to bring their bilateral air transport agreements in line with Community law. Also several horizontal agreements were concluded by the Commission. In addition, the European Commission entered into comprehensive air transport agreements with the countries of the Western Balkans and Morocco based on the mandates granted by the Council in December 2004. In November, the negotiations aiming at the creation of an Open Aviation Area with the United States of America made significant progress, possibly paving the way for the conclusion of a first-stage agreement in 2006. The full mandate for a comprehensive air transport agreement with China requested by the European Commission was not granted for the time being. In the field of aviation legislation, a Regulation on a “blacklist” of airlines which are subject to an operating ban within the Community because of safety deficiencies and a Regulation regarding the information of passengers on the identity of the carrier actually operating a particular flight were adopted. Other legislative work still in progress
concerned the proposed Regulation on the rights of persons with reduced mobility and a Directive on a Community air traffic controller licence.

7. Environment

The Competitiveness Council on 13 December achieved a political agreement on REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals) and on the related reform of the EU chemicals law. REACH provides for a new regulatory framework for dangerous chemicals and the establishment of a European Chemicals Agency in Helsinki. With REACH, the EU introduces a binding regulation to centrally register the approximately 30,000 chemicals produced, used or consumed in the EU. REACH will oblige large-scale manufacturers and importers of chemicals to systematically test the substances they want to put into circulation. Particularly dangerous substances, such as toxic or carcinogenic substances, cannot be placed on the market uncontrolled, but will require authorisation.

The EU is the driving force in the struggle to draw up an internationally binding and effective regulation related to protection against climate change and also sets a good example in this respect. Austria committed itself to meeting an ambitious Kyoto target. The EU Emissions Trading Directive has been in effect since January and is compatible with the project-related flexible mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol. Emissions trade within the EU is one of the major instruments to comply with the Union’s international climate commitments, which require the EU to reduce its emissions by 8% of the 1990 level during the period 2008-2012.

After conducting a public consultation process, the European Council of 16 and 17 June adopted the “Declaration on Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development”, which identifies sustainability as one of the key objectives of the EU Treaties.


Austria maintains its critical position on nuclear energy. Nuclear energy is a high-risk technology and the problem of final storage is still unsolved and poses a burden to future generations. The phasing out of nuclear energy and the raising of the protection level for people and the environment continue to
be major objectives. Efforts are still being made to develop common European nuclear safety standards and to reach a consensus regarding a revision of the EURATOM Treaty.

8. Energy

The EU continued its efforts to promote sustainability in the energy sector and adopted a Directive on energy end-use efficiency and energy services. A Green Paper on energy efficiency published by the European Commission addressing a large number of action spheres and levels for increasing energy efficiency was subjected to a wide consultation process. Work on the Green Paper is still in progress. The EU has formulated a number of targets to promote renewable energies. By 2010, the proportion of renewable energy in electricity production should amount to 21%, and the share of renewable energy in total consumption to 12%.

The Energy Council on 1 December discussed a progress report on the implementation of the Directive on the single electricity and gas market and a related interim report on a sectoral study of aspects relevant to competition in the single energy market.

The signature of the treaty on the “Energy Community – ECSEE” between the South East European countries on the one hand and the European Commission on behalf of the EU on the other on 25 October was a major success of EU energy policy, particularly for the South East European countries. The initiative was launched within the Stability Pact with the aim of ensuring a sustainable security of supply at fair prices as a precondition for economic development. The secretariat, which has the status of an international organisation, is headquartered in Vienna. The interim secretariat, which will be transformed into a permanent secretariat upon the entering into force of the treaty, took up its work in Vienna on 1 March.

Within its “energy partnerships”, Austria is presenting alternative options to the use of nuclear energy. Despite some setbacks and delays, specific projects with Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Ukraine were further developed or already implemented.

9. Education and Youth

In May, the Council on Education, Youth and Culture adopted Conclusions on new indicators for education and occupational training. A central element of the deliberations was an exchange of opinions on the integrated guidelines
for growth and jobs (2005-2008). Commissioner Ján Figel presented the Commission Communication on universities and their contributions to the Lisbon strategy. Under the British Presidency, the recommendation on a “European Quality Charter for Mobility” was discussed and an agreement was reached concerning quality assurance in university education. The November Council on Education, Youth and Culture reached a partial political agreement on the Programme for Lifelong Learning.

In the sphere of youth policy, the February Council on Education, Youth and Culture conducted a policy debate on the European Youth Pact and the mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy. The Council adopted Conclusions on the European Youth Pact, which were then referred to the European Council of 22 and 23 March. The European Council adopted a pact which aims at giving more consideration to the concerns of young people regarding employment, social integration, education, mobility and the reconciliation of family life and working life. The November Council on Education, Youth and Culture reached a partial political agreement on the new “Youth in Action” programme (2007-2015).

10. Research

Implementation of the 6th Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration (2002-2006) was successfully continued. Since the programme’s launch, the European Commission has provided financial support for more than 6,000 projects. The share of funds allocated to Austrian participants increased to approximately 2.5 per cent of the total funds made available for this purpose and hence exceeds Austria’s rate of contribution.

The Community has set itself the goal of strengthening the scientific and technological foundations of European industry in order to enhance its competitiveness. This plan is closely connected with the Barcelona objectives (to raise investment in research and development towards 3% of GDP by 2010, with two-thirds of this to come from the private sector). The future 7th Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration (2007-2013) is to make a significant contribution to the accomplishment of these objectives. At the end of November, the Member States agreed on the main contents of the programme. Following approval of the Financial Perspective in December, the 7th Framework Programme was allocated a prospective funding framework of 6 to 7 billion euros per year, which constitutes a clear increase in comparison with the previous Framework Programme. Major new elements of the 7th Framework Programme include the establishment of a European Research Council to support basic research projects, the comprehensive promotion of the construction of new research
infrastructure in Europe, the promotion of research in the field of security research, and measures to support research capacities in less-developed regions of the EU.

Under the 7th Framework Programme (EURATOM), research promotion will focus on fusion energy. As regards nuclear fission, major emphasis will be placed on the treatment of radioactive waste, the future use of nuclear energy and radiation protection.

The EUREKA research initiative with its 34 member countries celebrated its 20th anniversary. Austria has been a member since 1985. Alongside the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs pays half of the contribution to the secretariat in Brussels and provides the High Representative (Helmut Wessely). The characteristic features of EUREKA include the market-orientation of its projects, the mainly unbureaucratic and cost-efficient project management and the large number of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) participating in it. The 15th EUREKA Inter-Parliamentary Conference, which was held in The Hague, highlighted in its resolution the importance of EUREKA’s contribution to the accomplishment of the Barcelona objectives and welcomed the intensification of cooperation with the European Commission.

11. Establishment of an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice

The central activities in this field included efforts to develop a strategy for the external dimension of the area of freedom, security and justice and to create a new impetus in the sphere of migration management. The efforts are based on the Hague Programme (2005-2009) which was adopted by the European Council in November 2004 and pursues a number of political goals, including cross-border cooperation in criminal and civil matters, a more powerful common asylum and migration policy, combating illegal immigration and terrorism, and the implementation of the EU drug strategy. Progress will be evaluated on an annual basis.

In November 2005, the Council of the European Union agreed on the implementation of Regional Protection Programmes in close cooperation with the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). These programmes aim at improving existing refugee situations by enhancing protection capacities of regions of origin in order to create the necessary conditions for lasting solutions. In 2006, two regional pilot protection programmes will be implemented in Ukraine/Moldova/Belarus and in Tanzania. The experience gained in the pilot projects will then provide the basis for full regional protection programmes in other regions.
The “Strategy for the External Dimension of Justice and Home Affairs: Global Freedom, Security and Justice” which was already envisaged by the Hague Programme and adopted by the Council in December covers all external aspects of EU policy in the spheres of justice and home affairs. It particularly reflects the EU’s relations with third countries, country groups and regions and focuses on the specific needs of cooperation in the areas of justice and home affairs.

The Council Conclusions on migration and external relations fully integrate the efforts in the area of migration policy into the Union’s external relations and development cooperation. Building on this comprehensive approach, the EU adopted a priority package of measures for Africa and the Mediterranean.

The European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (FRONTEX) was opened in Warsaw on 30 June. Ilkka Laitinen from Finland was appointed executive director of the Agency.

In the field of justice and home affairs, Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia successfully engage in regional cooperation through the Salzburg Group which is implemented both by regular meetings of the Ministers of the Interior and by ongoing contacts at working level.

12. Combating Terrorism

Since the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. on 11 September 2001 and the Madrid bombings of 11 March 2004, the EU has attached major significance to the fight against terrorism. The attacks on the London underground network on 7 July once again demonstrated that terrorism can only be combated effectively by close international cooperation.

At its special meeting on 13 July, the Council on Justice and Home Affairs adopted a Declaration on Combating Terrorism. This declaration contains more than 30 different measures to accelerate the activities agreed under the Action Plan to Combat Terrorism as well as the Hague Programme and the related Action Plan. In the meantime, major progress was made in preventing the use of the financial system for money laundering and terror financing, in combating the radicalisation and recruitment of terrorists and in elaborating a programme for the protection of critical infrastructure.

In order to cut off funding to terrorist organisations, the Council of the EU on 26 October adopted a Directive on the prevention of the use of the financial
system for the purposes of money laundering and terrorist financing. This Third Money laundering Directive of the EU extends the scope of application of its predecessor to the fight against terrorist financing and provides for a requirement to report suspicious transactions involving an amount of at least 15,000 euros. Another step to eliminate terrorist financing focuses on preventing the abuse of non-profit organisations by terrorists. Efforts to compile a code of conduct which primarily aims at promoting transparency are already underway.

The Council on Justice and Home Affairs of 1 and 2 December adopted the Strategy to Combat Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism and the pertaining Action Plan which features the following three priorities: disrupting the activities of the networks and individuals who draw people into terrorism; ensuring that voices of moderation prevail over those of extremism; and promoting yet more vigorously security, justice, democracy and opportunity for all. In this respect, Austria particularly supports the promotion of an intercultural and inter-faith dialogue, which was at the centre of the “Islam in a Pluralistic World” conference Austria had organised in Vienna in November (see Chapter L.2).

Further activities include measures to protect transport, energy and communication infrastructures against terrorist attacks by drafting a European programme on the protection of critical infrastructure and setting up a warning and information network for critical infrastructure as well as a European Agency for Network and Information Security.

The Strategy for Combating Terrorism adopted by the European Council on 15 and 16 December, which lays down the EU’s long-term goals in this field and simultaneously is to provide the public with an overview of current and planned activities, constitutes a uniform and concise strategic policy document setting out the guidelines for future action. This comprehensive strategy is based on four pillars: the destruction of terrorist organisations, an improved management of the consequences of terrorist attacks, the protection of citizens and infrastructure, and prevention.

IV. The European Union’s External Relations

1. The Common Foreign and Security Policy

1.1. General

The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) focused primarily on the continuation of the stabilisation process in the Western Balkans, the search for a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict, the situations in Iraq and Iran,
as well as in the European Neighbourhood Policy countries and in the conflict zones of Africa. Thematic priorities included the fight against terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, conflict prevention, promotion of democracy, human rights, and the strengthening of the principle of effective multilateralism.

In recent years, the following trend has been observed: on the one hand, the commonly agreed (legally binding) Joint Actions and Common Positions of the EU cover more areas and have greater political implications; on the other hand, the economic and financial consequences of these legal instruments have become increasingly far-reaching. The most important Joint Actions and Common Positions were adopted in the field of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

Of central significance in this respect are the decisions to launch seven new EU missions: the first mission in Asia to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement in Aceh (Indonesia) (AMM); the border assistance mission at Rafah crossing point in the Palestinian territories (EU BAM Rafah); the police mission in the Palestinian territories (EUPOL COPPS); the EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine; the police mission in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo) for the Integrated Police Unit (EUPOL Kinshasa); the mission to provide advice and assistance for security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EUSEC RD Congo); and the integrated rule of law mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX), with training activities taking place in Europe. In addition, the EU initiated a civilian-military supporting action to the African Union’s AMIS II operation in the Darfur region (Sudan). It also established a EU Police Advisory Team (EUPAT) in Macedonia in order to continue on a smaller scale the activities of the completed “EUPOL Proxima” police mission.

Another important measure was the lifting of the arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Council furthermore resolved to renew and adjust the sanctions against Belarus, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Myanmar, Sudan and Zimbabwe and against certain persons in Moldova/Transnistria and Macedonia. Moreover, the EU changed the list of those individuals and groups subject to sanctions imposed as part of the action against the Taliban/Al Quaeda because of their terrorist activities. Subsequent to the extradition of several indictees to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, the restrictive measures to support the ICC were updated accordingly. In compliance with the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), new sanctions were imposed on persons who are suspected of having been involved in the murder of the former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. In addition, the Council also imposed sanctions on Uzbekistan.
The implementation of strategic policy documents, such as the European Security Strategy, adopted by the European Council in December 2003, and the Strategy against Weapons of Mass Destruction, also adopted in 2003, remained an important point of reference for a concerted approach within the CFSP in 2005. Joint activities for combating terrorism were advanced, including the adoption of a Strategy for Combating Terrorism. With regard to its non-proliferation policy, the EU continued the implementation of the Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction that was adopted in 2003.

The European Union’s Special Representatives remained an important instrument employed within the framework of the CFSP. Mandates have been granted for Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, the African Great Lakes Region, Sudan, South Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East Peace Process.

Throughout 2005, the monthly Conclusions adopted by the General Affairs and External Relations Council, as well as the joint demarches and declarations by the EU, also continued to remain central political instruments.

The European Union’s CFSP budget amounts to 62.6 million euros for 2005. For 2006, allocated funds were increased by 40 million euros to a total of 102.6 million euros. The main budget items were civil operations for crisis management, budget funding for the EU Special Representatives (EUSRs) and non-proliferation activities.

1.2. The European Security and Defence Policy

Established at the end of 1999 at the European Council in Helsinki, the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was a very dynamic policy sphere of the EU in 2005. Among other things, seven new operations and missions, each of them pursuing different goals, were initiated. Previous developments within the ESDP clearly revealed that civilian aspects of EU crisis management are increasingly gaining in importance. To accommodate this trend, major significance was attached to Civil-Military Coordination (CMCO), in order to create the necessary conditions for an efficient, cross-pillar interaction of the European Union’s various civilian and military instruments used for the purposes of crisis prevention and resolution and post-conflict reconstruction activities. This relates particularly to measures at diplomatic level, EU programmes in the field of development policy and humanitarian aid, foreign trade policy, civilian and military ESDP operations and EUSR. On 26 June, the United Kingdom, Austria and Finland, as the three consecutive Presidency countries, published a joint non-paper (discussion paper) entitled “Enhancing EU Civil-Military Coordination” which outlines the CMCO working programme until the end of 2006.
1.2.1. Ongoing Crisis Management Operations

At the end of 2004, the EU took over the previously NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, code-named “EUFOR-Althea”. Comprising 6,700 persons, EUFOR-Althea is the largest EU crisis management operation to date. Austria is participating in this operation with up to 300 military personnel, most of whom are deployed in the Northern Sector (Tuzla) and in the EUFOR command structures. This practical commitment is a tangible demonstration of Austria’s focus on security policy vis-à-vis the Balkans. On 30 November, Austria took over command in the Northern Sector for one year, where 2,000 soldiers from 13 nations are deployed.

In order to assist the African Union (AU) with its AMIS II operation to pacify Sudan’s Darfur province, the EU resolved in July to initiate a civil-military supporting action. The civilian part of this action will strengthen the AMIS II police component through advisory and training activities. The military component comprises, above all, planning and training support, the deployment of military observers and the coordination and operation of air transports. Austria provides a legal counsellor. In December, Austria decided to appoint up to four further experts to take part in this mission.

The police mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM) started its operations on 1 January 2003 and was extended for another two years at the end of 2005. Its tasks focus on the following activities: combating organised crime and corruption and supporting the police reform to establish a solid, professional, multi-ethnic police structure. The mission has a total strength of 170 international police officers and 27 international civilians. Austria has seconded five police officers.

The EUPOL Proxima mission initiated to assist local authorities in reaching European policing standards was completed on 31 December. However, the EU will continue to promote police work in Macedonia by measures and programmes coordinated and led by the European Commission. In order to ensure a smooth transition from the end of EUPOL Proxima to the full entry into force of these follow-up activities, the EU resolved to set up EU Police Advisory Teams (EUPAT), comprising up to 30 EU police advisers, for a period of six months as of 15 December. Austria had seconded three experts to EUPOL Proxima and has seconded one expert to EUPAT.

EUJUST THEMIS was launched in Georgia on 16 July 2004 with the aim of supporting Georgian authorities in the implementation of judiciary reforms, particularly in the sphere of criminal justice, and in combating corruption. The mission comprising 12 experts was successfully completed on 15 July. Austria did not take part in EUJUST THEMIS.
Since the start of its activities in April, **EUPOL Kinshasa** has been fulfilling its mandate to support the Integrated Police Unit (IPU) in Kinshasa by monitoring, mentoring and advising on the activities of the police forces trained with EU funds. Drawing on the assistance provided by the EU mission, the IPU has been able to contribute significantly to the stabilisation of the interim government. The mission has a total strength of 29 persons. Austria does not participate in EUPOL.

Another EU mission operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is **EUSEC RD Congo**. Since May, European experts have been supporting security sector reform in this country. Measures assisting in the creation of an integrated Congolese army primarily include training activities, improvements in financial and budget management and the audit of the payments system of the Congolese armed forces. The mission currently comprises 37 persons. Austria does not take part in the mission.

**EUJUST LEX** took up its activities on 1 July. The mission, which was initially scheduled to last one year, was launched with the aim of training more than 700 Iraqi criminal law experts from all spheres of the legal profession (judges, public prosecutors, penal experts) in investigation and administration techniques. The training activities will take place in Europe and are to ensure full respect of the rule of law and human rights in the Iraqi criminal justice system. Austria supports the mission by seconding trainers. In order to strengthen the role of women in crisis management, particularly in regions with male-dominated societies, two-thirds of the Austrian training activities were carried out by female experts.

Following the conclusion of the peace agreement between the Indonesian government and the Movement for a Free Aceh (GAM) in Helsinki on 15 August, the EU initiated the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM), the first ESDP mission established in Asia. The purpose of AMM is to monitor fulfilment of both parties’ obligations under the peace agreement including the decommissioning and destruction of the GAM weapons, the withdrawal of Indonesian troops and the amnesty and re-integration of GAM activists. On 15 September, AMM started its activities on the basis of a six-month mandate. AMM comprises 219 persons and is conducted together with five members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Norway and Switzerland under the leadership of the EU. Austria is participating in this mission with up to four observers.

Subsequent to the agreement on the opening of the Rafah border crossing reached between the Israeli government and the Palestinian National Authority, both parties invited the EU to monitor the operation of this crossing point. On the basis of this invitation, the EU initiated the **EU Border Assistance Mission (BAM) Rafah** on 25 November. This mission, which was
initially scheduled to last one year and which comprises 74 persons, is intended to monitor and control the implementation of the agreement regarding the operation of the crossing point and support capacity-building measures for the Palestinian border control authorities. Austria is participating in this mission with up to four experts.

Building on the work of the EU Coordination Office for Palestinian Police Support (EU COPPS), the EU decided at the end of 2005 to launch the EU police mission in the Palestinian territories (EUPOL COPPS) on 1 January 2006. The aim of the mission, which comprises 30 persons and is scheduled to last three years, is to support and advise Palestinian authorities on the establishment of solid and effective structures in the fields of policing and criminal justice. Austria has decided to second three experts.

At the request of Moldova and Ukraine, the EU initiated on 30 November an EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine, including the Transnistrian border region, initially scheduled to last two years. More than 50 experts seconded by the Member States support the practical work of border control officers as well as the border control reform efforts of central authorities through advice and inspection. The goal is not only to promote the combat of smuggling, organised crime and corruption, but also to contribute to a settlement of the Transnistria conflict. Austria does not participate in this mission.

1.2.2. Development of Civilian and Military Crisis Management Capabilities

Activities in the sphere of civilian crisis management included the implementation of the projects envisaged under the Civilian Headline Goal 2008 to further develop civilian crisis management capabilities (in the fields of police work, rule of law, civil administration, civil protection, monitoring and support of EUSRs). Crisis scenarios which might require civilian crisis management on the part of the EU served as the basis for the elaboration of Capabilities Requirements Lists outlining the capabilities required for appropriate intervention. At a conference on 21 November, the EU Member States pledged to make national contributions in order to meet these overall requirements. Austria made a commitment for capabilities in all major fields and raised the total number of committed experts from 135 in 2004 to 147 in 2005.

The implementation of the Civilian Headline Goal 2008 also included a concept for the creation and deployment of civilian crisis response teams. The aim is to be able to form modular teams of different sizes and compositions from an EU-wide pool of about 100 experts and to deploy them within five days after an intervention has been decided. The tasks of the civilian crisis response teams comprise fact finding missions (also as advance teams for
future civilian ESDP operations) and the strengthening of existing crisis management missions in crisis situations. Austria made a commitment for five experts in civilian crisis response teams.

Work on the Headline Goal 2010, which was adopted in 2004 for the purpose of further expanding the EU’s military capabilities, was continued in November with the completion of the Capabilities Requirements List 2005 which served as the basis for the elaboration of a questionnaire to determine Member States’ commitments. The battle group concept constitutes an important component of the Headline Goal 2010 and the key element of the EU’s responsive crisis management capability. The aim of the concept is to establish battle groups – for the most part infantry – of 1,500 persons each, which could be deployed at short notice (i.e. within a period of five to 15 days). These would be called upon, particularly at the request of the UN, for crisis management operations covering the whole spectrum of operations as defined under Art. 17 (2) TEU. Since the beginning of 2005, one battle group has been on standby for each six-month period. It is planned to reach the full response capability (two battle groups on standby simultaneously) at the beginning of 2007. Together with Germany and the Czech Republic, Austria will form a battle group in 2012.

The European Defence Agency (EDA) took up its work on 1 January. The establishment of this institution is a key element of the overall process to enhance the EU’s military capabilities. In addition to closing specific capability gaps, the agency will also be responsible for measures to improve the competitiveness of the European defence industry and to strengthen defence research and technology.

1.2.3. Cooperation with the United Nations and NATO

EU and NATO continued their strategic partnership activities. The agreement on the establishment of a permanent EU cell at the Allied Command Operations (NATO/ACO, previously SHAPE) and permanent NATO liaison arrangements with the EU Military Staff increases mutual transparency and facilitates cooperation between both organisations. Proof of this can be seen in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for instance, where EUFOR-Althea uses NATO resources and capabilities for its operations.

The EU continued its cooperation with representatives of the UN, whereby the close cooperation in the UN operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and in Sudan (UNMIS) was of particular relevance. By sending an EU liaison officer to the UN headquarters in New York, the coordination of activities could be further improved.
1.2.4. ESDP and Africa

In implementing the Action Plan foreseeing ESDP support for peace and stability in Africa, further measures to strengthen the autonomous peacekeeping and crisis management capabilities of the AU and of African regional organisations were taken. Among other things, the EU supported the establishment of an Africa Standby Force under the aegis of the AU. The further strengthening of African crisis management capabilities is also a core element of the Africa Strategy adopted by the European Council on 15 and 16 December.

1.2.5. ESDP and the Fight against Terrorism

The EU continued to implement the conceptual framework for the ESDP dimension of the fight against terrorism, focusing primarily on the further enhancement of the interoperability of military and civilian capabilities to address the consequences of terrorist attacks.

2. The European Neighbourhood Policy

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) includes 16 neighbouring countries of the enlarged Union: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian National Authority, Syria, Tunisia, and Ukraine. Originally, the EU, in compliance with the Conclusions of the European Council of December 2002, also wanted to fully include Russia in this policy. At the EU-Russia Summit in St. Petersburg on 31 May 2003, a specific form of cooperation was finally agreed. The EU and its “key partner” Russia would thus further develop their “strategic partnership” not within the framework of the ENP but by establishing “Four Common Spaces”: the Common Economic Space; the Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice; the Common Space of External Security; and the Common Space of Research, Education and Culture (see Chapter A.IV.5.).

With the ENP, the EU aims to include the above-mentioned neighbouring countries in a common zone of peace, security and prosperity. For this purpose, detailed Action Plans tailored to each individual country are being drawn up. According to these Action Plans, the ENP countries should not only make full use of the potential of the respective Association and/or Partnership and Cooperation Agreement but, provided they show the commitment required, also enter into an increasingly close relationship going beyond cooperation and including a considerable degree of economic and political integration, which might eventually require the conclusion of new agreements. The Action Plans, which are concluded for a period of three to
five years, are negotiated by the European Commission, approved by the Council and then endorsed by the respective Association or Cooperation Councils.

The priorities defined in the Action Plans include political dialogue and reform; trade, aspects of internal market policies; cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs; transport, energy, information society and environment; and contacts between the civil societies.

The Action Plans concluded with the first group of seven countries – Israel, Jordan, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian National Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine – were approved by the European Council in December. At the end of 2005, the European Commission started negotiations for further Action Plans with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia and Libya. The implementation of the Action Plans with Ukraine and Moldova, in particular, is well underway. Ukraine has already achieved some progress in the fields of transition to a market economy, energy, democracy and facilitating visa requirements. In addition, the EU established a border assistance mission to Moldova and Ukraine to ensure efficient border control (see Chapter A.IV.1.2.1.).

A new uniform European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) will be created as a basis for financing measures within the ENP and the strategic partnership in the period 2007-2013, replacing programmes such as TACIS (Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States) and MEDA (financial and technical measures accompanying the reform of economic and social structures under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership).

3. South East Europe / Western Balkans

3.1. Developments in the Individual States

3.1.1. Croatia

In March 2005 the EU postponed the envisaged start of accession negotiations due to Croatia’s failure to fully cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), notably on grounds of the non-extradition of the indicted former General Ante Gotovina. On Austrian initiative a task force was then set up to assess Croatia’s cooperation with the ICTY. The Croatian government presented an action plan aimed at locating Gotovina and destroying his support network. In view of the good progress made in the following months, the ICTY Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, on 3 October confirmed that Croatia was cooperating fully with the ICTY. On that very same day the EU opened accession negotiations with Croatia. On 7
December Gotovina was arrested in Tenerife and a few days later transferred to The Hague (see also Chapter A.I.).

In January the competent ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia and Montenegro signed a declaration regarding joint efforts in cooperation with UNHCR, the EU and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to facilitate the return of refugees. As compared to the previous year, the OSCE registered a clear improvement and the accelerated return of refugees to Croatia. According to the OSCE, about 122,000 Serbs who had been displaced or fled the country during the war had returned to their home country of Croatia as of September. Prime Minister Ivo Sanader invited all Serb refugees still living outside the country to return and reintegrate in Croatia.

No final solution has yet been reached in the unresolved bilateral issue regarding the sea frontier between Croatia and Slovenia (Bay of Piran).

As regards the conclusion of a bilateral agreement on granting Austrian citizens effective claims to restitution for expropriated property under the 2002 amendment to the Croatian Law on Restitution, the wording of an “Agreement between the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Croatia on Issues Regarding Property Restitution”, the first of its kind, was finalised and concluded with Croatia following the third round of negotiations in Vukovar in April. The agreement was initialled on 22 November. Its entry into force requires parliamentary ratification by both parties to the agreement.

3.1.2. Serbia and Montenegro/Kosovo

On 12 April the European Commission adopted a feasibility study recommending the initiation of negotiations for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. The Council accepted this recommendation and entrusted the Commission with the preparation of a draft negotiating mandate, which the Council approved on 3 October. The negotiations were officially opened on 10 October. The negotiations were officially opened on 10 October.

These EU resolutions had been preceded by a notable improvement in Serbia and Montenegro’s cooperation with the ICTY. Between January and April, the State Union had extradited a total of 14 indictees to the ICTY. As there were no further extraditions from May onward, Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte submitted a predominantly negative assessment of Serbia and Montenegro’s cooperation with the ICTY to the UN Security Council in December.

On 7 April Serbia and Montenegro passed an amendment to the Constitutional Charter of the State Union, which among other things provides for direct elections to the parliament of the State Union to be held concurrently
with the respective parliamentary elections in the two member states. Furthermore, the amendment reaffirms the requirement that a possible referendum on independence in one of the member states be held in line with internationally recognised democratic standards and that the referendum procedure be defined in cooperation with the EU.

In Serbia, the minority government of Prime Minister Vojislav Koštunica, despite further party splits and changes of allegiance by numerous MPs, succeeded in maintaining its parliamentary majority, which was dependent on the support of Slobodan Milošević’s Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS). On 14 May the party-internal opponents of the chairman of the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO), Vuk Drašković, founded a new party, the Serbian Democratic Renewal Movement (SDPO). On 22 August two representatives of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) withdrew their support for the government on grounds of the proposed privatisation of the state-run Oil Industry of Serbia (NIS). SDP chairman Nebojša Ović subsequently signed a cooperation agreement with the Power of Serbia Movement (PSS) headed by Bogoljub Karić. The government compensated for the loss of the two SDP representatives by securing the support of two representatives of Sulejman Ugljanin’s “List for Sandžak” who had obtained their seats in the Serbian parliament thanks to an election alliance with the second-largest opposition party, the Democratic Party (DS), headed by President Boris Tadić. The DS representatives reacted on 5 October by declaring their boycott of parliamentary sessions. Since this date they have only attended sessions dealing with issues of fundamental importance to the Republic of Serbia. The required majority for the budget for 2006 was only mustered after the G17 Plus party had two MPs, who had declared their intention to vote against the budget, replaced by two more cooperative members of parliament. Also in November, the former DS vice-president Edomir Jovanović founded a new party, the Liberal Democratic Party.

In Montenegro, the government of Prime Minister Milo Đukanović continued its campaign for an independent state and repeatedly confirmed its intention to hold an independence referendum in spring 2006. The proposal to found a “union of independent states” with Serbia, submitted in February, was rejected by the Serbian government. On 19 December the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission submitted its assessment on the conformity of the Montenegrin referendum legislation with internationally recognised democratic standards. On this basis Miroslav Lajčák, Personal Representative of the EU High Representative Javier Solana, started his mediation efforts between the government and the opposition on the issue of referendum rules.

In Kosovo, the situation more or less stabilised in 2005 after the unrest directed against the Serbian minority in March 2004, which among other things resulted in the destruction of valuable ecclesiastical cultural heritage.
To the surprise of many observers the reactions to the voluntary resignation of Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj in March and his transfer to the ICTY in The Hague were rather moderate. The coalition between the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) was continued with Bajram Kosumi’s election as prime minister by the Kosovan parliament on 23 March. An event of major domestic political importance in Kosovo was the transfer of specific UNMIK competences in the areas of justice and home affairs to Kosovan provisional institutions, which was finalised in December.

On behalf of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, NATO ambassador Kai Eide of Norway conducted a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Standards for Kosovo in summer 2005. In his report to the UN Secretary-General, Eide recommended the start of talks on the final status. The head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Special Representative Søren Jessen-Petersen, announced a more intensive linkage between the UN and EU processes of standards implementation and European integration. Irrespective of how the status issue is resolved, the EU signalled its readiness to play a more important role in the areas of police and justice.

In November, the UN Secretary-General appointed the former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari as Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Future Status Process for Kosovo and the former Secretary-General of the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Albert Rohan, as his deputy. The EU appointed Council Secretariat Director Stefan Lehne of Austria as envoy for the negotiations on Kosovo’s future status. Lehne will cooperate closely with Ahtisaari and Rohan. At Austria’s invitation the UN Kosovo status team set up its headquarters in Vienna.

In July, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with the University of Vienna and the “Pro Oriente” foundation organised a seminar on the topic of “Freedom of Religion and Principles of Self-Government of Religious Institutions” attended by government representatives from Belgrade and Pristina, high-ranking representatives of the different religious communities in Kosovo and Serbia and international experts. At the request of the participants the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Department of Legal Philosophy, Law of Religion and Culture at the University of Vienna subsequently participated in preparing a draft Kosovan law on religion.

3.1.3. Bosnia and Herzegovina

In 2005, Bosnia and Herzegovina achieved progress in numerous aspects of the reform process, in particular with respect to the country’s cooperation with the ICTY, police and defence reform and the laws regulating the reform of the
public broadcasting system. These measures laid the foundation for a positive recommendation by the European Commission to open negotiations on a SAA. The Council followed this recommendation and on 21 November resolved to take up negotiations.

On 14 December, the tenth anniversary of the signature of the Dayton Peace Accords in Paris, the former German Minister for Post and Telecommunications, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, was appointed the international community’s High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the successor to Britain’s Lord Paddy Ashdown. At a meeting in Washington, D.C., the representatives of the major political parties of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted a joint declaration in which they resolved to undertake a reform of the complicated structures of the Dayton Constitution “by March 2006”.

For EUFOR-Althea and EUPM see Chapter A.IV.1.2.1.

3.1.4. Albania

The first three quarters of the year were dominated by the parliamentary elections of 3 July. Following numerous challenges and re-runs in three constituencies, the Central Election Committee finally announced the official result on 1 September. On 11 September the new coalition government headed by Sali Berisha (Democratic Party) was sworn in by President Alfred Moisiu. The fourth quarter was characterised by the drive for success which Prime Minister Berisha had imposed on himself for his first 100 days in office. Almost all measures taken were justified as being part of the fight against corruption, the dominant topic of all political declarations of intent in these 100 days. The country’s foreign policy focus was on matters relating to Kosovo.

3.1.5. Macedonia

Domestic policy was marked by the power struggle between President Boris Crvenkovski and Prime Minister Vlado Bučkovski of the Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia (SDSM). On the side of ethnic Albanians, the coalition partner Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) evolved as the determining factor after the first party congress on 19 November, at which the party signalled unanimity. With respect to the Ohrid Framework Agreement concluded in 2001, the year 2005 doubtlessly saw progress in some areas of its implementation. However, the ethnic Albanians voiced the criticism that the ethnic Macedonians had implemented the agreement incompletely and halfheartedly. At the end of October, the new Head of the Delegation of the European Commission, Erwan Fouéré, replaced Michael Sahlin, the former EU Special Representative (EUSR) in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
Fouéré for the first time combines the functions of EU Special Representative and Head of Delegation of the European Commission in a single person.

3.2. The European Union Perspective of the Western Balkan States

With respect to the shaping of the EU’s relations with the countries of the Western Balkans, Austria is working towards the gradual realisation of the EU perspective for all the countries in the region that have enjoyed the status of “potential applicant” (“potential accession candidate”) since 2000. The EU strategy of providing comprehensive support to the Western Balkan countries in their rapprochement with the Union, affirmed and expanded at the Western Balkan Summit in Thessaloniki in June 2003, was further pursued and implemented within the SAP. The principle of matching the pace of rapprochement to that of the reform progress of the individual countries is clearly evident in this process. Also important in this context was the criterion of full cooperation of each state with the ICTY. Besides the conclusion of an SAA, the EU, in accordance with the European Commission’s Strategy Paper on enlargement agreed on 9 November, will consider a satisfactory track record in implementing the obligations under the SAA an important criterion in the treatment of any application for accession.

The SAA concluded between the European Community and its Member States and Croatia entered into force on 1 February. On 3 October, the Council of the EU resolved to take up accession negotiations with Croatia, which were formally opened immediately afterwards. On 20 October, the European Commission started the acquis screening process, which will prospectively be concluded in the autumn of 2006 (see also Chapter A.I.).

On 9 November, the European Commission adopted its Opinion on Macedonia’s application for EU membership, submitted in March 2004, and recommended that the country be granted candidate status. The European Council complied with the Commission’s recommendation in its session of 15 and 16 December and decided to grant candidate status to Macedonia, linking the start of concrete accession negotiations to compliance with a number of further criteria. Hence, the SAA that entered into force in April 2004 continues to create the legal framework for EU relations with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the time being.

The SAA negotiations with Albania that started in early 2003 were continued, the aim being to conclude the negotiations during the Austrian EU Council Presidency in the first half of 2006.

On 10 October, negotiations on a SAA were also opened with Serbia and Montenegro. In view of the unsatisfactory functioning of the State Union, important parts of the agreement (notably trade issues) are subject to separate
negotiations with Serbia on the one hand and Montenegro on the other (the so-called twin-track approach).

Ten years after the conclusion of the Dayton Accords, SAA negotiations were opened with **Bosnia and Herzegovina** on 25 November as the country had fulfilled the prerequisite of achieving progress in the 16 thematic areas identified by the European Commission in an earlier feasibility study.

The Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (CARDS) is a comprehensive EU external aid programme for the Western Balkans that includes various projects (e.g. infrastructure, education, environment and institution building) to assist the states in their rapprochement with the EU. The funds available for the period 2000 to 2006 total 4.65 billion euros. Here too, regional cooperation plays an important role. A CARDS regional project aimed at improving the judicial system and the relevant cooperation was launched in 2004 and will be implemented under the leadership of the Austrian Ministry of Justice within a three-year timeframe. Under the CARDS Twinning Programme of administrative partnerships between EU Member States and SAP countries the number of tender calls has been continuously rising and Austrian twinning partners submitted numerous bids for projects in Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro and Albania (see Chapter A.I.).

Complementing SAP, the **Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe** headed by Special Coordinator and former Austrian Vice-Chancellor Erhard Busek has launched numerous initiatives designed to promote rapprochement with the EU and improve cooperation within the region itself. Concurrently, in view of the progress already achieved, initial deliberations regarding a gradual transfer of part of the competences to the responsibility of the countries in the region were started. This issue was discussed at the meetings of the Regional Table, the Stability Pact’s highest decision-making forum, held in Sofia in May and in Prague in November. The Austrian Marijana Grandits assumed the function of Director of the Working Table for Democratisation. Furthermore, Austria continued its efforts aimed at promoting investments (co-chair of the Investment Compact for improving the investment climate in the region), and in cooperation with the European Commission also promoted the conclusion of the Treaty establishing the Energy Community between the EU and South Eastern Europe (gas and electricity). The treaty was signed in Athens on 25 October, and the Secretariat of the Energy Community of South Eastern Europe (ECSEE) was established in Vienna. The priorities defined by the Stability Pact for its activities in 2006 include parliamentary cooperation, local democracy, energy and infrastructure, trade, employment and investments, the fight against organised crime and corruption, and migration issues.
4. The Eastern European States

4.1. Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus

4.1.1. Ukraine

Relations between the EU and Ukraine have clearly intensified since President Victor Yushchenko and the reform-oriented government under Prime Minister Julia Timoshenko (until September) and Yuri Yekhanurov, respectively, took office. The basis for this new partnership is the EU-Ukraine Action Plan, a tool elaborated within the framework of the ENP and signed in Brussels on 21 February. On the same day the EU Council of Foreign Ministers adopted a comprehensive list of conclusions providing for a wide range of measures aimed at deepening cooperation. During his visit to Brussels President Yushchenko gave his widely noted address to the European Parliament on 23 February, in which he clearly underlined Ukraine’s orientation towards Europe under his leadership. When visiting Kiev on 30 March, the EU foreign ministers’ troika gained further proof of this intention to cooperate.

The concrete progress achieved in the implementation of the Action Plan was regularly monitored and assessed, as for example within the context of the EU-Ukraine Summit, which was held in Kiev on 1 December for the first time. The Joint Declaration adopted at this summit provides clear evidence that, compared with the era of Leonid Kuchma, great progress has been achieved in the quality of the relations between the EU and Ukraine since the signing of the Action Plan. This is also reflected in the Commission’s positive assessment on granting Ukraine market economy status as well as in the opening of visa facilitation negotiations. The EU further acknowledged Ukraine’s intensified cooperation in the field of a Common Foreign and Security Policy as well as the country’s active and constructive role in the quest for a negotiated solution to the Transnistria conflict. The EU supported Ukraine’s efforts to join the World Trade Organisation, while Ukraine for its part continued work on the necessary adjustments of its laws and the negotiations on bilateral market access protocols.

4.1.2. Moldova

Rapprochement with EU structures heads the foreign policy agenda of the Republic of Moldova. The EU-Moldova Action Plan within the ENP entered into force on 22 February. The implementation of this Action Plan involves a large number of reforms aimed at furthering the political, economic and social development of the country. In March, the EU appointed Adriaan Jacobovits de Szeged as European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for Moldova. In October the new Delegation of the European Commission to Moldova was opened in Chișinău.
In the wake of political change in neighbouring Ukraine and thanks to Moldova’s consistent orientation towards the EU, the efforts to solve the conflict concerning the separatist region of Transnistria began to gather momentum. The EUSR maintains regular contact with both parties to the conflict (the Moldovan government in Chișinău and the Transnistrian regime in Tiraspol) and the three mediators, Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE. Since October, the EU and the USA have been participating as observers in the ongoing Transnistria talks (the former “five-sided format” consisting of representatives of the two parties to the conflict and three mediators having been extended to the “5-plus-2” format). Up to and including 2004, the EU allocated a total of 129.9 million euros to the Republic of Moldova under technical assistance programmes, while a further 42 million euros in technical assistance were earmarked for allocation through TACIS in 2005–2006. Thanks to its pro-active policies the EU has gained higher visibility and an enhanced profile in this region.

For the EU’s Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine, see Chapter A.IV.1.2.1.

4.1.3. Belarus

Due to continual regression in the fields of democracy and human rights relations between the EU and Belarus have remained limited since 1997. In line with the “benchmark approach”, the EU would be ready to gradually normalise relations with Belarus to the extent that the country’s political leadership demonstrates its willingness to implement the principles of democracy and human rights.

In its conclusions of 7 November, the EU Council of Foreign Ministers expressed its concern at the deteriorating human rights situation and in view of the presidential elections scheduled for 19 March 2006, called upon the Belarusian government to undertake a change of course, among other things by ensuring a free and fair election process in line with UN and OSCE standards and under OSCE observation. The EU confirmed its determination to further promote democracy and human rights in Belarus, inter alia by supporting civil society and independent media, intensifying people-to-people contacts and strengthening good neighbourly cross-border relations. In its conclusions the EU Council reiterated the expert opinion prepared by the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission in which the referendum of 2004 (limiting the number of times the incumbent president can be re-elected) was described as not in conformance to law.

In April, the UN Human Rights Commission adopted a resolution on the human rights situation in Belarus introduced jointly by the EU and the USA,
which pointed to serious deficiencies during the elections and intimidation of political opponents and NGOs and called upon the Belarusian government to cooperate with the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus. As yet, the latter has not been allowed to enter the country. In a declaration issued in August, the EU condemned the action public authorities had taken against the Union of Poles in Belarus, SPB (with 25,000 members the largest NGO in Belarus), as well as the criminal conviction of organisers of demonstrations against the regime of President Alexander Lukashenko. In a declaration issued in December, the EU expressed serious concern in the face of tightened penal laws, noting that certain facts (among others the “discreditation of the Republic of Belarus” contained in the “anti-revolution” legislation) further restricted the freedom of opinion and of assembly and were in contradiction with the international obligations in the field of human rights to which Belarus had committed itself.

4.2. South Caucasus

A key foreign policy objective of the three South Caucasian states Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia is their rapprochement with Euro-Atlantic structures. ENP expansion to the three South Caucasian states accommodates this objective (see also Chapter A.IV.2.). In October, a high-level expert EU troika was commissioned to prepare the opening of ENP negotiations and explore progress towards a solution of the three territorial conflicts in Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh and South Ossetia. The Cooperation Councils with all three states in the region, which had been scheduled for December and prepared by the respective Cooperation Committees, could be held only in the form of a Troika Political Dialogue, as Cyprus opposed the convening of Cooperation Councils with Azerbaijan until the issue of Azerbaijani-operated flights to Northern Cyprus was settled. However, towards the end of the year the first negotiation round on drafting ENP Action Plans was held with each of the three states in order to meet the objectives of the EU’s regional policy approach towards this region. Important areas addressed by these Action Plans include in particular the strengthening of democratic structures and legal certainty, enhanced respect for human rights, the improvement of the macroeconomic climate and the strengthening of regional cooperation, as well as efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement of the conflicts in the South Caucasus.

At the end of May and after lengthy negotiations, Georgia and Russia finally reached agreement on the withdrawal of Russian troops still stationed in Georgia by the end of 2008 at the latest. The EU acknowledged this fact in a declaration. However, relations between these two players continued to be difficult on account of the ongoing Abkhazian and South Ossetian conflicts and the presence of Russian peacekeeping troops in both conflict areas. As in 2004, the situation briefly escalated during the summer of 2005 after a grenade
attack on South Ossetia. In this situation, the EU offered assistance in settling the conflict.

In October, the Georgian Prime Minister Zurab Nogaideli presented a peace plan on South Ossetia to the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna. The plan – which had already gained EU support in October – was approved by the entire OSCE community at the annual OSCE Ministerial Council in Ljubljana at the beginning of December, thus representing the most important outcome of the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting. This Georgian peace plan was followed by a South Ossetian peace plan, which was identical to the Georgian plan in many aspects and was in principle received positively by the Georgian side. Nevertheless, the subsequent meeting of the Joint Control Commission in Moscow ended without result. Within the framework of the OSCE, the EU welcomed the new Georgian peace plan. At the beginning of the year, the EU had already expanded the team of EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, Heikki Talvitie, by eight people, who were tasked with activities in support of the border monitoring operations of the Georgian troops deployed along the Georgian-Russian border. The OSCE’s Georgian Border Monitoring Mission that had expired at the end of 2004 could not be taken over by the European Union as requested by Georgia. The EUJUST THEMIS programme implemented with the objective of creating the basic structure for networking the Georgian administration within the area of the rule of law was concluded (see also Chapter A.IV.1.2.1.).

At their meeting in the Georgian spa of Borjomi in August, Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and his Ukrainian counterpart Victor Yushchenko established a new form of international cooperation conceived as the “democratic community of states of the Baltic-Caspian-Black Sea region”.

In Azerbaijan, the ruling New Azerbaijan Party emerged victorious from the parliamentary elections held on 6 November. Although progress had been achieved in several areas in the run-up to the elections, the period before and after the elections was also marked by incidents such as more rigorous police action against demonstrators and the arrest of a number of members of the government in connection with an alleged attempted coup by supporters of the former Chairman of the Parliament of Azerbaijan, Rasoul Gouliev, who was to return from exile in the USA. The conduct of the election failed to comply with international standards. Repeat elections were scheduled for May 2006, but the majority of the opposition parties, demoralised by their poor results in the November elections, announced a boycott. The EU noted with disappointment that the elections, as observed by the ODIHR mission, failed to comply with European standards.

As regards the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, the meetings of the two foreign ministers and presidents of state were continued making it appear possible
that a policy paper for a conflict settlement acceptable to both sides could be drafted in the course of 2006. In November the EU expressed its support for the positive process and called on both states to intensify their negotiation efforts.

In Armenia, a referendum on amending the constitution was held on 27 November. The international community of states welcomed this amendment as it resulted in strengthening democratic developments and a better distribution of power among Armenian institutions. There was, however, criticism of the manner in which the referendum was conducted due to numerous irregularities in the counting of the votes. On grounds related to the failure to acknowledge given power structures, the opposition parties, which had boycotted parliament throughout most the year, refused to participate in the referendum even though its content was positive from their vantage point.

5. Russia

In his second term, President Vladimir Putin has been pursuing the goal of a strong state increasingly in control of political and economic processes in the country. This drive for more state control is evident among other things in the new law regulating NGOs, increased state influence in the energy sector and a shift of competences from local self-government to central bureaucracy (since 2005 the Russian President has directly appointed governors and the presidents of the republics). In economic terms, Russian citizens are generally better off than they were a few years ago; all the same, early in the year people in many towns and cities turned out on the streets in protest, demonstrating against a radical reduction in social security standards. The President reacted by announcing an increase in social spending as well as “national priority projects”.

The Russian economy exhibited continuous growth of six per cent on average thanks to the proceeds from exports of mineral oil and gas. However, these proceeds were invested to only a very minor degree in diversification of the economy, as Russia continues to focus its economic activities on the energy and raw materials sectors. State influence on the country’s economic policy and the action against the Russian Yukos oil group resulted in increased state dominance of the Russian economy.

Although the situation in Chechnya has become somewhat calmer, terrorist activities have spread to other autonomous republics of the North Caucasus. The human rights situation in Chechnya continued to give cause for concern. The Chechen parliamentary elections of 27 November further strengthened the Kadyrov clan, on which Russia is pinning its hopes of political stabilisation in Chechnya. In November, a delegation of EU Troika Ambassadors to Moscow
visited the North Caucasus and explored possibilities for implementing the European Commission’s 20 million euro North Caucasus assistance programme. The situation in Chechnya is regularly discussed at the biannual human rights consultations between the EU and Russia.

Fostering relations with the other successor states of the former Soviet Union is of utmost priority in Russia’s foreign policy. As Russia has strong security policy and economic interests in this region, it endeavours to maintain a leading role within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and views foreign policy activities of Western countries in this region with scepticism and suspicion. The creation of the Common Economic Area with Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, envisaged in September 2003, appears deadlocked for the time being owing to differences of opinion with Ukraine. Towards the end of the year tensions in bilateral relations that had surfaced after the “Orange Revolution”, escalated into a dispute over the future price of natural gas deliveries and transit fees including the revival of differences regarding the deployment modalities for the Russian Black Sea fleet on Ukrainian territory. Within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Russia, in cooperation with China and four Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), has been making efforts to set up a security cooperation structure independent of the USA and to strengthen its influence, especially in Central Asia. Energy policy increasingly seems to be evolving into a key foreign policy instrument.

The EU is Russia’s most important trading partner. 60 per cent of all Russian exports – oil and gas deliveries accounting for the lion’s share – go to the EU. At the EU-Russia Summit held in Moscow on 10 May, the EU and Russia agreed on roadmaps for the creation of Four Common Spaces in order to further their mutual relations (see also Chapter A.IV.2.). One of the first results of the implementation of these roadmaps was a principal agreement between the EU and Russia on the conclusion of agreements on visa facilitation and readmission reached at the EU-Russia Summit held on 4 October in London. These agreements will be formally signed in the first half of 2006. As the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Russia, which was concluded in the 1990s, is due to expire in December 2007, the EU is deliberating how an institutional framework based on common democratic values should be designed so as to accommodate the continuously intensifying relations with the strategic partner Russia in the future.
6. The Middle East, North Africa and the Mediterranean

6.1. General Developments

The EU strengthened its relations with Iraq by supporting the political transformation process and economic reconstruction on the basis of UNSC Resolution 1546 (2004). After the elections in January the transitional parliament and the transitional government were formed. In support of the further process, the EU and the USA jointly held an international conference attended by more than 80 states and international organisations in Brussels on 22 June, at which the EU reconfirmed its support for the transition process based on Resolution 1546 (2004). On 21 September the EU-Iraq Joint Political Declaration was signed. A draft constitution was approved in a referendum held in October. In December parliamentary elections were held on the basis of this constitution.

In Saudi Arabia King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud died on 1 August. King Fahd, who had led the kingdom since 1982, was succeeded on the throne by his half-brother, Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz. On 11 December Saudi Arabia formally joined the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The ruling houses of Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar are making an effort to open up their political systems. To this end a number of internal policy reform measures have been launched in recent years, including an electoral reform in Kuwait by which the right to vote and run for public office was granted to women in 2005. Positive democratic developments were also continued in Bahrain and Qatar. The sovereignty and integrity of these three states is guaranteed by the USA, which has made them important cornerstones of its military strategy in the region.

Until August, the E3/EU (Germany, France and the United Kingdom) together with the High Representative attempted to negotiate an agreement with Iran on the exclusively peaceful use of the Iranian nuclear programme. Several rounds of negotiation on a trade and cooperation agreement were also held. Following the resumption of Iran’s uranium conversion activities, EU efforts focused on maintaining a strong international consensus to convince Iran to return to the full suspension of all enrichment and reprocessing activities. Despite the efforts undertaken by the EU, it was not possible to hold either the Comprehensive Dialogue or the Human Rights Dialogue. In June, the former mayor of Tehran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, was elected president. The latter’s unacceptable statements on Israel and the Holocaust gave rise to sharp international protest.
6.2. The Middle East Peace Process

The successful holding of the Palestinian presidential elections, an important step in the further consolidation of democratic processes in the occupied territories, marked the beginning of the year. On 8 February, soon after the inauguration of the new Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was organised in Sharm-el-Sheikh at the initiative of Egyptian President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak and King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein of Jordan. The talks resulted in mutual pledges to prevent further acts of violence, return security responsibility in selected towns to the Palestinians and release Palestinian prisoners from Israeli prisons. A follow-up meeting between Prime Minister Sharon and President Abbas was held in Jerusalem on 21 June. The EU stressed the need for this type of contact at all levels and called on the two parties to implement the agreements reached in Sharm-El-Sheikh. A donor meeting in London on 1 March confirmed the international community’s readiness to support President Abbas and the Palestinian National Authority in their efforts to reform and strengthen public structures with a view to a future state.

Israel’s disengagement from the Gaza Strip and parts of the Northern West Bank carried out by the Israeli government in September despite considerable opposition including in the ranks of its own parties, dominated the Middle East Peace Process. From the beginning, the EU stressed the need for social and economic improvements in the Gaza Strip, in particular unimpeded movement of persons and goods between the Gaza Strip and the outside world and the West Bank, as a prerequisite for the success of the disengagement plan. The “Middle East Quartet” (EU, Russia, USA and the UN) appointed the former president of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, as its Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement. Wolfensohn defined the most important requirements for a successful disengagement and submitted a plan outlining how the prerequisites for sustainable social and economic development could be created, provided the international community doubled its assistance over the following three years. The G8 states fully agreed to this plan at their summit in Gleneagles (United Kingdom) from 6 to 8 July (see also Chapter E.II.2.3.).

The immediate result of Israel’s disengagement was an Agreement on Movement and Access concluded between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority on 15 November. On the basis of this agreement, a first international border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt was established in the Egyptian-Palestinian border town of Rafah on 25 November, to which the EU as “third party” made a central contribution by dispatching the EU BAM Rafah border assistance mission (see Chapter A.IV.1.2.1.).
At the end of the year preparations begun for the Palestinian parliamentary elections scheduled for 25 January 2006. Austria participated by dispatching 10 members to the EU Election Observation Mission. Furthermore, Austria made a substantial financial contribution to the Palestinian Central Election Commission that was charged with ensuring the proper conduct of the first Palestinian elections after a decade frequently characterised by inadequate parliamentary practices. After Prime Minister Sharon had left the largest government party, the Likud Party, and founded a new centrist party, Kadima (Forward), new elections were scheduled in Israel for 28 March 2006. A considerable number of prominent Likud and Labour Party members followed the Prime Minister to the new party, including the former Labour Party leader, Shimon Peres, who had been voted out of office. At the end of the year, Prime Minister Sharon fell seriously ill and was unable to perform his official duties.

6.3. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona Process)

The EU’s third country policy vis-à-vis the Mediterranean region is implemented within the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, which, since the founding conference held on 27 and 28 November 1995, has also been known as the Barcelona Process. The ten EU partners are Egypt, Algeria, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian National Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. Libya, Mauritania and a number of organisations currently enjoy observer status.

The EU’s Mediterranean policy pursues three main objectives: the creation of a common area of peace and stability based on fundamental principles including respect for human rights and democracy, the establishment of a zone of shared prosperity through the gradual establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area by 2010, the improvement of mutual understanding between the peoples of the region and the development of an active civil society. These goals are pursued in three chapters: cooperation in the political and security policy areas, cooperation in the economic and financial areas and cooperation towards creating an improved intercultural and interpersonal dialogue.

The central event in the Barcelona Process in 2005 was a summit of the Heads of State and Government of the EU and the partner states on 27 and 28 November in Barcelona, the city in which the cooperation had been initiated, to mark the partnership’s ten-year anniversary. Austria was represented by Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel. The summit’s objective was to give a new impetus to the process. To this end, a work programme elaborated to meet the challenges of the next five years and a code of conduct for combating terrorism were adopted. The five-year programme provides for partnership building measures in all three chapters of the Barcelona Process.
The focus of activities in the political area was on democratisation issues, the enhanced involvement of civil society in decision-making processes and human rights, in particular the rights of women, the fight against international terrorism and different aspects of migration. Although the Middle East conflict has repeatedly been an obstacle to cooperation in the fight against terrorism, the Barcelona Process still remains an important initiative as it is the only body in which European, Arab and Israeli state representatives meet at the highest level.

The most important goal of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is the establishment of a Free Trade Area by 2010. Bilateral association agreements are being concluded with all partners in order to reach this goal. After the agreement with Algeria entered into force on 1 September, the network of contractual agreements between the EU and the partner countries is now almost complete. Only the finalisation of the agreement with Syria, which was initialled in October 2004, is still pending on account of the difficult political situation. In addition to the establishment of a free trade area between the EU and the Mediterranean countries, trade between the Mediterranean partners themselves will also be liberalised with a view to furthering regional integration. A free trade area has already been established by the Agadir Agreement between Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. Two financing instruments are available to implement the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The MEDA Programme, on the one hand, provides financial and technical support for economic and social reforms. In 2005 the programme had a budget of more than 800 million euros and from 2007 onwards it is to be financed through ENPI (see also Chapter A.IV.2.). In addition, the European Investment Bank (EIB), on the other hand, established a separate facility to finance infrastructure and individual investment projects.

In the field of social and cultural cooperation, the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, also known as the Anna Lindh Foundation, was established to foster dialogue between cultures and civilisations. Headquartered in the Egyptian seaport of Alexandria, the foundation was set up in 2004 with the aim of promoting NGOs, fostering network coordination between civil societies, promoting mobility between north and south and enhancing the visibility of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

6.4. Organisations Furthering Multilateral Cooperation

6.4.1. Arab League

The Arab League, founded in 1945, held its 2005 summit meeting in Algiers on 22 and 23 March. The resolutions adopted included the re-affirmation of the “Arab peace initiative” adopted at the Beirut summit of 2002; the welcoming of the elections in Iraq; the call on creditor countries to cancel 80 per cent of
Iraqi foreign debts; the establishment of an interim Arab Parliament consisting of four members delegated by each member nation’s parliament; the mandate to the Secretary General to initiate consultations regarding the establishment of an Arab Security Council and an Arab Court of Justice, and the establishment of an Arab Free Trade Zone by 2015.

The preparatory conference of foreign ministers dismissed the Jordanian initiative to make a normalisation of the relations of the Arab states with Israel no longer dependent on Israel’s previous formal acknowledgment of the right of return of displaced Palestinians and of Jerusalem as capital of a future Palestinian State. The call on the Arab states to restore their diplomatic relations with Iraq to their “natural level” suffered a serious setback with the assassination of the head of Egypt’s diplomatic mission in Baghdad in July.

6.4.2. Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)

On 1 January Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu of Turkey succeeded Abdul Wahid Belqeziz of Morocco as the new Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). He participated in the conference “Islam in a Pluralistic World” held in Vienna on 15 and 16 November (see Chapter L.2.). On 7 and 8 December an extraordinary OIC summit was held in Mecca at the invitation of King Abdullah, at which the crisis in the community of Islamic states and the reform of the OIC, among other things, were discussed.

6.4.3. Gulf Cooperation Council

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was founded in 1981 as a forum for closer cooperation between the member states Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. These states account for 45 per cent of the global oil reserves and about one fifth of the worldwide crude oil output. In establishing a customs union, the GCC was faced with the implementation of an ambitious programme, which included the establishment of a customs information centre and a uniform currency including a schedule for its implementation, the adoption of anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and protective measures as well as the founding charter for joint standards organisations. However, the integration progress remained below expectations owing to internal difficulties.

In 1988 the GCC and the EU concluded a Cooperation Agreement under which joint council and ministerial meetings are organised on an annual basis. The 15th GCC-EU Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting was held in Bahrain on 5 April. Thematic priorities included the future free trade agreement between the EU and the GCC, the GCC customs union and current international issues. The negotiations on the conclusion of a free trade agreement between the EU and the GCC, taken up in 1991, made important
progress so that the final conclusion of this difficult process may be expected for 2006. The GCC is the EU’s fifth-largest export market, with the EU showing a regular surplus in the bilateral balance of trade. Crude oil accounts for two thirds of the region’s total exports to the EU.

7. North America

7.1. United States of America

On 20 January President George W. Bush started his second term in office. The President made important personnel changes in his administration. Former National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice was appointed new Secretary of State, and other ministers were also replaced. Stephen J. Hadley succeeded Rice in the office of Security Adviser. The government commanded a large majority, both in the House of Representatives (Republican Party 232 seats, Democratic Party 202 seats, one independent representative) and in the Senate (Republican Party 55 seats, Democratic Party 45 seats).

President Bush set the following domestic priorities for his second term in office: a fundamental reform of the social security system, a reform of the tax law and education systems and the introduction of an effective new secret service law. Legislative successes scored by the Bush Administration included the passage of a package of laws on transport and energy. The filling of two vacancies on the Supreme Court became an important issue. John Glover Roberts, nominated new Chief Justice of the United States by President Bush, was confirmed by a large majority (78:22 vote) in the United States Senate in September.

In his foreign and security policy President Bush stressed the need for continuity. Richard Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld remained in their respective functions of Vice President and Secretary of Defense. Bush’s foreign policy priorities outlined in his Inaugural Address on 20 January and his State of the Union Address on 2 February included the continued fight against terrorism, the creation of stable democracies, the promotion of freedom and the establishment of an effective multilateralism. Transatlantic relations were revived. In the face of the ongoing attacks, a rising number of victims among US soldiers and costs amounting to six billion US dollars a month, the US population’s approval of the US engagement in Iraq declined continuously. In November the Senate required the administration to submit a quarterly progress report on Iraq. In the dispute about the nuclear programme of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the USA endeavoured to achieve a multilateral approach to the conflict. In comparison to its previous term, the Bush Administration also intensified its engagement in the Middle East Peace Process.
Following the dismissal by a New York district court on 7 December of the last class-action lawsuit pending in the USA against Austria and/or Austrian enterprises regarding restitution issues dating back to the time of National Socialism or World War II, the Austrian federal government on 13 December declared that legal closure of the matter had been achieved. The General Settlement Fund of the Republic of Austria, endowed with 210 million US dollars, was thus in a position to start disbursing payments to entitled persons from the funds made available under this scheme. The General Settlement Fund’s basis under international law is the Washington Agreement concluded between the United States and Austria on 17 January 2001.

With GDP rising by three per cent, US economic growth decelerated slightly in comparison to the previous year. Economic growth was mainly influenced by the monetary policy of the Federal Reserve System (the US central bank) particularly by the controlled devaluation of the US dollar. Following a series of eight further key interest rate increases, the Federal Funds Rate had risen to 4.25 per cent by December. Consumer confidence, which had dropped to 86.6 points in September, climbed again and closed the year at 103.8 points (the base year being 1985). Capacity utilisation in the US corporate sector was 80.7 per cent in December, which is marginally below the average rate of 81 per cent in the period 1972-2004. Unemployment fluctuated between 4.9 per cent and 5.1 per cent. Framework conditions, however, continued to give rise to concern: the trade deficit had climbed to 68.1 billion US dollars in October, hence exceeding the record deficit of 59.3 billion US dollars in November 2004 by a considerable margin. Total annual imports amounted to 1,996.9 billion US dollars, total exports to 1,271.1 billion US dollars. The US trade deficit thus widened to 725.8 billion US dollars. The budget deficit decreased to 494 billion US dollars, though the risk of structural deficits remained high. These shortfalls were cushioned by capital flows of some 45 billion US dollars monthly, with Asian central banks already accounting for almost one quarter of these capital flows. At the end of the year the Chinese central bank declared its intention to diversify investments of its currency reserves of 800 billion US dollars to include others of the world’s key currencies as well. Accounting for 750 billion euros, Europe is the largest investor in the USA. Conversely, 45 per cent of all US foreign investments go to Europe, accounting for a total of three quarters of all foreign investments in Europe. Transatlantic economic relations account for 12-14 million jobs in the EU and the USA. The volume of goods exchanged between the EU and the USA amounts to about one billion euros per day. Irritation was caused by the insufficient implementation of WTO rulings in the “Foreign Sales Corporations” case (US special regulations for the tax treatment of foreign sales subsidiaries) and the “Byrd Amendment” (US law on compensatory payments to offset continued dumping and subsidising practices) and the proceedings started by the counterparties in the Boeing-Airbus dispute. Successes scored by the Administration included the
ratification of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) on 2 August, as well as the positive outcome of US Congressional votes regarding continued US participation in the WTO and the prolongation of the “Trade Promotion Authority” (simplified ratification procedure for trade-related agreements) until 2007.

7.2. Canada

Canada is one of Austria’s most important trade and business partners outside Europe and there are also many affinities in non-economic areas. Like Austria, Canada is emphatically multilateralist, the degree of concordance in voting behaviour of the two countries in the UN General Assembly is extremely high (96 per cent in 2003, for instance). Canada and Austria cooperate closely within the Ottawa Process, in NATO’s Partnership for Peace Trust Fund Project for the destruction of anti-personnel landmines in Serbia and Montenegro and in activities within the framework of the Human Security Network (see Chapter H.VI.).

For Canada the USA is a major foreign policy and foreign trade factor. Canada attaches particular importance to keeping a balance between its basic multilateral stance and its wish to be a dependable partner for the USA. In Canada’s foreign policy statement, published in April, the country’s heightened interest in the Asian and South American regions was stressed. The government also continued to strengthen its strategic relations with the rapidly growing markets of China and India. Afghanistan, the Middle East, Haiti and Darfur (Sudan) were the key areas of Canada’s enhanced foreign policy commitment which also involved the increase of the relevant funds. Moreover, Canada attached great importance to its activities in international organisations like the United Nations. Numerous UN peace missions were launched at Canada’s initiative and Canada also participated in ESDP missions like EUFOR-Althea and EUPM (see Chapter A.IV.1.2.1.). Canada scored a political success by achieving the endorsement of the “responsibility to protect” principle at the UN summit in September. Canadians in high-level offices in international organisations, as for instance the President of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Philippe Kirsch, and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, are further evidence of Canada’s multilateral commitment. Territorial conflicts with Denmark and the USA prompted Canada to assert its sovereignty in the Arctic region, among other things by enhancing its military visibility under its “Northern Dimension” policy.

Significant domestic political developments in Canada included the premature fall of the government led by Prime Minister Paul Martin, the issue of national unity, the disputes about the legalisation of unisexual marriage and the failed effort to reform the country’s unfinancable health system. Following
the parliamentary elections on 28 June 2004, Prime Minister Martin, the Chairman of the Liberal Party, had led an initially relatively stable minority government. He enjoyed the support of three opposition parties (New Democratic Party, Conservative Party, Bloc Québécois) on a number of issues, but lost their support in the context of a sponsorship scandal. According to the findings of the Auditor General of Canada, public funds intended for anti-separatist government advertising had been misdirected and misused. The Prime Minister set up an independent judicial commission mandated with investigating the issue, which submitted its report on 1 November. Following the fall of the government, new elections were scheduled for 23 January 2006.

About 80 per cent of Canada’s exports go to the USA. The government, together with Mexico, made efforts to upgrade the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to create a modern free trade area. The refusal of the USA to comply with the NAFTA tribunal ruling on softwood exports loomed heavily on the Agreement. The Canadian economy expanded by three per cent. Inflation remained low, while the budget showed a surplus of about 12.5 billion euros. At 6.8 per cent, unemployment contracted, almost reaching a historic Canadian low. The balance of trade was positive despite the strong Canadian dollar. Canada hence holds a leading position in comparison with the other G7 countries.

7.3. Transatlantic Relations with the USA and Canada

The term transatlantic relations refers to the EU’s relations with the USA and Canada, which are of utmost importance to all parties involved. Besides very close economic ties, both sides are increasingly aware of the significance of a close partnership for realising common political goals. From early 2005 onwards, the USA showed itself increasingly interested in intensifying the exchange of views with the European Union.

7.3.1. The Institutionalised EU-US Dialogue

The institutionalised dialogue between the EU and the USA is essentially based on three cornerstones: the Transatlantic Declaration of 1990, the 1995 New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA) and the EU-US Joint Action Plan of 1995. The highest forum is the annual EU-US summit. In order to ensure efficient cooperation, numerous meetings are continually held at all the different working levels: EU-US ministerial meetings, Senior Level Group meetings convening high-ranking officials, meetings of Political Directors as well as Task Force and expert group meetings. The EU-US dialogue is the most intensive of all institutionalised dialogues between the EU and third countries.

Political observers see 2005 as marking a new beginning in transatlantic relations following the onset of the war in Iraq. With his visit to Europe at the
end of February, President Bush gave a clear and visible sign of this development. The need for close cooperation found its expression in a number of high-level meetings: the summit meeting between President Bush and the Heads of State and Government of the 25 EU Member States and with the EU Troika in Brussels on 22 February; the EU-US summit in Washington, D.C. on 20 June; the meetings of all EU foreign ministers with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in Brussels on 22 February and on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly on 20 September; the EU-US Troika meeting of foreign ministers in Luxembourg on 10 February and in Washington, D.C. on 2 June; the EU-US Troika meeting of justice and home affairs ministers in London on 11 and 12 July and in Washington, D.C. on 6 and 7 October, and the EU-US Troika meeting of economic affairs ministers in Brussels on 30 November. As numerous examples show, the concerted approach of the EU and the USA proved instrumental in coping with global challenges: the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism in Afghanistan; in the wake of the terrorist attacks in the United Kingdom, Turkey and Jordan; in the E3 negotiations with Iran; the UN initiative on Syria and Lebanon; Israel’s disengagement from the Gaza Strip and parts of the Northern West Bank; in Darfur (Sudan) and in Kosovo; for promoting democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine and the broader Middle East region and in the action taken against repression in Belarus and Myanmar.

Four out of a total of ten EU-US summit declarations focussed on the bilateral economic partnership. The content was heavily influenced by the Transatlantic Business Dialogue (TABD), an institutionalised dialogue forum for entrepreneurs based on the New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA). The TABD among other things convenes shortly before the institutionalised EU-US summits in order to elaborate proposals for improving economic relations at the highest level. Other dialogue fora within the “people-to-people links” framework are the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD) and the Transatlantic Legislative Dialogue (TLD), which aims to enhance the political discourse between the European Parliament and the US Congress. The meeting of economic affairs ministers represents an important step forward in transatlantic economic relations. A joint work programme on implementing the economic initiative of June was adopted at the end of November and encompasses measures in eleven areas: regulatory issues, the opening and competitiveness of capital markets; the detection and deterrence of money laundering and the financing of terrorist activities; the promotion of innovation and technological development; trade, transport and travel safety; energy efficiency; the protection of intellectual property rights; investments; competition policy; public procurement and services. Two focal points of activities are regulatory issues and the protection of intellectual property rights. Agreements were made in these areas to establish a forum for cooperation in regulatory issues and to elaborate a common strategy for the protection of intellectual property rights.
These developments create an overall positive perspective for relations between the EU and the USA. On 14 December the Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, Daniel Fried, in his address to a conservative think-tank stressed the political significance of the EU for the USA. The USA increasingly views the EU as its most crucial partner in coping with global challenges. Until recently US efforts mainly focussed on European stabilisation and defence, but now the focus has changed to how the two sides can work together and jointly contribute to spreading freedom and democracy in the world.

7.3.2. The Institutionalised EU-Canada Dialogue

The institutionalised dialogue between the EU and Canada is based on the 1976 Framework Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation, the Declaration on Transatlantic Relations of 1990, the 1996 Joint Political Declaration and the related Action Plan. Numerous meetings at the different levels of working groups, expert groups, and senior-level public and political representatives create the foundation for the political dialogue between the EU and Canada and in their entirety constitute one of the EU’s foreign policy priorities. An EU-Canada summit, the highest forum in the EU-Canada Dialogue, was held in Niagara-on-the-Lake on 19 June. On 24 November a video conference was held between Prime Ministers Paul Martin and Tony Blair as the EU Council President, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso and EU High Representative Javier Solana. Important issues on the Dialogue’s agenda included the acceleration of the negotiations on the conclusion of a Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement (TIEA); the continuation of the environmental and climate agenda; the UN reform process; fishery issues and the abolition of Canadian visa requirements for the new EU Member States. Moreover, the efforts resulting in the conclusion of agreements on Canada’s participation in crisis management operations, the Canada-Europol cooperation and the transfer of air passenger data were acknowledged within the context of the video conference. The British Presidency of the Council in cooperation with the European Commission and the EU Council Secretariat elaborated restructuring proposals aimed at further increasing the overall productivity of the EU-Canada dialogue and its orientation towards tangible results. The proposals were submitted to the new Canadian government for examination.

7.4. North American Free Trade Agreement

The agreement on the establishment of a North American Free Trade Area between the USA, Canada and Mexico (NAFTA, North American Free Trade Agreement) entered into force on 1 January 1994. Its special feature is that it unites two of the most highly developed industrial states with an emerging
market country from the south. The combined GDP of the NAFTA states amounted to 11.4 trillion US dollars in 2003; this is far in excess of the EU’s GDP, which even after the enlargement was estimated at 8.3 trillion US dollars.

The pronounced comparative cost differences stimulated the dynamic growth of intraregional trade, and the volume of trade between the USA and Mexico has more than tripled. With export rates of around 90 per cent and an import rate of 62 per cent, Mexico has increasingly concentrated its export activities on its NAFTA partners. However, NAFTA continued to be the subject of fierce domestic controversy in the USA, mainly on account of the extremely high US trade deficit. Intraregional differences and disputes also arose, particularly with regard to agricultural issues. American NGOs expressed concern with regard to wage and environmental dumping. The US government counteracted this criticism by pointing out that NAFTA was a way of opening new markets, allowing enterprises to reduce their costs, and increasing efficiency. In Canada and Mexico the agreement is considered a very positive achievement, primarily because it entailed a huge trade volume increase. On the occasion of its ten-year anniversary the parties to the agreement unanimously declared that NAFTA had benefited all three partner countries, while consumers enjoyed the advantages of lower costs and a higher diversity of supply. No consensus on the further development and deepening of NAFTA was reached, but on 23 June the NAFTA Environment Ministers adopted a strategic plan for the North American Commission on Environmental Cooperation (CEC) which placed special emphasis on combining trade and environmental issues.

NAFTA has broken new ground in the field of investment protection. On the whole, the integration process has proceeded as planned, in spite of delays in the implementation of individual NAFTA provisions. In view of the strong growth in intraregional trade, market integration and the elimination of customs duties, NAFTA has repeatedly served as a model agreement for other bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements concluded or negotiated by the USA over the past few years, among others with Australia, Chile, Colombia, Jordan, Panama and Singapore, as well as the Andes Region. Hence, the USA has increasingly come to view NAFTA as a model for trade cooperation and as a complement to the multilateral trade structure with the WTO at its centre.

8. **Latin America and the Caribbean**

8.1. **Political developments**

Although some states of the Andes Region were faced with political crises, their democratic institutions were not called into question and political
solutions were sought to problems. Today, Latin America is one of the world’s
democratic regions: democracy is widely accepted by the population and the
course has been set towards a state system founded on the rule of law, market
economy, regional integration and international opening. However, some of
the countries still exhibit social asymmetries and corruption. Strengthening
cooperation between the EU and the Latin American and Caribbean region
(LAC) and the growing significance of the EU-LAC summit process are
relevant not only as an essential complement to the existing bilateral relations,
but also with regard to Austria’s role as a host of the Fourth EU-LAC Summit
from 11 to 13 May 2006 in Vienna.

In Mexico, the parliamentary and presidential elections scheduled for July
2006 already dominated the domestic policy agenda. In June the Zapatistas
announced that they would discontinue military action in favour of peaceful
political work for the time being. In April, Mexico ratified the Facultative
Protocol of the UN Convention against Torture, and in October the Statute of
the International Criminal Court. On 9 December the country abolished the
death penalty. Successes on the foreign policy front included José Angel
Gurría’s election as Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-
operation and Development (OECD) and the election of Bernardo Sepúlveda
Amor as a judge at the International Court of Justice. In the EU-LAC process
Mexico continues to act as coordinator for the LAC Region.

In Brazil, the government led by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva continued
its efforts to lay the foundations for social and economic reform by pursuing
responsible debt, currency and budgetary policies. The “Fome Zero” (“Zero
Hunger”) programme aimed at eliminating hunger throughout the country
and meeting the population’s basic needs remained a key social policy
objective. Despite some internal political turbulence (corruption and vote-
buying scandal) economic developments continued along highly positive
lines. Brazil’s priority foreign policy objectives included obtaining a
permanent seat on the UN Security Council within the framework of a UN
reform, regional integration (MERCOSUR), the diversification of trade
relations, playing a leading role in South America and strengthening Brazil’s
role in the world, also as the mouthpiece of the emerging markets and
developing countries.

Argentina’s economy continued to grow, entailing a record government
budget surplus. The annual inflation rate, however, also rose to about 12 per
cent. A dispute with the government regarding the prices of goods and
services, institutional weaknesses and frequent changes in the legal framework
caus​ed insecurity among foreign investors. In December President Néstor
Kirchner announced that Argentina would repay its entire debt with the
International Monetary Fund (IMF) by the end of the year. Owing to high
unemployment, the social situation remained tense. The presidential elections
of 23 October strengthened the position of Argentina’s popular President Kirchner.

**Chile** continued to remain the most stable national economy in the region, boasting 5.5 per cent economic growth, an inflation rate of 3.5 per cent and an unemployment rate below eight per cent. Huge trade surpluses owing to high world market prices for copper were a key factor in the appreciation of the peso. In September the country’s constitution that dated back to the times of dictatorship was amended, abolishing, above all, the special role of the so-called “institutional” senators – including, among others, former presidents, heads of the army and court of audit presidents.

In **Colombia** the general security situation continued to improve while the incidence of violent crime decreased. President Álvaro Uribe’s “democratic security” policy further enhanced his high popularity. The government focused its efforts on a negotiated settlement with the paramilitary United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC) and succeeded in achieving a ceasefire. In November 2004 demobilisation of paramilitary associations began, which encompassed some 13,000 members by the end of the year and was to be concluded by mid-February 2006. In mid-June the law on “Justicia y Paz” (justice and peace) was adopted after prolonged internal discussions. This law is aimed at ensuring the investigation and prosecution of crimes committed by paramilitaries and providing redress for victims without jeopardising the peace process. In its Council conclusions of 3 October, the EU termed this law “significant progress” and called for its effective implementation. The first round of talks was launched with the National Liberation Army (ELN), the smaller group of guerrillas, in Havana in mid-December. Also in December, the government offered the far larger guerrilla organisation, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), to establish a demilitarised zone for possible negotiations on a humanitarian agreement.

Relations between **Cuba** and the EU relaxed after the EU at the end of January temporarily suspended its “four measures announced on 5 June 2003” (limiting of bilateral high-level visits, reducing cultural cooperation, inviting Cuban dissidents to national holiday celebrations at European embassies in Havana, re-examining the European Union’s Common Position on Cuba of December 1996). Diplomatic relations with EU missions in Havana, frozen by the Cuban regime in 2003, improved. The human rights situation deteriorated following renewed arrests, further restrictions on the freedom of opinion and assembly and aggressive intimidations of dissidents by government followers. The “Damas de Blanco” (a group of women who have been marching every Sunday since 2004 in peaceful protest at the imprisonment of their husbands and sons considered regime critics) were awarded the 2005 Sakharov Prize by the European Parliament, which, however, they were not able to receive in
person as they were not granted a travel permit. The EU foreign ministers reaffirmed the EU Common Position on Cuba of December 1996, which states that the EU’s main objective is to encourage a process of transition to pluralistic democracy within the framework of a political dialogue.

In Peru, much improved macroeconomic perspectives failed to make up for the population’s disappointment with regard to social and political developments. A transition government has been in office since July.

In Venezuela, parliamentary elections were held on 4 December. As the opposition parties withdrew their candidates shortly before the elections, the government parties obtained all 167 seats in the national assembly through a poll in which only 25 per cent of the electorate participated. The EU dispatched an election observation mission, which had not yet submitted its report at the end of the year.

The positive economic development in Guatemala was largely cancelled out by high energy prices and the devastations caused by hurricane Stan in October. Meanwhile, the difficult security situation and organised crime continue to be the country’s chief problems.

The latent political crisis in Nicaragua continued after Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega and ex-president Arnoldo Alemán, who had been sentenced to 20 years imprisonment on charges of money laundering, both declared their interest in running in the presidential elections scheduled for November 2006. In response to US pressure, the government at least managed to pass the budget for 2006 and meet IMF requirements in the autumn. A long-standing border conflict with Costa Rica took a turn for the worse.

Following the resignation of President Carlos Mesa, the elections for president, national congress and the first-ever elections for prefects in Bolivia were held prematurely on 18 December. Taking about 54 per cent of the votes, Evo Morales, the party leader of the Movement toward Socialism (MAS), emerged victorious from the presidential elections. His party, previously the strongest opposition party in the national congress, gained an absolute majority of some 54 per cent in the national assembly. The parties that emerged strongest from the prefect elections were the MAS and the Social and Democratic Power (PODEMOS), each returning three of a total of nine departmental prefects.

The President of Ecuador, Lucio Gutiérrez, who following large-scale demonstrations was unseated by a legally not undisputed congress vote at the end of April, was the third office holder since 1996 unable to complete his regular term of office. Gutiérrez was succeeded by his Vice-President, Alfredo Palacio.
8.2. Regional Integration Fora

The 28th Summit of the MERCOSUR States (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay), which was chaired by Paraguay, took place in Asunción (Paraguay) on 19 and 20 June, while the 29th Summit, which was chaired by Uruguay, was held in Montevideo (Uruguay) on 8 and 9 December. Work in the first half year focused on economic policy coordination, the endowment of the cohesion fund and the signing of a human rights protocol (Asunción Protocol). In Montevideo a resolution was taken to set up a MERCOSUR parliament by the end of 2010. Activities in the second half of the year centred on implementing the cohesion fund agreed on in Asunción, which will be endowed with some 100 million US dollars in 2006 and 2007. At the Montevideo summit Venezuela was formally admitted as a member state, though for the time being without vote and without factual and technical integration into MERCOSUR.

The 16th Summit of the Andean Community (CAN), which consists of Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela, was held in Lima (Peru) on 18 July. The most important results included the decision to deepen Andean integration, progress in the convergence process with MERCOSUR (the MERCOSUR countries were granted associate member status), the improvement of relations with the EU and the adoption of a new common drug-fighting strategy. CAN declared the common customs policy, the protection of water resources and biodiversity, the establishment of an Andean alliance, the setting-up of a social humanitarian fund and the mutual recognition and acceptance of education certificates and professional titles as priority issues. The Andean Community further agreed on the free transit of Andean citizens between the member countries and the introduction of a CAN passport.

The Central American states concluded a large number of regional, bilateral and multilateral trade agreements. These include the agreement to implement CAFTA, which six Central American countries had concluded with the USA. Within the framework of the Central American Integration System (SICA) further efforts were made towards progressive harmonisation among SICA countries and the formation of a customs union. A regional energy plan was agreed on at the 27th Summit of SICA countries on 2 December.

The 16th Intersessional Meeting of CARICOM Heads of Government in Paramaribo (Suriname) on 16 and 17 February acknowledged the progress made towards the full implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). The objectives of the CSME are the free movement of persons, goods and services. The decision was made to establish the Caribbean Court of Justice in Port of Spain (Trinidad und Tobago) as court of final appeal, replacing the Privy Council in London. The 26th Summit in Gros Islet
(St. Lucia) from 3 to 6 June reaffirmed the decision to establish the CSME as of 1 January 2006.

The foreign ministers of the Rio Group, which consists of the twelve Latin American states, the five Central American states and the Caribbean Region represented by the CARICOM presidency, met in San Carlos de Bariloche (Argentina) on 25 and 26 August. Deliberations centred on the stabilisation efforts in Haiti.

The regular session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) was, for the first time since 1974, held in the USA (Fort Lauderdale, 5 to 7 June). The “Declaration of Florida” calls on OAS member states to increase their commitment to supporting weak democratic institutions in the individual countries. On some items the conference was marked by differences between the USA on the one hand and, notably, Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela on the other.

The IV Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata (Argentina) from 3 to 5 November was attended by 32 heads of state and government. In contrast to the previous summits, discussions this time focused on economic issues, in particular on creating jobs and fighting poverty. As regards the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), preliminary agreement was reached on evaluating the possibilities for its establishment. In parallel to the political summit, a “Summit of the Peoples” was organised under the slogan “Another America is Possible”, at which alternatives to the FTAA were discussed.

The 15th Ibero-American Summit was convened in Salamanca (Spain) on 14 and 15 October. Key agenda items were the international influence of the Ibero-American region, the economic and social situation in the region and migration issues. A permanent General Secretariat headed by Uruguay’s Enrique Iglesias as first Secretary-General was set up in Madrid.

Following the inception of the South American Community of Nations in 2004, the first summit meeting was held in Brasilia on 29 and 30 September. Deliberations centred on economic and infrastructure policy issues. The Community agreed to enhance integration in the areas of energy, transport and communication. The agenda also included cultural, media, environmental and social policy matters. The Community’s long-term goal lies in setting up a comprehensive integrated South American free trade zone.

8.3. Relations with the EU

Relations between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean are maintained at the bi-regional level in the form of a summit process in which all 33 states of Latin America and the Caribbean region participate, as well as
through institutionalised political dialogue with the Rio Group. Regular specialised meetings are also held with MERCOSUR, Central America, the Andean Community, Mexico and Chile. The EU-LAC summit process defines the strategic direction for the further development of relations. Three bi-regional summit meetings were held following the inception of the process in 1999: in Rio de Janeiro in 1999, in Madrid in 2002 and in Guadalajara in Mexico in 2004. The EU’s relations with this region in 2005 were already dominated by the preparations for the IV EU-LAC Summit to be held in Vienna from 11 to 13 May 2006. Two Senior Officials Meetings were held in 2005: the XVI Meeting in Brussels on 19 April, which focused on the organisational framework, and the XVII Meeting in Lima on 16 November, at which a twelve-item agenda for the IV EU-LAC Summit was negotiated in a challenging process.

The XII EU-Rio Group meeting of the foreign ministers convened in Luxembourg on 26 and 27 May, while a further meeting of the foreign ministers between the EU Troika and the Rio Group was held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly on 17 September. Discussions at both meetings focused on the situation in Haiti.

At the XII EU-Rio Group meeting of the foreign ministers, separate talks were concurrently conducted between the EU Troika and MERCOSUR, Central America, the Andean Community, Mexico and Chile. At the EU-MERCOSUR Meeting the EU offered MERCOSUR its assistance as a political-strategic partner in globalisation issues. The parties resolved to initiate a political dialogue at senior officials level. From November 1999 negotiations have been conducted on an Association Agreement. Following the conclusion of the talks on the “political dialogue” and “cooperation” chapters in the seventh round, the following eight rounds failed to result in an agreement on the trade chapter. At a EU-MERCOSUR ministerial meeting in September both parties agreed to press ahead as far as possible with the negotiations by summer 2006.

The goal of establishing association agreements between the EU and the respective region was reaffirmed at the XXI EU-Central America Ministerial Meeting and the XXI EU-CAN Ministerial Meeting, the EU noting with appreciation its close cooperation with both regions and the integration process within these regions. The prerequisites for opening negotiations on association agreements between the EU and Central America and CAN, respectively, stated in the final document of the 2004 Guadalajara Summit, are progress in WTO negotiations (Doha round) and adequate regional economic integration of the Andean countries and the Central American countries. For the time being, the parties agreed on a joint evaluation process concluded by a joint evaluation report as a basis for future decision making.

The IV EU-Mexico Joint Council and the II EU-Chile Association Council also convened on 26 May. The EU and Mexico resolved to increase their joint
commitment to multilateral issues. At the meeting with Chile the parties affirmed the positive impact of the Association Agreement which had finally entered into force on 1 March.

In December, the European Commission adopted a Communication to the Council and to the European Parliament on EU-Latin America bi-regional relations, its first in ten years. In this comprehensive strategy paper entitled “Stronger Partnership between the European Union and Latin America”, Latin America is presented as an important and close partner with which the EU shares a commitment to common values (human rights, democracy, multilateralism), and a common history and culture.

9. Sub-Saharan Africa

9.1. General Developments

Developments in Africa presented a mixed picture. There were a number of unresolved conflicts on the continent: the Darfur crisis in Sudan intensified; the implementation of the North-South Agreement was further delayed; a new tension spot evolved in the east of the continent; the humanitarian crisis triggered by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in Northern Uganda continued; the transition process in Côte d’Ivoire had to be suspended and relaunched following the appointment of a legitimate interim prime minister, and the latent political crisis in Guinea-Bissau continued to ferment. Overall, however, developments went in a positive direction: progress was achieved in the third large peace process in Africa and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the preparations for the first democratic elections in 40 years made good headway. Further, the hot spots in Eastern Congo were at least stabilised. Elections were held in twelve countries: the Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritius, Tanzania, Togo and Zimbabwe. In Ethiopia, where serious unrest erupted during the post-election crisis, the outbreak of outright violence was successfully prevented, while in Liberia and Burundi the elections brought an end to long years of conflict. In December the EU adopted its first overall strategy for Africa, which sets forth the increasing significance of pan-African institutions and outlines a process for consolidating European-African relations.

9.2. Regional Integration Fora

The fourth regular AU Summit in Abuja (Nigeria) on 30 and 31 January mainly focused on institutional developments within the AU and on fixing the time schedules for the summit meetings to be held at biannual intervals up to 2010. Nigeria’s chairmanship mandate was extended until the end of 2005 to
create the basis for passing on the chair each 1 January. This implies that the political focus will shift to the respective January summit. The fifth regular AU Summit in Sirte (Libya) from 5 to 7 July was dominated by the debate on UN reform. In a separate resolution on the reform of the UN Security Council, the AU demanded that the Security Council be expanded from 15 to 26 seats and that all permanent members be given veto power. The issue of how the seats should be distributed among African nations was shelved for later discussion (see also Chapter F.III.1.1.). Subsequently, an extraordinary summit on the topic of UN reform was held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) on 4 August, at which Nigeria failed to achieve acceptance of a compromise for the reform of the UN Security Council negotiated with the G4 (Brazil, Germany, India and Japan) in London. On 2 December the 5th EU-Africa Ministerial Troika Meeting was held in Bamako (Mali), at which the parties agreed to step up joint activities in the fields of peace and security, governance, trade and development and regional integration. The Pan-African Parliament (PAP) convened at its headquarters in Midrand (South Africa) in March and November. The strategic plan “One Africa, One Voice” was adopted for the period 2006–2010.

The plans for restructuring the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) include the transformation of the secretariat into a commission headed by a president, a vice-president and seven commissioners. The reform is to enable the organisation to respond more adequately to peacekeeping requirements and to support it in performing its principal tasks in the area of economic integration. ECOWAS participated in the preparation and observation of the elections in Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Togo and acted as mediator in the Côte d’Ivoire conflict. For the planned “ECOWAS Standby Force” a rapid response unit of 1,500 soldiers will be made available by 2008 to tackle regional crises and will subsequently be expanded to up to 5,000 soldiers by 2010. In a first step, a small task force consisting of five representatives of West African countries was set up in cooperation with donor countries. This task force is to be expanded to a staff of eleven persons to form the headquarters of the standby brigade.

The summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) held in Gaborone (Botswana) on 17 and 18 August was chaired by the President of Botswana, Festus Gontebanye Mogae. The Namibian President Hifikepunye Lucas Pohamba was appointed Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. Tomás Augusto Salomão, the driving force behind the restructuring of SADC, was appointed SADC Executive Secretary.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), whose restructuring process had been concluded at the summit in Kampala (Uganda) in October 2003, continued to focus on efforts aimed at finding a solution to the conflict in Somalia. Projects in the organisation’s core development policy area continued to remain in the background. At the AU Summit in Sirte IGAD
successfully enlisted the support of the heads of state and government for the deployment of IGAD troops to Somalia. However, doubts arose on the issue of participation of troops from neighbouring states. A decision by the Somali government on this issue remained pending.

9.3. Regional Developments

9.3.1. The Horn of Africa

In Sudan, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement was signed on 9 January, but implementation progress was slow. The humanitarian and security situation in the Darfur crisis region in Western Sudan deteriorated, despite AMIS II efforts, and Darfur negotiations in Abuja (Nigeria) between the Sudanese government and the internally split rebel groups Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) failed to produce a breakthrough. In addition, violent clashes erupted in Eastern Sudan between rebel movements of the partly Eritrea-supported Beja tribes and the government. In economic terms, the Sudanese government benefited from higher proceeds from oil exports.

The peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea initiated by the Algiers Peace Agreement of December 2000 made no further progress from September 2003 onwards. Eritrea repeatedly urged Ethiopia to implement the decision of the independent border commission of 13 April 2003. The Eritrean flight ban of 5 October on helicopters of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) reduced the Mission’s observation capacity to less than half. On 24 November, the UN Security Council in response adopted Resolution 1640 (2005), which under the threat of sanctions demanded Eritrea to reverse its decision to ban UNMEE helicopter flights within 30 days and Ethiopia to withdraw its troops behind the lines demarcated on 16 December. In mid-December Ethiopia signalled its readiness to comply with the Security Council Resolution, but there were no signs of a shift in opinion on the Eritrean side.

In Somalia, events were marked by the successful transfer of the transitional government from Nairobi (Kenya) to Somalia. In the face of the difficult security situation in the capital Mogadishu, Transitional President Yussuf Abdullaahi decided to establish temporary government headquarters in Jowhar, about 60 kilometres north of Mogadishu. This decision gave rise to tensions with a number of members of government and parliament resident in Mogadishu.

In Djibouti, sizeable US military forces were still deployed on operations to fight international terrorism. Presidential elections were held on 8 April with incumbent President Ismail Omar Guelleh standing as sole candidate. The
head of state was re-elected with 100 per cent of valid votes and sworn in for his second – and according to the constitution last – six-year term of office. The opposition parties had resolved not to take part in the election.

9.3.2. Southern Africa

In South Africa, President Thabo Mbeki continued his active role in the peace efforts for the Great Lakes Region. He also achieved progress in his effort to find a solution to the conflict in Côte d’Ivoire. South Africa advocates a broadly-based reform of the UN (Security Council, General Assembly and ECOSOC), aspiring to obtain a permanent seat on the UN Security Council (see also Chapters A.IV.9.2. and F.III.1.1.).

In Namibia, the new President Hifikepunye Pohamba upon taking office appointed Nahas Angula as Prime Minister. The latter’s predecessor, Theoben Gurirab, was appointed Speaker of the Namibian National Assembly.

In Zimbabwe, the incumbent President Robert Mugabe and his “Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front” (ZANU-PF) emerged victorious from the presidential and parliamentary elections held in March. The EU did not judge the elections to be free and fair, above all due to repressions in the run-up to the polls. According to investigations by Security Council Special Envoy Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, the government had large shanty settlements on the fringes of several cities completely destroyed in large-scale operations conducted in an inhuman way, which left more than 700,000 people homeless. The country’s economic crisis aggravated. The restrictive measures imposed by the EU in 2003 remained in place.

In Mauritius, the governing coalition of Prime Minister Paul Berenger lost the elections held in July. The opposition Social Alliance led by Navin Ramgoolam secured itself 38 of the 62 seats in parliament. The voter turnout was 81 per cent.

9.3.3. Great Lakes Region

The key challenges faced by the Democratic Republic of the Congo included the integration of the troops who had formerly been on opposing sides in the civil war into a new army and the disarmament and demobilisation of the domestic and foreign militias active in the east of the country. Two ESDP operations, EUPOL Kinshasa and EUSEC RD Congo, were launched to support the transition government (see Chapter A.IV.1.2.1.). A draft constitution to pave the way for parliamentary and presidential elections in 2006 was accepted in a referendum on 18 December, the cornerstone of the new constitution being the creation of 25 provinces with far-reaching autonomy rights.
Internal developments in **Uganda** were marked by the preparations for presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for February 2006. In July the introduction of a multi-party system was approved in a referendum. In August, parliament passed a constitutional reform that lifted a ban limiting the president to two terms in office, enabling President Yoweri K. Museveni to run for office again. The Ugandan Electoral Commission supported the leader of the opposition Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), Kizza Besigye, who had been arrested and indicted for treason and terrorism shortly after his return from exile on 14 November, in running for the office of president despite his still being on remand. The armed conflict with the LRA, which has terrorised the people in the Acholi region in the north of the country for almost 20 years and had temporarily transferred its bases from South Sudan to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, continued. On 30 November the ICC issued warrants of arrest against LRA leader Joseph Kony and four of his top commanders.

The period of political transition in **Burundi** successfully ended with the adoption of a new constitution and the holding of parliamentary and presidential elections. On 19 August, the national assembly and senate elected Pierre Nkurunziza as the new president. A ceasefire agreement mediated by Tanzania and concluded with the Hutu rebel Forces for National Liberation (FNL) in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) on 15 May could not be implemented.

9.3.4. East Africa

In **Kenya**, the draft constitution submitted to popular vote after several redrafts was rejected by 57 per cent of the electorate in a referendum held on 21 November. The draft, while introducing the office of a prime minister with very restricted powers, maintained the central position of the president. The political debate in the lead-up to the referendum had split the government. Two days after the referendum President Mwai Kibaki dissolved cabinet and appointed a new government on 7 December. This marked the de facto end of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), which in 2002 had replaced the regime of the then ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU), itself in power since the country’s independence in 1963.

The parliamentary and presidential elections in **Tanzania** on 14 December brought the expected clear victory of the Party of the Revolution (CCM), the ruling party since the country gained independence. The incumbent Foreign Minister Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete prevailed against Prof. Ibrahim Lipumba, the candidate of the largest opposition party, the Civic United Front (CUF), and was elected president. The CCM also achieved a clear majority in the parliamentary elections. On 30 October, Tanzania’s semi-autonomous **Zanzibar Islands** elected the Zanzibaran president and local parliament. The incumbent president and CCM candidate, Amani Abeid Karume, won a
majority against the CUF presidential candidate, Seif Sharif Hamad. Demonstrations and violent clashes with casualties, above all on Pemba Island, marked the run-up to the elections. Immediately after the elections the CUF declared that it would not recognise the official results but that it would still take part in parliamentary procedures.

9.3.5. West Africa

In Nigeria, reforms focusing on the terms of office of the head of state, among others, and the use of the proceeds from oil production were discussed within the framework of a major constitutional conference in March. The incumbent president was considering seeking a third term in office on the basis of a constitutional amendment. The governors of two federal states in Nigeria’s oil-producing region in the Niger Delta, Diepreye Alamieyeseigha and Joshua Dariye, were arrested in London, which marked a first climax in the fight against corruption but also triggered a wave of violence and insecurity. Abuja, Nigeria’s federal capital, was the venue of AU-mediated talks in search of a solution to the Darfur crisis.

In Togo, the son of the late President Faure Gnassingbé was elected head of state. The run-up to the election was characterised by tension, both internally and with the international community, but the situation finally stabilised.

In Chad, the incumbent President Idriss Déby was re-elected for a third time following a constitutional amendment. The highly unstable internal situation was aggravated as a result of the impact of the Darfur crisis in neighbouring Sudan.

Following the withdrawal of UNAMSIL from Sierra Leone in December, Liberia and Côte d’Ivoire remained the only countries in West Africa in which the UN continued to deploy peacekeeping troops.

In Burkina Faso, presidential elections were held on 13 November. The Constitutional Council decided the issue of a further candidacy of the incumbent office-holder in favour of President Blaise Compaoré, the country’s head of state since 1987. Following this ruling the President’s party, the Congress for Democracy and Progress (CDP), managed to divide the political opposition, the “Alliance for Democracy and Federation – African Democratic Rally (ADF-RDA)”. The ADF-RDA did not put up a presidential candidate of its own, but obtained a number of ministerial posts in the government.

The presidential elections in Guinea-Bissau in June and July, held in accordance with the transitional roadmap drafted after the military putsch in 2003, ended with the victory of the former military ruler João Bernardo Vieira. Political tension arose following the dismissal of the government led by the
African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), though there were no open hostilities.

In Senegal, an amnesty law that provides for de facto impunity for political murder was adopted. An EU demarche failed to produce a change of opinion with the Senegalese government. In December the elections scheduled for May 2006 were postponed to 2007 by way of a constitutional act. This caused tension between the government and the opposition, which considers the postponement unconstitutional.

In Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf emerged as Africa’s first female head of state from the presidential elections held in November and December. She declared her intention to continue the reconciliation process initiated after the end of the civil war with great determination.

In Côte d’Ivoire, an air raid by Ivorian forces launched against barracks in Bouaké, in which French soldiers deployed in “Opération Licorne” (Operation Unicorn) were stationed, triggered lasting tensions between the Ivorian government and the international community of states. In retaliation, French forces destroyed the Ivorian air force, which further exacerbated the tensions. The international community, notably the AU, intensified their efforts to resolve the conflict through mediation on behalf of the UN Security Council. The appointment of former central bank governor Charles Konan Banny as interim prime minister in December is viewed as a successful result of these efforts.

10. Asia

10.1. General Developments

Efforts to promote regional integration were stepped up. The first East Asia Summit (EAS) was held on 14 December by the leaders of 16 countries (ASEAN as well as China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand). The states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) reinforced their cooperation. China and India evolved as regional power houses and global actors beside Japan. South Asia is characterised by the political climate between India and Pakistan and India’s rapid economic advancement. Economic integration within ASEAN, but also between ASEAN and China, Japan and the Republic of Korea is increasing. In the South Pacific area, Australia is increasingly assuming the role of a regional stabiliser. The majority of the countries in the region exhibited substantial economic growth, some of them (China, for instance) achieving record rates unparalleled worldwide. However, the region continues to be the stage for numerous
unresolved conflicts of political, ethnic and social nature and the efforts to enhance regional cooperation were of major importance in this light.

10.1.1. North-East Asia

The **People’s Republic of China** is faced with the consequences of the country’s dynamic economic developments, among them a growing social gap, notably between the urban and rural population as well as between the coastal regions and the inland provinces. The problems are aggravated by the ecological impacts of rapid economic growth, water shortages and bottlenecks in energy supply. For these reasons the National Congress of the Communist Party of China in October endeavoured to set the stage for a strategic reorientation in favour of balanced growth and social reforms. The goal of Chinese political and economic development formulated at the party congress is to “build a harmonious society”. Faced with occasional distrust on account of China’s rapid economic and military rise, the Chinese leadership usually responds by emphasising its wish for a “peaceful development path” and stability as a prerequisite for economic growth.

While China successfully resolved a number of territorial conflicts in recent years, for instance those with Russia and its Central Asian neighbours, the **Taiwan issue** still remains unresolved. Furthermore, a small group of islands in the East China Sea is claimed by both China and Japan.

Considering China’s increasingly significant global role, Austria and the EU further enhanced political contacts with China. In view of China’s rising energy demand, closer cooperation in the energy sector is seen to be of particular importance for Austria and the EU. The Austrian focus in bilateral cooperation is additionally on the areas of education, human rights and justice.

**Japan** has been stepping up its global political commitment since the end of the Cold War. Its wish for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council has not been realised for the time being. Participation in Asian cooperation mechanisms is becoming increasingly important in Japan’s foreign policy, above all with ASEAN and as a dialogue partner in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The security-policy partnership with the USA remains a cornerstone of Japanese foreign policy. From the Japanese vantage point, a US military presence in Asia is indispensable for guaranteeing security for Japan and stability in the Asian-Pacific region. A further crucial objective of Japanese foreign policy is to improve political relations with its neighbouring states. However, these efforts were partly frustrated by the repeated visits by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to the Yasukuni Shrine, which honours the souls of 2.5 million Japanese war victims, including a number of war criminals executed after World War II. In addition, unresolved territorial issues
hampered relations with Russia and the Republic of Korea. The EU made efforts to deepen the political and strategic dialogue with Japan. To mark the 2005 EU-Japan Year of People to People Exchanges, some 1,000 events were organised within the EU and in Japan.

The nuclear programme of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea continued to cloud the relationship between the two Koreas as well as the country’s relations with the USA and the EU. Since 2003 six-party talks between China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the USA have been held to seek a resolution to the crisis. On 10 February North Korea stated that it possessed nuclear weapons and announced its withdrawal from the six-party talks. In summer 2005, however, North Korea agreed to return to the negotiation table. On 19 September 2005 a joint declaration by the participants in the six-party talks was adopted in which North Korea in principle agrees to verifiable denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. In turn, the prospect of a light water reactor plant was held out to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. However, the implementation of the joint declaration, in particular the timing of economic aid and the construction of a light water reactor plant on the one hand and the denuclearisation process on the other, is proving difficult.

The Republic of Korea focused efforts on promoting the inner-Korean dialogue with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, which is primarily based on economic cooperation. Thus the Kaesong Industrial Park project and the development of the tourist region around Mount Kumgang in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea were pushed within the framework of these efforts. The Republic of Korea exhibited a keen interest in European integration as a possible model for the Asian area.

10.1.2. Central Asia

For Central Asia, 2005 marked a year of change. Developments in the region were essentially characterised by the revolution in Kyrgyzstan in the wake of defective parliamentary elections in February and March and the bloody quashing of the uprising in the city of Andijan in eastern Uzbekistan in May. These events resulted in a deterioration of the political climate in the countries affected and generally Russia and China were seen to have further consolidated their economic and political influence in the region. Both Russia and China are endeavouring to increase their influence in the region through the SCO.

The relevance of the EU’s Central Asia policy has increased on account of both the new EU members’ close relations with Central Asia and the generally increased strategic interest in the region. 2005 was characterised by an intensification of trade and investment relations, increased cooperation in
areas such as water, energy and the environment, an intensification of the political dialogue and efforts to promote democracy and human rights. The second EU-Central Asia Regional Political Dialogue was held in Brussels on 30 June; following preparation in the corresponding Cooperation Committees, Cooperation Councils were held with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The EU Border Management Programme for Central Asia (BOMCA), coordinated by Austria, and the Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP) were continued. The appointment of Jan Kubis as the EU’s special envoy to Central Asia is an expression of the importance the EU attaches to the region.

In Kazakhstan, incumbent President Nursultan Nasarbajew was re-elected in the presidential elections on 4 December. The election observation mission of the OSCE’s Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) reported further progress, even though the election still failed to live up to international standards in some respects. In a statement on the elections the EU above all expressed its regret at the way in which the opposition had been impaired during the election campaign, as well as at manipulation in the counting of the votes.

A political coup occurred in Kyrgyzstan in the wake of the parliamentary elections in February and March. Following protest against manipulation during the elections, former President Askar Akayev left the country and was removed from office. The presidential elections in July returned Kurmanbek Bakiev as the new President, who has since headed the country together with Prime Minister Felix Kulov. The EU issued a number of statements on the developments in Kyrgyzstan, emphasising the need for a peaceful development of the country and compliance with human rights and democratic principles and expressing its continued readiness to support Kyrgyzstan in its reform process. In addition, the EU issued a goodwill statement welcoming Kyrgyzstan’s decision to prolong its moratorium on the death penalty and its attitude with regard to the admission of Uzbek refugees after the events in Andijan.

Tajikistan held parliamentary elections concurrently with Kyrgyzstan. The elections failed to comply with international standards in many areas. On this occasion and with a view to the presidential elections scheduled for the autumn of 2006, the EU issued several statements calling on Tajikistan to uphold freedom of opinion and the media and reiterating its readiness to support the country on its reform path.

In a statement the EU expressly welcomed Turkmenistan’s decision to grant 16,000 Tajik civil war refugees Turkmen citizenship and permanent residency rights. Some advance was achieved in the issue of religious freedom, although further progress in the area of human rights is still required. This and the EU’s
call on Turkmenistan to fully implement its OSCE commitments were the subjects of an EU statement within the framework of the OSCE on 19 May. A EU-Turkmenistan human rights dialogue was conducted on the sidelines of the Cooperation Committee meeting.

In the city of Andijan in eastern Uzbekistan a prison revolt triggered by the population's frustration over the country's social and economic problems and which may also have had some Islamic background got out of control and was bloodily quashed, leaving hundreds of people dead. The EU called for an international inquiry into the events, though such an inquiry has so far been rejected by Uzbekistan. In the Council Conclusions of 3 October, the EU resolved to implement a number of restrictions aimed at those individuals directly responsible for the events in Andijan. In numerous statements the EU expressed concern at the events in Andijan, the conduct of the court hearings in connection with these events and the fate of a number of human rights activists and representatives of political movements (see also Chapters B.I.1.2., B.II.2.6. and H.III.2.). Two Austrians were employed at the representation of the EU Commission in Almaty and three at the OSCE missions in Almaty and Bishkek. The UN Election Observation Mission was headed by an Austrian.

10.1.3. Afghanistan

In Afghanistan the difficult process of political and economic reconstruction was continued. The parliamentary and provincial elections on 18 September marked a further important step towards democracy and stability, and the new parliament held its constitutive meeting on 19 December. Structural and security problems continued to impair the further reconstruction and stabilisation process. Efforts therefore continued to focus on strengthening state institutions. Work on building up the Afghan army, police and judiciary continued.

Austria extended its participation in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. In August, Austria dispatched an additional infantry contingent of 93 soldiers to the north of Afghanistan (Kunduz) to support the parliamentary and provincial elections. Operations were successfully concluded by the end of October. Austria further contributed to various projects for reconstruction in Afghanistan, both at the bilateral level and within the framework of the EU.

The EU continued to be one of Afghanistan’s main partners in the reconstruction process. On 16 November the EU and Afghanistan signed a Joint Declaration reconfirming their partnership and defining the focal areas of future cooperation.
10.1.4. South and South-East Asia

In South Asia, the improved political climate between India and Pakistan and the economic upturn in India remained the determining factors. In South-East Asia, the integration process within ASEAN was further enhanced by the plans for the creation of an East Asian community. This development reflected the increasing economic integration within ASEAN, but also between ASEAN and China, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

**India** and **Pakistan** continued the composite dialogue resumed in early 2004. Several bilateral rounds of talks resulted in an agreement on further confidence-building measures. The EU welcomed this positive development and encouraged the two states to continue the rapprochement process and their efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Kashmir issue. As with China, the EU also maintains a Strategic Partnership with India. The Joint Action Plan agreed on at the summit in September seeks to enhance the implementation of this partnership. On 8 October a devastating earthquake struck South Asia, killing more than 70,000 people. Austria actively participated in the international rescue and relief operations both at the bilateral level and within the framework of the EU and sent a water treatment team of the Federal Armed Forces to Muzaffarabad.

The political situation in **Nepal** remained unstable. The armed conflict between the government and “Maoist” insurgents, which has claimed about 10,000 lives since 1996, continued. On 1 February King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev dissolved the government, took over government affairs and declared a state of emergency. The EU sharply criticised these measures and the curtailment of fundamental rights and called on King Gyanendra to restore multi-party democracy and resume the dialogue.

The ceasefire agreement concluded in February 2002 between the government of **Sri Lanka** and the “Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam” (LTTE) was largely observed, but there was no progress in the peace talks. The peace process was hampered by political assassinations including that of Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar on 12 August, which the EU sharply condemned. The EU consistently supported international efforts to get the deadlocked peace talks restarted. Austria continued its policy of supporting the peace process with seminars and meetings on methods of conflict management (working meeting in Stadtschlaining at the end of March). Former Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse was elected as the new President in the presidential elections on 17 November. Following his narrow victory in the elections Rajapakse declared his intention to continue the peace process, but also advocated a revision of the 2002 ceasefire agreement. Sri Lanka had to cope with the consequences of the tsunami disaster on 26 December 2004. Austria concentrated the largest part of its tsunami aid on Sri Lanka.
In Indonesia international mediation helped to reach a political agreement between the government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) in the conflict over Aceh Province. On 15 August a Memorandum of Understanding was signed, which among other things provided for the handing over of arms by the GAM, the partial withdrawal of Indonesian security forces as well as far-reaching regional autonomy for Aceh. At the invitation of the parties to the conflict, the EU and ASEAN dispatched a civilian monitoring mission in early September, in which Austria, among others, participated.

For the submarine earthquake disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa see Chapter D.

Despite international pressure, the government of Myanmar was not prepared to make concessions in the field of human rights and democratisation. There was still no sign of a credible process of national reconciliation and democratisation. The house arrest of opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi was again extended in November; numerous other opposition politicians were also held in custody. The National Convention, convened by the government in July 2004, was continued in December. Its main task is to work out a new constitution in line with the government’s roadmap to democracy, which is then to be put to a referendum followed by elections. However, the National Convention failed to meet the requirements of a transparent, fair and open discussion process. Urgent appeals by the EU to release Aung San Suu Kyi and guarantee a free and fair conduct of the National Convention remained unheard. The EU sanctions imposed on Myanmar in 1996 and tightened in several steps since remained in effect. As the EU sanctions are intended to affect the military regime and not the population, the EU continued its humanitarian support measures aimed at combating poverty and supporting civil society in Myanmar.

10.2. Regional Organisations

The volume of goods and services traded between the ten ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) has doubled over the past ten years, reaching a value of about 100 billion euros. The long-term objective of ASEAN is the creation of an Asian Community resting on three pillars (the Asian Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community) by 2020.

10.3. The EU-Asia Partnership

The Europe-Asia Dialogue established in 1996 within the framework of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is a partnership process between the EU and
Asian countries which pursues political, economic, social and cultural objectives. Regular expert meetings are held at the senior officials and ministerial levels and the heads of state and government convene every two years. In May an ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting was held in Kyoto. The EU and ASEAN maintain a regular formalised dialogue at the foreign ministers level, held at intervals of two years since 1978. The cooperation between the EU and ASEAN was institutionalised back in 1980 with the conclusion of a cooperation agreement to promote trade, economic growth and development. A meeting of EU and ASEAN foreign ministers was held in Jakarta in March.

11. **Australia, New Zealand, Oceania**

11.1. **Australia**

Australia is not only a significant export market but also a major partner for dialogue for the EU in the regional fora of Asia and the Pacific. The EU is Australia’s most important foreign trading partner and its largest foreign investor. As regards foreign policy, the fight against international terrorism is one of Prime Minister John Howard’s priorities. Together with New Zealand, Australia also plays the role of a regional stabiliser in the Oceania region.

11.2. **New Zealand**

The EU shares with New Zealand the declared belief in and commitment to effective multilateralism and to the role of the UN, human rights protection and a sustainable environmental policy. The European Union is New Zealand’s second-largest trading partner after Australia. New Zealand’s economy continued its positive trend and was among the most stable and dynamic in the OECD area. The country’s foreign policy priorities are regional security, human rights, environmental protection and the liberalisation of trade.

11.3. **Oceania**

Austria established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Nauru and the Solomon Islands.

Relations between the EU and the majority of the countries in the Oceania region are based on the ACP-EU Partnership, whose legal foundation is the Cotonou ACP-EU Partnership Agreement. This partnership’s most important financial and technical instruments are the European Development Fund (EDF) and the different forms of funding provided by the EIB, such as nonrepayable grants and risk capital loans. The 78 ACP Member States which are party to the Cotonou Agreement in the Pacific region include Fiji, Kiribati,
the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
B. Austria in Other European Fora

I. European Security Policy

1. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace

1.1. Developments within NATO

The mission in Afghanistan (ISAF) is of central importance to the Alliance. The territory covered by ISAF and its Provincial Reconstruction Teams was expanded to the west of the country, and towards the end of 2005 the Alliance also started preparations for ISAF’s expansion into Afghanistan’s southern and eastern provinces. By the end of the year, ISAF comprised more than 9,000 troops. In Kosovo, the NATO-led operation (KFOR) in the framework of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) at a total strength of some 16,000 soldiers remains indispensable for stabilisation in the region. In the wake of lessons learned from the unrest in Kosovo in March 2004, it was decided to reorganise KFOR in a more flexible task-force structure. In Iraq, NATO continued its training mission (NATO Training Mission in Iraq) in and outside the country. In the Mediterranean the Alliance carried on its operation to combat terrorism and monitor shipping under the Operation Active Endeavour. Like the EU, NATO further supported the AU mission in the Darfur region of Sudan (AMIS II), especially by providing transport capacities. NATO was also active in the field of disaster relief and, in particular, performed air-transport assistance in the United States (Hurricane Katrina) and after the earthquake in Pakistan in November.

1.2. NATO-Partner Relations

The PfP’s focus on Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus, which was agreed upon at the 2004 NATO Summit Meeting in Istanbul, was continued. In this context, however, the violent suppression of demonstrations in Andijan (Uzbekistan) constituted a setback (see Chapters A.IV.10.1.2., B.II.2.6. and H.III.2.). Uzbekistan largely refused to hold a dialogue on this matter with NATO and under the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). NATO’s activities also focussed on intensifying cooperation with the states of the Middle East in the framework of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, such as Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. Upon Ukraine’s expressed desire to join NATO soon, the NATO-Ukraine Commission launched an Intensified Dialogue in April. NATO and the EAPC further continue endeavours in order to make a contribution to ensure stability in South East Europe, especially by promoting programmes for the reform of armed forces.
1.3. Austria and the Partnership for Peace

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Austria’s participation in the PfP, a symposium of high-level speakers was held in the Austrian parliament on 14 March. The event was organised by the Austrian Institute for European Security Policy (AIES) together with the Embassy of Slovenia in its capacity as NATO contact embassy in Austria.

Austria maintained its strong commitment within KFOR and has deployed up to 600 soldiers, the largest contingent from a NATO Partner country in Kosovo. Austria also had up to ten staff officers in ISAF and dispatched another contingent of nearly 100 personnel to the region around Kunduz to secure the parliamentary elections from the beginning of August until the end of October.

Austria continued its support for PfP Trust Fund Projects and has assumed the lead role, together with Canada, in a project for the destruction of anti-personnel landmine stockpiles (more than 1.3 million) in Serbia and Montenegro. Austria was the first Partner country to take on this lead role and paid 250,000 euros of the project costs. Furthermore, Austria made a 30,000-euro contribution to a Trust Fund Project dedicated to the destruction of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and surplus ammunition in Ukraine.

Jointly with Great Britain and supported by the AIES, Austria organised a NATO/PfP symposium on the topic of “Organised Crime and Drug Trafficking: A Challenge to the Security of Central Asia” in Vienna on 23 November.

Against the backdrop of the events in Andijan, Austria prepared a Food for Thought Paper in cooperation with Finland, Ireland, Sweden and Switzerland to emphasise that failure to comply with fundamental human rights values also casts doubts on practical security policy cooperation under the EAPC and the PfP. The presentation of this document to all NATO and EAPC countries marked an important contribution to intensifying the debate about the role of common values in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership.

On 3 November NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer paid a visit to Austria and met with Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel and Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik. At the EAPC Foreign Ministers Meeting in Brussels on 8 December, Austria was represented by State Secretary Hans Winkler.
2. The Western European Union

Pursuant to the resolutions adopted by the European Council in Helsinki (1999) on the development of a common European Security and Defence Policy within the framework of the EU, the mandate of the Western European Union (WEU) was reduced to a few residual responsibilities from 1 July 2001 on. The WEU’s founding treaty with its obligation to provide military assistance remains legally valid, as does the status of the WEU observer countries, including Austria. The WEU’s remaining functions include parliamentary collaboration within the WEU Assembly, to which Austria also sends representatives. As regards armaments cooperation at WEU level, the Western European Armament Group (WEAG), in which Austria had participated since 2000, was dissolved in May because its tasks will largely be performed by the EDA that was established within the EU.

II. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

1. Introduction

The Slovenian OSCE Chairmanship succeeded in negotiating some important fundamental decisions, including the nomination of a new OSCE Secretary General, Marc Perrin de Brichambaut (France), an agreement on the controversial issue of the scales of contributions by the participating States, as well as a stage decision in the OSCE reform process during the 13th OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Ljubljana on 5 and 6 December. Austria was represented by Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik. A total of 23 decisions were adopted during this Ministerial Council Meeting, providing an important impulse for the core areas of the OSCE. As to regional conflicts, the Meeting in Ljubljana adopted declarations on the conflicts in Southern Caucasus, yet there was no consensus for a declaration on Kosovo and on Moldova.

2. Regional Issues and Field Activities

The OSCE maintains 18 field operations, all in South East Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), to which the largest portion of the OSCE budget (75 per cent) and human resources are devoted. Austria seconded 29 civilian experts to over half of these field operations, the vast majority being active in South East Europe.
2.1. **South East Europe**

The OSCE continues to maintain its largest field operations in South East Europe, with missions in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and in Kosovo. The field operations of the OSCE still represent an important contribution to the **creation of democratic and rule-of-law structures** and the development and consolidation of **multiethnic societies** in South East Europe. In some areas, the role of the OSCE has shifted toward increased monitoring and consulting of the local administrative and political structures. In cooperation with the EU and other international players, the OSCE performs several functions that are indispensable for the rapprochement of these countries to the Euro-Atlantic structures.

2.2. **Moldova/Transnistria**

The resumption of status negotiations between Tiraspol and Chișișinau in October was seen as a partial success. The new impulses that were expected from these negotiations, however, largely failed to materialize. After three rounds of negotiations in the extended format, no consensus was achieved on the central issues, above all the reduction of Russian troops and weapon stocks in Transnistria. Due to the lack of consensus, it was not possible to accomplish a regional declaration on Moldova at the OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Ljubljana.

The establishment of an EU border mission for Moldova/Ukraine is an example for cooperation between the EU and the OSCE (see chapter A.IV.1.2.1.).

2.3. **Belarus**

The activities of the **OSCE Office in Minsk** focus on project management in the areas of business and environment, the development of democratic institutions, the rule of law, and civil society. The office, however, also assumes a monitoring function for compliance with the commitments undertaken within the OSCE (e.g. in connection with demonstrations and imprisonment).

A series of repressive measures against civil society and the media were observed in 2005, such as those directed against the Belarus Helsinki Committee or one of the last independent daily newspapers "Narodnaja Wolja".
2.4. Georgia

The OSCE Mission to Georgia, the largest OSCE field operation outside South East Europe, is involved in the political solution to the conflicts in the two separatist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The OSCE took over the monitoring of the peacekeeping operation installed in the region and dispatched additional observers.

The border monitoring operation at the Chechen-Georgian border segment with Russia, set up during the Austrian Chairmanship and subsequently extended to include Ingushetia and Dagestan, was terminated in 2004 upon the request of Russia and was replaced by a training mission for Georgian border guards in late April.

2.5. Ukraine

In close collaboration with the authorities and civil society in Ukraine, the mission conducts projects to promote the economy, to combat trafficking in persons, to coordinate funds provided by donor states, and to foster the democratisation of civil society.

The role of the OSCE election observers during the 2004 presidential elections significantly contributed to last year’s peaceful change of government in the Ukraine. Meanwhile, the implementation of the relevant OIDHR recommendations for the improvement of the election process has also been largely completed in view of the parliamentary elections scheduled to take place in 2006.

2.6. Central Asia

The elections in Kyrgyzstan, which were monitored by the ODIHR with the participation of Austrian observers, brought a change of government from President Askar Akayev to Kurmanbek Bakiyev; the new head of government is Felix Kulow. The OSCE played an intensive role as a mediator during the peaceful change of government. A constitutional reform is scheduled for 2006, which will give an indication of the future form of government.

In Uzbekistan, the unrest in Andijan in May resulted in a wave of approximately 600 refugees who first fled to Kyrgyzstan and then moved to various Western countries. The eyewitness report prepared by the ODIHR with Uzbek refugees delivers a picture of the bloody events. The trials against persons who participated in the events will be partially monitored by the ODIHR (see Chapter A.IV.10.1.2., B.I.1.2. and H.III.2.).
Kazakhstan announced its candidacy for the OSCE 2009 Chairmanship. The decision on the Chairmanship will not be taken until the end of 2006. Austria seconded election observers to the presidential elections held in Kazakhstan in December.

3. **The OSCE Human Dimension**

The human dimension, which is concerned with ensuring respect for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, is one of the core components of the OSCE’s activities and one of its most important comparative strengths.

The **ODIHR** (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) is the operative institution within the OSCE responsible for the human dimension. One of its main tasks is to assist with the conduct of **democratic elections** through technical support in the drafting and implementation of election law regulations and through election monitoring missions. The ODIHR monitored the elections in eight OSCE States: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, and Tajikistan. In the field of **democratisation**, capacity-building projects and consultation on issues such as the rule of law, civil society, equal treatment, trafficking in persons, freedom of travel and migration, as well as anti-terrorism are carried out in a number of states. The Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues established within the ODIHR focuses on Roma in public life and conflict prevention in various everyday areas. One of the ODIHR’s major tasks is monitoring compliance with **human rights** by participating states. The honouring of commitments in the entire human dimension was discussed at the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw on 19 to 30 September, while the three "Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings" were dedicated to specific topics: "Challenges of Election Technologies and Procedures" (21 and 22 April, Vienna) "Human Rights and Counterterrorism", (14 and 15 July, Vienna), and "Importance of the Defence Bar in Ensuring Fair Trials" (3 and 4 November, Tbilisi). The annual seminar on the humanitarian dimension dealt with the issue of "Migration and Integration" (11 to 13 May, Warsaw).

A large conference on anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance took place on 8 and 9 June in Cordoba (Spain) in connection with the topic of **tolerance issues** (combating anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination). Three Personal Representatives are charged with ensuring that the OSCE’s work on various aspects of tolerance is actually implemented.

The Austrian Helga Konrad was the Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on combating trafficking in persons. In connection with her coordinating activities, she cooperated closely with the Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit (ATAU) of the OSCE Secretariat. Rolf Ekeus has been the High Commissioner for National Minorities since 2001, and he is assigned with the
early detection and search for solution to ethnic tensions that could threaten peace, stability, or good relations between OSCE participating States. Professor Miklós Haraszti has been the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media since 2004. The aim of this institution is to promote standards and commitments with respect to the freedom of the media, since limitations of this freedom may be seen as the first indication of a potential source of political conflict. With respect to reporting its main focus was on obstructions to the work of journalists and newspaper publishers, the role of the media during election campaigns and media concentration, as well as the decriminalisation of libel by journalists.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, with its headquarters in Copenhagen and, since 2002, a liaison office in Vienna, is made up of more than 300 parliamentarians from the 55 participating States. The main session was held from 1 to 5 July in Washington D.C. (USA). At this meeting, the Chairman-in-Office Alcee Hastings was re-elected for another year in office, and Wolfgang Großruck, Member of the Austrian Parliament (National Council), was appointed Rapporteur of the Political Committee.

4. The OSCE Politico-Military Dimension

The Forum for Security Cooperation, the standard-setting body for politico-military issues, coordinated three decisions for the Ministerial Council Meeting in Ljubljana on 5 and 6 December: first, the holding of a military doctrine seminar on 14 and 15 February 2006, which is expected to provide new impulses for the OSCE’s security work, second, the decision proposed by Austria to support the effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on the Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and third, the promotion of further efforts to implement the OSCE documents on SALW and stockpiles of conventional ammunition. The aim of securing or destroying these stockpiles is to eliminate the threat posed to thousands of people by explosion, environmental poisoning ("Melange" missile fuel), or their use for terrorist purposes. A number of countries asked for assistance.

In the area of confidence-building and security-building measures, agreement was reached over the obligation to report the annual most important military exercise. In practice, however, no reports of large military exercises were made in accordance with the 1999 Vienna Document, since the exercises regularly fell short of the agreed threshold values.

The weekly security dialog is an institution of the Forum for Security Cooperation for the discussion of current security and military policy topics. The annual meeting for the assessment of compliance with the 17
commitments for reporting on the implementation of agreed confidence building and security measures (AIAM) took place for the 14th time on 8 and 9 March. Despite further improvement of compliance with the commitments, numerous improvement proposals pointed out the need for reform. The Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC), which serves to examine the OSCE’s security work, took place on 21 and 22 June. Several suggestions were submitted on the topics of preventing and combating terrorism, border security management, strategic aspects of comprehensive security, and further development of politico-military aspects.

**Combating terrorism** is a permanent focus of the OSCE. Apart from the responsible working group, there is also a Secretariat - Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) and an internal network for the exchange of confidential information. The OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Ljubljana adopted decisions on fighting against illicit drugs, strengthening legal cooperation to combat terrorism, and enhancing container security, which aim above all at strengthening cooperation with international organizations.

The adapted Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe, the ratification of which still depends on the fulfilment of the so-called "Istanbul Commitments" (withdrawal of Russian military equipment and troops from Moldova and Georgia) has not yet entered into force.

The Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre (RACVIAC), headquartered in Croatia, which is instrumental in confidence-building in South East Europe, is linked with the OSCE through the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

The Treaty on Open Skies, which is closely related to the OSCE, represents an important instrument of military transparency, confidence-building, and security. A total of 100 observation flights were carried out in 2005.

5. **The OSCE's Economic and Environmental Dimension**

The OSCE’s Economic and Environmental Dimension focuses on the three main topics of migration, new demographic trends, and integration of members of national minorities. In cooperation with relevant special organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Centre for Migration Policies Development (ICMPD) as well as with the support of the Office of the OSCE Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities, the Slovenian Chairmanship organised three preparation seminars in Almaty, Kiev, and Trieste, during which renowned experts prepared guidelines for the Economic Forum that took place in Prague from 23 to 27 May. While the submitted proposal for a declaration of principle...
on the integration of members of national minorities was not accepted, the Ministerial Council Meeting in Ljubljana unanimously decided to continue the debate on migration issues in all three dimensions.

Belgium, the country holding the Chairmanship, proposed that the Vienna Economic Forum scheduled for 23 and 24 January 2006 should focus on the importance of traffic infrastructure and networks for regional cooperation and stability. The first seminar on the preparation of the Economic Forum took place at the invitation of the Tadzhik Government in November in Dushanbe and was devoted to the problems of transport axes and infrastructure in Central Asia and in Southern Caucasus.

The Office of the OSCE Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities, which has been chaired by the Belgian Bernard Snoy since July, initiated numerous activities in priority areas of conflict prevention and cooperation for maintaining stability in the OSCE area: fight against money laundering, terrorism financing, trafficking in persons, corruption and organised crime, threats by environmental emergencies, and promotion of SMEs.

6. Reform issues

At the OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Ljubljana, all participating States adopted a decision to strengthen the efficiency of the OSCE by agreeing on a roadmap for reform negotiations with the following topics: strengthening the role of the Secretary General, possible acquisition of a legal personality by the OSCE, development of statutes, enhancement of the OSCE’s conflict resolution function, general budget, strengthening of field operations, creation of three new committees, review of the distribution of funds to program activities, personnel management, and cooperation with other international organizations. The ODIHR was assigned to examine the fulfilment of the commitments in the human dimension of the OSCE in cooperation with the participating States, including elections, and to report to the Ministerial Council in 2006. The aim of the report is to develop new commitments, propose new activities in the area of elections, and to outline possibilities for improving support.

7. Institutional Issues and Headquarters

The failure to reach an agreement on new scales of contribution and on the general budget plan for 2005 led to a severe financial crisis in the OSCE, which was bridged with a provisional solution in May. The final adoption of the
distribution basis for the general budget plan in early November paved the way for a timely decision on the 2006 budget.

The reconstruction work for the new permanent OECD headquarters in the centre of Vienna continued, and is scheduled to be completed in 2007.

III. Council of Europe

1. Political Developments

The Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Council of Europe held in Warsaw on 16 and 17 May was at the centre of political events. The Summit adopted the Warsaw Declaration and an Action Plan laying down the following tasks: focussing the activities of the Council of Europe on its core tasks i.e. human rights, rule of law and democracy; consolidating its human rights protection system; promoting democracy and good governance; fostering intercultural and inter-faith dialogue; strengthening the security of European citizens and intensifying cooperation with other European organisations.

The Action Plan lists specific measures for implementing the objectives of the Warsaw Declaration: establishing a committee of wise men who should prepare proposals to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR); establishing a Forum for the Future of Democracy to provide momentum for the further development of democracy in the Member States of the Council of Europe; conducting a pan-European campaign to combat violence against women, especially domestic violence; appointing a high-level task force to review the Council of Europe strategy to promote social cohesion in the 21st century; launching a pan-European programme of action to eradicate violence against children, which also addresses social, legal, health and educational dimensions of the various forms of violence against children; launching a Europe-wide youth campaign for diversity, human rights and participation in society; nominating a coordinator for intercultural dialogue and drafting a memorandum of understanding between the Council of Europe and the European Union to further develop cooperation.

The Austrian delegation to the Warsaw Summit was headed by Federal President Heinz Fischer. In his speech, he underlined the importance of the Council of Europe in safeguarding human rights and establishing the rule of law and stressed the role the Council of Europe plays as the social conscience of Europe. Furthermore, three new conventions that were drafted by the Council of Europe were presented for signing at the Summit: the Conventions
on the prevention of terrorism, trafficking in persons and money laundering. Austria was among the first Member States to sign these Conventions at the Summit in Warsaw.

2. **Relationship with other International Organisations**

At the Warsaw Summit, the preparation of a *Memorandum of Understanding* between the Council of Europe and the EU was adopted to establish a new framework for mutual relations. The EU had prepared a draft and on 21 December handed it over to the Romanian Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, who will head future negotiations to be conducted on the memorandum by the 46 Member States of the Council of Europe. Luxembourg’s Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker was tasked by the participants *ad personam* to submit a report on the future relationship between the Council of Europe and the EU to be integrated into the memorandum.

The existing close cooperation between the **Council of Europe and the EU** was intensified. There is a regular exchange of information on current activities and projects between the public officials of the Council of Europe Secretariat and the European Commission. The Council of Europe maintains a permanent office in Brussels. Representatives of the European Commission attend meetings held by the Committee of Ministers, the Ministers’ Deputies and the Rapporteur Groups. Special emphasis is placed on the jointly prepared and co-financed programmes for Central and Eastern European countries, which facilitate support for the legal system, the rule of law and democracy. The quadripartite meeting at the highest political level is usually held biannually and attended by the Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the President of the European Commission. The meeting held on 16 March dealt with the preparations for the Warsaw Summit and the results which were to be expected; the EU’s accession to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECPHR); the planned Fundamental Rights Agency of the EU; ENP; joint programmes of the Council of Europe with the European Commission and the situation in Moldova and the Southern Caucasus.

Cooperation between the **Council of Europe and the OSCE** takes place within the institutional context of the 2+2 and 3+3 meetings (of the Chairpersons, the Secretaries General and as necessary the Presidents of the Parliamentary Assemblies of both organisations). They are held annually; the 2+2 meeting took place on 23 February and the 3+3 meeting on 8 July. In addition, public officials hold regular working meetings. A first ever joint meeting between the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the Permanent Council of the OSCE took place in Strasbourg on 18 April. At this meeting, it was
decided to strengthen cooperation between the organisations, especially in the fight against terrorism and trafficking in persons, the protection of national minorities and the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination. In addition to ways of strengthening cooperation, the agenda of the 3+3 meeting in July included topics relating to Roma and Sinti issues, the integration of migrants, South East Europe, the Caucasus, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. As regards election observation, the Council of Europe already cooperates very closely with the ODIHR.

Regular contact is also maintained between the Council of Europe and the UN. On 18 February, a high-level tripartite meeting, prepared by the Council of Europe Secretariat and the OSCE was held between the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the UN in Strasbourg. The discussions focused on cooperation in encouraging the rule of law and freedom of expression. Cooperation with the UN has been very close and is constantly being intensified, especially in the area of combating international terrorism. The Council of Europe’s Guidelines on human rights and the fight against terrorism have proved to be of great interest to the UN.

3. Human Rights

See Chapter H.V.

4. Monitoring

Monitoring of the respect of commitments, accepted by Member States to the Council of Europe upon their accession, in the fields of human rights, pluralist democracy and the freedom of expression and information is one of the most important instruments of the organisation. Monitoring by the Parliamentary Assembly is distinct from that of the Committee of Ministers.

The Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly dealt with ten states – Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Monaco, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Ukraine – and made fact-finding visits. The Committee further prepares country reports and recommendations on a biennial basis, which are adopted by the plenary of the Parliamentary Assembly.

There are three different types of Monitoring by the Committee of Ministers: the monitoring on the basis of the 1994 Declaration on Compliance with Commitments accepted by Member States; thematic monitoring, which has been carried out since 1996 and examined the freedom of association in
Member States in 2005, and the specific post-accession ad hoc monitoring (monitoring of new Member States), which dealt with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Serbia and Montenegro. The latter is a confidential process extending over a longer period of time. In the case of Armenia and Azerbaijan this is done by a monitoring group set up specifically for the purpose, the AGO group, which is named after its initiator, Italy’s former permanent representative to the Council of Europe, Piero Ercole Ago, and of which Austria is a member. This monitoring group visited both countries and discussed the implementation of their membership commitments with leading representatives of state, parliamentarians, representatives of the media and NGOs. The fulfilment of Georgia’s commitments is being monitored by the Committee of Ministers. The Secretariat issues quarterly reports on Bosnia and Herzegovina and on Serbia and Montenegro to the Committee of Ministers, and half-yearly reports in the case of Georgia.

In the framework of “stock-taking”, Moldova is also subject to de facto monitoring. In addition, the offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and other outposts outside Strasbourg – Baku, Belgrade, Yerevan, Chi•in•u, Podgorica, Pristina, Sarajevo and Tbilisi as well as Tirana and Skopje – report on the developments in the respective countries on a nearly monthly basis.

5. Assistance Programmes

The Council of Europe strives to implement its priorities in the framework of assistance programmes. These concentrate on the promotion of human rights, the fostering of pluralist democracy and the rule of law; promotion of the awareness of a common cultural identity in all its diversity; strengthening civil society; the support of education and youth; the search for solutions to Europe’s social problems, such as discrimination of minorities, xenophobia, intolerance, environmental pollution, human cloning, HIV/AIDS, drugs and organised crime and the consolidation of democratic stability in Europe through the promotion of political, legislative and constitutional reforms. The assistance programmes to meet these objectives mainly concentrated on South East Europe, the Caucasus and Russia. In the field of these programmatic activities a total of some 13 million euros was made available to support activities and programmes for collaboration with 24 Member States and other countries (such as Belarus). More than 4 million euros went to multilateral activities.

The wide range of assistance programmes can be seen from the variety of support granted by the Council of Europe: in the core areas, the protection of human rights and the promotion of democracy, these also include the further
development of intercultural dialogue, the support of the Roma and the fostering of social cohesion, in addition to reforms of the judiciary and administration. The concrete activities consisted primarily of providing experts and organising training schemes. The programmes also served to fund the Council of Europe’s information offices and offices on site. Within the framework of Joint Programmes with the EU, the Council of Europe implemented programmes for the protection of human rights and the strengthening of the rule of law and democratisation in Russia and in the Southern Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia).

6. Organs of the Council of Europe

6.1. The Committee of Ministers

The Committee of Ministers is the decision-making body of the Council of Europe, consisting of the Foreign Ministers of the 46 Member States and their deputies (Ministers’ Deputies). The chair is rotated on a biannual basis.

Since the reform of 2004, the Committee of Ministers has met at ministerial level only once a year. The 115th Session was held on 17 November in Strasbourg and chaired by Portugal’s Foreign Minister. Austria was represented by State Secretary Hans Winkler. The main topics on the agenda were implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Warsaw Summit, the reform of the ECHR and the continuation of the Forum for the Future of Democracy. The Ministers’ Deputies normally meet four times a month.

6.2. Parliamentary Assembly

The Parliamentary Assembly has 630 members (315 representatives and 315 substitutes) from national parliaments. They have amalgamated into five parliamentary groups: the Socialist Group (SOC), the Group of the European People’s Party (EPP/CD), the Group of Liberals, Democrats and Reformers (LDR), the European Democrat Group (EDG) and the Group of the Unified European Left (UEL). There are 26 members who do not belong to any group. Austria is represented by six members and six substitutes, who are appointed by the National Council and the Federal Council (see Annex VII.6.). The members also form “national delegations”. The Austrian delegation is headed by Member of Parliament Michael Spindelegger. Member of Parliament Prof. Peter Schieder held the office of President of the Parliamentary Assembly up to January 2005.

The Parliamentary Assembly meets four times a year in plenary session and periodically in its committees and subcommittees. The Parliamentary Assembly and its Standing Committee issue resolutions, recommendations,
opinions and guidelines to the Committee of Ministers, national governments, parliaments and political parties. The Parliamentary Assembly also performs monitoring tasks, such as election observation in Council of Europe Member States and candidate countries and the monitoring of the development of individual countries’ compliance with the commitments and obligations they undertook on joining the Council of Europe.

6.3. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) was founded in 1957 as the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe and was established as a consultative body of the Council of Europe in 1994. It consists of a Chamber of Local Authorities and a Chamber of Regions and its 315 members meet once a year in a plenary session in Strasbourg. The Congress formulates important recommendations to the Committee of Ministers in the areas of urban and municipal democracy, environmental protection, disaster protection and social cohesion. These issues are further pursued in Austria by the Association of Towns and Cities and the Association of Municipalities, the Liaison Office of the Federal Provinces and the relevant ministries.

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe performs an important task, especially in the field of monitoring local and regional democracy. It also monitors the fulfilment of the commitments accepted by the Member States when joining. For South East Europe the Congress also offers projects within the Stability Pact (developing and strengthening democracy at local level). Programmes for the further development of local and regional democracy are offered for the southern Mediterranean countries.

6.4. The Secretary General

The Secretary General is elected by the Parliamentary Assembly on recommendation of the Committee of Ministers for a term of five years. He or she is entrusted with the responsibility of meeting the aim for which the Council of Europe was set up in London on 5 May 1949. The main goal is to achieve greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles representing their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress. The Secretary General sets the strategic course for the organisation’s work programme and budget and is also responsible for the Council of Europe’s Secretariat, which is made up of 16 organisational units with some 2,000 employees. Terry Davis from the United Kingdom has been the Secretary General of the Council of Europe since September 2004.
7. The Council of Europe and Austria

Austria shows a great deal of commitment to the Council of Europe’s activities and has to date been represented by three Secretaries General, two Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly and one President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. Austria is especially active in defending the right of individual petition to the ECHR, in preparing the Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, and in the fields of reinforcement of Europe’s social dimension and the further development of the Forum for the Future of Europe.

In all, the Council of Europe employs about twenty Austrians, several of them in executive positions, such as the head of the Council of Europe’s Office for Liaison with the EU in Brussels, the head of a division of the Venice Commission, the head of two of the 20 divisions of the ECHR and the head of the Council of Europe’s press unit.

IV. Central European Initiative

The Central European Initiative (CEI) primarily aims to ensure that its Central, East and South East European Member States participate in the process of European integration, to promote regional stability and development and to prevent new divisions in Europe. It comprises 17 European countries, including seven EU Member States, the two acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, and the candidate countries Croatia and Macedonia. In 2005, the CEI was presided over by Slovakia, which will hand over the Presidency to Albania in 2006.

The major event was the CEI Summit of Heads of Government in Piešťany (Slovakia) on 25 November, who in their final declaration among other things welcomed the significant progress achieved in the European integration process through enlargement, SAP and ENP. In this context, the heads of government stressed the important role played by the CEI, whose structures and networks foster university collaboration and the exchange of knowledge between the EU Member States and CEI Members lacking an immediate perspective of EU accession.

As regards Austria’s initiative for the reform of the CEI’s working groups, significant progress was made last year. The reform aims to harness synergies between the working groups. Austria also successfully promoted the maintenance of the CEI’s existing lean structures. To this end, new rules of procedure, which are based on an Austrian proposal, were adopted in November. The CEI further stepped up its capacities in the fields of science
and research and university cooperation as well as cooperation with other international organisations.

V. Neighbourhood Policy

1. Regional Partnership

The concept of the Regional Partnership with the neighbouring new EU Member States – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and “cultural neighbour” Poland – is a logical continuation of the existing close cooperation in Central Europe. Prior to the enlargement of the EU, the Regional Partnership served both to reduce potential sources of friction and to support the partner countries in their accession negotiations and adjustment to EU regulations. It was also used as an important consultation framework for the EU’s constitutional convention and the Lisbon agenda. Since enlargement, the Regional Partnership has helped to define matters of common interest and to promote them within the EU. It has thus become part of existing regional networks putting relations between EU Member States on a more sustainable basis, thereby providing clear benefits both for the partners and for the neighbouring regions in South East and Eastern Europe.

In this regard, cooperation within the Regional Partnership grew considerably in scope and depth in 2005. After developing proposals for the future of Kosovo and for the further development of the EU Action Plan for Ukraine in 2004, the partner countries made an important contribution to the concrete work on the European perspective of the countries of the Western Balkans in the framework of the Budapest Western Balkans Conference of the Regional Partnership on 10 and 11 October. In the wake of the tsunami disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa, the partners worked out joint proposals for a better coordination of national and European efforts in future emergencies, which were followed by coordination measures for intensified consular cooperation of the regional partner countries when facing such challenges (see also Chapter D.). Cooperation in different policy areas at the respective ministerial level was also stepped up, and the Ministers of the Interior of the Regional Partnership countries, who form the Salzburg Group, successfully integrated Bulgaria and Romania into their intensified security partnership.

Since the inception of this forum, the Foreign Ministers of the partner countries have been meeting on a regular basis in the countries holding the Presidency, and at intervals on the margins of the General Affairs Council in Brussels. On 10 October, the seventh meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Regional Partnership was held in the lead-up to the Partnership’s Western Balkans conference and was chaired by Hungary, which in 2005-06 also
presides over the Visegrád Group. The Regional Partnership will continue to pursue its goals pragmatically and to look for ways of cooperating in specific areas and on specific occasions with the closely related Visegrád Group. A notable feature of the Partnership is the fact that it continues to manage without any institutional and bureaucratic structures.

2. Switzerland, Liechtenstein

2.1. Switzerland

Bilateral relations are marked by a set of tightly-knit treaties and the traditionally lively exchange of visits at all levels. Switzerland’s Federal Assembly established a permanent delegation to foster relations with Austria. With a total trading volume of 6.9 billion euros, Switzerland is also one of Austria’s most important trading partners. Austria and Switzerland will jointly host the European Football Championship in 2008, for which preparations are underway. A special point of contact of Austrian and Swiss foreign policy is the commitment in the Western Balkans: in Kosovo the Swiss SWISSCOY company (216 personnel) participates within the Austrian AUCON battalion.

In the relations between Switzerland and the EU, several landmark decisions were taken: in a referendum held on 5 June, 54 per cent of votes cast were in favour of Switzerland’s joining the EU agreement on cooperation in the fields of justice, police, asylum and migration (Schengen/Dublin). On the agreement put to public referendum on 25 September, a majority of 56 per cent voted in favour of extending the free movement of persons to the ten new EU Member States. The positive outcome of both referenda created an essential basis for a successful ratification of the bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU (Bilateral Agreements II).

Following the two referenda, the Federal Council undertook a definition of Switzerland’s European policy position on 26 October. The meeting confirmed, among other things, that joining the EU is seen as a longer-term option and that the suspended application for EU membership dating from 1992 will not be withdrawn. As regards the bilateral agreements with the European partners, independence, autonomy of decision and institutional particularities should be taken into account. The Federal Council also agreed to present a report containing possible options regarding European policy on a longer-term basis in 2006.
2.2. Liechtenstein

In the parliamentary elections of 13 March, the Progressive Citizens’ Party won 48.7 per cent of votes cast or 12 seats, the Patriotic Union 39.2 per cent or ten seats, and the Free List gained 13 per cent of the vote or three seats and for the first time ever was represented in parliament. Since 21 April, the Progressive People’s Party and the Patriotic Union have formed a coalition government.

After the positive outcome of the referendum on Schengen/Dublin participation in Switzerland on 5 June, a possible association of Liechtenstein has become increasingly important. Liechtenstein intends to avoid becoming an external border to the EU. The Agreement on the taxation of interest income between Liechtenstein and the EU entered into force on 1 July.

3. South Tyrol

3.1. General

The municipal elections that were held in South Tyrol on 8 May yielded the following results: 58.8 per cent of the electorate gave their votes to the South Tyrolean People’s Party (SVP), 3.7 per cent less than five years before. Of South Tyrol’s 116 mayors’ offices, 107 are headed by SVP members. The Union for South Tyrol recorded an overall increase from 3 to 3.7 per cent. Considerably lesser gains were posted by the Liberals (up from 0.2 to 0.6 per cent). The share of votes won by civic lists rose from 6 per cent to 9 per cent. The Greens increased their share of votes from 3 per cent to 3.7 per cent. The number of municipal councillors from the centre-left camp dropped from 115 to 83. Alleanza Nazionale partially suffered serious losses. Forza Italia now has 16 municipal councillors.

The province capital, Bolzano, saw a tie-breaking ballot between the centre-right candidate, Giovanni Benussi, and the centre-left-supported mayor, Giovanni Salghetti-Drioli, which the former won by a margin of seven votes. However, as the centre-right parties supporting Benussi held only a minority of seats in the municipal council (27 to 21 in favour of centre-left), his proposed municipal government team lacked majority support and thus a provisional administration was put in charge and new elections were scheduled for 6 November. In these elections, the new centre-left candidate, Luigi Spagnolli, won 50.36 per cent of votes cast (28,986 votes), and Giovanni Benussi, who ran again supported by the centre-right camp, won 45.2 per cent (26,017 votes). In the municipal elections that were also restaged, the SVP achieved for the second time since 1952 a relative majority of votes and eleven seats in the city council (in May: nine). Alleanza Nazionale remained the
strongest Italian party, but lost one seat as compared to May (from nine to eight). Forza Italia kept its five seats. As for the other parties, deviations from the results of the elections held in May were only slight. The new mayor, Luigi Spagnolli, can rely on 27 out of 50 votes in the municipal council.

3.2. Development of Autonomy

Due to a complaint that the inter-ethnic association CONVIVIA had filed with the European Commission, Italy was at risk of an infringement procedure. It was questioned whether the obligatory declaration of membership with one of the three linguistic groups, as set out in the statute of autonomy (a declaration required of citizens in the course of census-taking), complied with EU data protection legislation. It was also questioned whether its binding effect of ten years was appropriate. Following lengthy negotiations between the South Tyrolean province government and the government in Rome, and after the Italian data protection commissioner had presented a positive expert opinion in the Commission of Six, a compromise was agreed on 26 April, which is acceptable to South Tyrol and retains the core provisions. The text was then adopted by the Council of Ministers and came into force by virtue of its publication in the Law Gazette. The government notified the European Commission of the solution.

On 16 November, the Italian Parliament adopted a constitutional reform, which provides for a profound restructuring of Italy’s institutional landscape, such as increasing the competencies of the prime minister, downsizing both the Chamber and the Senate as well as devolving additional responsibilities to the ordinary-statute regions. In the course of intensive parliamentary negotiations, it was ensured that this reform would not impair the autonomy of South Tyrol. Nevertheless, the opposition announced its plans to apply for holding a referendum against the coming into force of the reform.

4. Nuclear Safety

Safety, especially of nuclear power plants near borders, is an issue of the highest priority for the federal government.

After the completion of the operational part of the Road Map of the Brussels Agreement between Austria and the Czech Republic concerning the Temelín nuclear power plant, a final expert report was presented in September and communicated to the Czech Republic and the European Commission on 3 October. The report highlighted the progress made to date, but also pointed to a number of open questions, which will be further discussed in greater detail in expert meetings under the Bilateral Nuclear Information Agreement in order to meet the safety targets laid down in the Brussels Agreement.
The nuclear expert meetings in the context of the bilateral nuclear information agreements with the neighbouring states for the timely exchange of information and experience on the safety of nuclear power plants, radiation protection, monitoring of radioactivity levels in the environment, nuclear contingency planning and the problem of final storage were held as planned. In particular, in the field of radiation data exchange a close cooperation could be established and the early warning systems further advanced. A timeframe for the exchange of data with Germany and Switzerland was established. Joint emergency exercises were conducted with Germany, Switzerland and Hungary. Cooperation with the neighbouring states in order to assess any radiological effects of nuclear incidents was intensified and further developed. The federal government and the Austrian representatives in the relevant expert bodies made all-out efforts to optimally represent Austria’s interests in the nuclear procedures in neighbouring countries, such as Germany, Switzerland and the Czech Republic, and to enable interested citizens to represent their interests themselves. The main objective in this context is to provide the best possible protection of the population and the environment.

5. Alpine Convention

Presided over by Austria, the 30th Meeting of the Permanent Committee was held in Villach in April. The Permanent Committee acknowledged the priorities of the Austrian presidency on this occasion. The 31st Meeting of the Permanent Committee took place in Galtür in September. As the Alps are especially affected by the climate problem, the Permanent Committee for the first time focussed particularly on the topic of “Climate change in the Alpine area – effects and challenges”. It was agreed that the ministers should work out a declaration by the 9th Alpine Conference in the autumn of 2006, which should include recommendations for action for active climate protection. The session was further used to set the course essentially with a view to elaborating the contents of topics classified as priority issues by Austria, such as the first Alpine status report and the declaration on the issue of “population and culture”.

In October, the first meeting of the Compliance Committee under the Austrian presidency took place. On the basis of national reports, the implementation of and the compliance with the obligations undertaken by the states parties to the Convention and its Protocols was evaluated for the first time. The Secretariat was commissioned to prepare working documents in the lead-up to the next meeting of the Review Committee in February 2006.
6. Cooperation in the Danube Region

6.1. Danube Cooperation Process

The Danube Cooperation Process was launched in Vienna on 27 May 2002 by the Foreign Ministers of the 13 countries of the Danube basin, the European Commission and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. It is designed to give the Danube region a broad political forum in order to intensify cooperation in the region, to orient the diverse regional activities and organisations towards regional focal points, and to contribute to the economic and political stabilisation of this – in many respects – very heterogeneous region. On the occasion of the Second Ministerial Conference in Bucharest in July 2004, the future common goals within the six dimensions – the environment, the economy, transport/navigation, tourism, culture and regional cooperation – were adopted and laid down in a substantial final document.

Under the auspices of the Danube Cooperation Process, the Danube Region Business Conference 5 was organised by the Serbian Ministry of Trade in Belgrade on 10 and 11 November. On the part of Austria, the preparations and the conduct of the conference were especially supported inter alia by the City of Vienna and the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber. The results elaborated by the working groups held at this conference will be presented to the forthcoming Ministerial Conference of the Danube Cooperation Process.

6.2. Danube Navigation

As the Sloboda motorway bridge in Novi Sad (Serbia and Montenegro) was completed in October, the pontoon bridge was removed and the free passage of ships along the entire length of the Danube restored.

In the light of the changing framework of economic and integration policy, the renewal of the Danube Commission aimed at making it a modern, international organisation is expected to prepare the ground for enhancing the Danube’s position as a competitive means of transport in a European network of inland waterways. However, the organisation – not least with respect to thematic issues like the River Information Services (RIS) – has somewhat receded into insignificance due to its failure to make personnel changes and carry out structural reform in its Secretariat. The election of the new president of the Danube Commission, Milovan Božinović (Serbia and Montenegro), at least improved the atmosphere.

No essential progress was made as regards the revision of the Belgrade Convention. The signing of a protocol amending the Convention in the framework of a diplomatic conference in Belgrade was postponed until 2006.
Since the work in the working groups on navigational issues, chaired by Romania, and on institutional and legal matters, headed by Austria, was completed in September 2004, a few questions have remained open on which individual parties have persisted in withholding their consent because of unrelated national interests. The rapid and successful completion of both the revision of the agreement and the reform of the Secretariat are of vital importance in this context, since the Danube Commission might otherwise risk losing its competence as a European river commission.
C. The Legal and Consular Dimension of Austrian Foreign Policy

I. General Legal and Consular Issues

Among the most important functions of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs are its services to Austrian nationals permanently resident in or visiting a foreign country, be it for private or for business reasons, who get into serious difficulties while abroad. This applies not only to consular assistance in individual cases but also to measures for the protection of Austrians in times of crisis or disaster. Assistance is usually provided through the local Austrian representation, with the competent authorities of the country in question being called in if necessary. If there is no Austrian diplomatic or consular representation or authority in a particular country, the local representation/permanent mission of another EU Member State is contacted in urgent cases (consular cooperation between EU Member States and the obligation to render mutual assistance to citizens of the Union pursuant to Article 20 of the EC Treaty).

1. Citizens’ Service

In cooperation with the Austrian representations abroad, the Citizens’ Service of the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs offers consular assistance worldwide to Austrian citizens who get into serious difficulties while abroad. Employees of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs can be reached around the clock on the phone number +43 50 11 50 ext. 4411 in the event of consular emergencies abroad and to obtain travel information and general details regarding visas, the procurement of documents from abroad, as well as certifications and official procedures. In peak times, up to 1,000 callers a day were registered.

The growing volume of foreign travel by Austrian citizens is also reflected by the increased use of consular support in cases of emergency abroad (2,680 cases in 2005). This includes the repatriation of accident victims, assistance in cases of death, and support of mentally unstable or sick Austrians in a foreign country or their repatriation from abroad. The financial means made available to assist Austrian nationals in emergencies or serious difficulties abroad amounted to 240,000 euros.

The travel notes on the homepage of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs www.aussenministerium.at, which serve as an objective source of information for those travelling to foreign countries, have gained broad recognition in the light of terrorist attacks and natural disasters. An average of more than 70,000
visits per month was recorded. The assessment of security conditions in particular is updated on an ongoing basis in collaboration with the Austrian representations abroad and Austria’s EU partners.

From 20 to 23 January, the Citizens’ Service participated in the Vienna International Holiday, Travel and Leisure Fair, where it familiarised interested visitors with the travel advice on the homepage of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the support facilities available via the Citizens’ Service and the Austrian representations abroad. In addition, the booklet “Tipps für Auslandsreisende” (Tips for Travellers Abroad) was distributed.

2. Crisis Prevention and Crisis Management

2.1. The National Dimension

The tsunami disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa on 26 December 2004 clearly demonstrated the increasing importance of the crisis prevention measures implemented by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the representations abroad (see Chapter D.). In order to further improve the crisis response capability of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, comprehensive further training sessions were conducted for employees trained in consular matters to enable them to work on crisis response teams, and the technical equipment was optimised by setting up mobile crisis response units.

In the wake of the terrorist attacks in Sharm-el-Sheikh and London in June and July respectively, where there were no Austrian casualties, the rapid and efficient operation of the crisis response team on site, and the publicising of the hotline offered by the Citizens’ Service for concerned relatives at home, ensured the best possible support for those affected.

After the especially strong hurricanes Katrina and Wilma, which caused severe damage in the autumn of the year, the Austrians affected were evacuated and transported safely back to Austria, assisted by employees of the responsible representations who were swiftly dispatched to the crisis regions.

In December, two Austrian hostages were successfully liberated in Yemen thanks to cooperation with the Yemeni authorities and the dispatch of Austrian diplomatic staff on site.

In all crisis situations which occurred this year, collaboration with other ministries and organisations, such as the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Ministry of Defence, the Red Cross and psychosocial services, and the dispatch of joint response teams in emergencies, have proved to be a suitable strategy for providing optimum assistance to Austrian citizens affected.
2.2. The EU Dimension

Building on the national actions, there was intensified cooperation between affected EU Member States in order to assist and support the citizens of the Union in emergency situations abroad. Information was exchanged and coordinated on an ongoing basis between the crisis centres in the capitals, the representations in the countries involved and the national crisis intervention teams on site. Joint information points were set up in airports, refugee centres and hotels, joint search teams were formed to locate EU citizens and joint evacuation measures prepared, and the authorities of the host countries were contacted in a coordinated manner.

3. Assistance in Civil and Criminal Matters

Legal assistance was provided in a total of 1,732 cases.

4. New Treaties

The Treaty between the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Poland on the amendment to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters of 20 April 1959 as amended by its Additional Protocol and the facilitation of its implementation entered into force on 1 May.


The Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Czech Republic on The Readmission of Persons Residing Illegally on their Territories (Readmission Agreement), signed in Prague on 12
The negotiations concerning the Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the Readmission of Persons Residing Illegally on their Territories (Readmission Agreement) including its Implementing Protocol and the Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the French Republic on the Readmission of Persons Residing Without Authorisation (Readmission Agreement) including its Implementing Protocol were successfully completed.

Negotiations concerning a readmission agreement and a protocol on its implementation were launched with the Republic of Macedonia.

II. Tourist and Cross-Border Traffic

1. Visas

Austrian nationals holding a regular or machine-readable passport are free to enter 101 states without a visa, including the member states of the European Economic Area (EEA) and all neighbouring states, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the USA, most Latin American countries and Brunei, Hong Kong and Macao.
The Agreement with the Republic of Slovenia on Mutual Representation by the two Countries at their Representative Offices Abroad in Issuing Airport Transit Visas, Transit Visas and Short-Term Visas was signed in Ljubljana on 28 January.

The Agreement with Serbia and Montenegro on the Abolition of Visas for Holders of Diplomatic and Official-Duty Passports was signed on 13 April and will enter into force on 1 January 2006.

The Agreement with the Republic of Malta on the representation of the Republic of Malta by Austrian consular authorities for the granting of visas for transit and short stays, signed on 7 May 2004, came into force on 1 November.

Austrian foreign missions issued 430,647 visas, which was 29,875 or 7.5 per cent more than in the previous year. The Austrian representations also processed 46,992 applications for residence permits, which represented a decline of 14.3 per cent or 7,222 applications as compared to the previous year.

2. Border Treaties

The fifth regular session of the Joint Austro-Hungarian Committee on border traffic was held in Budapest on 30 and 31 May.

The sixth regular session of the Joint Austrian-Slovenian Committee on local border traffic was held in Moravske Toplice on 21 and 22 March.


The Treaty with the Czech Republic relating to border crossings on tourist routes and border crossings in special cases and the Agreement on crossing points alongside the common state border were signed on 17 September. For the implementation of the Treaty, the Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Czech Republic on Establishing Fixed Points on Tourist Routes was signed on 9 December. The Agreement on crossing points alongside the common state border came into force on 22 December. Also on 9 December, three Implementation Agreements for the Agreement between the Republic of Austria and the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic on the Facilitation of Customs Clearance at the Frontier in Railway, Road and Ship Transport, which is still in use between the Republic of Austria and the Czech Republic, were signed.

III. Social, Labour and Health Policy

Social security agreements with Bulgaria and Romania were signed, and first expert-level talks were conducted with the Republic of Korea. There were expert talks with Australia about possible adjustments to the existing agreement. Moreover, a memorandum of understanding on bilateral cooperation between the relevant ministries in social matters was signed with Iran.

IV. Austrians Abroad

Support and services for expatriate Austrians (Austrian citizens residing permanently abroad) are among the most important functions of the Austrian embassies and consulates (general) abroad. Furthermore, the expatriate Austrians’ website at www.AuslandsoesterreicherInnen.at is an important link to the former home or native country. For Austrians living abroad, it is a first point of contact, a general service facility and a source of information, providing effective crisis (or precautionary) coordination services and assistance with the organisation or promotion of Austria-related events.

As there is no obligation to officially register one’s permanent abode abroad, the figures concerning Austrians living abroad are mostly estimates, and documented figures do not reflect the actual number of Austrians living in foreign countries. Austrian embassies and consulates (general) hold current address records for more than 375,000 expatriate Austrians, the majority of them residing in Germany (175,000), Switzerland (32,000), Australia (15,000), Argentina (10,000), the USA (20,000), the UK (15,000), Brazil (10,000) and France (7,000). The number of “Austrians at heart” (those who feel especially attached to Austria thanks to their former Austrian citizenship, ancestors or other relatives) can only be estimated and probably comprises several hundred thousand persons.
1. Organisations representing Austrians Abroad

Links with Austria are maintained for the most part through associations of Aussrians abroad and other Austria-related societies in foreign countries. There are about 450 associations in approximately 50 countries worldwide, a list of which can be found at www.AuslandsoesterreicherInnen.at.

Since 1 January 2003, the Vienna-based Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund (AÖWB), the World Confederation of Austrians Abroad, has been active as an umbrella organisation, interest group and service platform for Austrian associations and individual Austrians living abroad. The AÖWB was formed by merging the predecessor organisations, Weltbund der Österreicher im Ausland, in existence since 1952, and the Auslandsösterreicherwerk, which was founded in 1955, and includes Austrian Central Europe Round Tables and the Austrian-American Councils in North America. It took over the functions of both institutions. Since 1 July 2004 Gustav Chlestil has been the president of the AÖWB. Irmgard Helperstorfer holds the office of Secretary-General. The Confederation operates its own website (www.weltbund.at), publishes the quarterly magazine “ROT-WEISS-ROT” and also organises an annual gathering of Austrians abroad. The 2005 meeting was held in Baden near Vienna from 1 to 4 September and attended by several hundred delegates from associations of expatriate Austrians from all over the world. In 2005, the AÖWB received a subsidy of 184,300 euros from the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The Burgenländische Gemeinschaft, or Burgenland Community, is the umbrella association of all natives of Burgenland who live abroad. It aims to preserve and reinforce the ties of Burgenland-Austrians all over the world with their origins. To this end it also publishes a periodical magazine, “Die burgenländische Gemeinschaft”. The President of the Burgenländische Gemeinschaft is Walter Dujmovits.

2. Support for Austrian Citizens Abroad

Since 1967, the Fund for the Support of Austrian Citizens Abroad has been assisting Austrians living abroad who get into difficulties. Financed by subsidies from the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the nine federal provinces, it provided assistance totalling 632,600 euros to 931 needy Austrians in 59 countries in 2005. This was a slight increase over the previous year. The chairman of the board of trustees appointed by the Federal Government is former Ambassador Georg Hohenberg, the managing director is Stefan Bagyura.
In the course of its “Christmas Campaign”, which the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs organises every year for needy Austrians living abroad, donations in cash and in kind worth 64,600 euros were allocated from the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs’ funds to assist 569 needy Austrians in 61 countries.

For Austrians living abroad who are aged or severely physically or mentally ill and no longer able to care for themselves, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs arranges for repatriation and accommodation in hospitals or nursing homes if they cannot be helped by relatives or local organisations, provided their condition allows them to undertake the journey and their personal permission is obtained. In 2005, 15 Austrians were brought home from Brazil, France, Italy, Lebanon, Mexico, Paraguay, Serbia and Montenegro, Spain, the USA and Venezuela and found accommodation in Austrian care institutions.

3. Participation by Austrians Abroad in Elections in Austria and the EU

Since 1990, Austrians residing in other countries, and also those temporarily abroad on election dates, have had the right to vote in Austrian parliamentary and presidential elections and in nationwide referendums. Expatriate Austrians and non-Austrian citizens of the European Union having their main residence in Austria are also entitled to vote in elections of Austrian Members to the European Parliament. Voting is subject to registration on the register of (European) electors, which remains valid for a maximum of ten years, and voters must also apply for a voting card for every election. Details and all the necessary forms can be found on the election website www.wahlinfo-bmaa.at. In 2005, there were no elections in which expatriate Austrians were entitled to vote.

4. The e-Democracy Pilot Project “Internet Poll on Citizenship Issues among Austrians Abroad”

Within the framework of an e-democracy pilot project, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs conducted a survey among Austrians abroad on citizenship issues from 10 October to 30 November. More than 4,700 visitors from 92 countries were registered in the course of the Internet poll, and 2,300 Austrians abroad responded to the questionnaire. The large number of participants and their comprehensive commentaries, opinions, ideas and suggestions, as well as the high degree of satisfaction among the visitors far exceeded expectations.
D. The Tsunami Disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa

On 26 December, a submarine earthquake off the Indonesian island of Sumatra triggered a gigantic tidal wave (tsunami) that caused enormous devastation in some of the countries bordering the Indian Ocean. More than 225,000 people were killed, with approximately 165,000 fatalities in Indonesia, 35,000 in Sri Lanka, 16,000 in India and 8,000 in Thailand. In the coastal regions 1.6 million people lost their homes. While the consequences for the national economies of the affected countries are difficult to gauge, the damage is estimated to run to billions of euros. Foreign nationals from 50 countries were also among the victims and 86 Austrians lost their lives. By the end of the year arrangements for the repatriation of the bodies of all Austrian victims had been made.

As soon as the devastating extent of the natural disaster in South-East Asia became apparent, a crisis management team was convened in the early morning hours of 26 December 2004, under the chairmanship of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Before midday the telephone numbers of the crisis hotline at the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Federal Chancellery for calls from victims and their relatives were published in the media and on the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs’ homepage. The staffing of the round-the-clock crisis hotlines and the entry in a database of all Austrian citizens reported missing were assured by the immediate deployment of employees of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and of the Austrian Federal Army. In the first two days alone, the staff of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs dealt with approximately 30,000 calls.

Based on the data received via the crisis hotlines, the passenger lists of tour operators and airlines as well as information gained from the diplomatic representations abroad, local authorities and hospitals, a database was compiled of Austrians who were known to be in the region at the time of the crisis. The data were then continually updated through constant contact with the local diplomatic representations and by follow-up calls to the affected relatives.

Staff from the Austrian embassies in Bangkok and New Delhi were dispatched to Phuket, Colombo and Malé to care for those injured or affected by the disaster and to provide coordinative support in the search for missing persons. In additions, employees and experts from the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Federal Chancellery, the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Federal Ministry of Defence, as well as staff from the Austrian Red Cross, were also deployed in the disaster zones. The employees of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and four Austrian Rescue Teams composed of staff from the above-mentioned ministries, together with doctors, psychologists and forensic pathologists, supported the local diplomatic representations in searching for
injured and missing Austrians. They also made the necessary arrangements for injured Austrians wishing to return home, organised repatriation, issued passports and emergency travel documents, provided emergency financial assistance, organised lodging, food and clothing, and provided medical and psychological care. Up to 231 Austrian staff were deployed in the crisis region.

Besides making use of free capacities on scheduled Austrian Airlines/Lauda Air flights, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs also organised three special flights in cooperation with the two airlines to bring affected Austrians home. With support from the Federal Ministry for Health and Women one of these extra flights was specially equipped for the repatriation of injured Austrians. In all, around 1,700 people, including citizens of other EU Member States, were successfully repatriated from the crisis zones on 31 Austrian Airlines/Lauda Air flights. In agreement with the bereaved families, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs also organised the repatriation of the bodies of the Austrian victims who had been identified on the spot.

A commemorative flight to Thailand was arranged on 7 April to give the relatives of deceased Austrians or of persons still missing at that time the opportunity to say farewell to the tsunami victims in a symbolic ceremony. On the anniversary of the disaster the Thai authorities also organised a commemorative event in which affected Austrians participated.

The unique global dimension of this natural disaster and the large number of European tourists affected in the crisis region confronted the crisis management teams of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and other Austrian and European institutions with a hitherto unknown challenge. For this reason, coordination and cooperation procedures for use in the event of similar disasters abroad are being strengthened and expanded on an ongoing basis, both with the competent national authorities and with Austria’s EU partners. This included the development and establishment of a uniform data management system for all Austrian institutions involved. In a call centre, specifically set up for this purpose, specially trained staff of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs can receive and enter information on persons reported missing. Furthermore, in the event of a disaster, a response team comprising volunteer staff from the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs can be dispatched to the crisis region at any time. This team will also have improved technical equipment at its disposal to support the affected diplomatic representations abroad. In addition, Austria proposed the establishment of joint crisis response teams at EU level. Last but not least, the evaluation and monitoring of potential crisis regions is carried out on an ongoing basis to enhance preparations for potential crisis scenarios and thus to provide improved support facilities for Austrians affected by disasters abroad (see also Chapter C.I.2.2.).
Austria contributed comprehensive aid in the wake of the tsunami disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa. In the immediate aftermath of the submarine earthquake, the Federal Government made 5.7 million euros available for humanitarian aid to the countries affected. Of this, 1 million euros was made available to Austrian aid organisations for emergency humanitarian relief measures in the crisis zone. In agreement with the regional and local authorities, it subsequently adopted a comprehensive reconstruction programme amounting to 50 million euros over a period of three years, comprising 34 million euros from the federal budget, 10 million euros from the federal provinces, and 6 million euros from the cities and municipalities. The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs is contributing to the total federal aid package earmarked for South-East Asia and East Africa with co-financing totalling 2.15 million euros from the Austrian Development Cooperation budget. In addition, the “Nachbar in Not” (“Neighbour in Need”) appeal and other fund-raising initiatives raised private donations totalling more than 54 million euros for projects in the region.

Under the leadership of the federal ministries, federal provinces, and the cities and municipalities, concrete reconstruction projects will be implemented in twelve priority areas: cooperation between schools, national reconciliation, protection of women and children, reconstruction of villages, environmental protection, mine clearance, water treatment, infrastructure development, economic recovery, training and tourism. In the initial stages, former federal minister Ernst Strasser was charged with coordinating information between the ministries and local authorities contributing to re-construction assistance. His honorary activities ended on the first anniversary of the tsunami disaster on 26 December.

The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs subsequently dispatched an expert to Colombo who assumed the task of coordinating the local activities of the numerous Austrian NGOs and initiatives. At the end of the year the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs undertook a special survey evaluating the Austrian tsunami assistance for further referral to the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC). The analysis showed that more than 70% of the funds earmarked for 2005 were used for projects in Sri Lanka. An independent third-party study was commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs to identify sectors for the federal government’s further involvement in Sri Lanka and Indonesia in order to guarantee the long-term sustainability of stage two of Austria’s reconstruction assistance.

In the wake of the submarine earthquake disaster, the Federal Government passed a resolution to establish a Relief Fund for International Disasters, which will be used to finance damage alleviation and reconstruction measures, and to provide humanitarian aid in connection with disasters abroad. It will be funded by contributions from the federal budget, regional and local
authorities and other public and private donors. The Federal Government will decide how the funds are to be used on a case-by-case basis.
E. Austrian Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe

I. Introduction

Combating poverty, ensuring peace and preserving the environment are the central objectives of Austrian Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe (ADC). All its programmes and projects are based on the principles of partnership with the people involved, the use of appropriate technologies, regard for the cultural dimension of development, equality between women and men and a special regard for the needs of children and people with disabilities. In this context, Austria’s efforts are centred mainly on underprivileged population groups, especially in the least developed countries (LDCs) of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

1. Legal Basis

The Development Cooperation Act (DCA) passed in 2002 and amended in 2003 is the basis for a coherent Austrian development policy. It contains a specific package of objectives defining the development policy criteria for the entire Austrian federal administration, coordinated by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Austrian Development Agency GmbH (ADA) has performed the operational work since 2004. The strategic framework for the ADA’s activities is established by the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe at the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

2. Additional Budget for Development Cooperation

According to preliminary data, Austria spent a total of 1,249 million euros or 0.52 per cent of GNI on official development assistance (ODA) in 2005. Austria agreed to the internal EU roadmap towards attaining the ODA/GNI target of 0.7 per cent by 2015. In Austria’s case, this will be achieved by raising the development cooperation funds to 0.33 per cent of GNI by 2006. As from 2010, 0.51 per cent of GNI will be made available to fight hunger and poverty.

3. Sustainable Development

The long-term success of development cooperation is contingent on the strengthening of institutional competences and capacities in the partner
countries. Austria supports its partner countries in the preparation and implementation of appropriate policies and strategies, such as, for example, in the water and wastewater sector, good governance, judicial reform, and food and basic social services. ADC also traditionally pursues a decentralised approach since strengthening decentralised and local development programmes fosters democratic processes, improves services and promotes the sustainable use of resources – all of which are important prerequisites for the success of the ADC programmes to reduce poverty.

4. Coherence

Coherence is of particular importance to ADC because agreement in all external policy areas of development cooperation is necessary to achieve a consistent and sustainable development policy for the benefit of the partner countries. The DCA provides that the federal government must integrate the development policy objectives and principles into the policy areas within its remit which affect the developing countries. Both the European Commission and the EU Member States orient their development cooperation and cooperation with Eastern Europe towards international efforts striving for greater coherence, coordination and complementarity. A network for the exchange of information was set up, which is especially designed to enhance development policy coherence.

II. Bilateral Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe

1. Bilateral Development Cooperation

1.1. Key Region Central America (Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador)

Rural development, the promotion of SMEs and the social sector are the priority sectors in Nicaragua, the ADC priority country in Latin America. ADC supported a new health care programme in the North Atlantic Autonomous Region, made a contribution to the health care sector in agreement with all other donors, supported a programme to foster local economic development in the Departement Masaya, made efforts to enhance the coordination of central government and local level activities as regards the promotion of SMEs, and supported the production and marketing of organically produced foods. Under the North-South Partnership, Austria made a contribution to the academic training of skilled workers in Austria. ADC’s partners were primarily Austrian and local NGOs, as well as official authorities and multilateral organisations. Bilateral consultations between
ADC and the Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry were held for the first time in Managua in September. Likewise in September, a Central America Regional Workshop was organised in Granada within the framework of the project “Europe-Latin America Relations and the issues of Poverty, Development and Democracy”.

In Guatemala, ADC concentrates its efforts on rural development, the promotion of SMEs and the social sector. The priorities in the social sector include assistance to the institutions of the Maya and the traditional legal system, bilingual, intercultural education and drinking-water supply measures. Geographically, ADC continues to concentrate its efforts on the western highlands of Guatemala. ADC aims to make a contribution to reducing poverty and also to assist with the implementation of the 1996 Peace Accords by strengthening the indigenous population and their organisations. ADC’s cooperation partners for the implementation of these objectives are primarily civil society organisations. Within the framework of the North-South Partnership, ADC supports the academic training of skilled workers in Austria.

In El Salvador, ADC concentrates its efforts on rural development, the promotion of SMEs and the social sector. A new project for the promotion of organic farming was launched, and the projects in other fields, such as the encouragement of local development in the municipality of Zaragoza and solar drying of fruit and coffee beans, were continued. In most cases, ADC’s cooperation partners are civil society organisations. Austria further supports El Salvador under the North-South Partnership by organising academic training schemes for skilled workers in Austria.

1.2. Key Region West Africa (Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Senegal)

Regional conflict prevention is one of ADC’s main objectives. Austria made contributions to the maintenance of peace in the region by participating in UN peacekeeping operations. On the basis of a Planning Conference organised in Dakar (Senegal), a regional cooperation programme for 2007-2009 is being prepared. The West Africa Regional Programme builds on the bilateral experiences gathered in the three priority countries Burkina Faso, Senegal and Cape Verde.

In the priority country Burkina Faso, ADC contributes to the subsidised sale of foods in the north of the country in order to counteract a further impoverishment of the rural target group. In May, Austria signed a three-year cooperation programme with Burkina Faso entailing some 13 million euros in aid. Under this agreement, the sectors of rural development, education and vocational training and the setting up of small enterprises have been made
ADC priorities. Aligning its activities with national priorities and instruments in the fight against poverty remains a central concern of ADC.

In Senegal, ADC continued to support sustainable rural development within the framework of the new country sector programme, concentrating especially on the Kolda region in the south of the country. Projects in the fields of agriculture, trades and crafts, food security and the protection of the environment were carried out in this context. The further development of professional organisations and cooperation with NGOs and local authorities strengthened the Senegalese civil society, which in turn contributed to democratisation and peacekeeping.

The priority country Cape Verde succeeded in improving and safeguarding its macroeconomic stability, but the higher oil price resulting from the country’s high import rates was clearly felt by the population. Important infrastructure projects were completed, such as the building of the new international airport in the capital Praia and the major link road on Santiago Island. Cape Verde consolidated its reputation as a reliable partner for the international community of donors and signed, inter alia, a Memorandum of Understanding with the EU and the World Bank on budget support. ADC supports Cape Verde in the areas of education, decentralisation and water supply. Incipient preparations were started for a cooperation programme for the period 2006-2008.

1.3. Key Region East Africa (Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania)

In the priority country Ethiopia, ADC was active in the fields of health care, food security, energy supply, and gender issues and democracy. This was complemented by training programmes and capacity building in science and research. The dialogue with all parties involved in the preparation of the country programme 2007-2011 was initiated.

In the priority country Uganda, ADC gears its efforts towards the national programme for the fight against poverty and participates in coordinated efforts with national partners (central government and civil society) and other donors. Austria’s activities focus on water supply and settlement sanitation, judicial reform, decentralisation and democratisation, and the development of the private sector. A special programme addresses the conflict situation and resulting humanitarian crisis in the north of the country. Further vocational training is promoted by grants for courses in Uganda and Austria and assistance is provided for cultural activities. The last country programme expired at the end of the year, and the new programme will continue to promote the three priority sectors as from 2006. Harmonisation with
programmes offered by other donors will be further improved. Bilateral cooperation is complemented by the programmes of Austrian NGOs.

In Burundi, the priority sectors targeted by ADC were water supply, judicial reform and reconciliation. The activities centred on the promotion of rural areas and democracy. Furthermore, a national programme for civic instruction is supported.

In Rwanda, ADC concentrated its efforts on the sectors of water supply and judicial reform. Support was continued for a government-established fund for rural water supply, and for the procedure that has been established within the local Gacaca tribunal system for the judicial appraisal of the mid-1990s genocide.

In Tanzania, ADC continues to prioritise decentralisation and the development of the private sector. Decentralisation was boosted by the district development programmes in the Kasulu and Ngorongoro Districts. The promotion of private business centred on programmes in the fields of dairy farming and meat processing.

1.4. Key Region Southern Africa (Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa)

The country programme 2002-2004 for the priority country Mozambique was extended by one year, and a new country programme was prepared. Cooperation efforts concentrated on the sectors of rural development and decentralisation in the province of Sofala. Furthermore, the decision was taken to join the national programme for agricultural development. Humanitarian assistance, especially the provision of food, became necessary due to the incessant drought besetting the centre and south of the country. ADC therefore supported the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and provided funds for the ADC priority region of Sofala. The international group of donors in Mozambique is increasingly switching to budget support. The new national programme to fight poverty for the period 2006-2010 is just about to be completed. The ADC coordination office relocated from Beira to Maputo.

In Zimbabwe, the population continued to be threatened by famine. All bilateral cooperation has been suspended because of the EU sanctions. However, civil society projects for democratisation were still supported, with the emphasis on the frontier zones with Mozambique and South Africa.

The primary goals of ADC in Namibia were democratisation and peacekeeping measures. There have been enormous advances in these areas since independence, though improvements in the legal sector are urgently required if the consolidation process is to be continued. These reforms were
promoted by the establishment of local structures and judicial and penal system models adapted to the country’s social circumstances.

South Africa still needs international assistance to eliminate the consequences of apartheid, to modernise the state and to integrate its economy into the world markets. ADC devoted its efforts to the promotion of democracy through the development of local structures, decentralisation of the state administration, providing access to the legal system, and asserting the rights of the population.

1.5. Key Region Himalayas/Hindu Kush (Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan)

In the past few years the priority country Bhutan reported progress with the development of its infrastructure, health care and education systems. ADC contributed to this successful development through projects in the energy, tourism, cultural and forest ecology sectors. The Basochhu hydro-power plant, one of the largest ADC projects, was opened und put into service in March in the presence of Foreign Minister Plassnik.

In the partner country Nepal, ADC continued its cooperation efforts in the sectors of rural development, the promotion of low-impact tourism and the preservation of the Nepalese cultural heritage in collaboration with local and Austrian organisations.

In Pakistan, ADC attached special importance to measures safeguarding the longstanding tourist project PAITHOM. Its cooperation with the NGO Frontier Primary Health Care (FPHC) in the north-western region of the country was continued and provided support for Afghan refugees. These activities primarily focused on basic health care services and on strengthening the role and rights of women and girls in Afghan refugee camps.

2. Bilateral Cooperation with Eastern Europe

2.1. Key Region South East Europe

As in the past few years, the geographical focus was on South East Europe, especially on the Western Balkans countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro including Kosovo. Generally, decisive headway was made in the integration of individual countries into European structures. However, the economic and social situation has remained tense. ADC makes a concrete contribution to the pacification of the entire region through its measures for the promotion of regional cooperation.
In the priority country **Albania**, ADC continued to concentrate its efforts on the water sector in the Shkodra area. Measures to safeguard the water supply and to promote integrative rural development offer perspectives for the people to stay in the area and reduce migration from the rural areas to cities. In the field of energy, ADC prioritises the promotion of renewable energy sources and supports hydro-power and solar power projects. The comprehensive external Evaluation of Ten Years of Austrian Development Cooperation with Albania confirmed the successful cooperation work to date. It forms the basis for the development of another country programme, which will be commenced at the end of the year.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, another priority country, important projects in the fields of economic development and higher education were implemented. Austria is supporting the reform of the land register in Bosnia and Herzegovina, thus contributing essentially to the improvement of economic conditions. Through the continuation of its commitment in the field of higher education, Austria established itself as the largest bilateral donor in this area. The newly founded Business Start-Up Centre at the University of Tuzla provides an important link from the education system to labour market requirements.

ADC is gradually withdrawing from **Bulgaria** in view of the country's advanced stage of EU integration. Cooperation projects such as the institutional reinforcement of the Bulgarian Environment Agency are now in their final stages.

In **Croatia**, a priority country, ADC concentrates its efforts on East Slavonia, a region particularly affected by the war. A comprehensive programme to boost the economy focuses on the tourist potential in the municipalities of Vukovar and Ilok.

In the priority country **Macedonia**, ADC implemented its country programme, especially fostering the sectors of water, energy, education and economy. Investments made to date in order to improve the water supply technology in a number of municipalities were accompanied by measures to improve waste water systems and programmes for the institutional strengthening of water utilities. A new programme to promote solar energy was also launched. Further important projects were the support of the Macedonian Investment Promotion Agency, a business consulting project and an assistance programme for the University of Skopje.

In **Romania**, ADC was especially committed to supporting the environmental sector and successfully completed the water supply project in Campulung. ADC further promoted a project for environmentally compatible manufacturing (Cleaner Production Project) in the Timisoara region. In
Romania too, the imminent completion of the EU integration process will mark the end of Austrian Development Cooperation efforts.

In Serbia and Montenegro including Kosovo, the coordination office in Podgorica was opened as an outpost of the Austrian Embassy in Belgrade and will, in addition to its political work, assist the ADC projects in Montenegro. ADC activities in this important priority country were characterised by the preparations for the Serbia and Kosovo country programmes 2006-2008. It was decided to continue the focus on education and to further develop the ADC programmes in the fields of private sector industry and development in both Serbia and Kosovo. In Serbia, cooperation with South Serbia, the poorest region of the country, was further developed. Austria is supporting a large project with international partners to strengthen local capacities for the planning and implementation of sustainable socio-economic development measures, thus making a contribution to the harmonisation and alignment of donors’ programmes with the needs and priorities of recipients. In Montenegro, the regional and tourism development project in the north-eastern region of the country was continued. In Kosovo, ADC focused increasingly on the Suhareka region, where a cooperation programme supports the civil unit of the Austrian CIMIC troops contingent. Improvements in the infrastructure as a basis for economic development are intended as a means of opening up new perspectives for the rural population. Other major projects were a project for water supply improvement in the municipality of Gjilan together with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the improvement of the living conditions of the Ashkali population and the support of the ombudsman in Kosovo.

2.2. Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Cooperation with the new priority country Moldova was further developed. The Office, which was newly opened in Chiinu on 1 January, will provide effective assistance to ADC activities and will be further expanded in the medium term. ADC was further highly committed to working out a bilateral agreement and a country programme for Moldova. A new priority will be the improvement of water supply in rural areas, while further activities include vocational training measures and the fight against human trafficking and trafficking in women. ADC further supported a number of cooperation projects between Austrian NGOs and those of the partner countries in the region, plus several smaller administrative cooperation schemes through the Know-how Transfer Centre of the Association of Austrian Cities and Towns. A regional concept for the Southern Caucasus was prepared with a focus on conflict prevention.
2.3. Programme in the Palestinian Territories

Israel’s disengagement from the Gaza Strip and the related Action Plan elaborated by the Special Envoy of the Middle East Quartet were significant developments in the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process (see Chapter A.IV.6.2.). Austria sent an important signal of support with the visit by Foreign Minister Plassnik and the promise to contribute 1 million euros to this plan. In cooperation with the Palestinian National Authority, ADC pursued a combined approach of direct relief measures and regular development projects, among other things in the field of health care. Further measures were taken in the field of building conflict prevention and peacekeeping capacities. Cooperation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was continued and assistance increased considerably.

3. Special Programmes

Although Afghanistan is not an ADC partner country, Austria supports the political will and the efforts of the international community aimed at reconstruction of the country. At the 2004 donors conference in Berlin, Austria pledged to provide another 3 million euros for 2005-2006 (1 million euros for development projects, 2 million euros for ISAF). ADC focussed on programmes to fight illegal drug trafficking and to promote women, as well as on programmes to strengthen local capacities; these were primarily carried out in collaboration with multilateral organisations.

Together with the international community, Austria supports the establishment of a democratic, stable state of Iraq. Projects in the field of health care and child care were continued, thus ensuring that those worst affected by the war were helped quickly. To make a contribution to capacity building in the process of democratisation, the Vienna Diplomatic Academy trained ten Iraqi diplomats in Austria. The Federal Ministry of the Interior is supporting the political consolidation process in the country through capacity-building measures in the form of police training projects. Austria offered debt relief in the amount of 1.16 billion euros for reconstruction for the years 2005-2008.

3.1. Themes and Sectors

The primary objective of ADC is to reduce global poverty in all its dimensions and enable the poor to develop their economic capacities and political interests, to satisfy basic human needs, and to protect people from dangers and ensure safety, taking into account socio-cultural factors. These basic goals were further pursued in the international donor forums under the OECD
Development Assistance Committee’s Network on Poverty Reduction (DAC POVNET), the European Commission and the World Bank. A documentation and indicator system, which is required in this context, was outlined on the basis of specific country programmes. Furthermore, draft guidelines on poverty reduction were drawn up and first steps regarding the necessary requirements for implementation were taken.

Austria has recognised expertise in the field of rural development, which it uses to fight poverty in the partner countries. The majority of the poor population live in rural areas, where infrastructure and access to basic services are scarce and participation in the decision-making process is insufficient. The living conditions of the rural population were improved by application of appropriate technologies, transfer of knowledge and information concerning production and marketing and by fundamental infrastructure building. In addition to the activities targeting African countries, Latin America and Nepal, rural development is also increasingly coming to the fore in South East Europe (Albania, Moldova). Beyond the traditional project-based approach, more modern ways of cooperation are increasingly being sought, such as sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) taking into account the harmonisation and alignment agenda within international coordination fora such as the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD).

The promotion of local development and decentralised administration is a priority within the framework of assistance for decentralisation processes in the partner countries, and ADC centres on the capacity development of all actors at local level, the increased inclusion of the population in decision-making processes (empowerment) and the use of social capital.

The three thematic fields of human rights, good governance and democratisation and peacekeeping were further anchored in the work of ADC, building on the variety of existing experiences. Specific guidelines were developed for each theme, and further training sessions on Human Rights and Development Cooperation and Poverty Reduction Strategies and Human Rights were organised for ADC staff. At programme and project level, contributions for the current country programming in the field of Good Governance and Peacekeeping were elaborated, e.g. for Uganda and East Africa, the Southern Caucasus and Central America. On the other hand, new focal points were stressed by supporting global and regional initiatives, and a new focal point was emphasised in the field of democratisation by providing support to parliaments. A number of specific thematic projects were continued within the framework of current country projects, such as those in the fields of judicial reform, promotion of peace processes, protection of children in and after armed conflicts and human rights education. At international level, participation in OECD working groups in the fields of human rights, good governance and peacekeeping was intensified.
Equality between women and men is an essential principle followed by ADC, which accordingly worked out new gender guidelines. ADC concentrates on the inclusion of women in decision-making processes in order to strengthen their qualifications, opportunities and personal safety, thus aligning these aims with the main objectives of ADC.

The working division for Private Sector and Development was further enlarged, and the activity areas defined in three pillars. The first pillar serves to improve the framework and basis for private business commitment, which benefit the local entrepreneurs and are designed to increase the willingness of Austrian and European companies to invest directly. As a second pillar, the projects for direct assistance to the private sector in the partner countries aim to create sources of income for the poor population groups. This pillar especially stresses the building of local economic cycles and the development and use of innovative financial services. The third pillar of the working division, which is still under construction, comprises the integration of Austrian businesses into ADC. Partnerships are supported between Austrian and local enterprises on the one hand, and public and private partners on the other. These instruments were employed especially successfully in South East Europe and were rated positively by Austrian companies.

In the field of education cooperation, the building of institutional and personnel capacities in the partner countries and in the regional context was given special attention, with vocational training and further training and higher education measures as particular priorities. In addition to well-established North-South cooperation projects, regional South-South cooperation was intensified too, as for example in the cooperation between Burkina Faso and Morocco in the field of vocational training. At international level, codetermination in policy formulation within the EU and cooperation with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) were continued. Training projects with the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) and the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) were continued.

One of the focal points in the water sector lay in the further development of the harmonisation of bilateral regional programmes in the key regions Cape Verde, Kenya, Mozambique, the Palestinian Territories and Uganda, and first steps in the coordination of the water sector and the education sector were taken. The programmes in Cape Verde, Kenya and Mozambique were prepared for new programme phases, and the water project in the Gaza Strip was successfully completed. In Uganda, the coordination of donors with the partner country was highlighted by participation in the Joint Partnership Fund. In Cape Verde, Austria has assumed a leading role in the Water Sector Dialogue of the EU Water Initiative (EUWI). The activities of the EUWI were further supported, and a communication system was financed and developed.
Within the framework of EU educational cooperation, a project application was submitted for the coordination of programmes in the water sector and in the applied sciences. In the multilateral field, the cooperation with the World Bank “Water and Sanitation Programme” Trust Fund was continued and intensified cooperation prepared through funding and the provision of experts. The African Water Facility was also supported.

In the energy sector, ADC concentrated on developing power supply services in rural zones, particularly in Ethiopia and in Bhutan, where an ADC multi-year project, the Basochhu hydro-power plant group, was successfully completed. Apart from providing the appropriate infrastructure, aid centred on the training of local employees and the setting up of local companies to ensure the professional operation of the power supply facilities. In Bhutan, ADC installed another pilot project for improved biomass stoves. Austria’s assistance in the field of solar thermal technology in Albania, Bhutan and Macedonia was also stepped up. Within the EU, ADC played a leading role in the Energy Initiative for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development. A new financing instrument is being used by Austria together with other EU Member States to help partner countries prepare sustainable energy development concepts. The first joint project was a study on the economic sustainability of wind power plants connected to the power grid in Ethiopia.

As regards the global protection of the environment, ADC made national and international networking efforts. In this context, it concentrated on themes related to the preservation of biological diversity and consolidated cooperation with international organisations active in this area. A new thematic priority that has been established is environment, conflict and safety. Environmental analyses of partner countries were conducted, and ADC has been carrying out independent environmental impact assessment procedures since 2005.

4. NGO Co-financing

A significant share of Austria’s programme and project aid was managed by Austrian NGOs. NGO co-financing covers schemes launched on the NGOs’ own initiative and financed by both their own funding as well as funding provided by ADC. Since 1 July the co-financing budgets have been managed directly by the ADA. Nine Austrian NGOs were awarded framework agreements for a total amount of 8.5 million euros, and more than 80 projects in the field of training and education, rural development and health care in Africa, Asia and Latin America were funded and implemented. The framework agreements also funded the posting of skilled workers to development cooperation projects. In mid-2005, new guidelines were published for the future structuring of NGO framework programmes. Within
the framework of individual NGO projects, twelve projects in developing countries in the South were approved: the total volume was 606,700 euros, of which 342,000 euros went to five projects for reconstruction in the wake of the tsunami disaster in South-East Asia. Under Cooperation with Eastern Europe, eleven projects in South East and Eastern Europe and Central Asia totalling 593,300 euros were approved, and ADC also promised additional funding for five EU co-financed projects by Austrian development organisations with a total volume of 274,000 euros. A significant decline in new budget pledges in this area may be attributed to delays in assistance decisions by the European Commission. In April, the three-year **Regional Partnership Programme** started. The latter aims at better integrating development cooperation into the civil societies of the new EU Member States Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary and has a total project volume of 1,167,300 euros.

5. **Evaluation**

The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the ADA conducted several strategic evaluations in the year under review. Working in close cooperation, the Foreign Ministry was responsible for selecting the evaluations while the ADA was in charge of their operational implementation. A joint process serves to lay down the objectives and scope of these evaluations, and once the results are available they are discussed once more. The evaluation of individual projects, in line with the applicable guidelines, lies with the respective country desks, coordination offices and implementing agencies, which are supported by the ADA Evaluation Desk. In the operational field, attention is paid to the results and recommendations of previous evaluations when future activities are programmed and planned.

In 2005, two strategic evaluations were completed. The evaluation of Development Cooperation with **Albania** spanning more than a decade yielded a positive result regarding the efforts made to date and practice-related recommendations for current and future programmes. An important section of the evaluation (water power) was conducted together with SECO, the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs. Further evaluations dealt with **Development Education** in the light of the Austrian campaign on the Millennium Development Goals and the education sector.
III. Multilateral Development Cooperation

1. United Nations

The discussion in the field of multilateral development cooperation, which culminated in the UN World Summit in New York from 14 to 16 September, concentrated on the issue of how the development goals defined by the Millennium Declaration could be achieved in a timely and complete manner by 2015. In the run-up, the EU, in line with its previous model role, pledged to further raise ODA. The anchoring of gender in the Final Document and the first mention of “renewable energies” in the Millennium context also rewarded years of Austrian efforts to this end.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the largest UN development programme, is represented in 166 countries. The activities are financed by voluntary contributions: in 2005 some 3.8 billion US dollars were provided for structural and emergency relief programmes. The Multi-Year Funding Framework 2004-2007 will concentrate on five strategic goals: democratisation; poverty reduction; energy and environmental protection with a view to sustainable development; crisis prevention and reconstruction, and the campaign against HIV/AIDS. In the past few years, UNDP transferred operational activities to the country offices, and resident coordinators now increasingly coordinate all UN programmes and specialised agencies on site. The stepping up of regional competence centres is another measure to increase decentralisation. Austria has continuously increased its contributions to the UNDP core budget to 3.7 million euros since 2001, and since 2004 thematic priorities have been set by participating in the Trust Funds on Energy (500,000 euros), Democratic Governance (500,000 euros) and HIV/AIDS (500,000 euros). A medium-term goal within multilateral fora is to provide better support than in the past for those sectors that are also at the centre of bilateral development cooperation. Austria further provides assistance to UNDP programmes at regional and country level according to ADC objectives, a particular success being its cooperation with UNDP in South East Europe.

The UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) contributes to the building of the financial sector through local development projects and microfinance projects. It aims to enable all population groups to access banking services and to build administrative capacities at local level. The International Year of Microcredit 2005 very successfully illustrated the necessity of having access to credit and other financial services for business development opportunities, especially among the most disadvantaged population groups. As from 2006, the Fund will be integrated into UNDP in terms of budget organisation. In addition to a payment of 90,000 euros into the core budget, Austria financed a
project to strengthen local administrative structures in Northern Uganda with an amount of 100,000 euros.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is a relatively small and decentralised UN programme which supports projects for monitoring demographic developments. Since the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo 1994), UNFPA has increasingly concentrated on reproductive health, focusing on the role of girls and women, especially in the fields of family planning, medical care and universal primary education. The prevention of HIV/AIDS is becoming an increasingly important field of action for UNFPA. Austria therefore raised its contributions to the core budget by 500,000 euros to 600,000 euros and supported UNFPA by paying contributions to the budget and by financing projects in Ethiopia and Nepal. In cooperation with other donors, Austria undertook an analysis of UNFPA’s cooperation with other development institutions at country level, which yielded positive results in all areas.

As in previous years, the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) focussed on the prevention of HIV/AIDS and prioritised projects in the field of immunisation, health and hygiene. UNICEF is also a trailblazer for Child Protection and the Child Rights Approach (promoting the basic idea that children have rights). A major part of the efforts concentrated on emergency relief in the wake of the natural disasters that were especially frequent this year. By the adoption of the Medium-Term Strategic Plan in September, the new work programme of UNICEF for the period 2006-2009 was laid down. The five new priorities will be young child survival and development, basic education and gender equality, HIV/AIDS and children, child protection and policy advocacy and partnerships for children’s rights. In addition to making payments to the core budget of the organisation, Austria allocated amounts of 100,000 euros each to combating the spread of HIV/AIDS and the fight against polio in the Darfur region. A contribution of 230,000 euros went to a UNICEF project in support of national institutions to establish punishments for the violation of children’s rights in Cape Verde.

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has the mission to ensure women’s participation at all development levels and to serve as a catalyst for equal rights of women within the UN system. Austria, in addition to its payment to the core budget (about 90,000 euros), contributed an amount of 117,000 euros to the Trust Fund for the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995 World Conference on Women) und via UNIFEM supports the Gender Office of the African Union with a subsidy of about 90,000 euros. The thematic priorities are HIV/AIDS, armed conflict, participation in EU bodies and the economy, while regional priorities include Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan.
Austria for the first time held the Presidency of the Industrial Development Board of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). Three important decisions were on the agenda, which were achieved through active Austrian assistance: the drawing up of the budgets for the biennium 2006-2007 with a nominal growth of 150.7 million euros; the nomination of the new Director-General, Kandeh K. Yumkella (Sierra Leone), and the adoption of a long-term corporate strategy focusing on the following three areas: poverty alleviation through productive activities; trade-capacity building, and environment and energy. Austria’s high level of financial contributions remained unchanged and included, in addition to its payments to the core budget, assistance for environmentally sound production technologies (1 million euros) and funds for two specific projects in the field of small and medium-sized enterprises in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda (860,000 euros).

A number of young Austrians were given the opportunity to work for a limited period of time within the Junior Professional Officer Programme (JPO) in the United Nations development system: Austrian JPOs were on duty with UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNHCR and UNIDO. In part they served on assignments in the respective headquarters, in part in the networks of outposts, such as in Afghanistan, Jamaica, Liberia, the Palestinian territories, Zimbabwe and Uganda.

2. **European Union**

The EU consolidated its position as the world’s biggest donor by passing a historic resolution within the Council Conclusions of 24 May: 35 years after the donors’ first pledge that they would achieve the 0.7 per cent target by 1980, it was decided that, as far as they have not yet achieved this rate, the old Member States of the Union (EU-15) should raise their ODA to 0.51 per cent of GNI by 2015, and the new Member States to 0.17 per cent by 2010 and 0.33 per cent by 2015, respectively. Jointly, the EU Member States want to raise their ODA ratio to 0.56 per cent by 2010 and 0.7 per cent by 2015.

Within the concept of **“more and better aid”**, efforts were continued to increase the effectiveness of external assistance actions. Also in May, the EU fully committed itself to implement and monitor the commitments which were assumed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in a timely manner and to increase coherence. The Declaration that was adopted in March by about 90 industrialised and developing countries contains specific commitments to harmonise aid processes, to better align donors’ strategies with recipients’ development strategies, to reduce transaction costs and bureaucratic processes, to untie aid and to reinforce the accountability of donors’ and recipients’ governments vis-à-vis the affected population and parliaments. The
Paris Declaration contains a list of twelve objectives (including the pertinent indicators) which are to be met by 2010. One step towards meeting the goal was achieved by the adoption of two Commission Regulations which, inter alia, provide for the unilateral untying of all aid to the least developed countries.

To fight the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, the EU launched its Programme for Action, which is to accelerate action against these epidemics in analogy to the national poverty reduction strategies in the affected countries by an integrated response (prevention, treatment, care, research).

Another milestone was the passing of the European Consensus on 22 November. For the first time a comprehensive development policy has become available through the Joint Declaration by the Council, the governments of the Member States represented on the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on the European Union Development Policy, which is binding on both the Commission and the EU Member States. The Declaration confirms the main focus of European development policy on poverty reduction within sustainable development processes and stresses the ownership principle for the countries involved, as well as partnership, political dialogue, gender equality, the inclusion of civil society and the specific situation of fragile states.

In the context of WTO agricultural negotiations, the EU adopted Council Conclusions in the run-up to the Hong Kong Special Meeting on 12 December regarding trade-related aid and expressed its intention to increase the funds for this field to a total of 2 billion euros by 2010.

The agreement reached during the European Council on 15 and 16 December about the Financial Perspective of the Union set out the framework conditions for EU development cooperation in the next budget period. In the end, the European Development Fund was not integrated into the Community Budget but will be managed separately.

The EU completed its negotiations with the ACP countries concerning the review of the Cotonou Agreement, which serves as a framework for the EU-ACP partnership. Priority items on the agenda which the EU wanted to firmly incorporate in the revised agreement were the fight against terrorism, the International Criminal Tribunal and the commitment to non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It was also important to align this Agreement with the general policy stance taken by the EU in these areas. For the ACP side, the new version of the financial protocol was of special interest. It forms the basis for the funds of the European Development Fund, which finances the development cooperation with the ACP states. It was difficult to define an EU position that was acceptable to the ACP countries in the light of the
unresolved Financial Perspective 2007-2013 and the open questions regarding
the budgeting of the European Development Fund.

The Africa Peace Facility serves to fund peacekeeping operations in Africa. It
received a one-time funding of 250 million euros by the EDF for the period
2004-2006, of which 200 million euros were allocated to peacekeeping missions
and 35 million euros to the building of capacities. Operations were funded in
Sudan and in the Central African Republic.

The European Council on 15 and 16 December adopted a comprehensive EU-
Africa Strategy, which focuses on three main areas: peace and security,
human rights and governance as well as poverty reduction and sustainable
development. The EU formulates areas oriented on implementation in order to
support the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and peace in
Africa.

IV. Humanitarian Aid, Disaster Relief and International
Humanitarian Organisations

1. Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief

ADC’s International Humanitarian Aid provides for measures to supplement
international disaster relief operations, which are coordinated by the Federal
Ministry of the Interior. Assistance instruments cover humanitarian
emergency aid, reconstruction assistance and disaster prevention. The funds
for international humanitarian aid can be provided to international
organisations or NGOs by the ADA.

As a consequence of the tsunami disaster in South-East Asia and Eastern
Africa, the Federal Government decided to set up a Relief Fund for
International Disasters. The Federal Government determines the allocations
to this Fund by resolution of the Council of Ministers and annual funds of up
to 100 million euros can be supplied according to budget provision
regulations. The Fund is managed by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

For the tsunami disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa see Chapter D.

Austria provided humanitarian aid amounting to 569,000 euros to regions in
Bulgaria, Georgia and Romania that were struck by severe floods this summer.
The USA was supported with 42,000 euros after the devastating Hurricane
Katrina. Further assistance was provided to Ethiopia, Iraq, Russia (Beslan),
Sudan and Uganda. The campaign for the treatment of injured Iraqi children
in Austria which had been conducted since 2003 was completed, except for the necessary follow-up treatment.

On 8 October, Kashmir was beset by a devastating earthquake. The Austrian Federal Government responded quickly to the petition for assistance submitted by the Pakistani Government and supplied relief in the value of 3,581,000 euros. In addition to the emergency relief measures funded by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Federal Ministry of Defence provided four water treatment plants to Pakistan a few days after the disaster, and the plants were operated by an accompanying contingent of the Austrian Forces Disaster Relief Unit (AFDRU). In the light of dire humanitarian needs, the ADA made available additional funds in the amount of 1 million euros in November, which will serve humanitarian projects in Pakistan and of which 800,000 euros will be used in multilateral efforts. A call for emergency relief by the UN was answered by providing another 400,000 euros.

The Federal Government provided humanitarian aid on a worldwide scale through the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). ECHO’s budget in 2005 amounted to some 500 million euros, of which Austria paid 2.6 per cent (i.e., about 13 million euros).

1.1. Austrian Anti-personnel Mine Campaigns

The mine action programme of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs is an essential part of its humanitarian aid and development policy and includes mine clearance projects in affected areas, socio-economic rehabilitation of mine victims and general awareness building. Funds spent in 2005 in this connection amounted to 1.5 million euros.

1.2. Austrian Food Aid

The Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management is responsible for the implementation of the 1999 International Food Aid Convention. Recipients are selected by recommendation of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Prioritised areas were the traditional crisis regions of Africa.

In the framework of the International Food Aid Convention, Austria made a contribution of 1.49 million euros. The funds provided to Uganda (340,000 euros), the Palestinian National Authority (200,000 euros) and the Saharan refugees in Western Algeria (150,000 euros) were processed through the World Food Programme (WFP). Food aid for the Cape Verde Islands amounting to 800,000 euros was managed by the ADA on the basis of a bilateral agreement on food aid. Because of the precarious nutrition situation, the ADA provided
additional funds of 410,000 euros to famine-struck people in Mozambique and in the refugee camps of Western Sahara.

2. International Humanitarian Organisations

2.1. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is responsible for the development of the humanitarian policies of the UN, their promotion within the UN system and the international coordination of humanitarian aid and emergency relief. In addition to its headquarters in New York and Geneva, the OCHA operates a network of 38 field offices and regional offices. As only about 11 per cent of OCHA’s financial needs are covered by the regular UN budget, the rest is provided by voluntary payments by the Member States. Austria paid 97,000 euros to OCHA, thus more than doubling its contribution as compared to the previous year. Austria reaffirmed its commitment to the protection of internally displaced persons by its support of the Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division.

Austria continued to hold its traditional chairmanship of the Consultative Group of the Military and Civil Defence Unit (MCDU). As part of the UN Civil Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) training programme, 16 courses were held under the direction of a former Austrian army officer, half of the participants being civilian, the other half military experts.

The programme of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) system was supported through funds from the Federal Ministry of the Interior. Furthermore, an UNDAC further training course took place in Salzburg from 6 to 10 September and was attended by 80 disaster relief experts from European and African states. On this occasion, the UNDAC manual was revised.

For UN reform efforts in the humanitarian sector see Chapter F.

2.2. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with a staff of 6,885 employees in 116 countries and an annual budget of about 1 billion US dollars, is one of the largest relief organisations operating on all continents. The 56th session of the UNHCR Executive Committee, held from 3 to 7 October in Geneva, was marked by a debate on internally displaced persons. Within the UN system, the future leading responsibility of the UNHCR as regards internally displaced persons and their legal protection, accommodation and camp management was agreed.
In addition to its payment of 350,000 euros made to the core budget, Austria supports the UNHCR by funding concrete projects, such as a 400,000-euro contribution to a UNHCR project concerning the reintegration of women and children in Afghanistan.

2.3. The International Committee of the Red Cross

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) operated in more than 80 countries and its more than 11,000 employees, together with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and national relief organisations, made a decisive contribution to alleviating humanitarian distress. In March, the ICRC published a report on Customary International Humanitarian Law, its 5,000 pages listing 161 customary rules which impose legal obligations on warring parties. Austria supported the operational work of the ICRC in Ethiopia, Iraq, Pakistan and Rwanda by providing funds amounting to 1.35 million euros. Austria contributed 458,700 euros to the ICRC headquarters budget.

On 8 December, the signatory countries to the Geneva Conventions approved a Third Additional Protocol at a diplomatic conference in Geneva and established a new neutral Red Crystal humanitarian emblem, in addition to the Red Cross and the Red Crescent.
F. Global Cooperation – The United Nations

I. Introduction

The report by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan "In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All" on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration formed the basis of the debates at the 2005 World Summit, the central event in the UN’s Programme of Work. The report stressed the enduring relevance of the UN Charter, emphasized the interdependence of development, security, and human rights, and made proposals for a comprehensive UN reform. The work of the UN focused on the conflicts in Africa, combating hunger and poverty, and the fight against terrorism. Austria firmly supported the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission and a Human Rights Council, stressed the importance of energy as a means to accomplish the Millennium Development Goals, and expressed its regret for the lack of progress in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation. Austria is a candidate for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for the period 2009–2010.

II. The United Nations General Assembly

1. Procedural Matters

1.1. The 2005 UN Summit

The 60th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations was opened on 13 September and was chaired by the Swedish ambassador Jan Eliasson. At the centre of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) was the largest UN Summit in the 60 years since the Organization’s establishment, which was held in New York from 14 to 16 September and was attended by representatives from all 191 Member States, including 148 Heads of State and Government. Austria was represented by Federal President Heinz Fischer and State Secretary Hans Winkler. The debate focused on such issues as the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the fight against terrorism, and the UN reform. Other issues included the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission and a Human Rights Council, the responsibility of the international community to protect people from genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity (“Responsibility to Protect”), disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as environment and climate protection.

Some of the decisions of the UN Summit have already been implemented: for instance, an additional protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel was adopted on 8 December, the Central
Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was created on 15 December, and the Peacebuilding Commission was established on 20 December. The purpose of the latter is to close an institutional gap in the UN system and to advise and support countries in coping with post-conflict situations.

1.2. General Debate

Following the UN Summit, the General Debate of the 60th United Nations General Assembly took place from 17 to 23 September. In her speech, Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik stressed the role of the UN for peace and security, the reform of the UN, the protection of human rights, and the strengthening of the role of women, especially in the area of peacebuilding. Moreover, the Federal Minister described the "Responsibility to Protect" as great progress and praised the life-time achievement of Simon Wiesenthal in this context. In addition, she termed the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and a Human Rights Council agreed during the UN Summit as great progress, and announced that Austria would increase its contributions to development cooperation to 0.51% of GNI by 2010.

During the annual ministerial week, Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik also held bilateral talks with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, UN General Assembly President Jan Eliasson, Special Adviser Lakhdar Brahimi, and other leading representatives of the Organization as well as with the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Future Status Process for Kosovo Martti Ahtisaari. Further talks were held in connection with the Central European Initiative and the Human Security Network (HSN). As a member of the EU Troika, Austria also participated in meetings with Japan, China, and Iraq, as well as with regional organizations such as the OSCE and the Rio Group. In addition, the Federal Minister and State Secretary Hans Winkler met with representatives of Jewish organizations.

2. Political Affairs

2.1. Holocaust Remembrance

On 24 January, a special session of the UN General Assembly was held to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps. This was the first special session in the history of the UN dedicated to the commemoration of the Holocaust. The session was based on a joint initiative by Israel, the USA, the EU, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Austria was represented at the session by State Secretary Franz Morak and State Secretary Eduard Mainoni. Secretary-General Annan reminded participants that the UN was created as a response to the "evil of National Socialism" and appealed to their responsibility to prevent genocide and
human rights violations. Elie Wiesel spoke as a representative of the victims of the Holocaust. In his speech, State Secretary Morak stressed Austria’s moral share of the responsibility for the Holocaust. On 1 November, the General Assembly adopted by consensus a resolution on Holocaust remembrance. It is the first resolution dedicated to the Holocaust in the Organization’s history. In memory of the victims, the resolution designates 27 January International Day of Commemoration of the victims of the Holocaust. Austria co-sponsored the draft resolution.

2.2. Middle East

With regard to the annual resolutions on the Middle East, as in the previous year, the EU adopted a common voting policy, with the exception of the resolution on the "Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People" and the resolution on the "Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat". Unlike the other EU Member States, which abstained from voting, Malta and Cyprus, which are members of the above committee, voted in favour of these resolutions. The Palestinian side refrained from presenting the resolution on the “Situation of and assistance to Palestinian children”, from which the EU had traditionally abstained. In return, formulations on the situation of Palestinian children were introduced into the Resolution on “Assistance to the Palestinian people” that was sponsored by the EU and adopted by consensus.

2.3. Disarmament and International Security

The discussions on disarmament and non-proliferation in the First Committee were dominated by the failure of the Review Conference for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the negotiations on the relevant section of the final document of the UN Summit in December, as well as by the continuing paralysis of the multilateral bodies for disarmament and non-proliferation. Moreover, the debates were influenced by the treaty on bilateral cooperation in the civilian use of nuclear energy concluded between the USA and India. The discussions on nuclear matters were again characterized by the diverging views held by the nuclear-weapon States, which emphasized the importance of the non-proliferation provisions of the NPT, and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which stressed the disarmament obligations under the NPT and the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

As the country holding the presidency of the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Ottawa Convention), Austria made a statement in the debate on conventional weapons and introduced the traditional resolution on the Ottawa Convention. Active lobbying succeeded in convincing 144 co-sponsors, and 147 votes in favour were the best voting result for this
resolution so far.

2.4. Small Arms and Light Weapons

The working group on the negotiation of an international instrument to label and track small arms and light weapons (SALW) successfully completed its work in June. This is an important step towards the implementation of the UN Action Programme against the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons adopted in 2001. Due to the resistance from a few states, however, this instrument is only politically binding. The Latin American states expressed their dissatisfaction over the issue through collective abstention during the adoption of the instrument by the First Committee.

During the year before the Review Conference of the UN Action Programme (2006) there was a noticeable polarization between those states that urged for further rapid measures by the international community (in particular the EU, Canada, Switzerland, and African and Latin American states) and those that were not willing to accept any further measures or recommendations that would limit them in the definition of their national policies. Not least due to this fundamental division, the second SALW Biennial Meeting in July failed to adopt a substantial document.

2.5. The United Nations Disarmament Commission

The UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) in New York failed to agree on an agenda for its three-year cycle. The main problem was the formulation of the agenda item on nuclear disarmament. However, agreement was reached at the end of the year on an agenda for the next session of the UNDC in April 2006.

3. Economic, Development, and Environmental Affairs

The final document issued by the World Summit confirmed the Millennium Development Goals and adopted measures to accomplish these goals by 2015. The decisions of the EU to increase development contributions to 0.56% of GNI by 2010 and the G8 initiative on writing off the debt owed by 18 Highly Indebted Poor Countries to multilateral financial institutions (IMF, World Bank, and African Development Fund) constitute major steps in these efforts.

The Second Committee focused on the implementation of the development-related results of the World Summit. There was, however, controversy over macroeconomic aspects, and the WTO negotiations in Hong Kong (see Chapter J.I.) failed to reach consensus on the importance of international trade for development. Further progress was achieved in the implementation of the
results of the International Conference on Financing for Development through the high-level dialogue in June; a comprehensive review of the results is to follow in 2008/2009. The negotiations on the Resolution on the international financial system concentrated on systemic issues and on the participation of the developing countries in the decision-making process. The Resolution on Science and Technology for Development was dominated by the Conference on the Information Society in Tunis. Preparations were made for the high-level dialogue on migration and development to take place in autumn 2006, and for a review meeting on the implementation of the Brussels Programme for the Least Developed Countries.

The negotiations on the environment concentrated both on the results of the World Summit in September and on the Climate Conference that took place in Montreal in November. Apart from the traditional resolutions on conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification, and the institutional resolutions on the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and "Agenda 21", the Assembly also negotiated the biennial resolutions on development in mountain regions and on renewable energies (World Solar Programme). The Resolution on the Reduction of Vulnerability to and the Impact of Natural Disasters and Extreme Weather Events, which established a link between climate change and natural disasters, was again adopted. Also adopted were a resolution already passed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that had declared 2008 the "International Year of Planet Earth" and a resolution on the "International Year of the Potato" (also 2008) already negotiated within the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

4. Human Rights

See Chapter H.III.

5. International Drug Control and International Crime Prevention

See Chapters I.II. and I.III.

6. Social Policy

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development, the Commission for Social Development adopted a statement on the evaluation of Copenhagen. A special UN General Assembly plenary session was held on 6 October to observe the 10th anniversary of the World
Programme of Action for Youth. All resolutions on social affairs were adopted by consensus in the Third Committee and in the plenary session. A resolution on the protection and promotion of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities introduced by Mexico proposed two Ad-Hoc Committee sessions for elaboration in 2006 in order to allow for a full reading of the new draft convention.

7. International Women’s Affairs


8. Humanitarian Affairs

The reforms envisaged in the final document of the World Summit also included the ability of the UN system to act in the humanitarian field. The central concerns include the development of the UN's ability to manage humanitarian crises and a better coordination of aid measures on the ground. In view of the limited availability of aid material, efficient coordination constitutes a decisive contribution to a comprehensive, effective alleviation of the impacts of a disaster. The issue of funding humanitarian operations in the UN system is expected to improve with the establishment of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). The adoption of the resolution on the "strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations" has led to the creation of this fund. Austria co-sponsored the resolution. Endowed with an envisaged sum of 500 million US dollars, the fund is to become operational in March 2006.

9. Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

The meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) that took place in Vienna from 8 to 17 June focused on the agenda items "Space and Water", introduced by Austria, "Review of the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE-III)", and "Space and Society" (mainly in education). The topics of telemedicine, disaster management systems, nuclear power sources for space missions and reduction of space debris were discussed in the legal subcommittee and in the scientific and technical subcommittees respectively. The international community is becoming increasingly aware that space technology can make a significant contribution to the implementation of development policy objectives, especially in the areas of remote sensing,
mapping, and communications. Therefore, a series of measures were adopted to promote closer cooperation between COPUOS and the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Moreover, a study was commissioned to examine the possibility of creating an international unit for the coordination of space technology services for disaster management.

As in previous years, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs organised a symposium in Graz entitled "Space Systems: Protection and Restoration of Water Systems". An international group of participants focused on the experiences with space technology applications in the restoration of Lake Chad. Due to the high potential of these technologies, it was decided that the discussion on this set of topics be continued.

10. Administrative and Budgetary Affairs

The regular budget 2006–2007, on which agreement was reached on 23 December following lengthy negotiations, was the dominant issue of the Fifth Committee (Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions). For the first time, the biennium budget of 3.798 billion US dollars provided for an expenditure authorization for the UN Secretary-General limited to 950 million US dollars. The release of the remaining budgetary funds by the General Assembly will depend on the progress achieved with the management reform adopted during the World Summit. The implementation measures of this reform were the main contentious issue during the budget negotiations. The USA and Japan demanded that the budget be linked with a mandate review scheduled for the first quarter of 2006, as well as the implementation of the first phase of the management reform (creation of an Ethics Office, external evaluation of the Internal Oversight Services, and creation of an independent oversight committee). However, the Group of 77 (G77), a coalition of 132 emerging and developing countries, rejected any link between the budget and the management reform and was hardly prepared to make any concessions in connection with the UN reform. The EU, which assumed the role of mediator between the two parties, succeeded in proposing a balanced budget package that was eventually approved by both the USA and the G77.

The annual budget for peacekeeping operations from July 2005 to June 2006 increased to a record approx. 5 billion US dollars due to a massive enlargement of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the creation of a United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS).

Since the overall capital master plan for the UN Headquarters in New York cannot be implemented as scheduled with the construction of alternative
headquarters, there is disagreement over both the project strategy to be implemented and over funding.

11. International Law

The Sixth Committee (Legal Committee) focused on the issues of terrorism, the safety of United Nations and associated personnel, and the report of the International Law Commission during the "International Law Week". After years of negotiations, the Nuclear Terrorism Convention, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, and the United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts prepared by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) were adopted by consensus. Moreover, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration on Human Cloning by vote.

A number of Austrians work as judges in international courts of the UN system: on 22 June, Helmut Türk was elected judge to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in Hamburg by the States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Prof. Frank Höpfel has been working as an ad litem judge at the ICTY in The Hague since December. Renate Winter has been a judge at the Appeals Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) since July 2002.

11.1. Terrorism

After seven years of negotiations, the General Assembly adopted the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (Resolution 59/290) on 13 April. The Convention constitutes the 13th UN Convention on the prevention and suppression of international terrorism. Federal President Heinz Fischer signed the Convention for Austria at the UN Summit on 15 September. No agreement has been reached so far in the negotiations on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. In the final document of the World Summit, the Heads of State and Government declared their intention to conclude the negotiations by the end of the 60th UN General Assembly. Although a reference to the right of self-determination in the preamble was generally supported, the exceptions in the current Article 20 of the draft Convention remain controversial. A compromise proposal by Liechtenstein regarding the relationship between the Convention and humanitarian international law has brought some momentum to the negotiations for the first time since 2001, but failed to obtain the necessary support both by many Western and Islamic States. The negotiations will continue in the Ad-hoc Committee on terrorism to be held in New York from 27 February to 3 March 2006.
11.2. Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel

On 8 December, the UN General Assembly adopted the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel (Resolution 60/42) prepared by the Sixth Committee. The agreement, which was based on a proposal by Austria, was the first result of the implementation of the decisions taken at the UN Summit in September. The protocol will extend the scope of the Convention to all UN operations with respect to the provision of humanitarian, political, or development assistance in peacebuilding or emergency humanitarian assistance.

11.3. International Law Week

The International Law Week, named after an Austrian proposal, was held from 24 to 28 October and brought together legal advisers from capitals of UN Member States to discuss international law issues in the Sixth Committee. The debate on the Report of the International Law Commission focused on current international law issues, such as reservations to treaties, unilateral acts, responsibility of international organizations, expulsion of foreign nationals, shared natural resources, diplomatic protection, the effects of armed conflicts on treaties, and fragmentation of international law. Following last year’s success, Austria continued its series of events on the role and function of the Security Council in strengthening a rules-based international system, and together with the New York University School of Law organised a panel discussion on the topic of "The Security Council as World Judge?". The first two events of the series had taken place in November 2004 and May 2005 on the topics of "The Security Council as World Legislator?" and "Who needs Rules?". Moreover, within the framework of the Austrian-Swedish initiative to revitalize the debate in the Sixth Committee, two interactive discussions took place with Special Rapporteurs of the International Law Commission.

11.4. Ban on Human Cloning

By a vote taken on 8 March, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on Human Cloning with 84 votes in favour, 34 votes against, and 37 abstentions. Five states that did not participate in the vote stated their support on record. The EU did not have a common position (10 in favour; 14 against; one abstention). Austria voted in favour of the declaration. Despite its adoption by a majority, the political importance of this legally non-binding declaration is diminished in view of the split vote and support by less than half of the Member States. The central provision of the declaration calls upon Member States to prohibit all forms of human cloning inasmuch as they are incompatible with human dignity and the protection of human life.
III. The United Nations Security Council

1. Introduction

Membership of the Security Council in 2005 consisted of the five permanent members (China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) and the elected members Algeria, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Denmark, Greece, Japan, the Philippines, Romania and Tanzania. To replace Algeria, Benin, Brazil, the Philippines and Romania whose term ended at the end of the year, the 60th General Assembly elected Congo, Ghana, Peru, Qatar and Slovakia to the Security Council for the period 2006-2007. The large number of open debates enabled the EU Council Presidency to maintain the EU’s visibility in the Security Council. Austria made a statement on "Women, Peace, and Security", stressing the important role of women in the promotion and consolidation of peace and security. Austria thus demanded the participation of a gender consultant in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Following its membership of the UN Security Council in 1973–1974 and 1991–1992, Austria is now standing for a non-permanent seat for the third time. The elections will take place during the 63rd UN General Assembly in 2008. The other contenders for the two seats of the Group of Western European and Other States (WEOG) are Iceland and Turkey. To assist the intensive Austrian efforts, the Federal Government in August appointed former Federal Minister Peter Jankowitsch and former Federal Minister and parliamentary faction leader Herbert Scheibner Special Emissaries for the Austrian Security Council candidature.

2. The Reform Debate

In his report entitled "In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All" of 21 March, the Secretary-General supported the reform recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change of 2 December 2004 ("A more secure world: Our shared responsibility"), and called upon the UN Member States to reach agreement before the UN Summit. On 6 July, the G4 (Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan) tabled a draft resolution with a total of 27 co-sponsors, providing for the enlargement of the UN Security Council to 25 members - by adding six permanent and four non-permanent seats. Two of the permanent seats would go to Africa and two to Asia, and one to Latin America and the Group of Western European and Other States respectively. In a second step, the new permanent members would be elected by the UN General Assembly and would for the time being waive their veto right. Consequently, on 18 June the
AU introduced the draft agreed upon at its Summit in Sirte, which provided for the enlargement of the UN Security Council to 26 members. Contrary to the G4, the AU insisted on the veto right for the new permanent members and demanded a total of two permanent and five non-permanent seats for Africa (see also Chapter A.IV.9.2.). In response to the draft submitted by the G4, the "Uniting for Consensus" group which includes countries like Costa Rica, Canada, Columbia, Italy, Mexico, Pakistan, and Spain, on 26 July tabled a draft resolution with twelve co-sponsors which did not provide for new permanent seats, but for ten non-permanent seats elected for a period of two years. Contrary to the present situation, however, it provided for the possibility of immediate re-election of the non-permanent members. The USA, which is generally in favour of a permanent seat for Japan, as well as China and Russia, rejected voting within "artificial deadlines". The three draft resolutions were not put to the vote before the UN Summit, since none of the groups expected to receive the required approval of 128 Member States of the General Assembly at this point.

3. Work of the Security Council

3.1. Iraq

On 16 February, the UN Security Council congratulated the Iraqi population in a Presidential Statement on the course of the elections for a provisional National Assembly, for the 18 provincial governments, and the National Assembly of Kurdistan held on 30 January. The statement called upon the United Nations to urgently prepare for a role in promoting national dialogue and in the constitutional process. The Security Council urged Member States to provide the UN with relevant advice and technical assistance. On 11 April, the head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and SRSG Ashraf Jehangir Qazi and the USA reported to the Security Council on the situation in Iraq. The Special Representative referred to the participation of all major parties in the formation of a government, including those that had not participated in the elections. He added that the constitutional process was an additional opportunity to integrate those who had so far felt excluded. SRSG Qazi reaffirmed the readiness of UNAMI to assist in leading the efforts for further implementation of the very tight political calendar (elaboration of a constitution, referendum on the constitution, and elections). He criticized the human rights situation in Iraq, referring especially to non-combatants. On 31 May, the UN Security Council dealt with the review of the mandate of the Multinational Force (MNF) which according to Resolution 1546 (2004) had to take place after one year.

On 14 December, the Security Council discussed the work of UNAMI based on the quarterly report submitted by the Secretary-General. In his report, the
Secretary-General stated that he was confident about the official completion of the political transition process through the parliamentary elections on 15 December in accordance with Resolution 1546 (2004). According to the SG, the constitutional revision, which is provided for in the constitution itself and is to be carried out after the formation of a new government, must be used to increase the support of the population for the constitution and its institutions. The USA stated that the training of the Iraqi security forces by the MNF was scheduled to be completed by August 2007. Iraq pleaded for an increase in the UN presence in Iraq and asked the Security Council to terminate the mandate of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). On 14 December, the Secretary-General publicly expressed his concern about the human rights violations in Iraq.

The Independent Inquiry Committee (IIC) into the "Oil-for-Food" Programme headed by the former US Federal Reserve Board Chairman Paul Volcker accused, among others, former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali of disregarding UN procurement guidelines for apparently political reasons in connection with the award of contracts to companies during the development of the Programme in 1996. Although the Programme accomplished an alleviation of the impact of Security Council sanctions on the Iraqi population, the deficiencies and corruption cases revealed were detrimental to the credibility and reputation of the UN. Volcker demanded better management by the UN’s top officials, substantive administrative reforms, and more reliable oversight and audit mechanisms. The Secretary-General stated that he accepted the criticism expressed in the report according to which he had failed to fulfil his oversight functions. He subscribed to the conclusions of the IIC with regard to management reform and urgently called upon Member States to use the Summit for relevant decisions. The IIC final report published on 27 October confirmed that approx. 2,200 companies had made illegal payments to Iraq. The report provided details on how the Saddam Hussein regime was able to collect 1.8 billion US dollars in illegal fees and bribes. The illegal payments were made by companies from 66 states, including Austria. The Security Council had been informed but had not reacted appropriately. It was important to consider, however, that the Iraqi regime had collected far higher amounts from oil smuggling outside this assistance programme.

3.2. The Middle East

Contrary to previous years, the activities of the Security Council did not focus on the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, but on the situation in Lebanon. On 2 November, Terje Roed-Larsen, the SRSG for the implementation of Resolution 1559 (2004), stated in his report to the Security Council that some provisions of the Resolution had been implemented, in particular the withdrawal of Syriantroops (although the Syrian secret service maintained a limited presence), and that free and fair elections had been held.
Other provisions like the disbanding and disarmament of the Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and the extension of the authority of the Government of Lebanon over the whole territory had not been implemented.

On 7 April, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1595 which provided for the setting-up of an International Independent Investigation Commission to support the Lebanese authorities in the investigation of the bomb attack on former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri on 14 February. On 20 October, the Commission headed by German public prosecutor Detlev Mehlis reported to the Security Council on numerous indications that pointed towards an involvement of members of the Syrian security apparatus in the assassination. Consequently, on 15 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1644 which extended the mandate of the Commission for an initial period of six months until 15 June 2006.

3.3. Afghanistan

With the adoption of Resolution 1589, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) by another twelve months and called upon the mission to provide support for the upcoming parliamentary elections. On 13 September the Council decided in Resolution 1623 to extend the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) without changes by 12 months. In the wake of the Afghan parliamentary and provincial elections, the Security Council in a press statement of 23 November welcomed both the confirmation of the final election results as a step toward the completion of the Bonn Process and the consultations on the Post-Bonn Process initiated by the Government and the United Nations.

3.4. Kosovo

Following a comprehensive review of the standards, the Norwegian diplomat Kai Eide proposed in his report to the UN Secretary-General the introduction of a process for the solution of the status issue. In the future, the EU will have to play the major role in Kosovo, especially in the areas of police and justice, and should increase its local presence within a short time. In the UN Security Council, which supported the beginning of the Kosovo status process by adopting a Presidential Declaration on 24 October, China increasingly positioned itself in favour of Serbia and Montenegro. The USA attracted attention in particular with their repeated demand for a stronger role to be played by NATO. The head of UNMIK, SRSG Sören Jessen-Petersen (Denmark) announced a more intensive linking of UN and EU processes for the implementation of standards and European integration.
On 10 November, the UN Secretary-General appointed former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari as his Special Envoy for the Future Status Process for Kosovo, and former Secretary General of the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs Albert Rohan as his deputy. The UN Status Team has its seat in Vienna. Thereupon, the EU appointed the Austrian Stefan Lehne, a Member of the EU Council Secretariat as its Kosovo Representative, who will work closely with Ahtisaari and Rohan during the talks scheduled to take place at the beginning of 2006 in Vienna on the core issues of decentralization, protection of religious sites, and return of refugees.

3.5. Bosnia and Herzegovina

In his briefing to the UN Security Council in March, High Representative Lord Paddy Ashdown praised the excellent and seamless takeover of the military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the EU. On 15 November, Ashdown presented his last report as High Representative to the UN Security Council. In his report, Ashdown stressed the progress achieved, which allowed for the imminent start of the negotiations on SAA, but pointed to problems still existing in the areas of justice and the penal system. As in the previous year, he called upon the UN Security Council to establish a review mechanism for the dismissal of police officers carried out at the time by the International Police Task Force (IPTF). The Resolution on the extension of the mandate of EUFOR-Althea by another twelve months was adopted by consensus on 21 November.

3.6. Cyprus

After the failure of the referendum on the Annan Plan on 24 April, no new UN initiatives were put in place. Following a visit to the region, the outgoing Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Kieran Prendergast reported to the UN Security Council in June about highly diverging positions between the parties. On 14 December the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution on the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) by another six months until 15 June 2006.

3.7. Timor-Leste

On 21 May, the political mission "UN Office in Timor-Leste" (UNOTIL) established by Resolution 1599 succeeded the previous peacekeeping operation "United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor" (UNMISET). This symbolically ended the post-conflict phase in East Timor. UNOTIL consists of 130 consultants, almost all of them civilians, and focuses on the establishment of institutions to allow for the full takeover of all government functions by the Timorese authorities and the completion of the
state-building process.

3.8. Myanmar

The worrying situation in Myanmar was for the first time discussed in the UN Security Council during informal consultations, though not as an official agenda item. However, the Member States of the Security Council have still not reached an agreement on whether the situation in Myanmar constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

3.9. Africa

The trends of the last few years continued: Conflicts in Africa account for most of the work of the UN Security Council. This is also reflected in the fact that the major part of all soldiers and civilians involved in peacekeeping missions are stationed in Africa. Once again, the destination of one of the two trips undertaken by the UN Security Council to Africa was the Great Lakes Region. On the other hand, the Security Council increasingly sees its role as being complementary to that played by regional organizations such as the AU, ECOWAS and IGAD and assists in resolving conflicts through regional mediators.

The situation in Sudan was a major focus of the consultations of the UN Security Council, during which significant progress was achieved. After a comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed on 9 January, the UN Security Council on 24 March set up UNMIS consisting of up to 10,000 soldiers and a corresponding civilian component, including 715 civilian police officers, to assist the parties in implementing the agreement. Austria supported the establishment of the headquarters of the mission in Khartoum with five staff officers from the Federal Ministry of Defence. By adopting Resolution 1593 on 31 March, the UN Security Council took the historical decision to refer the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court to prosecute the war crimes and serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law identified by the International Investigation Commission on Darfur. Despite the AMIS II AU Mission, the situation in Darfur did not improve (see also Chapter A.IV.1.2.1.).

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the elections initially scheduled to take place in the first half of the year, which would have completed the transition process, were postponed until the first half of 2006. There were delays in several areas including the reform of the security sector, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of former combatants and in the preparation of the elections. The EU assisted the country in the reform of its security sector and the police with the EUSEC RD Congo and EUPOL Kinshasa missions (see Chapter A.IV.1.2.1.). The many armed groups
operating in the east of the country pose a special threat to the transition process and to regional stability. The brief presence of several hundred fighters of the Ugandan LRA led to a regional crisis, when Uganda threatened to invade the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the event that the latter remained inactive. MONUC was extended until 30 September 2006 and was strengthened and authorized to provide robust assistance to the army of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in fighting armed groups.

The transition process in Burundi was completed successfully with the holding of parliamentary elections that were won by the largest Hutu party, and with the subsequent election by parliament of its chairman Pierre Nkurunziza as President of the Republic. The UN operation in Burundi (ONUB) was extended until 1 July 2006 by the UN Security Council. Upon the request of the new Government of Burundi, the military component of the mission is to be significantly reduced by then. For the time being, Burundi will remain dependent on external assistance for the reconstruction of the country.

Only limited progress was accomplished in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. The country is de facto divided into a northern half under the control of the rebels of the "Forces Nouvelles" (New Forces) and a southern half under government control. The troops of the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the French "Licorne" units separate the parties and monitor compliance with the ceasefire. AU and ECOWAS assumed an active role in the mediation efforts; in April, the parties signed the Pretoria Agreement under South African mediation. The UN Security Council extended the arms embargo and the threat of sanctions, and imposed an import ban on rough diamonds from Côte d'Ivoire.

As of 31 December, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) terminated its activities that can generally be considered as successful. The reconstruction process and the fight against high unemployment, however, continue to present great challenges. By Resolution 1620, the UN Security Council therefore created the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) that will provide comprehensive reconstruction assistance to the government and ensure an effective coordination of all UN and international efforts. This office will generally serve as a model case for the Peacebuilding Commission created as part of the UN reform. Since then the protection of the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) has been guaranteed by a military unit, the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

The UN Security Council continues to regard the possible return of the ex-president of Liberia, Charles Taylor, as a threat to peace and stability in the region. By Resolution 1638, the UN Security Council mandated UNMIL to arrest Charles Taylor and hand him over to SCSL if he returns to Liberia. The
Security Council extended the sanctions against the diamond and timber sector because it continues to believe that the conditions for their lifting have not been met. In September, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of UNMIL until 31 March 2006.

There was no progress in the peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea, particularly with regard to the recognition and implementation of the Boundary Commission decision by Ethiopia. There was a dangerous aggravation of the situation in autumn after Eritrea had prohibited UNMEE to use helicopters, significantly limited the scope of movement of the mission and expelled European and North American mission staff. By Resolution 1640, the UN Security Council therefore called upon the Government of Eritrea to lift these measures.

There was no progress in the conflict over Western Sahara. The UN Secretary-General appointed Peter van Walsum (Netherlands) as his Personal Envoy for Western Sahara. The mandate of the United Nations Mission for the referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) was extended. The disastrous humanitarian situation caused by the government in Zimbabwe led the UNSC to deal several times with the situation in the country during informal consultations. Like Myanmar, however, Zimbabwe was not officially on the UN Security Council’s agenda.

4. UN Peacekeeping Operations

At the beginning of the year 17 UN peacekeeping operations were in place, with 94 states contributing personnel. In the course of the year, UNMIS was established, MONUC and the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) were considerably expanded, and UNMIK and UNAMSIL were significantly reduced. UNMISET was continued with a new mandate as UNOTIL, and UNAMSIL was succeeded by UNIOSIL. By the end of the year, the total military and police personnel deployed amounted to 69,838 persons. The largest operations were MONUC (15,046 persons), UNMIL (14,824 persons) and MINUSTAH (7,286 persons).

In total 1,234 Austrians participated in peace operations authorized by the UN Security Council. As of 31 December, 422 Austrians (383 troops, 15 military observers and 24 police officers) were serving in eight UN peacekeeping operations, and 530 military personnel in the Kosovo troop (KFOR) authorized by the Security Council. Five Austrians participated in ISAF, authorized by the Security Council, and 290 Austrians participated in EU-led EUFOR-Althea. By the end of the year, out of all EU Member States, Austria contributed the fourth-largest number of personnel to UN-led missions and peacekeeping operations after Poland, France, and Ireland, thus ranking 28th
among the 107 troop-contributing UN member countries.

Under Romanian chairmanship, the international cooperation in the framework of the SHIRBRIG project for a swift provision of personnel for UN-led peacekeeping operations, which Austria had co-founded, continued. The importance of this cooperation project was underlined for the forth time already, by the fact that the SHIRBRIG brigade command was deployed with UNMIS. Austria has been a full member of SHIRBRIG since 1997. Other members include Canada, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

IV. The Economic and Social Council

1. General Part

The session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) held in New York between 27 and 29 July was dominated by the imminent UN World Summit. Significant progress was accomplished in the implementation of the comprehensive three-year political review that aims at a stronger cooperation between the UN agencies, funds, and programmes at country level. Contrary to the usual practice, the results of the functional commissions and expert groups were not automatically endorsed, and the draft resolutions of the Commission for Science and Technology, the Commission for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and the Human Rights Commission were partly amended or rejected. The critical attitude of some states toward ECOSOC, and in particular the rejection of mandate extensions, the basic resistance against a resumption of the meeting, and the modification of commission results compromised the negotiation climate. Austria was represented in ECOSOC as an observer and will be a member from 2006 to 2008.

The coordination segment of ECOSOC dealt with the accomplishment of internationally agreed development targets. Round-table discussions focused in particular on a possible improvement of the way the UN system works, as well as on perspectives and strategies for achieving development targets. Although no agreement was reached on the requested multi-annual programme for streamlining the work methods of ECOSOC, at least the parameters for the programme were defined. The title "Sustainable economic growth for social development, including eradication of poverty and hunger", was adopted for the coordination segment 2006. The operative segment dealt with the implementation of the last Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities (TCPR) of the UN System, as well as with issues
relating to the financing of the funds, programmes, and special agencies. The discussions with the UN Funds and Programmes focused on the reform of the operational activities of the UN system. The humanitarian segment concentrated on strengthening the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance, discussing in particular organizational aspects and capacity issues, as well as experiences from the submarine earthquake in South-East Asia and East Africa. Contrary to the usual procedure, the general segment dealt once again with the result reports of the functional commissions and expert groups.

2. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

As one of the five UN regional commissions, the Geneva-based United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) focuses primarily on forging stronger ties between the economically weaker countries, particularly countries in transition and Central Asian countries, and the rest of Europe, especially in the areas of transport, environment, energy, human settlements, facilitating trade and company development.

V. The International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), which is responsible for dispute settlement between States, is one of the principal UN organs and has been based in The Hague since its establishment in 1946. The Austrian-born international law expert Bruno Simma who was nominated by Germany has been a judge at the ICJ since 2003. The number of cases before the ICJ has increased significantly in recent years.

While only one or two cases were dealt with in the 70s, eleven cases were already awaiting decision by the end of the year. The Court asserted its leading role in interpreting international law with the judgments on the violations of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations by the USA (2001 and 2004) and the Advisory Opinion on the construction of a wall in the occupied Palestinian territory (2004). The cases examined often involve border disputes, especially in former colonial countries, but also other international law issues. The ICJ rendered important judgments in 2005, such as in the case of Liechtenstein vs. Germany, in which the Court found that it had no jurisdiction to entertain the application by Liechtenstein, since in the Court’s view the facts giving rise to the dispute (alleged expropriation of property belonging to Liechtenstein in former Czechoslovakia in 1945) fell outside the Court’s jurisdiction ratione temporis. In late December, the Court found in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo vs. Uganda that Uganda’s military activities on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
violated the principles of non-use of force and non-intervention and that Uganda was therefore under an obligation to make reparation.

VI. The United Nations Special Agencies and Related Organizations

1. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The 33rd Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), held in Rome from 16 to 28 November, adopted the Programme of Work and Budget 2006–2007 amounting to 765.7 million US dollars. FAO General Director Jacques Diouf (Senegal), who has been in office for twelve years, was re-elected for another six years. Prof. Noori Naeini (Iran) was elected Independent Chairman of the FAO Council. Great Britain took over the chairmanship in the Programme Commission.

The 19th meeting of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), which took place in Rome from 13 to 16 April, adopted the financial strengthening of the areas of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), genetic resources, Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions, and bioenergy, as well as the work on the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food in the FAO Work Programme 2006-2007. The SARD initiative (initiative on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development) is considered an important instrument in carrying out the tasks of the Follow-Up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

During its 31st meeting in Rome from 23 to 26 May, the FAO Committee on World Food Security (CFS) pointed to the necessity to accomplish the Millennium Development Goals. The Committee reported on 36 countries, of which 23 in Africa, that are facing serious food shortages, and on the threefold increase in the number of natural disasters in the last 30 years. The Committee also recommended a stronger cooperation between FAO and other UN organizations, the development of evaluation instruments for a better assessment of needs in emergency situations, the elaboration of strategies against diseases (HIV/AIDS) and for the development of rural space, as well as assistance to member states in implementing the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food.

The theme of this year’s FAO World Food Day on 16 October was "Agriculture and Intercultural Dialogue". In view of the fundamental contributions of agriculture to human culture, the Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management together with the Ecosocial Forum Austria (Ökosoziales Forum Österreich, ÖSFO) and the ADA organised a discussion on the global nutrition situation entitled "Power -
Globalization - Hunger. Whom will Agriculture be Feeding in the Future?”. The speakers Franz Fischler (ÖSFO), Maria Kadlecikova (FAO), Fatima Shabodien from the Women on Farms Project in South Africa, and ethnologist Wolfgang Müller-Funk came to the conclusion that international trade and globalization as such do not contribute to the eradication of poverty and hunger: sustainable agriculture, a fair trade system, good governance, and human rights protection are decisive for a fair global development.

2. International Labour Organization

The 7th European Regional Meeting of the International Labour Organization (ILO) took place from 14 to 18 February in Budapest. The agenda included some of Europe’s central problems, such as youth employment, "flexicurity" (flexibility through security), migration, and security in old age. An informal ministerial meeting discussed issues concerning the social dimension of globalization. The 93rd Meeting of the International Labour Conference in Geneva from 31 March to 16 June adopted a plan of action for youth employment. An informal meeting of EU Ministers took place on the sidelines of the Conference on "Internationalization of Employment: a Challenge for a Fair Globalization?". Federal Minister Martin Bartenstein participated both in the International Labour Conference and in the informal EU Ministerial Meeting. In September, the UN included the ILO goals of "Productive full employment" and "Decent work for all" as general goals in implementing the Millennium Development Goals in the final document of the UN Millennium Review of the UN General Assembly, following a recommendation by the "World Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalization".

3. International Telecommunications Union

The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) is the initiator of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which is under the patronage of the United Nations Secretary-General, and is divided into two phases, Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005. The objective of the first summit in Geneva was to reach an agreement on a common vision and a global understanding with regard to all development aspects of the information society. Accordingly, a political declaration of principle and a strategic action plan were adopted. The setting-up of a "Digital Solidarity Fund", demanded by the developing countries, was adopted during the first summit, and the fund was officially established in Geneva in March.

The international preparatory conference "UN WSIS Contributory Conference on ICT & Creativity" took place in Vienna on 2 and 3 June as a
specifically Austrian contribution to the WSIS process, attracting high-level participation. Austria thus focuses on the previously neglected topic of "Contents – Creative Industries – Best Practices" and used the WSIS process for partnerships and cooperations. A "Vienna Declaration" was drawn up as a result of the conference that carried the theme "Bridging the Content Gap", which was presented during the second phase of the summit in Tunis.

The second phase of the World Information Summit, attended by representatives of various social interest groups and governments and international organizations (multistakeholders), was successfully completed from 16 to 18 November in Tunis with the adoption of the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society. Under the motto "ICT for Development", the global development of the information society was emphasized as an important instrument for the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals. Agreement was reached on the issue of the future administration of the Internet through a forward-looking compromise formula providing for stronger cooperation and the establishment of an Internet forum. Moreover, the summit decided to review all existing financing schemes for the use of ICT in order to promote development. With a view to raising awareness of this issue, the UN General Assembly was asked to declare 17 May as the "World Information Society Day".

Austria was represented at the summit with a government delegation headed by State Secretary Franz Morak and presented its own Austria booth, where various ministries and business enterprises, as well as Ars Electronica presented their products, initiatives, and achievements. One of the highlights of the Austrian presence was the ceremony for the "World Summit Award" (WSA) for content and creativity. During the WSA gala event, which attracted high-level participation, awards were presented to the 40 best multimedia projects from 168 countries. Moreover, the improved version of the "ICT Benchmarking Tool", a software for measuring a country’s ICT development status, which was financed and developed by Austria, was presented during the summit in Tunis.

4. International Fund for Agricultural Development

The central task of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), a special UN agency established in 1977 following a decision by the 1974 World Food Summit, is to mobilize resources to assist the poorest rural populations in the developing countries by granting loans at very favourable conditions and non-repayable subsidies. The major elements of this strategy are facilitated access to small loans, adjusted technologies, fair markets, basic infrastructure, health services, and primary education, especially in marginal regions. In the last 24 years, IFAD has financed approximately 600 projects.
worth 7.7 billion US dollars. The services of the IFAD are complementary to the loans granted by the World Bank Group and regional development banks.

5. **International Civil Aviation Organization**

In 2005, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), now consisting of 189 States Parties following the accession of Timor-Leste, focused on the further development and strengthening of the security of civil aviation. After several airplane crashes, especially those involving low-cost airlines, ICAO intensified its efforts in autumn with a view to removing deficits in the area of safety. In the field of challenges to security posed by external factors, the supervision programme was continued with inspections carried out by ICAO in 42 countries. No hijacking incidents or acts of sabotage were reported in 2005. Austria, a member of the ICAO Council for the period 2004–2007, contributed actively to these improvements and particularly supported a reform aimed at increasing ICAO’s efficiency. In connection with this reform project, an agreement was reached on a business plan setting out six specific strategic goals, the focus once again being on security and the environment.

6. **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

The implementation of the ambitious guidelines set by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the previous biennium with regard to international standards was successfully continued with the adoption of the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Diversity, the Convention on Anti-Doping in Sport, and the Bioethics Declaration by the 33rd General Conference that took place from 3 to 21 October. In addition, the General Conference appointed Koichiro Matsuura as Director-General of UNESCO for another four-year term and welcomed Brunei as the 191st member state of the organization. The Austrian delegation to the General Conference was headed by State Secretary Franz Morak, who also participated in the plenary meeting.

Günter Köck of the Austrian Academy of Sciences was elected member of the International Coordination Council of the "Man and Biosphere" (MAB) programme, while Prof. Karl Heinz Gruber of the University of Vienna was elected member of the International Bureau of Education (IBE). On 26 October, Austria’s representative Christoph Bazil from the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture was elected for a period of four years as a member of the new committee created in accordance with the Second Protocol to The Hague Convention.
The adoption of the Austrian draft resolution on the Year of Languages 2008, the recognition of the Vienna Woods as a biosphere park, and the association of the UNESCO with the commemoration days for Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sigmund Freud and Bertha von Suttner in the biennium 2006/2007 are further examples of success in the Austrian UNESCO year 2005. Following the submarine earthquake disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa, UNESCO and the International Oceanographic Commission (IOC) for the protection of coastal populations began preparations for a Global Early Warning System worldwide. The Convention for the Protection of Cultural Diversity was discussed and elaborated during two more meetings of government experts in Paris in February and in May/June. The European Commission was granted an extended observer status for the first time, allowing it to participate in the negotiations both as an independent negotiation partner and on behalf of the European Union. During the 29th meeting of the World Heritage Committee from 10 to 17 July in Durban, 24 world cultural and natural heritage sites from 29 countries were added to the World Heritage List, which now comprises 812 World Heritage Sites in 137 countries. The meeting also expressed special recognition for the Vienna Memorandum adopted during the Conference "World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture - Managing the Historic Urban Landscape" held in Vienna from 12 to 14 May.

7. World Health Organization

Apart from the annual conferences of the Executive Council (115th and 156th conference) and the World Health Assembly (58th session), the work of the World Health Organization (WHO) was dominated by the submarine earthquake disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa, the disastrous earthquake in Pakistan, and the avian influenza epidemic.

The 58th World Health Assembly held in Geneva from 16 to 25 May was opened with a concert by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, which has assumed the role of a WHO Good Will Ambassador for a period of five years. Federal Minister Maria Rauch-Kallat participated in the plenary debate entitled "Every woman and every child counts", during which she presented the priorities of the Austrian Council Presidency in the health sector such as "Women's health", "Diabetes", and "Tradition-based violence against women" (HTP). A highlight of the meeting was the adoption of the new "International Health Rules" (IHR) that will strengthen international cooperation in case of severe health crises. The previous health rules, dating back to 1951, no longer corresponded to the current challenges. The objective of the new text is to significantly increase the efficiency and transparency of measures by the national health authorities for the monitoring and early warning of as well as the reaction to crises, especially in view of a potential new influenza
pandemic. The 2006-2007 budget adopted by the World Health Assembly, showed a significant increase particularly in the area of voluntary contributions and amounts to approx. 3.3 billion US dollars. Apart from its regular obligatory contributions, Austria made voluntary contributions to the WHO Tuberculosis Control Programme for the Southern Balkans (30,000 euros) and the three WHO priority areas of "Women's health", "Making pregnancy safer", and "Injuries and disabilities" (300,000 euros).

Austria has ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control adopted in 2003.

8. International Atomic Energy Agency

The principal task of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is to promote research and development of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and its many practical applications worldwide and to verify observance of the commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Within the IAEA, Austria contributes particularly to the fields of nuclear safety, nuclear radiation protection and the IAEA safeguards system for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The issue that dominated the work of the IAEA during the year was Iran's extensive nuclear programme. Although the IAEA was able to clarify several issues, it was not possible to achieve a final assessment on the question of whether the Iranian nuclear programme serves exclusively peaceful purposes. A resolution proposed to the Board of Governors by the EU in September stated that Iran was violating its international obligations and demanded more openness and cooperation.

As a result of the doubts relating to the observance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by some NPT contracting states, the 49th IAEA General Conference held from 26 to 30 September dealt in great detail with strengthening the Agency’s verification system and measures to enhance protection against nuclear terrorism. In view of this, Austria once again focused on Safeguards Agreements. Similar to previous years, a resolution elaborated by Austria on behalf of the EU in this area was adopted by consensus. Another focal area was the field of nuclear security, in which Austria supported the resolution introduced under French leadership on "Nuclear Security - Measures to Protect against Nuclear Terrorism".

Shortly after the re-election of Mohamed El Baradei for a third term in office as the Director General of the IAEA, the IAEA and its Director General were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of their central role in international security and peacekeeping.
9. **World Tourism Organization**

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the leading international organization in the field of travel and tourism and serves as a global forum for tourism policy and as a platform for tourism know-how and statistics. The UNWTO is a bilateral body based in Madrid, and has been a UN Special Agency since November 2003. Following the decision to admit additional full members and the readmission of Australia and Great Britain at the XVI General Assembly, held in Dakar (Senegal) from 25 November to 2 December, the UNWTO now consists of 150 full members, representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations, and local tourism authorities.

Austria has been a member of the World Tourism Organization since 1975 and of its Programme Committee since 1995, in which it took over the chair in September 1999.

One of the main tasks of the UNWTO consists in the transfer of tourism-related know-how. Major events and programmes were organised, including the 3rd Forum on "Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty "(ST-EP) held in March. The ST-EP project was launched jointly with the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, with the objective of linking sustainable tourism with the elimination of poverty.

The General Assembly re-elected the Secretary General of UNWTO Francesco Frangialli for another four years in office. Moreover, the delegations agreed to use UNWTO as the new abbreviation for the World Tourism Organization to avoid further confusion with the World Trade Organization. The General Assembly also adopted the Programme of Work and Budget 2006-2007 that included two new work areas: "The ethical dimension of tourism" and "Development of e-tourism". For the medium and long-term strategic approach of the organization, the General Assembly approved the Agenda 2010 and the White Paper on "Development scenarios and forecasts for tourism until 2020".

10. **Universal Postal Union**

The Conference of the Postal Operations Council, the body of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) responsible for technical and operational questions together with the Council of Administration and the Consultative Committee, took place from 17 to 28 January at the UPU headquarters in Bern. This conference adopted the amendments of the regulations for the execution of
the agreements of the Universal Postal Union. These contain detailed explanations on the Universal Postal Convention and refer to the letter and parcel post services and postal payment services. The first regular session of the Consultative Committee, established in 2004 in Bucharest, took place on 26 January. This newly created body represents the interests of all stakeholders such as consumers, employee organizations, forwarding agencies, and private postal companies. The Consultative Committee, consisting of 19 members, meets three times a year during the conferences of the Postal Operations Council and the Council of Administration in Bern.

11. International Maritime Organization

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) comprises 166 Member States and three Associated Members. The Organization issues legally binding international provisions for the prevention of environmental damage from and greater safety in maritime navigation. The agenda of the 24th IMO Assembly in November included piracy, limitations for shipping routes in particularly sensitive maritime areas, elaboration of a binding legal instrument for the recycling of ships, and the protection against arrest and criminal prosecution of seamen following ship accidents. Austria’s interest in the IMO focuses mainly on sustainability aspects of maritime shipping, nuclear safety, and international standards to control trafficking in illegal immigrants by sea.

12. World Meteorological Organization

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) supports and coordinates the worldwide development of a meteorological and hydrological measurement and observation network. Moreover, it ensures an efficient exchange of data, i.e. in the areas of aviation, navigation, and agriculture, and works towards both the standardization of global weather monitoring and the development of early warning systems for submarine earthquakes and tsunamis. WMO’s numerous programmes and activities create essential conditions for environmental protection.
G. Global Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Means of Delivery

The strengthening and further development of international disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery are a clear goal of Austrian foreign policy. Austria therefore undertakes numerous efforts within the EU to assist and implement the universalization of the respective treaties and agreements. The fact that the NPT Review Conference in May ended without any results was a setback in the international efforts towards disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In contrast, the adoption during a diplomatic conference in July of a final document by the Conference on the Universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as well as of an amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) largely prepared by Austria can be considered positive developments. Austria held the chairmanship of the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA). The Austrian chairmanship of the Ottawa Convention ended in December after two years.

I. Arms Control and Disarmament in the Field of Weapons of Mass Destruction

1. Nuclear Weapons

The nuclear agenda was characterized by the failure of the NPT Review Conference in May and by open questions in connection with the Iranian nuclear programme.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) comprises 189 contracting states and represents the major pillar of nuclear non-proliferation. Only India, Israel, and Pakistan are not yet party to the NPT. Contrary to the previous Review Conference in 2000, the NPT Review Conference in May failed to agree on a substantial final document, and ended without any results. The Conference, the objective of which had been to the strengthen the NPT in its three pillars, i.e. non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, nuclear disarmament, and peaceful use of nuclear energy, led to a clear division of the international community. The nuclear-weapon states held the view that, in the current situation, priority must be given to the area of non-proliferation of nuclear material and nuclear technology as opposed to the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. In turn, several non-nuclear states, including Austria, underlined the necessity to attribute greater importance to the disarmament obligations of the five nuclear-weapon states stipulated in Art. VI of the NPT and to implement the "13 concrete steps"
agreed upon at the last NPT Conference in 2000.

The discussion on the **Iranian nuclear programme** dominated the summer and autumn sessions of the IAEA Board of Governors. Based on an IAEA report, the IAEA Board of Governors adopted a resolution on 24 September, which established Iran's non-compliance with its obligations under the IAEA Safeguards Agreement. According to the IAEA statute, this statement provides the legal basis for referral to the UN Security Council.

An amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (**CPPNM**) prepared under Austrian leadership represents decisive progress both in the area of nuclear safety and for the non-proliferation of nuclear material.

### 2. Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (**CTBT**) provides for a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests and the related nuclear chain reaction, as well as on all other nuclear explosions. So far 176 states have signed the CTBT and 126 have ratified the Treaty, including 33 of the 44 key States whose ratification is necessary for the CTBT to enter into force. None of these key States ratified the Treaty in 2005. By adopting a key resolution including measures to promote the entry into force of the Treaty, the Art XIV Conference represented one of the few successful developments in the area of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation this year.

The main task of the Provisional Technical Secretariat (**PTS**) of the Preparatory Commission for the organization of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (**CTBT PrepCom**) is to develop the Verification System provided for in the Treaty, consisting of 321 monitoring stations, 16 radionuclide laboratories, and an International Data Centre in Vienna. In the wake of the tsunami disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa, tests began with the aim of eventually providing seismic data for a future tsunami warning system (see also Chapter D.).

Tibor Tóth (Hungary) was elected as the new Executive Secretary.

### 3. Geneva Conference on Disarmament

This year, the Geneva Conference on Disarmament (**CD**), which is composed of 66 member states (Austria since 1996), was once again unable to overcome its crisis.
There is still no consensus on a work programme, which is why the long due negotiations for a "Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices" (FMCT) have not yet begun.

4. Chemical Weapons Convention

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which is composed of 175 member states, introduced a ban on all chemical weapons and made violations a criminal offence. It calls for the phased destruction of all existing chemical weapons by 2007 or 2012 by extension of the deadline. As to the destruction of the existing chemical weapons arsenals (in Albania, India, the Republic of Korea, Libya, Russia, and the USA) only the Republic of Korea (67% of its stockpiles) complies with the schedule defined in the Convention. Especially Russia and the USA are experiencing delays, so that only 17.23% (12,300 tons) of the stockpiles registered worldwide have been destroyed.

In addition, commercial enterprises are subject to regular controls in order to prevent any new production of chemical weapons. The EU Common Action has been supporting the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) since 2004, and contributed two million euros in 2005. Austria's competence and commitment were proved on several occasions, such as during the EU exercise "Joint Assistance 2005" in Lviv (Ukraine), through the continuous and active contributions to the topic of Challenge Inspections, and by heading the working group on Art. X CWC (Assistance and Protection Against Chemical Weapons).

5. BTWC

Signed in 1972, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) covers the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and their destruction. Efforts to strengthen the BTWC by creating a verification mechanism ended without any results in August 2001. Nor was there any progress in the field of verification in 2005, because some states with significant biotechnological research, in particular the USA, reject this programme. The meeting of the States Parties in December mainly dealt with the development of a Code of Conduct for scientists who carry out research in the area covered by the convention. A total of 154 states have ratified the BTWC, and another 16 states have signed it.
6. Ballistic Missiles

At the end of December 2005, membership in The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC) consisted of 123 Subscribing States. China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Israel, Pakistan, and Syria, however, have so far refused to become parties to the Code. The Executive Secretariat of The Hague Code is headquartered in Austria (Disarmament Department at the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs). This politically binding multilateral treaty, the only normative instrument in the area of the non-proliferation of ballistic and cruise missiles, mainly focuses on confidence-building measures such as the advance announcement of missile launches and annual reports on space programmes.

II. Restriction and Control of Conventional Arms and Weapons

1. Anti-Personnel Mines

Austria continued its efforts in the fight against anti-personnel mines both at a political and an operational level. The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Convention) was signed in 1997 and entered into force on 1 March 1999. A total of 148 states had ratified the Ottawa Convention by the end of the year. Austria welcomed this development as one of the driving forces behind the Ottawa process. The Convention is characterized by considerable progress and a dynamic process in implementing its goals in the areas of support to mine victims, mine clearance, destruction of stockpiles and universalization of the international standard against this type of weapon. At the beginning of the Meeting of the States Parties in Zagreb in November, Austria handed over the Chairmanship of the Anti-Personnel Mines Convention to Croatia.

The mine action programme of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, funded with 1.5 million euros, promoted mine clearance and destruction measures, awareness-building and mine victim support programmes as well as measures to strengthen the Ottawa Convention. In addition, a reorientation of the Austrian mine action programme was decided for the period 2006–2009. According to the new plan, the funds granted by Austria in the coming years will primarily focus on South East Europe and Africa, and will be increasingly linked to the compliance with and implementation of the Ottawa Convention.
2. **Excessively Injurious Arms and Weapons**

Austria is actively committed to the implementation of the obligations and to the further development of the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCWC). Work on the topics of "Cluster Munition" and "Mines Other than Anti-Personnel Mines" (MOTAPM) was continued at several conferences. Protocol V of the Convention on "Explosive Remnants of War" did not enter into force because not all the necessary UN language versions were available.

3. **Small Arms and Light Weapons**

The second biennial meeting on the implementation of the Programme of Action against the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), adopted by the UN in 2001, took place from 11 to 15 June in New York. The main result was the completion of a political, legally non-binding instrument for the identification and tracing of illegal SALW that was adopted by consensus by the UN General Assembly in autumn.

Consistently continuing the European Union's international leading role in implementing the UN Programme of Action, the European Council of 15 and 16 December adopted an ""EU Strategy to Combat Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of SALW and Their Ammunition". The EU is planning to increase its technical and financial assistance as part of its CFSP and development policy. Austria focuses on SALW programmes in South East Europe.

4. **Export Controls on Conventional Arms and Weapons**

In Austria, arms exports are governed by the Foreign Trade Act and – as *lex specialis* for war material - the War Material Act (Federal Law Gazette 540/1977). The 2005 Foreign Trade Act, Federal Law Gazette I 50/2005 (AußHG 2005), which also amended the War Material Act, entered into force on 1 October, and represents a significant improvement of the previous legislation in the area of arms export control. As a result of international law or political obligations, this law both adjusted existing regulations (e.g. import, export, transit, and brokerage limitations in connection with the transfer of arms) and covered new areas (e.g. control of intracommunity trade for certain goods and limitations on technical assistance that is to be provided outside the EU and serves a military end use). The reformulation of the approval criteria in accordance with eight criteria laid down in the politically binding EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports was an important step toward the improvement of credibility, continuity, and coherence of Austrian arms.
export control. The EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports, established in 1998, plays a central role in this process. The technical work aimed at extending the scope of the Code to include the control of brokering, transit, and technology transfer and upgrading the Code as a legally binding Common Position has been completed.

III. Multilateral Export Control Regimes

The primary objective of the current five control regimes is to coordinate national export controls to prevent sensitive technology and know-how from falling into the hands of states that could use them to pursue military aims. The main instruments under these regimes are lists of the relevant goods and/or substances and guidelines governing the export to non-member states. Austria is a member of all five regimes.

Nuclear-related exports are covered by the Zangger Committee (ZC) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). These comprise 35 and 44 members, respectively, and draw up lists of sensitive nuclear goods and equipment, in particular with the aim of preventing uranium enrichment and plutonium processing for non-peaceful purposes. The long-serving Chairman of the Zangger Committee, Fritz Schmid, died at the beginning of the year. The Australia Group (AG), comprising 39 members, assumes a similar function in the field of chemical and biological weapons. The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), consisting of 34 members, was set up to prevent the proliferation of ballistic missiles (guided missiles and cruise missiles) due to their importance as carrier systems for weapons of mass destruction.

The Vienna-based Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) plays a central role in the field of conventional weapons, dual-use items and the technology required to produce such weapons. Dorothea Auer is the first Austrian to hold the chair of the WA Plenary. The objective of this organization comprising 39 member states is peacekeeping through enhanced transparency and the avoidance of destabilizing accumulations of conventional weapons and dual-use items through voluntary information exchange.
H. The International Protection of Human Rights

I. Introduction

Austria devotes considerable attention to the promotion of the worldwide implementation of international human rights standards. Main focuses were the abolition of the death penalty, the protection of minorities, the rights of women and children, particularly in armed conflicts, the situation of internally displaced persons, the prohibition of trafficking in persons, the effective combating of racism and xenophobia, human rights education and the promotion of democratization and good governance. Austria made important contributions to EU bodies dealing with human rights, to international organizations such as the UN, the Council of Europe and the OSCE, and to bilateral political dialogue with governments throughout the world. In addition, it strongly advocated strengthening civil society and NGOs working in the field of human rights.

II. Human Rights in the EU

1. EU Human Rights Policy

The task of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy is to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and to protect human rights and basic freedoms. Questions arising out of the EU’s human rights policy are dealt with by the EU human rights directors in the Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM) and in cooperation with geographical working groups and the Human Rights and Democracy Committee chaired by the European Commission. Austria was particularly involved in the implementation and evaluation of EU guidelines regarding children in armed conflicts, the implementation of guidelines for the protection and promotion of human rights defenders, and the preparations for the establishment of a European Human Rights Agency. Moreover, Austria participated actively in discussions within the EU on the issues dealt with by the Commission on Human Rights, the UN General Assembly and EU country initiatives.

In addition to the Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict established in December 2003 upon the initiative of Austria, an evaluation was carried out under the British Presidency to comprehensively strengthen EU efforts in this area. The implementation of the Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders was a priority in the EU’s 2005 Work Programme in the field of human rights. The objective of the EU guidelines is to improve practical measures by the EU and its Member States for the protection and promotion of human rights defenders. In addition, a worldwide campaign on the freedom of expression
was carried out under the British Presidency. As a member of the EU Troika, Austria actively participated in EU interventions in over 20 countries in the second half of the year, which were aimed at the protection of severely threatened human rights defenders and journalists.

The **seventh EU Human Rights Forum** that serves the exchange of experiences between EU Member States, the Union’s institutions and civil society representatives, was held in December in London. The forum focused on the freedom of expression and dealt with issues such as what should be done in the case of impunity for attacks against journalists and of a "defamation legislation" to limit the freedom of expression. A working group was dedicated to the concrete implementation of EU Directives on human rights defenders.

The worldwide abolition of the death penalty remains a priority issue in the human rights policies of Austria and its partners in the EU. This aim is pursued both through general measures and through specific actions based on the [Guidelines for an EU policy towards third countries on the death penalty](https://europa.eu/europeaid/rdti/dil/index_en.htm) and through an increased focus on this issue in regional and international committees. As in previous years, the EU sponsored a resolution on the death penalty at the 61st Session of the CHR.

Another priority of the EU human rights policy is the fight against torture, to be implemented in particular through the EU [Guidelines against Torture](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/torture_en) adopted by the EU in April 2001. In compliance with these Guidelines, the EU undertakes demarches in states whose first report to the UN Committee against Torture is still due, and in those countries which have not yet reacted to a request for a visit by the Special Rapporteur on Torture. Moreover, demarches are undertaken also against states in which individual cases of torture have been reported. The Austrian human rights expert Prof. Manfred Nowak has been the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment since November 2004. The Special Rapporteur travels to individual countries, transmits appeals from individuals who are threatened with torture, and reports annually to the Commission on Human Rights and the United Nations General Assembly on the situation in prisons and detention centres. Austria submitted its third national report to the UN Committee against Torture and presented it in Geneva during a national audit on 16 and 17 November.

The preparation of [human rights country fact sheets](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/torture_en) that were proposed by Austria and drafted locally by the heads of EU missions continued, and the first updates were carried out under the British Presidency.

The EU human rights projects and programmes are implemented with the aid of [EIDHR](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/torture_en) funding amounting to 120 million euros, which is managed by the
European Commission in consultation with the Member States. The majority of EIDHR projects is subject to public tender and carried out by NGOs. The main topics include the human rights of women and children, the abolition of the death penalty, democratization/good governance/rule of law, combating racism and xenophobia, combating torture/impunity, and support of international tribunals and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The seventh EU Annual Report on Human Rights, which is co-written by all EU partners, was adopted in compliance with the Vienna Declaration of 10 December 1998. The report can be downloaded at ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/HR2005de.pdf.

EU election monitoring missions, organised by the European Commission, are an important component of the EU’s human rights policy. Since 2000, the EU participated in 43 election monitoring missions. Training seminars are offered for election observers as part of the EU project “Network of Europeans for Electoral and Democracy Support” (NEEDS). NEEDS seminars are also held at the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution (Österreichisches Studienzentrum für Frieden und Konfliktlösung, ÖSFK). In 2005, approx. 70 Austrians were involved in EU election monitoring missions in Afghanistan, Burundi, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Lebanon, Liberia, Sri Lanka, Venezuela, and the West Bank/Gaza Strip.

Further implementation steps were taken after the decision of the European Council in Brussels in December 2003 to expand the mandate of the Vienna-based European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) and its transformation into a European Human Rights Agency. Following the completion of its consultation process in January, the European Commission, in late June, published a proposal for a Council Regulation to establish a European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and for a decision of the Council to empower the Agency to exercise its activities in the areas described in Title VI of the Treaty on European Union. This proposal was negotiated in the Council. The ad-hoc Council Working Party "Fundamental Rights and Union Citizenship" was established on 7 July under the British Presidency. The date set by the European Commission for the Agency to take up work is 1 January 2007.

The Agency’s mandate proposed by the European Commission meets Austria’s expectations according to which the Agency’s main task will consist of service and consulting activities for EU institutions as a basis for its political and legal decisions in human rights affairs. By collecting data and elaborating analyses, expert opinions and proposals, the Agency is to support decision makers in the EU and to contribute to higher coherence in the EU’s human rights policy. The Agency will not carry out a continuous monitoring of the general human rights situation in the Member States in order to avoid
duplications with existing institutions. This kind of monitoring is already undertaken successfully by various international organizations, in particular the mechanisms of the Council of Europe and the UN.

The national working group set up for the negotiations on the establishment of the Agency for Fundamental Rights and made up of representatives from all ministries concerned (Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs; Federal Chancellery/Constitutional Service; Federal Ministry for the Interior; Federal Ministry for Justice; Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations, and Consumer Protection, as well as the Federal Ministry for Health and Women) is contributing to a successful, coherent Austrian presence both at a national level and in the corresponding European Forums.

The Agency for Fundamental Rights will continue to be based in Vienna, although both the current staff and the budget of the EUMC will be significantly increased.

2. Structured Human Rights Dialogues

In December 2001, the EU adopted Guidelines on human rights dialogues containing criteria for the initiation, conduct and evaluation of dialogue with third countries on human rights. It identifies different forms of dialogue: structured human rights dialogue, ad hoc dialogue, dialogue based on treaties (e.g. Cotonou) and consultations with like-minded states in preparation for major human rights events. As a supplement to these guidelines, COHOM agreed in September on a document to be reviewed every six months, which provides a survey of the different types of human rights dialogues and consultations describes the procedures and criteria for the initiation of such dialogues and defines a standard list of core issues for EU human rights dialogues.

2.1. China

The structured human rights dialogue that has been conducted between the EU and China since 1995 was continued in February and October at meetings of the EU Troika with representatives of the Chinese government. Austria was represented at the round of talks in autumn as a member of the EU Troika. The talks were supplemented by expert seminars on specific human rights issues involving participants from the academic world, NGOs and other representatives of the EU and China. Moreover, seminars were held on the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the freedom of expression, and on the death penalty. The EU-China human rights dialogue also regularly deals with the following issues, including specific individual cases: the prohibition of torture, death penalty, Tibet and Xinjiang,
and the exceptionally harsh persecution of supporters of democratic movements, religious groups and the Falun Gong movement. Both rounds of talk focused on the implementation of the Council proposals on the human rights dialogue between EU and China from October 2004. In its 2004 evaluation, the Council criticized the absence of progress, particularly regarding the death penalty and the freedom of expression. As a whole, however, the human rights dialogue with China was seen as a valuable instrument in the cooperation between EU and China. For this reason, Austria is in favour of continuing the dialogue.

Special Rapporteur Nowak paid a visit to China from 20 November to 2 December, which he described as being basically positive and constructive. According to his report, torture is still widespread despite a slightly declining tendency in urban areas. This visit represented the fulfilment of a long-standing demand by the EU. The EU now specifically insists on compliance with the proposals submitted by the Special Rapporteur.

2.2. Iran

During the second half of the year, the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as President of Iran led to a further deterioration of the already critical human rights situation in the country. The human rights dialogue that began in late 2002 practically came to a standstill. The fourth round of talks had taken place in June 2004 in an extremely tense atmosphere characterized by a lack of willingness to cooperate. Despite repeated initiatives, the EU no longer managed to continue talks with Iran. Austria attaches great importance to the human rights dialogue with Iran and supports its continuation - provided that there is a demonstration of clear commitment on the part of the Iranian authorities to improve the human rights situation and to promote the rule of law.

III. Human Rights in the United Nations

The World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993, provided the impetus for strengthening the UN’s operative human rights capacities. Austria particularly supports strategies to strengthen human security. Important instruments for promoting human rights as well as conflict prevention and the consolidation of peace include the establishment and strengthening of the rule of law, coupled with good governance, an active civil society and local human rights structures as well as far-reaching measures in the field of human rights education at all levels of society. The UN Summit underscored the protection of human rights as one of the UN’s central tasks. In order to fulfil this task, it was decided at the Summit that a Human Rights Council be established to replace the CHR.
1. The Commission on Human Rights

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) is the driving and coordinating force behind the universal human rights efforts and serves as a political signal. Its work forms the basis for the human rights activities of the United Nations General Assembly. Compared to previous years, the 61st session of the CHR, held from 14 March to 22 April, was characterized by a slight weakening of the usual confrontation scenario and a willingness to achieve consensus. The positive developments in the Middle East contributed significantly to this lessening of tension. There were no other external events that had an impact on the course of the CHR session. Although the fact that the EU refrained from introducing initiatives on the human rights situation in Zimbabwe and Chechnya and that the USA refrained from doing so on China had a positive impact on the atmosphere, it basically had a negative effect on the credibility of the CHR. At the same time, the conference focused on the debate regarding a reform, with both the UN Secretary-General and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, speaking in favour of a CHR reform. The statement of the UN Secretary-General on the loss of credibility suffered by the CHR was quoted by many delegations from the North and South for most diverging reasons.

The trend towards a reduction of confrontational country texts continued, especially because an increasing number of states from the South rejected the relevant agenda item "Human rights violations in any part of the world", making it very difficult to reach a majority for the corresponding resolutions - with the exception of those against politically isolated states like Belarus, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Myanmar. Therefore, country situations were increasingly presented under the agenda item "Technical Cooperation", which required the approval of the country concerned (Burundi, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan). Some situations (Afghanistan and Colombia) were also dealt with under the agenda item "Organization of the work of the session". Although these agenda items reduced the conflict potential of the CHR, severe and systematic human rights violations were not mentioned by the CHR, a fact that questioned its credibility.

Following intensive negotiations with the African Group, and despite massive initial resistance by the country concerned, the EU succeeded in significantly strengthening the text on Sudan submitted by the African Group. The text particularly condemns the continued violence against the civilian population, and calls upon the Government of Sudan to implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and to abandon support for the Janjaweed militia. These commitments by the African Group incited the EU to withdraw its initiative on Sudan, initially provided for under the agenda item "Human
rights violations in any part of the world”. In the case of Nepal, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of a presence by the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) in Nepal led to an agreement on a consensus resolution.

There were positive developments concerning several thematic initiatives. The Austrian resolution on minorities provides for the appointment of an independent expert for minorities to implement the declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in cooperation with governments. A new mandate, that of a CHR Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Combating Terrorism, was created. This mandate involves advice and technical assistance to governments as well as cooperation with relevant UN Units, including the Vienna-based Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). A Special Representative of the Secretary General was appointed for the area of the human rights responsibility of transnational companies. The CHR adopted major resolutions in the area of the rule of law: transitional justice, the right to truth, and the protection of civilians in armed conflicts. In the normative area, an important Catalogue of Principles for the Compensation of Victims of Severe Human Rights Violations was adopted. Still, a hardening of positions could be observed in some thematic resolutions, e.g. relating to racism.

This year, the EU was once again the most active participant in the CHR. A total of twelve declarations were issued by the EU on various topics, including the EU country statement and the general declaration of the EU in the High Level Segment (HLS). In implementing the conclusions of the General Affairs Council, the EU tabled country initiatives on the human rights situation in Belarus (together with the USA), in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (together with Japan), and in Myanmar. An EU text on the Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories was not tabled, due to the earlier initiative by the Arab Group. Moreover, the EU negotiated Presidential Declarations on Afghanistan and Colombia. The EU initiated thematic resolutions on children’s rights (with the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States), the death penalty and the elimination of religious intolerance (with reference to anti-Semitism). In addition, the EU held negotiations with the African Group with regard to the human rights situation in Burundi, Chad, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Sierra Leone and Sudan, and supported the Swiss initiative on Nepal.

Although Austria participated at the CHR as an observer this year, it was involved in the EU decision-making process. The Head of the International Law Department, Hans Winkler, represented Austria in the HLS. The two Austrian resolution initiatives on minorities and internally displaced persons were again adopted by consensus (see Chapter H.VII.4. and 5.).
2. The General Assembly

Work in the Third Committee of the 60th UN General Assembly was carried out in an objective and comparably quiet atmosphere. Austria once again presented thematic resolutions on the "Protection of Human Rights in the Administration of Justice" and "Minority Rights", which were adopted by consensus. The Resolution on Minority Rights welcomes the mandate of an independent expert on minority issues created by Austria at the 61st CHR and thus consolidates the progress achieved in the area of the protection of minorities. The Resolution on the Protection of Human Rights in the Administration of Justice focuses on juvenile justice and welcomes the "Guidelines for the protection of child victims and witnesses involved in court proceedings adopted by ECOSOC in July and the activities of the Interinstitutional Group on Juvenile Justice. The resolution also stresses the importance of the establishment and strengthening of the administration of justice in post-conflict situations and calls upon the UN Secretary-General to coordinate UN activities in this area by integrating the newly established Peacebuilding Commission and the Rule of Law Assistance Unit.

The EU presented country resolutions on the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Myanmar, Sudan and Uzbekistan, Canada on Iran, and the USA on Turkmenistan. All resolutions were adopted with the exception of the resolution on Sudan, which could not be put to the vote due to an accepted motion for non-action. An increasing number of countries, however, rejects the presentation of country resolutions for reasons of principle, and therefore presents motions for non-action. If these succeed, a majority of the UN Member States will thus be able to prevent the debate on situations of systematic, continued, and severe human rights violations by the only existing universal human rights body. Motions for non-action were introduced on Iran, Myanmar, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, which were, however, rejected by a small margin.

The resolution presented by the EU on the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was negotiated in close consultation with the country affected. The resolution condemns the severe human rights violations that were committed. In view of the elections, the government was urged to carry out the transition process in accordance with the "Global and All Inclusive Agreement" and to guarantee free and fair elections at all levels. The Democratic Republic of the Congo voted in favour of adopting the resolution. The resolution on Uzbekistan expresses grave concern about the continued gross human rights violations in the country, especially in connection with the events in Andijan in May (see Chapter A.IV.10.1.2., B.I.1.2., and B.II.2.6.). The government is called upon to cooperate with the international community and in particular with the OHCHR. The UN General
Assembly also expressed grave concern over the continued systematic human rights violations in Myanmar and called on its government to stop these. The UN Secretary-General was asked to continue providing good services, to assist his Special Envoy Razali Ismail and the CHR Special Rapporteur Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro in fulfilling their mandate, and to report to the next UN General Assembly and CHR on the situation in Myanmar. With regard to Turkmenistan, the UN General Assembly expressed grave concern over the continued and severe human rights violations, and called on the government of Turkmenistan to ensure the protection of human rights and basic freedoms and to implement the relevant resolutions of the CHR and the UN General Assembly. The serious human rights situation in Iran was also condemned, and concrete measures to protect human rights were demanded from the Iranian government.

The EU presented two thematic resolutions. The resolution on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance that, as in the previous year, made reference to anti-Semitism and the importance of dialogue between civilizations and religions, was adopted by consensus. The resolution on the Rights of the Child presented together with Latin American countries dealt comprehensively with the protection of the interests of children. A section on the problem of children and HIV/AIDS was introduced in the resolution as a new topic. The mandate of the SRSG for children and armed conflicts was extended for another three years.

Important thematic resolutions on the prohibition of torture, the fight against terrorism, human rights defenders, and the protection of internally displaced persons were once again adopted by consensus. Cuba again presented a resolution on the Right to Food that was co-sponsored by the EU and was adopted with only one vote against. The EU also co-sponsored the resolution on the Right to Development presented by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Informal consultations took place in parallel to the work of the Third Committee on the establishment of a Human Rights Council, which were headed by the permanent representatives of Panama and South Africa on behalf of the President of the UN General Assembly. The negotiations were interrupted on 22 December and will be resumed in January 2006.

3. The Commission on the Status of Women

The 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) focused on the 10th anniversary of the World Conference on Women in Beijing. During the first week of the 14-day session of the Commission, 1,800 members of government delegations were represented, of which 93 were ministers.
The political declaration adopted at the end of the Ministerial Week, which reaffirmed the Conferences of Beijing and Beijing+5, can be considered a success due to the reaffirmation of these conferences. The USA issued a declaration dissociating itself from the consensus.

The Austrian delegation was headed by Federal Minister Maria Rauch-Kallat. Austria presented its Protection against Domestic Violence Act and its model of “Intervention Agencies against violence in the family” during an informatory meeting on the topic of "Protection-Provision-Prevention: Austrian and European Models of Preventing Violence against Women and Children in the Family". Austrian NGOs were also represented in large numbers. Austria was represented at the Conference of the Interparliamentary Union in connection with the CSW by MPs Ridi Steibl (ÖVP), Gabriele Heinisch-Hosek (SPÖ), Brigid Weinzinger (Grüne) and Elke Achleitner (FPÖ).

The majority of the resolutions on women’s issues were adopted by consensus both by the Third Committee and the Plenary of the United Nations General Assembly. The resolutions on the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and on the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (the conference duration of which was considerably increased for 2006 for a faster treatment of the national reports) had to be put to the vote due to their budgetary impact.

Resolution 1325 (2000) of the UN Security Council calls for the involvement of women in all phases of peace processes, including all peacekeeping and peace-building measures, especially in leading positions. Great importance is attached to the training of personnel in peacekeeping operations to prevent cases of sexual exploitation during deployment. HIV/AIDS during peacekeeping operations is an important topic. The UN adopted stricter measures in July, calling for "zero tolerance" in case of abuse. Following an EU decision in October to implement this resolution, further specification began in connection with the implementation of current and the planning of future ESDP missions. Women should not only be perceived as victims, but must be involved as players in all phases of peace processes. Austria participates in the efforts to consider the demands contained in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) in ESDP and OSCE missions. Moreover, Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik and other foreign ministers sent a letter to the UN Secretary-General in September, in which they demand this consideration in the new UN Peacebuilding Commission.
IV. Human Rights in the OSCE

See Chapters B.II.3., as well as H.VII.3. and H.VII.4.

V. Human Rights in the Council of Europe

The protection of human rights in the framework of the Council of Europe is essentially based on the European Convention on Human Rights and the work of the European Court of Human Rights. The increase in the number of Member States from 23 in 1989 to 46 in 2005, together with the direct access to the Court by individual applicants, as well as the increased awareness as a result of the greater public impact of the human rights system, have resulted in a rapid rise in the number of applications. In 1989, some 4,000 individual applications were made, compared with around 40,900 in 2005. A number of reforms have become necessary to safeguard the functioning of this central body for the protection of human rights in Europe. At its 114th session on 12 May, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe therefore adopted Protocol No. 14 to the Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms on changes to the control system of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Basic Freedoms. Austria signed the Protocol on 10 November, the adoption by the National Council followed on 7 November, and by the Federal Council on 22 December.

Alvaro Gil-Robles, the European Commissioner for Human Rights, continued his visits to Member States of the Council of Europe, travelling to Italy, Spain and other countries. His task is to provide advice, to promote education in and awareness of human rights in the Member States of the Council of Europe, and to identify and draw the attention of Member States and the Committee of Ministers to fundamental or system-inherent shortcomings and problems. In October, the Swede Thomas Hammarberg was elected as successor to Gil Robles; he will take up his duties in April 2006. After the entry into force of Protocol No. 14, the Commissioner for Human Rights will also be able to submit comments to the decision-making bodies of the ECHR (Chambers and Grand Chamber).

VI. The Human Security Network

The Human Security Network (HSN) is a supraregional, interdisciplinary interest group of 14 states in which the Foreign Ministers of Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland, South Africa (observer) and Thailand work together with representatives of the scientific community and civil society. Thailand took over the HSN chairmanship from Canada in May.
The political concept of “human security” focuses on the security needs and requirements of the individual. Human rights, international humanitarian law and refugee law are essential components of human security. During its term as Chair of the HSN from July 2002 to May 2003, Austria concentrated in particular on the issues of human rights education and children in armed conflicts. A number of fundamental documents on these issues were adopted, such as the "Graz Declaration on Principles of Human Rights Education and Human Security", the HSN Manual "Understanding Human Rights" on human rights education, a strategy paper in support of the rights of the child ("HSN Support Strategy for Children Affected by Armed Conflict") and training curricula. Austria continued its engagement in these two focal areas.

This year's ministerial meeting in Ottawa from 18 to 20 May, concluding the Canadian Presidency, was dominated by discussions on the UN reform, focusing in particular on the inclusion of the human security aspect in the report of the UN Secretary-General on the UN reform. Moreover, a study was presented on armed groups and SALW in West Africa. Costa Rica was admitted as a new member, and the Presidency was handed over to Thailand which presented an ambitious work programme. The programme attached great importance to the Austrian priorities, especially to topics like landmines, human rights education, children in armed conflicts and small arms. Apart from HIV/AIDS and greater consideration of the development aspects of human security, Thailand intends to concentrate on the issue of trafficking in persons.

The HSN Ministerial Meeting on the sidelines of 60th Session of the General Assembly in New York adopted the "HSN Guidelines for Cooperation on HIV and AIDS Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support with Focus on Young People and Health Systems". These guidelines also contain an agreement on closer cooperation between states and with civil society, and on a general knowledge exchange on the topic of HIV/AIDS. Moreover, the Meeting adopted a new Medium Term Work Plan for 2005 to 2008.

VII. Focuses

1. Rights of the Child

The topic of children in armed conflicts is one of the priorities of Austrian human rights policy. Austria further develops the training curriculum for civil and military missions abroad, which will also be used in the priority countries of Austrian Development Cooperation. Within the EU, Austria is actively involved in the evaluation of the guidelines for the protection of children in
armed conflicts. The most important recommendations include: support for UN Security Council Resolution 1612 on Children in Armed Conflicts; consideration of the gender perspective in the reports on children in armed conflicts; consistent consideration of children in armed conflicts in the EU system; training on children in armed conflicts in EU and national training programmes, as well as the regular evaluation of the implementation of the guidelines.

Austria supported efforts in the UN to create systematic and coordinated reporting and monitoring mechanisms for children affected by armed conflicts. Resolution 1612 establishes a comprehensive monitoring and reporting mechanism, and strengthens the rights of children in armed conflicts in all peacekeeping operations. Projects linked to the rights of the child were also carried out as part of Austria’s development cooperation activities, with financing mainly devoted to projects for the reintegration and rehabilitation of war-traumatized children in Afghanistan, the Balkans, and Iraq. A project for the rehabilitation of former child soldiers in Northern Uganda and children orphaned or otherwise traumatized by the civil war was made possible through co-financing by the Austrian Development Cooperation scheme. In compliance with the commitment undertaken at the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Children in 2002, the implementation of the National Plan of Action on the Rights of the Child is being managed by an interministerial working group in which the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs is participating.

2. Women’s Rights

The UN Secretary-General was assigned a comprehensive study on "Violence against Women", a priority of Austrian human rights policy, which will reintroduce an objective debate both in the CSW and in the UN General Assembly. This study was co-funded by Austria with 90,000 euros.

3. Combating Racism

The third report of the European Commission on Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe on Austria, and Austria’s remarks on the report were published on 15 February. A round table organised by ECRI took place in Vienna on 13 September, the topics of which included the report on Austria and the implementation of legal measures to combat discrimination.

The head of the International Law Department, Hans Winkler participated in the OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism and other Forms of Intolerance in
Europe in Cordoba on 8 and 9 June, and delivered speeches on "Political Education and Further Teacher Training on National Socialism and Holocaust in Austria" and on "The Islamic Religious Community in Austria".

4. **Protection of Minorities**

Following long years of engagement in the field of minorities within the UN, Austria could achieve a significant success at the 61st session of the CHR: The Resolution on the "Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities" traditionally presented by Austria was adopted by consensus on 21 April and its call on the High Commissioner for Human Rights to appoint an independent expert on minority issues creates a special mechanism for the protection of minorities. The mandate includes the demand to implement the declaration on the Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and the identification of best practices and possible technical cooperation with OHCHR. On 29 July, High Commissioner Arbour appointed US-American Gay McDougall as an Independent Expert. This meant the fulfilment of an objective long pursued by Austria, i.e., the establishment of a UN mandate on minorities.

The UN General Assembly adopted by consensus the resolution also presented by Austria on the "Effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities".

5. **Internally Displaced Persons**

The protection of internally displaced persons has been one of the priorities of Austrian human rights policy for over ten years now. Austria supports the mandate of the SRSG on internally displaced persons, in particular by submitting resolutions to the CHR and UN General Assembly, and makes substantial contributions to promoting the further strengthening of the standard of protection for over 25 million internally displaced persons worldwide. In January 2004, an Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division was established at OCHA to coordinate all UN Agencies involved in matters relating to internally displaced persons. The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement also provide international protection standards for persons who have been displaced from their homes as a result of natural disasters. The SRSG for IDPs, Professor Walter Kälin is developing model legislation for the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement in national legislation. Austria supports the development of this model legislation as an important instrument for states in order to adequately
respond to the situation of internally displaced persons.

6. Human Rights Education

The **UN World Programme for Human Rights Education** has been in place since December 2004 as a follow-up to the Decade of Human Rights Education. The first phase of the programme was defined for the years 2005–2007. An Action Plan was adopted by consensus by the UN General Assembly in July, which will focus on human rights education in primary and secondary schools. The Austrian manual on human rights education entitled "Understanding Human Rights" is a tool that can be used worldwide and provides stimuli for further development by users from all cultural backgrounds. The manual has been translated into other languages, including a Chinese version in February, a Russian and Croatian version in August and September, and a Serbian version in October. Preparations have begun for planned translations into Italian, Macedonian, Portuguese, Slovenian, and Thai. The European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (ETC) conducted several train-the-trainer courses in Austria and other countries with the financial support of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. There were, for instance, working sessions in Pristina (Kosovo) for the Albanian version, a presentation of the Chinese translation in Beijing in February, a working session in Bamako (Mali), and a one-week training programme for Human Rights Focal Points in Moldova on the initiative of the UNDP Moldova. Finally, an Arabic translation was presented during a working session in Beirut (Lebanon). Another project initiated by the ETC is the development of an electronic distance education programme that will be made available via the Internet based on the Human Rights Manual.
I. The Humanitarian Dimension in International Relations

I. Migration and Refugee Issues

1. Migration and Refugee Movements in and to Europe

The total number of refugees was estimated by the UNHCR at 8.4 million worldwide, a million less than in the year before and the lowest figure in 26 years. Nevertheless, the total number of persons protected and supported by the UNHCR rose by 1.3 million to 20.8 million: Apart from those refugees who cross an international border and thus automatically fall under the UNHCR mandate, there are an estimated 25 million people who are displaced within their own countries because of domestic armed conflicts. In 2005, the UNHCR supported approx. 6.6 million of these internally displaced persons, and thus 1.2 million more than in 2004.

The number of asylum seekers worldwide showed a marked decrease: around 331,600 persons applied for refugee status in industrialized countries, some 15% per cent fewer than in the previous year. The number of applications for refugee status in the EU also declined significantly: The number of applications fell to 237,840, which corresponds to a minus of 16% and is the lowest level since 1988. With a total of 22,471 (-9%) applications for refugee status, Austria ranked below the EU average, while in absolute figures it occupied the fifth place worldwide, and measured per 1,000 inhabitants (18.2), it came third after Cyprus and Malta. Most asylum seekers in the industrialized countries came from Serbia and Montenegro (almost unchanged with 21,900), Russia, mostly Chechnyans (21,500, minus 30%), followed by China (18,300, minus 9%), Iraq (12,500, plus 27%), and Turkey (11,600 minus 27%).

2. Refugee and Migration Policy in Austria

In its refugee and migration policy, Austria places emphasis on a holistic approach in which political, human rights and development aspects are taken into account. In line with UNHCR recommendations, no deportations are made to Iraq, Afghanistan, and a number of other countries.

The total number of applications for refugee status was 22,471, corresponding to a 9% decline. Around 18,546 applications were dealt with, of which 4,435 were recognized, and 5,566 refused. The remaining cases were abandoned, withdrawn, dismissed, or became irrelevant. With account being taken of the legally binding refoulement decisions, this is equivalent to a recognition quota of 28 per cent. Serbia and Montenegro were the most common countries of
origin, with 4,408 applicants, followed by Russia (4,359), India (1,530), Moldova (1,210), Turkey (1,067), Georgia (953), Afghanistan (928), Nigeria (881), Mongolia (641), and Bangladesh (548).

The new Federal Law on Asylum, Federal Law Gazette I No. 100/2005 (AsylG 2005) was published on 1 January 2006, and will enter into force on 1 January 2006. The activities of Austrian representations in asylum procedures (only family reunification procedures) and in offering administrative assistance for asylum proceedings to domestic asylum authorities remained unchanged. A new element is the involvement of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the advisory council for documentation on the states of origin (Staatendokumentation) in accordance with Article 60 of the Asylum Act (AsylG 2005).

3. International Organization for Migration

The International Organization for Migration (IOM), which was founded in 1951 by European states, is today the most important international organization for migration issues. In addition to its traditional tasks of registering and transporting refugees, it has taken on a number of new tasks connected with emergency and post-conflict situations in recent years. The IOM is also becoming increasingly important as a platform for the political exchange of information on the development of a sustainable migration management, going beyond legislation on foreigners to include economic and humanitarian aspects, and allowing a better use of existing initiatives and their effective coordination. With the accession of Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameroon, Gabon, Ghana, Jamaica, and Togo in 2005, the total number of IOM members has risen to 116, including all EU Member States with the exception of Spain, which, however, announced its intention to rejoin the IOM in 2006.

The IOM provided valuable help during the crisis in Darfur and the submarine earthquake disaster in South-East Asia and East Africa. IOM Director General Brunson McKinley visited Austria on 12 April and held talks with Federal Minister Liese Prokop and Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs Johannes Kyrle.

II. International Drug Control

Drug abuse remains a global threat, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) combats all aspects (cultivation, production, trade and consumption) and criminal side effects using a balanced set of measures.
designed to reduce supply and demand.

The 48th Session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) from 7 to 11 March showed a continuation of the conflicting views held by supporters and opponents of measures to minimize the damaging after-effects of drug use on health in the prevention of HIV/AIDS. Despite positive experience reports on syringe exchange in the prevention of HIV/AIDS, there is still resistance from those countries in which prevention is only based on abstinence. The cooperation between the EU and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC) was reflected in two jointly developed resolutions on measures of alternative development in the sustainable fight against drug cultivation and illicit trade with chemical precursors required for the production of drugs. The resumed session of the 48th CND from 7 to 9 December adopted a budget of 182.4 million US dollars for the drug fund for the period 2006-2007. The consolidated UNODC 2006-2007 draft budget provides for an increase in financing by 18% to 230 million euros, largely based on increases in voluntary contributions to the crime prevention fund. Moreover, Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa was called upon to continue the development of a comprehensive strategy for UNODC to give a more long-term approach to the activities of the Office. This will require a medium-term increase of general purpose funds as compared to earmarked contributions by member states for individual projects.

The publications by UNODC provide extensive background information for a better understanding of the world drug problem and for the analysis of trends and developments. The studies on drug cultivation revealed a concentration on a few countries: Afghanistan for opium poppy, and three Andean states for coca. Although a significant decrease in coca cultivation in the Andes Region and in opium poppy cultivation in Laos and Myanmar has been achieved since the nineties, Afghanistan continues to pose the greatest problem in the global drug market. After the record year 2004, there was a decline in the area of cultivation for opium poppy by approximately one fifth, yet opium production in Afghanistan remained almost at the same level as in the previous year as a result of higher yields. Afghanistan remains the largest opium producer in the world, accounting for 87% of worldwide opium production, and 1.4% of the country’s total adult population are opiate consumers themselves. Despite some success with regard to the cultivation area, opium production, accounting for approx. 60% of total economic output, is expected to remain an important economic factor in Afghanistan, at least in the medium term. Although global production trends remain stable for opium and are declining for coca, an increase is expected for cannabis and synthetic drugs (ATS). West and North Africa are becoming increasingly important as a transit or origin region in the supply of the European drug market with cocaine and cannabis.
On the demand side, cannabis was the most widely consumed illicit drug. The area of problematic drug use (meaning drug use with serious impact on the user, often accompanied by addiction and health, social and legal consequences) worldwide was dominated by opiates, especially in Europe and Asia, and by cocaine in North and South America. In Africa, however, most treatments were linked to cannabis consumption. UNODC forecasts an increase in the consumption of cannabis, stabilization in the use of opiates, cocaine, and amphetamines, and a decline of ecstasy consumption. There were regional deviations from the worldwide trend, such as, for instance, an increase in the consumption of cocaine in Europe.

For the 2005 World Drug Report, the UNODC provided an estimate of the financial value of the world drug market for the first time. Measured at consumer prices, the value of the illegal world drug market (260 billion euros) exceeds the gross domestic product of 88 percent of the world’s economies.

Until July, the UNODC held the annual rotating chairmanship of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations within the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). The latest research results in Asia and Eastern Europe on the correlation between HIV/AIDS and drug use refute the assumption that knowledge of the risk of HIV/AIDS among intravenous drug users leads to less risky behaviour. According to estimates, 5–10% of HIV infections worldwide are linked to intravenous drug use. In many Asian, Eastern European, and South American countries, intravenous drug abuse represented the main source of HIV transmission.

In November, the UN Vienna Civil Society Award established in 1999 by the UNODC, the Municipality of Vienna, and the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs for outstanding achievements by representatives of the civil society was presented to three NGOs: the association "Mothers against Drugs", created upon a self-help initiative by affected women and mothers, provides assistance to young drug addicts and prisoners infected with HIV/AIDS in Belarus. "Albergue Infantil de Bogotá" from Colombia helps street children escape from drug use and dealing. The "Rebirth Charity Organization" founded by former drug addicts from Iran offers a special treatment and rehabilitation programme for drug addicts in eleven Iranian provinces.

III. International Crime Prevention

Fewer state controls, the abolition of borders and the free movement of goods and persons not only offer more freedom of movement for businesses but also provide organised criminal groups with more scope for action. Increased international cooperation in countering cross-border organised crime is needed as a counterweight to these undesired side effects of globalization.
Some 3,000 delegates met at the XI United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice that took place between 18 and 25 April in Bangkok. The Congress, that takes place every five years, ended with the adoption of a political final document (Bangkok Declaration). The main topics of the Congress were terrorism, organised crime, and corruption. In the fight against terrorism, Austria successfully promoted the definition of the Nuclear Terrorism Convention previously negotiated in New York as the 13th UN Legal Instrument, which extends the mandate of the Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) of UNODC to this Convention. Moreover, Austria particularly contributed to the debate on UN Standards and Norms, stressing their key role for criminal law reforms, in maintaining the rule of law, and for the protection of basic rights, e.g. in the treatment of prisoners and in juvenile criminal law in the last 50 years. Some emerging countries openly criticized the approach of the working group "Financial Action Task Force" (FATF) created within the OECD, which they believe applies different yardsticks for assessing national actions taken by individual countries in order to combat money laundering and demanded the elaboration of a UN Convention against money laundering. The beginning of negotiations for such a convention at UN level, however, seems just as unlikely to win a majority in the medium term as a UN Convention against computer crime proposed by some countries.

The 14th session of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) was held in Vienna from 23 to 27 May. The debates on the activities of UNODC focused on the increasing networking of drug trafficking, organised crime, corruption, and terrorism. The integration and strengthening of the rule of law and the development of fair and functioning (criminal) law systems were identified as the basic requirements for their sustainable control. Other items on the agenda included the conclusions and recommendations of the XI United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the UN Secretary General’s report on capital punishment. Austria initiated two draft resolutions at the 14th CCPCJ. The objective of the resolution presented by Austria together with Egypt as one of the co-chairs of the "Friends of the UN Convention against Corruption" is to maintain the impetus in the fight against corruption and create the necessary conditions for an effective implementation of the convention. The resolution on the intensification of international cooperation and technical assistance in the fight against terrorism, already initiated by Austria for the third time, considerably strengthened the role of TPB as a partner to the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) in New York in recent years. In this year’s resolution, TPB was called upon to include the strengthening of national criminal law systems and the rule of law in its technical assistance programmes, and to consider the links to other forms of crime.

The link between drugs, organised crime and lack of rule of law on the one
hand and the lack of sustainable development on the other were at the centre of a Round Table for Africa held in Abuja (Nigeria), at which a five-year action programme was adopted on the basis of a UNODC study. The establishment of a programme by UNODC for South East Europe aims at counteracting the negative impact of crime on stability.

Following the entry into force of the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime in 2003, the second conference of the States Parties took place from 10 to 21 October, at which Austria participated as a State Party after the ratification of the Convention in June 2004. Austria ratified the Additional Protocol against Trafficking in Persons in September. Since the entry into force of the Firearms Protocol on 3 July, all three additional protocols of the convention have been in force. Now the primary aim of the Conference is to elaborate a review mechanism for the Convention on international cooperation and technical assistance. Whereas the first conference of the States Parties in 2004 had focused on structural and organizational issues, the second conference began with a substantial review of the implementation, placing the focus on the application of the criminalization provisions and international cooperation in the Convention and the two Additional Protocols against Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling. Upon the request of the G77, the question of technical cooperation for the promotion of the ratification and implementation of the Convention will be dealt with in an interim working group. At the next conference of the States Parties, two other working groups will be dealing with the issues of extradition, mutual legal assistance and confiscation, as well as victim and witness protection, and repatriation in connection with trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

The UN Convention against Corruption, based on a draft proposed by Austria and the Netherlands, entered into force on 14 December. Considerable importance is attached to this Convention, which for the first time provides for the recovery of assets acquired through corruption and taken out of the country, particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Convention provides the international community with a global legal framework for combating and preventing corruption. To promote the entry into force and implementation of the Convention, an informal "Group of Friends of the UN Convention against Corruption" was formed, which was chaired jointly by Austria and Egypt in the second half of the year. The second International Anti-Corruption Day was celebrated on 9 December to mark the first anniversary of the signing conference in Mexico.

IV. The International Criminal Court

The deposit of the 100th ratification instrument on the Rome Statute by
Mexico was an important signal as regards the establishment and recognition of the Court as an essential part of the international peace order. Austria was the first State Party to sign an agreement with the ICC on the enforcement of prison sentences.

In January, the Central African Republic filed an application with the first Chief Prosecutor of the ICC, Luis Moreno Ocampo, for the investigation of war crimes committed within its territory. Along with Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, there are now three cases pending before the ICC as a result of state applications. In March, the UN Security Council issued Resolution 1593, referring the situation in Darfur (Sudan) to the Office of the Chief Prosecutor in accordance with Art 13 of the Rome Statute. The decision to introduce official investigations in Darfur was taken in June. In October, the ICC issued the first arrest warrants of the Court against five rebel leaders of the Ugandan rebel group LRA.

The fourth assembly of the States Parties to the ICC Statute met from late November to early December in The Hague. The Assembly reappointed the ICC Bureau, elected the Austrian Erwin Kubesch as one of the two Vice-Presidents of the Assembly of States Parties, agreed to establish an ICC Liaison Office in New York, adopted Rules of Procedure for the Trust Fund for Victims, adopted a Code of Conduct for human rights defenders at the ICC, and approved the 2006 budget.
J. Multilateral Economic Policy

I. The World Trade Organization

The Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference took place from 13 to 18 December in Hong Kong. Although it did not produce all the expected results, some progress was made, especially with respect to agriculture and the development package, which allows for more detailed negotiations. The agreed timetable provides for establishing modalities no later than 30 April 2006 and submitting comprehensive draft Schedules based on these modalities no later than 31 July 2006.

The EC has exclusive competence for most foreign trade issues. The European stance on WTO issues is coordinated in Brussels and Geneva in the Council committee of high-level trade officials under Article 133 of the Treaty Establishing the European Community.

1. Agriculture

Agreement was reached on the parallel elimination of all forms of export subsidies by 2013, under the condition that similar measures of other members such as food aid, state-trading enterprises, or export credits will also be phased out.

2. Industrial Goods

The reduction or elimination of tariff peaks and high tariffs is to be carried out based on a "Swiss Formula" that further reduces higher tariffs. Special consideration will be given to developing countries and small vulnerable economies. Negotiations still need to be carried out on the coefficients of the formula. Unbound tariff lines are to be included as well. Member groups in individual sectors will also be able to agree on a greater opening of the markets. The reduction of non-tariff trade barriers will remain on the agenda. Efforts will be undertaken to harmonize progress in the industrial and agricultural areas.

3. Services

The negotiations on services are lagging behind those on agriculture and industrial goods. In January, the EC addressed new demands to 103 WTO Member States based on their respective level of development, and submitted
a revised offer in early June. The EC received in turn more than 40 demands from WTO partners. While the 32 poorest developing countries are not obliged to submit offers, 23 other members, including Kuwait, South Africa, and Venezuela did not yet submit an initial offer, despite the agreed deadline in spring 2003.

4. Development Issues

The deadline for proposals by the General Council on special and differential treatment of developing countries, which expired in July, was extended until December 2006. The Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong managed at least to adopt the proposals of the poorest developing countries for a more favourable treatment in the various agreements, including customs-free and quota-free market access for at least 97 percent of goods from these countries until 2008, or not later than the entry into force of the Doha Round results. The Trade-Related Technical Assistance for developing countries was broadened to an "aid for trade" package. The funds are to be further increased to cover the demand for assistance resulting from the future implementation of the Doha results. The plan is to prepare proposals for a targeted use of trade aid by July 2006.

5. Environment

The major focus was placed on the greater opening of markets for environmental goods. Austria and the EC are demanding an open list of indicators for the definition of these goods. Moreover, efforts will be undertaken to enhance the mutual consideration of trade and environmental agreements.

6. Trade Facilitation

Progress was achieved in this last remaining topic of the 1996 WTO Ministerial Conference in Singapore, so that complete targets were elaborated, while the other three, i.e. investment, competition, and transparency in government procurement had already been abandoned at the 2003 WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancún (Mexico).
7. Trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPs)

The TRIPs Council approved exemptions for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the implementation of the TRIPs Agreement. On 6 December, the WTO General Council adopted the hotly debated amendment to the agreement regarding access by developing countries to affordable medicines. Progress in the negotiations on the establishment of a multilateral catalogue of information about the origins of wines and spirits is not expected until 2006 on account of the frozen positions. The extension of the protection of appellations of origin to other goods striven for by the EC, and the relationship between TRIPs and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) are to be dealt with by 31 July 2006.

8. Dispute Settlement

The ministers in Hong Kong once again called for the rapid completion of the review and improvement of the dispute settlement mechanism. The most important ongoing cases against the EC include bananas, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and Measures affecting Trade in large civil Aircraft (Airbus). The United States is the defendant in cases concerning the Foreign Sales Corporations (see Chapter A.IV.7.1.), hormones, and Measures affecting Trade in large civil Aircraft (Boeing).

9. Accessions

The accession of Saudi Arabia increased the number of members to 149. The admission of Tonga approved in Hong Kong will become effective in mid-2006. Accession negotiations are currently under way with 28 countries, including Russia and the Ukraine. Accession negotiations were opened with Iran, Serbia, Montenegro, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Austria chairs the accession working group for Bhutan.

10. Head Office

Former EU Commissioner for Trade Pascal Lamy has succeeded the previous Director General Panitchpakdi Supachai, and was appointed for a four-year term in office in early September.
II. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

On 30 November, the OECD Council unanimously appointed the former Mexican Foreign and Finance Minister José Ángel Gurría Treviño to succeed the Canadian Donald Johnston as OECD Secretary General for a five-year term in office as of 1 June 2006. Austria accounts for a share of approx. 1% in the OECD budget of approx. 330 million euros. In addition, the Organization received voluntary contributions of 50 million euros, a slight increase compared to the previous year. Die

1. OECD Enlargement and Foreign Relations

Following lengthy negotiations, a strategic framework was defined for the relationships between the OECD and non-member states. This will, however, not enhance the position of the new EU Member States Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Slovenia who are non-members of the OECD. A Council working group on the preparation of an OECD enlargement will examine issues of classification and administration, as well as the way member states will participate in individual bodies, the primary aims of the organization and its future role and tasks. A report will be submitted to the OECD Ministerial Council in 2006.

2. International Economy and Finances

The economic outlook of the member states has been dampened by the sharp increase in oil prices. The OECD praised the EU for the adjustment of the Stability and Growth Pact, but considered the 0.25 interest rate increase by the European Central Bank in early December to be premature. The expected economic recovery in Japan was largely based on internal demand. In view of the continued deflationary pressure, the OECD recommended that the Bank of Japan maintain its quantitative loosening of monetary policy (see Chapter A.IV.7.1. on the US economy).

3. In-Depth Country Review of Austria

Audit: Austria’s country audit in April focused on the following topics in connection with the sustainability of the national budget and growth increase: performance of the public sector, restructuring of budget relations between the Federal Government and the Federal Provinces, increase of the percentage of older people in the working population, and possible improvements of the conditions for innovation.
**Ageing Societies and Employment Policy:** Following a detailed examination of Austria's pension and employment policy, a report was published in the middle of the year which acknowledges the latest retirement pension regulation as a step in the right direction, but demands further measures to increase the number of older people in the working population.

**Information and Communication Technology:** The report on the Austrian audit entitled "ICT Diffusion to Business" published in December describes the state of the information and communication technology (ICT) in Austria and measures to further promote its diffusion in businesses. The report will be adopted at a meeting of experts in March 2006. Due to the manifold interrelations, the examination was extended to include the areas of research and development, government procurement, standards, broadband technology, confidence and security issues.

**Corruption and Bribery:** An audit on the topic of "Bribery in International Transactions" also took place in December. The audit examined the Austrian legislation and the approach in combating bribery of foreign officials by companies or businessmen based in Austria.

4. **Education**

The importance of education increased within the OECD, partly as a result of two studies entitled "PISA 2003" and "Education at a Glance 2004". Apart from educational comparisons between OECD states, "Education at a Glance 2005" also provides a worldwide comparison of important figures on education. Cross-border value standards were defined for higher schools and universities in cooperation with UNESCO.

5. **Focus of Development Cooperation**

The OECD consultations focused on the question of an increase in Official Development Assistance (ODA) as a result of international obligations, and the receptiveness of the recipient countries for a greater scope of assistance. In view of the UN Goal of 0.7% of GNI, the EU decided to increase ODA to 0.51% of the GNI of the EU-15 by 2010. According to forecasts by the OECD Secretariat, the ODA of the 23 Members of the Development Assistance Committee will increase by 50 billion US dollars until 2010. Short term increases in the ODA were also achieved through debt reductions for Iraq (12 billion US dollars) and Nigeria (15–18 billion US dollars) and the emergency assistance for the tsunami victims and the earthquake victims in Pakistan. In
the long term, however, significant increases must be targeted by 2010.

Based on the "Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness" issued in March, the OECD prepared implementation guidelines and examined compliance with this agreement. In this declaration, donor and recipient countries undertake to carry out comprehensive changes to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

6. Sustainable Development

During their annual meeting in October, the national experts on sustainable development discussed the work progress of the OECD, including the far-reaching package of indicators for sustainable development. Other topics discussed included the preparation of OECD contributions for CSD, the current climate change, energy and industry, the selection of best practices in the individual member states, research projects on material flows, and a working meeting on the reorientation of environmentally harmful subsidies.

7. Agriculture

The High-Level Session in June, which was attended by the OECD countries and Brazil, China, India, and South Africa, focused on the necessary changes in agricultural policy in a global context. At the end of the Session, Chairman and former EU Commissioner Franz Fischler stressed the significant role played by comprehensive rural development as one of the most important instruments for reshaping the future of agriculture and underscored the fundamental importance of improved cooperation and technical assistance for the developing countries.

8. Ministerial Meetings

The Social Ministers' Meeting on 31 March and 1 April in Paris, which was attended by Federal Minister Ursula Haubner, focused on the support of families and children and the new challenges for the social insurance networks in the member states.

The main topic of the Economic and Finance Ministers' Meeting on 3 and 4 May, chaired by Sweden, was the impact of globalization on worldwide growth prospects. Austria was represented by Federal Minister Martin Bartenstein and State Secretary Alfred Finz. The overlapping of this Meeting with the Energy Ministers' Meeting was taken advantage of for a joint meeting.
on energy and investments. Moreover, the Council of Ministers issued a statement on the follow-up assessment of the UN Millennium Declaration and on the Monterrey Consensus as an OECD contribution to the UN World Summit.

State Secretary Alfred Finz participated in a ministerial meeting on "Public Governance" on 28 November in Rotterdam. In view of the changing role of state institutions, the meeting discussed ways and means of strengthening the citizens' confidence in democratically elected governments.

9. The International Energy Agency

At the Ministerial Council of the International Energy Agency (IEA) on 2 and 3 May, the Energy Ministers stressed the important role of the organization in securing energy supply and sustainable development. The meeting concentrated mainly on two issues: “Is it possible to reduce the negative environmental impact of the increasing worldwide dependence on fossil fuels?” and “How can we solve the growing dependence on energy imports – while the worldwide supply is increasingly being narrowed down to a small number of sources at the same time?”. Increased efforts to make more effective use of energy are aimed at reducing the vulnerability of the world’s economies to high and widely fluctuating energy prices.
K. Global Sustainability Policy

In preparation for the UN World Summit, the EU increased its efforts to promote the plan to transform the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) into a UN Special Agency. The conclusions of the European Council in June contain a clear commitment to the establishment of a UN Environment Organisation (UNEO). Although Austria is open to the efforts aimed at a transformation into UNEO, it points out that the substantial work in the environmental sector at the international level must not be obstructed by the transformation process.

At the UN Summit the EU achieved its objective to obtain political consensus on the start of negotiations for the reinforcement and institutional change of UNEP. Based on this, the EU supported the plan of the President of the UN General Assembly to introduce an open consultation process for reforms so as to promote the transformation. The EU requested the Green Diplomacy Network to tout for support for UNEO in third countries.

The 11th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 11) in Montreal (Canada) and the jointly held 1st Meeting of the Parties (MOP 1) to the Kyoto Protocol gave a clear signal in favour of the continuation of the global climate process. The EU accomplished its plan to bring the USA and the developing countries back to the negotiation table. This also meets the demand of the European business community that the EU pursue its climate policy only together with the most important greenhouse gas producers. The conference result was a first step in this direction and does not contain any reference to future commitments. These will have to be elaborated in the coming years.

I. Continuation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

The Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD 13) met in New York from 11 to 22 April. The negotiations on the final document concentrated on approaching the Millennium Goal for 2015 to halving the number of people without access to clean and safe drinking water. There were diverging opinions in the area of financing and ODA, the ecosystem approach, and the role of the various interest groups. The demand for the right to access to clean and safe drinking water was not implemented. The EU achieved a global approval of the concept of integrated water resources management.

The Fifth Conference of the Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (GFSE) entitled "Enhancing International Cooperation on Biomass" took place in Vienna in May. Recommendations were adopted for the 14th and 15th CSD Conference in 2006 and 2007, which contain concrete measures to fight
poverty by improving international cooperation in the area of biomass, point to an improvement in the use of traditional biomass, and outline modernisation steps on the topic of biomass.

The 5th Session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) took place in May, with the aim of evaluating the efficiency of the International Agreement on Forests (IAF). Although there was some consensus regarding basic objectives and a few aspects of the framework conditions, the negotiations failed with regard to issues related to the compatibility of global goals, the strengthening of the legal framework, and the development of a new international law instrument.

II. The United Nations Environment Programme

The 23rd Conference of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF) took place in Nairobi (Kenya) in February. The Conference adopted several decisions concerning chemicals management, water management, and women and the environment. There was no agreement on the need for an international legally binding instrument for mercury.

In accordance with the implementation plan of the Word Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 in Johannesburg (South Africa), an intergovernmental negotiation process was continued under the aegis of UNEP with the aim of creating a global structure for the improvement of international cooperation in the area of chemicals, involving all relevant players. The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) was passed in Dubai (United Arab Emirates) on 6 February and the Global Plan of Action and the Overarching Political Strategy adopted. Although it is not legally binding, the High Level Declaration signed by the Environment Ministers in Dubai reflects the political support for SAICM.

III. Global Environmental Protection Agreements

1. Cartagena Protocol

The 2nd Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was held in Montreal from 30 May to 3 June. Despite the EU's willingness to compromise, no decision could be reached on the main negotiation item, i.e. the definition of the labelling provisions for bulk products. The Session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Liability and Redress took place immediately before the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. The report of the group was approved by the meeting of Parties and the negotiations within the working group will continue under the Austrian Council Presidency in 2006.
2. **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification**

The 7th Conference of the Parties (COP 7) to the Convention to Combat Desertification took place in Nairobi in October. The political crisis surrounding the Convention was evident: The results of the Conference lagged far behind the expectations of the member states. The central topic – under the thematic guidance of the EU – was the demand of the donor countries for a strategic reorientation of the Convention.

3. **Ramsar Convention**

The 9th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) was held in Kampala (Uganda) in November. The Conference adopted 25 resolutions, including the Convention Strategy for 2006–2008, the identification of cross-border Ramsar Areas (Wetlands of International Importance), the role and engagement of the Convention in other multilateral processes, in particular at the 4th World Water Forum in 2006 in Mexico City, the role of the Convention in natural disaster prevention, and the support of multilateral regional initiatives in the fight against poverty and in development cooperation.

4. **Bonn Convention**

At the 8th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention) in Nairobi in November, the Parties dealt with the general strategy of the Convention, an amendment to the appendices, plans of action for particularly endangered species, the Global Register of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, and administrative questions regarding the Convention.

5. **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change – Kyoto Protocol**

The Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC entered into force with the accession of Russia in February. For the first time, the limits on CO₂ and five other greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming are legally binding for industrialised countries. The 1st Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol took place in December together with the 11th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC held in Montreal. Two negotiation processes were launched in view of the further development of the Climate Regime. One based on the
architecture of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the other on the Kyoto Protocol after 2012. In addition, the Marrakech Accords, the implementation provisions of the Kyoto Protocol, were adopted without any amendments. The provisions that contain the implementation of the reduction obligations, the rules for the application of flexible mechanisms, and the crediting of sinks, as well as the regular reporting and control were prepared. The Five-Year Programme of Work on Adaptation which will enable the start of implementation was then specified. The Adaptation Fund, established in 2001, was able to take up its work on assistance to developing countries, enabling these to cope with the negative impact of climate change.

6. **Stockholm Convention and Rotterdam Convention**

The 1st Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) took place in Punta del Este (Uruguay) in May. The Convention has begun its work.

The 2nd Meeting of the Parties to the UNEP/FAO Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (PIC) was held in Rome from 28 to 30 September. The meeting focused on questions relating to the implementation of the Convention. A meeting of the Working Group on the establishment of a compliance mechanism took place immediately before the meeting of the Parties. The report of the group was approved by the Meeting of the Parties, and negotiations on the establishment of a compliance mechanism will be resumed during the 3rd Meeting of the Parties in autumn 2006.

7. **International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling**

The 57th Meeting of the Parties to the International Whaling Commission (IWC) took place in Ulsan (Korea) in June. The fact that the IWC consists of two camps, which hold largely incompatible views, obstructed the decision-making process. Therefore, the establishment of new protected areas in the South Atlantic and South Pacific was rejected, as was the loosening of the moratorium in force since 1986. Also, no progress was achieved with regard to the completion and entry into force of a management scheme.

8. **International Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution**

The 23rd Session of the Executive Body in Geneva in December dealt with the
evaluation of the implementation of the International Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) and its Protocols. Progress was particularly achieved in the financing of this core activity, the promotion of the implementation of the Convention in the Caucasus Region, and the orientation of the strategic activities.

9. Aarhus Convention

The 2nd Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) took place in Almaty (Kazakhstan) in May. After years of negotiations, a legally binding amendment to the Convention with regard to decision-making in certain GMO-authorisation procedures was adopted. This represents a significant improvement of the environmental situation, especially for the states of Central Asia.
L. International Cultural Policy

1. Priorities and Projects

Austria enjoys a high international standing as a cultural nation, and living up to this reputation requires an especially committed international cultural policy. As an acknowledged foreign policy "soft power" Austria maintains and enhances this status by means of several thousand cultural, scientific and academic projects per year, which are implemented abroad by 29 Cultural Fora, 81 Embassies, 15 Consulates General and 51 Austria Libraries. The emphasis here is on Austria's contemporary creative character, though at the same time these projects contribute to the dissemination of European values, above all those of dialogue and democracy, in order to further develop Europe's cultural identity, make use of common traditions and break down national prejudices.

"Platform Culture - Central Europe", the cultural organisation set up within the framework of the Regional Partnership, undertakes special efforts aimed at active cooperation in the preparation and implementation of joint projects which are realised in the capital city of the respective Member State holding the EU Presidency. In June, for instance, an exhibition curated by Hungary was presented in Luxembourg, highlighting common features and differences in Central European architecture under the motto "form and nonform", while in October London was the venue for a documentary film festival exploring different Central European perspectives on the enlargement of the EU.

Alongside the numerous historical anniversaries that were celebrated in Austria, a large number of events were also held abroad. The latter not only focussed on historical documentation, like the presentation of the exhibition "Von der Befreiung zur Freiheit" ("From Liberation to Liberty") featuring unique photographic material by Erich Lessing, but also testified to the changing nature of the external perspective on Austria.

In the context of these commemorative events, special attention was devoted to the 100th anniversary of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Bertha von Suttner. Celebratory events were organised in Prague, her birthplace, as well as in Vienna, her last place of residence. Furthermore, this anniversary gave occasion to underline the major contribution made by women to peace and human rights and the importance of peacekeeping as a key task of foreign policy. Curator Georg Hamann's documentary exhibition on Bertha von Suttner was produced in eleven languages and shown in more than 30 countries, including at the Ghandi Museum in New Delhi, the Nobel Peace Prize Centre in Oslo, the Palais des Nations in Geneva and the United Nations in New York.
Alongside these artistic events, a project entitled "Österreich innovative" ("Innovative Austria") coordinated with the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture contributed to placing the significance of Austria’s scientific and academic achievements more strongly to the fore abroad than it had been before. Topical scientific issues were addressed in the lectures organised by all Austrian Cultural Fora abroad, while under the same title a wide-ranging series of events focussing on the contemporary music scene was also held at the Cultural Forum in New York, organised in cooperation with mica (music information center austria).

Innovation was also a feature of the Ministry’s cooperation with other Austrian institutions, for instance its support for cultural projects such as the Austrian Pavilion at the World’s Fair in Aichi and further accompanying events in Japan, or its presentation of young Austrian musicians within the framework of a large-scale event in Berlin following on from the 2002 pilot project “The New Austrian Sound of Music”.

A new form of cultural cooperation emerged in connection with the designation of 2005 as the EU-Japan Year of People to People Exchanges, which focussed attention on Japanese culture and lifestyle in all EU Member States while simultaneously providing the latter with an exceptional presentation platform in Japan. More than 1,700 events were held throughout the EU, approximately 120 of which were in Austria.

An important showcase for our country was the Guadalajara Festival (Mexico), where Austria was guest country and celebrated great successes in a wide range of artistic fields and genres.

This year’s International Cultural Policy Conference focussed on the question of Austria’s cultural self-image and its images of the other. The conference theme “Österreich zwischen Image und Identität” ("Austria between Image and Identity") made a reflective contribution to the jubilee year, showing ways in which Austria’s international cultural policy work can create moments of international attention for Austria in general and the achievements of the country’s artists, scientists and academics in particular, and throwing light on the interrelationships between Austria’s international image and its cultural identity.

2. Dialogue among Cultures and Religions

Over fifteen years ago, the then Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Alois Mock launched this initiative aimed at fostering dialogue between the major world religions. The aim of the dialogue is to promote the understanding of
religious diversity as enrichment, thus making an important contribution to
education and training.

From 16–22 October, at the initiative of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Academy of Sciences and at the invitation of the Tajik Academy of Sciences, twelve representatives of Austria’s intellectual and cultural life participated in an intercultural dialogue forum in Dushanbe (Tajikistan), where they engaged in exchanges of opinion in the fields of history, archaeology, music, anthropology, sociology and religion. These efforts are to be continued and further developed in Vienna in spring 2006.

The international conference "Islam in a Pluralistic World" organised in cooperation with the Austrian Hammer-Purgstall Oriental Society was held in Vienna from 14–16 November and brought together high-ranking religious and secular figures including the President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, the President of Iraq, Jalal Talabani, the former President of Iran, Mohammad Khatami, the personal representative of the UN Secretary-General at the conference, Lakhdar Brahimi, the Secretary-General of the OIC, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I, the Grand Mufti of Syria, Ahmad Bader Hassoun, the President of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, Rabbi Arthur Schneier, Archbishop Christoph Cardinal Schönborn and the Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Shirin Ebadi, before a large audience. All the Muslim participants at the conference clearly rejected the idea of an Islamic theocracy and condemned terrorism.

3. Music Projects

In 2005 around 1,000 music projects were realised worldwide, the focus being on contemporary music, world premieres and young, up-and-coming soloists and ensembles.

Owing to the widespread impact achieved by the pilot project, the programme "The New Austrian Sound of Music" was relaunched in 2005. The talented young musicians selected by a jury were presented to the German public at an event held in Berlin in November in cooperation with the Austrian Music Export Office and the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber. The Cultural Forum New York continued its successful focus on music of the 20th and 21st centuries. In the field of electronic music the "Moving Patterns" festival organised in cooperation with mica became a fixed element of Austria’s presence in this field. The Cultural Forum Paris continued its emphasis on the "Entartete Musik" ("Degenerate Music") theme in cooperation with the "Forum voix étouffées" with festivals throughout France. The "European Horizons and Mosaic Programme – EUROPEAN VOICES" project, based at the Cultural Forum Istanbul and headed by Vijay Upadhyaya, organised a series of
symposia on cultural-historical connections between Turkey and Europe and staged a concert tour of Turkish cities which then continued to Damascus, Beirut, Tbilisi and Yerevan.

Successful Austrian **guest appearances at music festivals** included Hubert von Goisern at the "Festival au désert" in Timbuktoo (Mali) and the Wiener Gemüseorchester at the International Festival of Modern Music in Vilnius (Lithuania). The Pierrot Lunaire Ensemble guested at the "Two Days & Two Nights of New Music" festival in Odessa (Ukraine), while the Merlin Ensemble Wien appeared at the Zagreb Music Biennale. The group BLACKLAB collectiv were invited to perform at the "Transformation05" festival in Zrenjanin (Serbia and Montenegro), while the singer Louie Austen opened the "Refra ct4 – Republika" festival in Belgrade. The Austrian String Quartet gave a concert at the Spring Friendship Arts Festival in Pyongyang (People’s Democratic Republic of Korea).

Artists representing **music of the 20th and 21st centuries** attracted great interest worldwide. The “European GDs Parade” in Prague, featuring Patrick Pulsinger among others, met with acclaim from the young audience. The soundscape composer Gabriele Proy toured Japan within the framework of the 2005 EU-Japan Year of People to People Exchanges, while in Mexico a series of electronic music events featuring DJs such as Christopher Just, Microthol and Elin prepared the ground for future invitations to other DJs. In Slovenia, concerts by Electric Indigo and Rosa Reitsamer were enthusiastically received. Jazz and world music from Austria were also presented on the international stage, with successful performances by the klezmer ensemble Scholem Alejchem, solo vocalist Agnes Heginger and jazz pianist Martin Wöss, the Wolfgang Muthspiel Trio, the jazz bands K.O.P.G and BlocBusiness as well as Achim Tang and Otto Lechner. The jazz violinist Rudi Berger gave a highly acclaimed concert on the occasion of Federal President Heinz Fischer's state visit to Brazil.

4. **Literature and Theatre Projects**

As far as literature and theatre events were concerned the spotlight was on **contemporary Austrian literature**, in which there is great international interest. Successful productions of plays by Peter Turrini, Felix Mitterer and Elfriede Jelinek were staged. The newly established "**German Book Prize**" was presented to Arno Geiger during the Frankfurt Book Fair for his novel "Es geht uns gut" ("We're Doing Fine"), while Kathrin Rörgla was awarded the Solothurn Literature Prize and Josef Winkler the Spanish "Premio Lateral para Narrativa Extranjera".
Ensembles from Austria's independent theatre scene were also highly successful in the year under review. The theatre groups "Konnex" and "Lalish Theaterlabor" made guest appearances at the International Experimental Theatre Festival in Cairo, the Graz-based "Theater im Bahnhof" in Ljubljana, the Schönbrunn Palace Puppet Theatre in Seoul and the theatre group ASOU at Dance Mitaino and the Artvillage Festival in Japan. Also worthy of special mention are the Graz-based ensemble "Theater UniT"'s cooperation and joint performances with theatre groups and musicians from Romania, Slovakia and Hungary, as well as their appearances in Slovenia as part of the "Romanovela, Love in Translation" project.

Readings by authors were organised in practically all the countries in which Austria has a diplomatic representation. Zdenka Becker, Doron Rabinovici, Gert Jonke, Robert Schindel, Tarek Eltayeb, Karl-Markus Gauß, Josef Winkler, Thomas Glavinic, Daniel Kehlmann, Dimitri Dinev, Eva Menasse, Anna Mitgutsch and Arno Geiger read from their works in places around the globe.

To mark the 100th birthday of Elias Canetti an exhibition documenting the author's life and work was opened at the Austria Library in Rousse on 25 July, while in October the Austrian Embassy in Sofia held an international symposium on interculturality and intertextuality in the works of Elias Canetti at the University of Sofia. The 200th anniversary of the birth of Adalbert Stifter was also celebrated with panel discussions, exhibitions and readings at Austrian representations abroad.

Austria was also prominently represented at international literature festivals: by Franz Josef Czernin at the international poets’ symposium "Cosmopoética, poetas del mundo en Córdoba", at a night of readings from German, Austrian and Czech literature at the German Theatre in Almáty featuring texts by Elfriede Gerstl, H.C. Artmann, Barbara Frischmuth, Erich Fried and others, by Robert Schindel at the "TransEuropeExpress – Writers from the New Europe" series of readings in Rome, at the Göteborg Book Fair, by Jörg Piringer at "Audiatur", a festival of new poetry in Bergen, and at the Salon du Livre in Montreal. The children's book authors Selda Soganci and Seher Cakir travelled to the 24th TÜYAP International Book Fair in Istanbul.

The aim of interesting publishing houses outside the German-speaking region in works by Austrian writers was consistently pursued. Friedricke Mayröcker's works were translated into Swedish, Josef Winkler's into Spanish, Daniel Kehlmann's into French and Elfriede Jelinek's into Norwegian, for example, while Hans Landauer's "Lexikon der österreichischen Spanienkämpfer 1936–1939" ("Dictionary of Austrian Fighters in the Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939") was published in Spanish for the first time.
Representatives of the younger generation of Austrian dancers and choreographers enjoy a high degree of popularity. The Willi Dorner Company made guest appearances with its two pieces "threeseconds" and "no credits" in Ireland as well as in Beijing and Shanghai. CUBE (Christian Uhl) completed an extremely successful French tour, taking his new programme "May you live in interesting times" to Lausanne, Aix-en-Provence, Grenoble and Montpellier, while the groups "Tanz*Hotel" and "DANS.KIAS", as well as the "Bilderwerfer Wien" and the solo dancers Robert Tirpak and Ziya Azazi performed at prestigious dance festivals such as the "4th International Summer Arts Festival Alexandria", the "Dashanzi International Art Festival DIAF" in Beijing, the "International Modern Dance Festival" in Kaunas and the "Dies de Dansa" in Barcelona. Furthermore, the Cultural Forum Beijing for the first time succeeded in initiating a cooperation with the "Living Dance Studio Beijing", China's only independent dance company.

5. Fine and Visual Arts

This year's Festival Cultural de Mayo, held in May in the Mexican city of Guadalajara, featured a comprehensive focus on Austria. Original works by the Surrealist painter Wolfgang Paalen could be seen for the first time. Furthermore, the festival also boasted a show of architecture by Coop Himmelb(l)au and an exhibition curated by Bernhard Rehn entitled "Austrian Art in Mexico" and featuring works by Gerda Gruber, Fritz Riedl, Ilse Gradwohl, Doris Steinbichler, Bruno Schwebel and others.

In the autumn, the project "Es lebe die Ente!" ("Whoop to the Duck!") by the Graz-based architects' and designers' collective Splitterwerk guested at the 6th Architecture Biennale in São Paulo, where sketches and plans by Clemens Holzmeister were also exhibited. Austria was also prominently represented at the prestigious 47th "October Salon" in Belgrade as well as at other international art fairs.

In cooperation with Austrian art galleries and museums the Ministry was able to realise a series of exhibitions which were received with great interest by the international press and public. The exhibition "Die Kunstkammer der Habsburger" ("The Art Treasury of the Habsburgs") was shown at the Kremlin Museum in Moscow, while the Moscow Museum of Modern Art put on a Friedensreich Hundertwasser retrospective. The exhibition "Vienna, Budapest and St. Petersburg – Between Historicism and Avant-garde, 1873–1920" was shown in cooperation with the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, and the Essl Collection presented Austrian contemporary art post 1945 at the Museo de Arte Moderno in Mexico City. An Alfred Kubin retrospective was on show at the Luxembourg Museum of Art, while the Musée National d’Histoire et d’Art Luxembourg together with the Austrian Gallery at the Belvedere Palace
showed masterpieces of the Baroque period in the exhibition "Österreichische Kunst im Zeitalter Maria Theresias“ (“Austrian Art in the Age of Maria Theresia”). Mention should also be made of the major Secession exhibition "Vienne 1900: Klimt, Kokoschka, Schiele, Moser“ held to mark the reopening of the Grand Palais in Paris, as well as of the exhibition "New Abstract Painting from Austria“ with works by Erwin Bohatsch, Herbert Brandl, Gunter Damisch, Hubert Scheibl, Walter Vopava and Otto Zitko, which toured Shanghai, Beijing, Xian and Guangzhou.

A number of younger representatives of the Austrian fine and visual arts scene received support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2005. Dieter Buchhart and Anna Karina Hofbauer curated the exhibition "RE-ACT“ at the Nikolaj Contemporary Art Center in Copenhagen featuring works by Oliver Ressler, Gerald Nestler, Julius Deutschbauer, Gerhard Spring and Toni Kleinlercher; Elisabeth Wörndl exhibited her photo series "Periférico“ at the Fonca Gallery in Mexico City, works by Ricarda Denzer and Andreas Fogarasi were presented within the framework of the international group exhibition "in the picture, out of space“ at the Trafó arts centre in Hungary, and Peter Gric’s artworks were on show at the Historical Museum in Belgrade.

The Directorate-General for Cultural Policy currently has more than 20 travelling exhibitions in its repertoire. The newly acquired "Adolf Loos“ exhibition was shown in Turkey, the photography exhibition “Die Heimat ist um die Ecke“ ("Home is Round the Corner") toured Spain, and the Ingeborg Bachmann exhibition devoted to the Austrian author's anti-war writing stopped off in Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Sweden, France and Turkey. The two documentary photographic exhibitions - Inge Morath's "Donau“ ("Danube") and Liesl Ponger's "Xenographische Ansichten“ ("Xenophobic Views") – were presented in Serbia and Montenegro, Poland and Mexico, while János Kalmár's exhibition "Jewish Vienna" attracted keen public interest in Argentina and Belgium.

6. Film

A number of Austrian film productions celebrated international successes in the year under review: Michael Haneke's "Caché“, for instance, was voted Best European Film at the European Film Awards and took the Best Director prize in Cannes, while films such as "Silentium“, "Crash Test Dummies“, "Neue Welt“ ("New World"), "Keller – Teenage Wasteland“, "Working Man’s Death“, "Handbike Movie“ and "Darwin’s Nightmare“ also did well abroad.

The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs enabled Austrian film-makers to participate in international film festivals by co-financing their travel costs: highlights included the Austrian Film Weeks in Bulgaria, Chile, France, the
United Kingdom, Canada, Mexico, Russia, Spain, Turkey and Hungary, among others.

Austrian film-making was more intensively promoted at a total of 30 "Austrian Film Days", and Austria also participated in some 48 of the "European Film Days" organised worldwide by the EU.

7. **International Youth Cooperation**

Together with the Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs is responsible for all youth projects realised within the framework of the European Union, the Council of Europe and other international organisations. In the year under review it further assumed responsibility for projects aimed at facilitating and improving mutual understanding within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

8. **International sporting relations**

The preparatory activities for the European Football Championships 2008 in Austria and Switzerland were continued. The City of Salzburg's bid to host the XXII Winter Olympics in 2014 was officially submitted to the President of the International Olympic Committee on 28 July. Following the official submission, activities supporting the bid were initiated in line with the International Olympic Committee’s guidelines.

9. **Grants for cultural projects**

After deduction of the funds tied in accordance with Austrian financial legislation, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs had 420,000 euros at its disposal for subsidisation of cultural projects. These funds were granted on a selective basis to 97 individual projects in accordance with foreign policy and international cultural policy considerations.

The following are cited here to give some idea of the broad spectrum of projects that were granted financial support: In the art and exhibitions segment funding was awarded to the “Czernowitz Austria” (“ernivci statue of Austria”) project organised by the Institute for Culture-Resistant Goods as well as to the Jerusalem Foundation for its Einstein anniversary exhibition. The symposium "10 Years of EU Membership – Taking Stock and Looking Ahead" organised at the University of Innsbruck and a panel discussion on the
"Bosnian Peace Dialogue in Vienna" received support, and teams of students from the universities of Graz and Vienna were likewise given assistance with their participation in international law competitions. In the field of music the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra, the Klangforum Wien and the Vienna Art Orchestra were granted subsidies for concert tours abroad.

The Slovenia-based cultural associations "Brücken", "Abstaller Feld" and "Peter Kozler" received funding for specific projects in line with the Ministry's policy of active support for the German-speaking minority in Slovenia. Assistance with printing costs was granted to a series of publications, including an Armenian language edition of Robert Musil's works, a biography of the physicist Marietta Blau, the book "Die Erwerbungsgeschichte des Heroons von Trysa" ("The Story of the Acquisition of the Heroon of Trysa"), and the literature magazine "New Books in German". Finally, as in previous years, financial assistance was provided to St. George's College Austrian school in Istanbul.

10. Academic and Scientific Projects

In the academic and scientific field mention should be made of an international symposium in Copenhagen entitled "Austrian Identity: History – Society – Literature", the International Germanists' Conference on "Germanistik im Konflikt der Kulturen" ("German Studies in the Conflict of Cultures") held at the Sorbonne in Paris, the symposium "Italy and Austria – Neighbours and Partners in South-East Europe" in Rome, an international Erwin Chargaff memorial conference at the University of ernivci in Ukraine and a four-day symposium on 20th century Austrian literature co-organised by the Cultural Forum Beijing. In addition, a conference was also held to mark the 30th anniversary of the Austrian Archaeological Institute in Cairo.

11. Austrian Professorships and Centres for Austrian Studies

These facilities established at a number of foreign universities serve the purpose of initiating, deepening and coordinating the study of Austria-specific topics in the academic life of the respective host country. European themes and their interlinkages with Austria's intellectual potential are incorporated into the planning of the academic teaching programmes, and the publication of academic works in these fields is encouraged. Furthermore, through networking with appropriate Austrian institutions these establishments strengthen Austria's involvement in the international scientific, academic and cultural network.
12.  Austria Libraries

The network of Austria Libraries abroad currently numbers 51 libraries in 23 different countries. Most Austria Libraries also organise cultural, scientific and academic events. These media and cultural centres are an important instrument of international cultural policy, the majority being located in cities where Austria has neither an embassy nor any other official diplomatic representation. In 2005 more than 100,000 people visited the Austria Libraries, whose stocks now comprise approximately 300,000 books and media items. In the year under review the network was further expanded with the opening of the "Elias Canetti" Austria Library in Rousse (Bulgaria), while two other Austria Libraries saw a clear improvement in terms of space: the Austria Library in Tbilisi was re-opened on the premises of the State University of Western Languages and Cultures, while the Austria Library in Bratislava relocated to the city’s University Library.

In November, the Foreign Ministry together with the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the Austrian Society for Literature and the Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies organised the workshop "Kultur://Übersetzung – Wissens- und Kulturtransfer im Netzwerk der Österreich-Bibliotheken“ ("Culture://Translation – Knowledge and Culture Transfer in the Austria Libraries Network"), which was attended by representatives of a total of 27 Austria Libraries in twelve different states. The workshop was organised as part of the "Culture for Stability" international cultural policy programme for South East Europe in response to requests for theme-based cooperation among the individual libraries. Scientific and academic projects are ideally suited for this kind of cooperation, since 46 of the Austria Libraries are directly located in an academic environment. The collection of foreign-language works and articles about Austria that can be accessed via the web portal of the Austria Libraries meanwhile contains some 4,000 titles. The revision and updating of the literature lists accessible via the web portal www.oesterreich-bibliotheken.at was completed, and now covers both classics and relevant new publications; the magazine "Buchkultur" assumed responsibility for the editing work.

13.  German as a Foreign Language

German is spoken by more than 100 million people Europe-wide and has the largest number of native speakers of any language in the European Union.

Österreich Institut GmbH (Austria Institute Ltd.) was founded in 1997 for the purpose of strengthening the position of German as a regional lingua franca and promoting the Austrian variety of German. The non-profit limited
company with headquarters in Vienna organises German language courses, supports and promotes German language teaching abroad and cooperates with relevant national and international organisations. At present there are Austria Institute language schools in Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw, Budapest, Bratislava, Brno, Ljubljana and Rome. The new Austria Institute in Wroclaw was opened in October.

Lecturers, language assistants and trainee teachers of German as a foreign language are recruited and assigned to their posts by the association "Österreich-Kooperation". As a rule they are trainee teachers or humanities and social science graduates who are employed in secondary and tertiary educational institutions (secondary schools and universities) abroad (lectureships in 135 locations, language assistant posts in 10 countries, German as a foreign language teaching placements in 45 countries).

The **Austrian German Language Diploma** (Österreichisches Sprachdiplom Deutsch, ÖSD) is an educational and language policy instrument for the promotion of German as a foreign language. The examination system is based on international framework guidelines and offers candidates the opportunity to have their German language skills certified at several different levels. The ÖSD examinations can be taken at more than 160 examination centres in schools and other institutions worldwide.

The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs again co-managed the several-week language scholarships programme for around 50 students of the **Hebrew University of Jerusalem** in cooperation with the latter’s Society of Friends. This year’s Austrian host universities were Vienna, Innsbruck, Linz, Graz, Klagenfurt and, for the first time, Salzburg.

14. **Grants and Mobility Programmes for University Studies**

Since the separation of the universities from the federal administration, the provision of services to grant holders and the administration of the various mobility programmes (like Erasmus, for instance) has been entrusted to separate dedicated offices. The partner institution of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in this regard is the **Austrian Exchange Service** (Österreichischer Austauschdienst, ÖAD), which encompasses the Bureau for Academic Mobility, the Bureau for EU Educational Programmes (Socrates, Leonardo), the Unit for EU – Third Countries Educational Collaboration, the Bureau for Scientific and Technological Co-operation and the Department of Development Cooperation. The tasks carried out in this area include coordination and information activities for both the Austrian representations abroad and foreign representations in Austria as well as answering of
individual enquiries and supporting and organising relevant events in Austria and abroad.

15. **Multilateral Scientific and Technical Cooperation**

In order to integrate Austria into the latest European developments in pure research, high technology, space research and nuclear research and thus strengthen its position as a location for research and high-tech industries, the country's participation in the programmes of international scientific and technical organisations such as the intergovernmental framework for European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research (COST) in Brussels, the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, the European Space Agency (ESA) in Paris and the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT) in Darmstadt is vitally important. In these organisations, Austria is represented by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with the Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Austria's foreign policy concerns are also represented through its involvement in the European Molecular Biology Conference (EMBC) in Heidelberg, the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) in Laxenburg near Vienna and the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF).

Some 30,000 scientists from all over the world are involved in around 200 COST research projects which receive a volume of more than 2 billion euro per annum in national funding. In percentage terms, Austria's participation in COST Actions is significantly higher than its involvement in any other international scientific cooperation. Participation in COST Actions by institutions from non-COST countries such as Australia, Japan, Canada, Russia, the USA and Ukraine, as well as by NGOs, testify to COST's attractiveness. Furthermore, new rules and procedures based on decision-making by majority vote were adopted by the 33 member countries in order to lend COST even greater dynamism. Austrian foreign policy objectives such as promoting participation by the Balkan states and cooperation with scientists from the Mediterranean region are covered by a COST Fund specially established for this purpose.

Austria finds similarly favourable conditions for participation in ESA, whose Convention enables selective participation in programmes with guaranteed return. This means that Austrian scientists and companies are awarded contracts in proportion to Austria's financial contribution to the selected ESA programme. Participation in ESA optional programmes creates the optimum basis for later involvement in space programmes with commercial applications, as envisaged on the basis of the ESA/EU Framework Agreement.
for the satellite navigation and positioning systems project (GALILEO) and in future for the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) programme. Austria has continuously increased its participation in ESA optional programmes. At the ESA Council meeting at ministerial level held in Berlin on 5 and 6 December resolutions were adopted on the financing of the ESA scientific programmes, the Earth Observation Envelope Programme (EOEP), the GMES programme, the telecommunications programme and the further development of the European launch vehicle Ariane V for the period 2007–2013. Furthermore, for the first time a strategy was defined that gives priority to "institutional utilisation" of European Ariane V launch vehicles, i.e. to launches commissioned by state and government institutions. With these resolutions the EU gained credibility as an operator of independent space systems and as an international partner in space-related matters. For Austria, which primarily participates in the development of European satellite systems via ESA, the results of the ESA conference in Berlin are especially welcome.

In its first year of operation the Vienna-based European Space Policy Institute (ESPI) co-founded by ESA and Austria held a successful international scientific conference in Vienna. The conference elaborated a report entitled "A New Paradigm for European Space Policy: A Proposal", which calls for stronger involvement of the citizens in the shaping of European space policy. The ESPI also prepared the scientific bases for the conference on the commercial application of GMES which will be held in Graz during the Austrian EU Presidency in 2006.


Cultural cooperation within the framework of the EU is enshrined in Article 151 of the Treaty establishing the European Community (EC Treaty), which stipulates that the Community shall contribute to "the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore". Cultural issues remain a national responsibility of the Member States; the Community may complement and support actions taken by Member States and pass funding and coordination measures, but it has no legislative powers in this field.

The Culture 2000 programme is the framework funding and planning instrument for the implementation of Article 151 of the EC Treaty. Originally established for a period of five years (2000-2004) with a total budget of 167 million euros, it was prolonged unchanged for the years 2005 and 2006 with additional funding of 69.5 million euros, the aim being to contribute to the
continuity of the programme against the background of EU enlargement and secure sufficient time for the elaboration of the follow-up programme.

In 2005 Austria submitted a total of 18 one-year projects, eight of which were granted EU funding. Austrian institutions are also involved as co-organisers or partners in eight further projects. Five out of a total of 14 multi-annual cooperation projects submitted were granted EU funding, with Austrian co-organisers also involved in three further projects. 5.3 million euros were thus made available to Austrian project-executing organisations in 2005. This sum represented an increase of more than 100% on last year’s amount (2.16 million euros), the rise being attributable to the successful performance of the multi-annual projects submitted.

The first half of the year under Luxembourg’s Presidency saw a first exchange of opinion on the "Citizens for Europe" programme at the EU Education, Youth and Culture Council held on 23 May. The programme’s objectives are to give citizens the opportunity to interact and participate in constructing an ever closer Europe, united in and enriched through its cultural diversity; to forge a European identity based on recognised common values, history and culture, and to enhance mutual understanding between European citizens, respecting and celebrating cultural diversity while contributing to intercultural dialogue. The Council also discussed measures recommended by museology experts to promote the mobility of museum collections.

Under the British Presidency in the second half Linz and Vilnius were designated as the European Capitals of Culture for 2009. In addition, partial political agreement was reached on the Culture 2007 programme, which is to take over from and build upon its predecessor, Culture 2000. The new programme aims to contribute to the development of a European identity by deepening cultural cooperation in Europe.

The EU education and training programmes Socrates II (general education) and Leonardo II (vocational training) provide for a total of 3 billion euros in funding for the period 2000-2006. Besides the EU Member States these programmes are also open to the Central and Eastern European (CEEC) candidate countries Romania and Bulgaria, the EFTA/EEA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and with retroactive effect from 1 January 2004 to Turkey as well. More than 25% of these funds go to the field of school education, in which some 400 schools cooperate every year within the framework of transnational Comenius school projects. Besides Socrates/Comenius, the programmes Socrates/Erasmus for higher education and Socrates/Grundtvig for adult education and lifelong learning should also be mentioned. Every year numerous Austrian students have the chance to spend a semester abroad in one of the 30 participating states, and more than 4,100 young people have taken up this opportunity in the academic year
2005/06. Furthermore, the "Erasmus Mundus" programme established in 2003 supports cooperation with universities and research institutions outside the EU and promotes mobility among young postgraduate students with the goal of improving the quality of higher education in the EU and deepening inter-cultural understanding. The programme has a budget of 230 million euros and will run from 2004–2008.

17. Bilateral Agreements in the Fields of Culture and Science

Work programmes on cultural cooperation were negotiated and concluded with Belgium, Finnland, France and Serbia and Montenegro. Negotiations were taken up with the Czech Republic aimed at concluding a new cultural agreement to replace the 1977 Convention between the Republic of Austria and the Czechoslovak People's Republic on Co-operation in the Fields of Culture, Education and Science and create a new basis for cultural cooperation between the two states. The Convention between the Government of the Republic of Austria and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania on Co-operation in the Fields of Culture, Education and Science was signed in Tirana on 31 October during an official visit to Albania by Federal Minister Elisabeth Gehrer. At the first round of Austrian-Turkish talks on cultural issues held in Vienna on 13 June the Heads of the Directorates-General for Cultural Policy of the two Foreign Ministries initialled an Annex to the Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Cooperation signed in Ankara on 18 June 2004. This annex deals, among other things, with issues relating to the Austrian school in Istanbul and the Austrian archaeological excavations in Ephesus. The Austrian-German cultural consultations were continued on 12 September, dealing with current issues relating to cultural contacts at the level of public officials. On the basis of the Convention between the Government of the Republic of Austria and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on Cooperation in the Fields of Science and Technology, the Mixed Commission foreseen in this convention met for the first time on 19 and 20 December in Vienna. On 5 December a draft agreement on scientific and technical cooperation was submitted to India for further negotiations following prior consultations at political level.
M. Media and Information

I. Public Relations Activities of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs

1. New Press Centre

The six former sites of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs were brought together in two buildings at the Ministry's new location at No. 8 Minoritenplatz. The new premises also house a state-of-the-art Press Centre which can accommodate more than 50 journalists during press conferences. Cutting-edge technology allows simultaneous interpretation into three languages and provides the necessary equipment connections for several TV and radio crews, plus WLAN, ISDN, a video beamer and a plasma monitor. Other new facilities include a video conference room and a media room for showing of films and videos.

2. Austro-Polish Prize for Journalism

The Austro-Polish Prize for Journalism, initiated in 2001, is sponsored by Bank Austria Creditanstalt. The prize for 2004 was awarded to Malgorzata Schwarzgruber-Barwicka who is Head of the Foreign Affairs Desk of the Polish daily "Trybuna" and also writes for "Polonika", a monthly magazine published in Vienna in Polish and German. In his laudation at the award ceremony on 6 July, Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs Johannes Kyrle stressed that Malgorzata Schwarzgruber-Barwicka's work stood out not only for its high journalistic standard, but also for its transnational European approach. In her numerous articles and analyses the prize-winning journalist had addressed a diverse range of topics related to Austria.

In the interest of expanding the pool of potential candidates the statutes of the prize were changed in 2005; in future, not only journalists, but also people working in the cultural field, academics and others whose activities have contributed to fostering Polish-Austrian relations may be considered as candidates for the 5,000 euro prize, which in future will be known as the "Prize for the Promotion of Austro-Polish Relations".

3. Press Officers' Conference

This year's Press Officers' Conference on 7 September, the first to be designed as a "media module" forming part of the Ambassadors' Conference, was
dominated by the forthcoming Austrian Presidency of the EU in 2006. The agenda focussed on discussion of the key tasks and objectives of Austria’s second Presidency of the Council and the resulting requirements in terms of media work in Austria and the diplomatic representations abroad. The Presidency website www.eu2006.at was presented as the "central information platform” in this regard.

4. Internet

The successful implementation of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs’ new internet concept following a complete overhaul in autumn 2003 and its high level of acceptance among the interested public were confirmed by the number of visits registered by the Federal Ministry’s web server, which rose continuously over the course of the year to over 170,000 per month. The successive installation of websites in a uniform corporate design for the Austrian diplomatic representations abroad was continued, and 31 such homepages were online by the end of the year.

5. Events and Publications

A major focus of 2005 were the media and PR activities associated with a number of large-scale events, especially those organised to mark Austria’s "jubilee year". Events worthy of special mention in this context were the European congress entitled "Gemeinsame Erfahrungen, gemeinsame Perspektiven – 10 Jahre Österreich in der Europäischen Union“ ("Common Experiences, Common Perspectives – 10 Years of Austrian Membership of the European Union") in February, the celebrations commemorating the 50th anniversary of the signing of the State Treaty at the Belvedere Palace on 15 May, the "Islam in a Pluralistic World” conference at the Hofburg in November (see Chapter L.2.) and the celebratory event to mark "50 Years of Austrian Membership of the United Nations “ in December.

A good number of the publications supported or published by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2005 were also connected with the anniversaries of the "jubilee year". These included an English-language brochure marking the 100th anniversary of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Bertha von Suttner, a DVD of the celebrations commemorating the 50th anniversary of the signing of the State Treaty and a brochure about the European congress. The Foreign Ministry also provided financial support for the production of the commemorative anthology marking the jubilee year, "Lesebuch zum Jubiläumsjahr – Österreich 2005”. Besides the above, a brochure about the new Ministry premises and an updated edition of the
handy booklet "Tipps für Auslandsreisende" ("Tips for Travellers Abroad") were printed.

II. International Cooperation in the Media Sector

The "Communicating Europe" initiative launched under the Irish EU Presidency in the first half of 2004 was continued. Following the negative outcome of the referendums on the EU Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands, however, the initiative, which until then had essentially consisted of an exchange of experience between the Member States and the European Commission on communication about the European Union, was largely superseded by a period of reflection agreed upon in June and featuring national debates on the future of Europe.

In the course of this period of reflection the Federal Government, among other measures, in September initiated a campaign on Europe entitled "Europe is listening" which focused on a dialogue with the citizens. On a newly established website at www.zukunfteuropa.at the Austrian people were invited to express their ideas and comments on EU issues. By the end of the year the website had already registered 34,720 visitors. Further components of the Europe campaign include TV ads, posters, panel discussions and a "roadshow" organised in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (see also Chapter A.II.3. for more details on the period of reflection and the "Europe is listening" campaign).
N. The Austrian Foreign Service

I. Introduction

As in previous years, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs contributed to the Federal Governments efforts to consolidate the federal budget by cutting down both on staff and budgetary expenses. Growing demand for Foreign Service intervention (rising number of consular cases as a result of increased travelling by Austrians, the need for diplomatic representations in newly independent states and active participation in international organisations and bodies), presented the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs with considerable challenges in view of the envisaged cost-cutting. In the light of the additional staff requirements for the Austrian EU Council Presidency, special short-term employment contracts were made possible within the Federal Staffing Scheme. The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs made use of this provision hiring 115 additional employees, including 14 at the foreign missions.

II. Foreign Missions – Honorary Consulates

Austria maintains 81 embassies (one of them in the form of a trade representation), six permanent missions to international organisations, four branches of embassies (two in the form of a coordination office for development cooperation) and 15 consulates general (one of them in the form of a trade representation). Compared with similar EU Member States, this is a small network of foreign representations. In addition, there are 29 cultural forums (Beijing, Belgrade, Berlin, Bern, Bratislava, Bucharest, Budapest, Brussels, Cairo, Istanbul, Kiev, Krakow, Ljubljana, London, Madrid, Mexico, Milan, Moscow, New York, Ottawa, Paris, Prague, Rome, Tehran, Tel Aviv, Tokyo, Warsaw, Washington, D.C. and Zagreb). The network of Austrian missions was further extended by the opening of the embassies in Valletta and Nicosia. The Austrian embassy in Abidjan was closed for security reasons.

Austria is represented by 276 honorary consuls, who offer valuable support and supplement the work of professional Austrian representations. Most honorary consuls are prominent businesspersons who provide infrastructure for consular services and work for Austria on an honorary basis.

III. Real Estate Management and Construction Activities

After 286 years, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs moved to a new location in historic buildings located on No. 8 Minoritenplatz and No. 13 Herrengasse, former seat of the Lower Austrian Province Government and the Lower Austrian Diet. The new location now provides 700 workstations,
conference, media and reception facilities. Refurbishment and adaptation for the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs focused on security, state-of-the-art IT and telecommunications (Voice-Over-IP) and an efficient working environment.

The building on No. 8 Minoritenplatz is the core piece of the approximately 370 properties used by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 81 countries, including historic palais like the Austrian Embassy in Bratislava, and modern buildings such as the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York. These premises are managed by a team of specialists handling purchases, sales, reconstruction and renovation projects under a modern facility management scheme.

IV. Joining the Foreign Service

Joining one of the career schemes of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs is subject to the successful completion of the corresponding selection process ("Examen Préalable") carried out by an independent selection commission. The legal basis is the Federal Law on Tasks and Organisation of the Foreign Service - “Statut” (Federal Law Gazette I 129/1999 of 23 July 1999) and the ministerial order issued by the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs (Federal Law Gazette 120/1989 of 16 February 1989). The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs invites qualified applications for this selection procedure and provides information on the requirements and career options in the Foreign Service in the form of lectures and professional guidance programmes.

Based on an examination for the consular/administrative level (“Gehobener Dienst”) in the Foreign Service, twelve candidates were accepted. For a career as support staff (“Mittlerer Dienst”), a total of 20 candidates qualified.

All service levels have to undergo a mandatory basic training programme, which was revised in the Basic Training Regulation of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Federal Law Gazette II 113/2004. The training programme for the higher service includes a one-week general introduction, specific technical and personality-oriented seminars at the Diplomatic Academy and at the Centre for Administrative Management of the Federal Chancellery, various lectures and targeted foreign language courses with special emphasis on learning and/or perfecting the languages of Austria’s neighbouring states. The training period also includes practical work at an Austrian mission abroad for six months to introduce staff to the practical work of a foreign representation.

The training programme for the consular/administrative level in the Foreign Service also consists of practical training at a foreign mission, which focuses in particular, on the performance of administrative and consular tasks. In addition, staff members are required to attend seminars at the Centre for
Administrative Management as well as in-house training sessions. The training programme for support staff essentially takes the form of seminars offered by the Centre for Administrative Management and targeted foreign language training. A French course tailored to the needs of staff in the higher intermediate and intermediate service is held on the premises of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The “Austrian Embassy in Vienna” was established specifically for training purposes and familiarising employees at all service levels with consular and administrative activities before their first employment abroad.

V. Staff

In December, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs had 1,304 employees: 555 in Vienna and 749 abroad. Seven of them were assigned to the Ministry from other federal bodies, 20 persons were employed on the basis of special employment contracts and three employees were released temporarily. 22 employees of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs were assigned to other federal bodies, 78 were on leave (33 maternity leave/parental leave, 17 to work for international organisations, 28 are engaged in other activities, e.g. at the Diplomatic Academy and Development Cooperation offices, or are on leave for private reasons such as accompanying their spouses on foreign missions or caring for a sick relative) and three were released from duty temporarily. 21 employees retired from the staff of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The staffing scheme for 2005 provided for 1,422 positions (or 1,467, if the positions under Section VI of the staffing scheme are included), but the Federal Government currently controls the staffing of government offices as part of its budget consolidation policy essentially through expenditure-effective “full employment equivalents” (number of remunerated employments converted in relation to full employment). The full employment equivalents allocated to the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs were fixed at 1,319.32.

Women accounted for 47.3 per cent of the total staff of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs (28.8 per cent at the diplomatic level, 40 per cent at the consular/administrative service level, 68.8 per cent in the technical service and 62 per cent at the support level).
Staff of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2005 shown by level/gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>male</th>
<th>female</th>
<th>total</th>
<th>female in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1/v1, A/a (diplomatic service)</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2/v2, B/b (consular/administrative level)</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3/v3, C/c (technical service)</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4/A5/v4,D/d, P2/P3/p2/p3, h2/h3 (qualified support staff or support staff)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>60.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7/v5, E/e, p4/p5, h4/h5 (auxiliary service)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>1,304</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Retirement age: The average age at which public officials of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs retired was 63.95 years. As can be seen from the following table, the average retirement age in the past ten years has always exceeded the 60-year limit, with the exception of 1998.

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60.48</td>
<td>63.69</td>
<td>62.11</td>
<td>59.93</td>
<td>62.52</td>
<td>61.59</td>
<td>61.48</td>
<td>61.54</td>
<td>60.48</td>
<td>61.44</td>
<td>63.95</td>
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</table>

VI. Budget

In the federal budget for 2005 the total amount earmarked for the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs was 380 million euros. This included 15 million euros for covering general costs for the preparation for the Austrian EU Council Presidency in 2006 (“Zentralbudget”). After deducting this “Zentralbudget”, the budget allocation for ADA (90.134 million euros), Austria’s contributions to international organisations (64.774 million euros), other legal commitments (3.454 million euros) and expenditure for international conferences (2.437 million euros), the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs’ operative budget, including salaries and other staff expenditures, amounted to 204.291 million euros. The operative share came to 0.32 per cent of the total federal budget.
**Budget 1995 - 2005 in 1,000 euros**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>FMFFA budget</th>
<th>Contributions to international organisations, international conferences, development cooperation, grant programmes in Eastern Europe</th>
<th>Operative budget of FMFFA</th>
<th>FMFFA operative budget as a percentage of the federal budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>288.960</td>
<td>106.395</td>
<td>182.565</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>292.889</td>
<td>113.380</td>
<td>179.509</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>292.837</td>
<td>113.747</td>
<td>179.090</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>314.673</td>
<td>133.327</td>
<td>181.346</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>297.232</td>
<td>113.901</td>
<td>183.331</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>305.662</td>
<td>127.165</td>
<td>178.497</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>303.409</td>
<td>122.652</td>
<td>180.757</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>299.775</td>
<td>121.938</td>
<td>177.837</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>307.000</td>
<td>112.298</td>
<td>194.702</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>340.928</td>
<td>144.892</td>
<td>196.036</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>380.000</td>
<td>175.799</td>
<td>204.201</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Compared with the previous year, 2005 saw a rise in the federal budget. Substantial increases were attributable to expenses incurred by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in connection with the preparations for the Austrian Council Presidency and contributions to international organisations. In the ordinary budget, 9.5 million euros was earmarked for the obligatory contributions to the UN, 24.358 million euros for peacekeeping operations, and 2.9 million euros for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

**Note:** The percentage share of the operative budget of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the federal budget from 1995 to 1998 was originally indicated on the basis of the total budget (general budget plus compensatory budget). From 1999, only the general budget (= the total actual expenditure as budgeted by all ministries) was used, with no account being taken of the compensatory budget (= the total expenditure incurred for the redemption of debts and short-term obligations and/or of capital from currency exchange agreements and income from capital payments from currency exchange agreements and income from short-term obligations). The percentage shares 1995-1998 were therefore adjusted accordingly.

**VII. Information Technology**

All Austrian professional missions are connected with the Ministry in Vienna either by encrypted terrestrial **WAN data lines** or by **satellite (VSAT)**. These lines ensure communication with all Austrian authorities, the information
flow being transmitted via e-mail, by far the most important means of communication used by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and by e-fax. Telephone calls are already being transmitted via VSAT. In the autumn these connection lines were put out to tender for a further period of five years, taking into account that in the future telephone calls will be made via these data lines on a fixed cost basis.

In addition to office automation, all missions are equipped with tailor-made software for their administrative and consular activities which was developed by the ICT Department itself. The service accounting software is a front-end application of the budget accounting system with SAP software introduced at the national level (SAP budget accounting). The consular software enables the representations to issue visas and temporary or permanent residence permits. The missions have access to the SIS Schengen Information System and are connected to the VISION consultation network of the Schengen states.

Electronically available information may be downloaded directly from the missions or from the Ministry. Each workstation is connected to the Internet, while news agencies like APA and Reuters as well as various data bases, e.g. the legal information system (the legal data base, for instance), are accessible to specialist staff. Internal information and important links are provided through the intranet, which is constantly being expanded. The open communication strategy of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs connects the Ministry in Vienna with the representations abroad and worldwide networks.

Operated by the Austrian Federal Computing Centre the records management system (ELAK, Elektronischer Akt) has been in use nationwide since the beginning of this year. The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which has worked with its own records management system for years, effected the change-over without any problems or major adaptation difficulties.

The first half of the year was mainly marked by activities relating to the move to the new offices of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The entire central structure, including cabling, central server and communication systems, security systems and periphery (PCs and printers) was newly designed and implemented. With this new infrastructure in place telephony, which was integrated into the ICT department, is now operated via the data network (Voice-Over-IP). During the second half of the year, activities focused on the preparations for the Austrian Council Presidency. Special importance was attached to making the system both mobile and fail-safe by implementing additional redundant systems and concepts.
VIII. Außenpolitische Bibliothek

The ministry’s archives, which used to be stored in several cellar storage libraries of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, were relocated to the storage facilities in the new office premises at No. 8 Minoritenplatz. Since these premises had not been used for a longer period of time, humidity levels of up to 80 per cent were measured but could be reduced and kept at a constant level of 40 per cent by employing mechanical and physical measures.

In cooperation with the Austrian public record office an electronic form for file recording was prepared to enable the uniform marking and inscription of files throughout all ministerial departments in the future. The data included in these files are saved and stored to enable research into the entire archives of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Thanks to this innovation it is now possible to sort and review the ministry’s files more quickly.

In October, the Cultural Forum in Prague was the first branch to be integrated into the “Austrian Library Union Catalogue” (ALEPH). The opportunity of running on-line internet queries on the library’s files at the Cultural Forum led to an increase in the number of users.
IX. The Organisational Structure of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs

### I. General Affairs
**Dr. Johannes KYRLE**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>I.1</th>
<th>Protocol</th>
<th>Dr. Ferdinand MAULTASCHI</th>
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<td>I.1a</td>
<td>Gudrun HARDMANN-POLLROSS</td>
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<td>Werner AMMINGER</td>
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#### Group I.A Office of the Legal Adviser
(Directories I.2, I.4, I.7)

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<th>Dr. Ferdinand TRAUTMANSORDORFF</th>
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<td>Mag. Ulla KRAUSS-NUSBAUMER</td>
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<td>Dr. Georg HEINDEL</td>
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<th>I.9</th>
<th>Security Affairs</th>
<th>Dr. Daniel KRUMHOLZ</th>
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### II. Political Affairs
**Dr. Thomas MAYR-HARTING**

#### Deputy:
**Dr. Ralph SCHEIDE**

<table>
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<th>Security Policy Affairs, CFSP, Basic Issues</th>
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<td>II.1a</td>
<td>Andreas RIECKEN</td>
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<td>Dr. Klaus FAMIRA-PARCSETICH</td>
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| II.2 | South Tyrol and Southern Europe | Mag. Dr. Clemens KOJA |

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<th>Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Central Asia; Central European Initiative (CEI)</th>
<th>Dr. Hanns PORIAS</th>
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<td>II.3b</td>
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**Dr. Martin SAJDIK**

#### Deputy:
**Dr. E. TICHY-FISSSLBERGER**

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**Dr. Christian BERLAKKOVITS**

#### Deputy:
**Dr. Wolfgang PAUL**

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### FEDERAL MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
**Dr. Ursula Plassnik**

**Head of Ministers’ Office**
**Dr. Nikolaus MARSHIKA**

**Staff Unit**
**Mag. Astrid HARZ**
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<td>AAK</td>
<td>Aleanca për Ardhmëriny e Kosovës / Alliance for the Future of Kosovo</td>
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<td>AAS</td>
<td>Austrian Academy of Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABIS</td>
<td>Austria, Benelux, Ireland, Switzerland</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACO</td>
<td>Allied Command for Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACP</td>
<td>African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States</td>
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<td>ADA</td>
<td>Austrian Development Agency</td>
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<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<td>ADEA</td>
<td>Association for the Development of Education in Africa</td>
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<td>ADF-RDA</td>
<td>Alliance pour la Démocratie et la Fédération – Rassemblement Démocratique Africain / Alliance for Democracy and Federation – African Democratic Rally [Burkina Faso]</td>
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<td>Approved Destination Status</td>
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<td>AEMM</td>
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<td>AfDF</td>
<td>African Development Fund</td>
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<td>AFDRU</td>
<td>Austrian Forces Disaster Relief Unit</td>
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<td>AFTA</td>
<td>Asean Free Trade Area</td>
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<td>Australia Group</td>
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<td>AI</td>
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<td>AIAM</td>
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AIES Austrian Institute for European Security Policy
AMIS African Union Mission in Sudan
AMM Aceh Monitoring Mission
AMSDE Annual Meeting of Sustainable Development Experts
ANC African National Congress
AÖWB Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund
World Confederation of Austrians Abroad
ARF ASEAN Regional Forum
Art. Article
ASEAN Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEA-Uninet Asean-European University Network
ASEF Asia Europe Foundation
ASEM Asia-Europe Meeting
ASO Austrian Science and Research Liaison Office
ASRC Annual Security Review Conference
AsylG Asylgesetz
Federal Law on Asylum
ATAU Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit
ATS Amphetamine-type Stimulants
ATU Action against Terrorism Unit
AU African Union
AUA Austrian Airlines
AUC Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia
United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia
AUCON Austrian Contingent
AUSBATT Austrian Battalion
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<tr>
<td>Außenhandelsgesetz (AußHG)</td>
<td>Foreign Trade Act</td>
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<td>Bundesministerium für auswärtige Angelegenheiten (BMaA)</td>
<td>Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs</td>
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<td>Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD)</td>
<td>Ballistic Missile Defense</td>
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<td>Bovine Spongiforme Encephalopathie</td>
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<td>Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction</td>
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<td>Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP)</td>
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<td>Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)</td>
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<td>Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM)</td>
<td>Chama Cha Mapinduzi</td>
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<td>Party of the Revolution [Tanzania] (Party of the Revolution [Tanzania])</td>
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<td>Centre for Co-operation with Non-Members (CCNM)</td>
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<td>Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)</td>
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<td>Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects (and</td>
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<td>CDP</td>
<td>Congrès pour la Démocratie et le Progrès [Congress for Democracy and Progress [Burkina Faso]]</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEATS</td>
<td>Central European Air Traffic Services</td>
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<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</td>
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<td>CEECs</td>
<td>Central and Eastern European Countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEEPUS</td>
<td>Central European Exchange Programme of University Studies</td>
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<td>CEI</td>
<td>Central European Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>CENCOOP</td>
<td>Central European Nations’ Cooperation in Peace Support</td>
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<td>CERF</td>
<td>Central Emergency Response Fund</td>
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<td>CERN</td>
<td>Organisation Européenne pour la Recherche Nucléaire [European Organization for Nuclear Research]</td>
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<td>CESDP</td>
<td>Common European Security and Defence Policy</td>
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<td>CFS</td>
<td>Committee on World Food Security</td>
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<td>CFSP</td>
<td>Common Foreign and Security Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG</td>
<td>Consulate General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGIAR</td>
<td>Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CICP</td>
<td>Centre for International Crime Prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIME</td>
<td>Committee on International Investment and Multinational Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIMIC</td>
<td>Civil-Military Cooperation</td>
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<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<td>CITES</td>
<td>Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna</td>
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<td>CLRTAP</td>
<td>Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution</td>
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<td>CMCO</td>
<td>Civil-Military Coordination</td>
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<td>CMIT</td>
<td>Committee on Capital Movements and Invisible Transactions</td>
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<td>CND</td>
<td>Commission on Narcotic Drugs</td>
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<tr>
<td>COAG</td>
<td>Committee on Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>COHOM</td>
<td>Groupe de travail droits de l’homme EU Council Working Party on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>Conference of the Parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPUOS</td>
<td>Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space</td>
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<td>CORET</td>
<td>Conifer Research and Training Partnership</td>
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<td>COST</td>
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<td>CPC</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPHRFF</td>
<td>Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms</td>
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<td>CPPNM</td>
<td>Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material</td>
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<td>CROMAC</td>
<td>Croatian Mine Action Center</td>
</tr>
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<td>CSCE</td>
<td>Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
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<td>CSD</td>
<td>Commission on Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>CSDP</td>
<td>Common Security and Defence Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSME</td>
<td>CARICOM Single Market and Economy Caribbean Community Single Market and Economy</td>
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<td>CSR</td>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
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<td>CSW</td>
<td>Commission on the Status of Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTBT</td>
<td>Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTBT PrepCom</td>
<td>Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTBTO</td>
<td>Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization</td>
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<td>Counter-Terrorism Committee</td>
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<td>DUI</td>
<td>Demokratska Unija za Integraciju</td>
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<td>East African Community</td>
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<td>EACA</td>
<td>EC-ASEAN Co-operation Agreement</td>
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<td>EAGGF</td>
<td>European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund</td>
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<td>EAPC</td>
<td>Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council</td>
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<td>East Asia Summit</td>
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<td>European Bank for Reconstruction and Development</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Community</td>
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<td>ECA</td>
<td>European Commission on Agriculture</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECAP</td>
<td>European Capability Action Plan</td>
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<td>ECFI</td>
<td>European Court of First Instance</td>
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<td>ECHO</td>
<td>European Community Humanitarian Office</td>
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<td>ECHR</td>
<td>European Court of Human Rights</td>
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<td>ECJ</td>
<td>European Court of Justice</td>
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<td>ECLAC</td>
<td>Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<td>European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts</td>
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<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>Economic and Social Council</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community Of West African States</td>
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<td>ECPHR</td>
<td>European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms</td>
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<td>ECRI</td>
<td>European Commission against Racism and Intolerance</td>
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<td>EDA</td>
<td>European Defence Agency</td>
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<td>European Development Fund</td>
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<td>EDG</td>
<td>European Democrat Group</td>
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<td>EEA</td>
<td>European Economic Area</td>
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<td>European Development Fund</td>
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<td>European Fair Trade Association</td>
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<td>European Investment Bank</td>
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<td>EIDHR</td>
<td>European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELAK</td>
<td>Elektronischer Akt</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electronic File, a records management system</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELN</td>
<td>Ejército de Liberación Nacional</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Liberation Army [Colombia]</td>
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<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>exempli gratia</td>
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<td>for example</td>
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232
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>EMBC</td>
<td>European Molecular Biology Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMS</td>
<td>European Monetary System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENP</td>
<td>European Neighbourhood Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENPI</td>
<td>European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVISAT</td>
<td>Environment Satellite</td>
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<tr>
<td>EOEP</td>
<td>Earth Observation Envelope Programme</td>
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<td>EP</td>
<td>European Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPO</td>
<td>European Patent Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPP/CD</td>
<td>Group of the European People’s Party/Christian Democrats</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPU</td>
<td>European Peace University European University Center for Peace Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERPA</td>
<td>Emission Reductions Purchase Agreement</td>
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<td>ESA</td>
<td>European Space Agency</td>
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<td>ESDP</td>
<td>European Security and Defence Policy</td>
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<td>ESF</td>
<td>European Social Fund</td>
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<td>ESPI</td>
<td>European Space Policy Institute</td>
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<td>ETC</td>
<td>European Training Centre for Democracy and Human Rights</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU BAM</td>
<td>European Union Border Assistance Mission</td>
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<td>EUEOM</td>
<td>European Union Election Observation Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUFOR</td>
<td>European Union Force Multinational stabilization force</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUJUST</td>
<td>EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUJUST LEX</td>
<td>EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUJUST THEMIS</td>
<td>EU Rule of Law Mission to Georgia</td>
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</table>
EUMC European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia
EUMETSAT European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites
EUMM European Union Monitoring Mission
EUPAT EU Police Advisory Team
EUPM European Union Police Mission
EUPOL European Union Police Mission
EUPOL COPPS European Union Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories “Co-ordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support”
EURATOM European Atomic Energy Community
EUREKA European Research Coordination Agency
EUROCONTROL European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation
EUROPOL European Police Office
EUSE EU Special Envoy
EUSEC RD CONGO Mission de conseil et d’assistance de l’Union européenne en matière de réforme du secteur de la sécurité en République démocratique du Congo European Union mission to provide advice and assistance for security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
EUSR EU Special Representative
EUTELSAT European Telecommunications Satellite Organization
EUWI European Union Water Initiative
ex-FAR ex-Forces armées rwandaises ex-Armed Forces of Rwanda
EZA Entwicklungszusammenarbeit Development Cooperation
FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FARC Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia

FATF Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering

FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation

FDLR Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda
Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda

FLG Federal Law Gazette

FMCT Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty
Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices

FNL Forces Nationales de Libération
National Liberation Forces [Burundi]

FPHC Frontier Primary Health Care

FPÖ Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs
Freedom Party of Austria

FRELIMO Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
Front for the Liberation of Mozambique

FTAA Free Trade Area of the Americas

GAM Gerakan Aceh Merdeka
Free Aceh Movement

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GCC Gulf Cooperation Council

GDPRD Global Donor Platform for Rural Development

GEF Global Environmental Facility

GENDERNET Network on Gender Equality

GmbH Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung
Limited liability company
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GFATM</td>
<td>Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria</td>
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<td>GFSE</td>
<td>Global Forum for Sustainable Energy</td>
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<td>GMEF</td>
<td>Global Ministerial Environment Forum</td>
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<td>GMES</td>
<td>Global Monitoring for Environment and Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMOs</td>
<td>Genetically modified organisms</td>
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<td>GNI</td>
<td>Gross National Income</td>
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<td>GPA</td>
<td>Gewerkschaft für Privatangestellte Union of Salaried Employees</td>
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<td>GPS</td>
<td>Global Positioning System</td>
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<td>G-4</td>
<td>Group of 4</td>
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<td>Group of 8</td>
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<td>G-77</td>
<td>Group of 77</td>
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<td>GRULAC</td>
<td>Grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe Group of Latin American and Caribbean States</td>
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<td>GSTP</td>
<td>Global System of Trade Preferences</td>
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<td>HC</td>
<td>Honorary Consulate</td>
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<td>HCG</td>
<td>Honorary Consulate General</td>
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<td>HCOC</td>
<td>The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation</td>
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<td>HIPC</td>
<td>Heavily Indebted Poor Countries</td>
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<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<td>Harare International Festivals of the Arts</td>
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<td>HLS</td>
<td>High-Level Segment</td>
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<td>HRC</td>
<td>Human Rights Council</td>
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<td>HSN</td>
<td>Human Security Network</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTP</td>
<td>Harmful Traditional Practices</td>
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<td>HV-SAP</td>
<td>Haushaltsverrechnung – Systeme Anwendungen und Produkte in der Datenverarbeitung</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SAP budget accounting</td>
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<td>IAEA</td>
<td>International Atomic Energy Agency</td>
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<td>IAF</td>
<td>International Arrangement on Forests</td>
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<td>IBE</td>
<td>International Bureau of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>IBRD</td>
<td>International Bank for Reconstruction and Development</td>
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<td>ICAO</td>
<td>International Civil Aviation Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Criminal Court</td>
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<td>ICCPR</td>
<td>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</td>
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<td>ICIMOD</td>
<td>International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development</td>
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<td>ICJ</td>
<td>International Court of Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICMPD</td>
<td>International Centre for Migration Policy Development</td>
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<td>ICOM</td>
<td>International Council of Museums</td>
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<td>ICOMOS</td>
<td>International Council of Monuments and Sites</td>
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<td>ICPD</td>
<td>International Conference on Population and Development</td>
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<td>ICPDR</td>
<td>International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River</td>
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<td>ICPR</td>
<td>International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine</td>
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<td>ICRC</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
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<td>ICRW</td>
<td>International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<td>ICTR</td>
<td>International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda</td>
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<td>ICTY</td>
<td>International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDB</td>
<td>Inter-American Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDM</td>
<td>Institut für den Donauraum und Mitteleuropa (Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe)</td>
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<td>i.e.</td>
<td>id est \textit{that is}</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEA</td>
<td>International Energy Agency</td>
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<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
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<td>IFC</td>
<td>International Finance Corporation</td>
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<td>IFRI</td>
<td>Institut Français des Relations Internationales (French Institute of International Relations)</td>
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<td>IGAD</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Authority on Development</td>
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<td>IHR</td>
<td>International Health Regulations</td>
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<td>IIASA</td>
<td>International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis</td>
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<td>IIC</td>
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<td>IIEP</td>
<td>International Institute for Educational Planning</td>
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<td>International Institute for Peace</td>
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<td>IIZ</td>
<td>Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (Institute for International Cooperation)</td>
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<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>International Maritime Organization</td>
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<td>INSTRAW</td>
<td>International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women</td>
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<td>IOC</td>
<td>International Oceanographic Commission</td>
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<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<td>IPI</td>
<td>International Press Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPPC</td>
<td>International Plant Protection Convention</td>
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<td>IPTF</td>
<td>United Nations International Police Task Force</td>
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<td>IPU</td>
<td>Integrated Police Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRCAM</td>
<td>Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique Musique Institute for music/acoustic research and coordination</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISA</td>
<td>International Seabed Authority</td>
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<td>ISAF</td>
<td>International Security Assistance Force</td>
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<td>ISEA</td>
<td>International Symposium on Electronics Art</td>
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<td>International Telecommunications Satellite Organization</td>
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<td>International Telecommunication Union</td>
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<td>IWC</td>
<td>International Whaling Commission</td>
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<td>JEM</td>
<td>Justice and Equality Movement</td>
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<td>JIU</td>
<td>Joint Inspection Unit</td>
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<td>JPO</td>
<td>Junior Professional Officer</td>
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<td>JREC</td>
<td>Johannesburg Renewable Energy Coalition</td>
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<td>Joint Vienna Institute</td>
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<td>KANU</td>
<td>Kenya African National Union</td>
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<td>Kosovo Force</td>
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<td>LAC</td>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<td>LAVAK</td>
<td>Landesverteidigungsakademie National Defence Academy</td>
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<td>LDCs</td>
<td>Least Developed Countries</td>
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<td>LDK</td>
<td>Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës Democratic League of Kosovo</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDR</td>
<td>Liberal, Democratic and Reformers’ Group</td>
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<td>LIPRODHOR</td>
<td>Ligue Rwandaise pour la Promotion et la Défense des Droits de l'Homme</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rwandan League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>LRA</td>
<td>Lord's Resistance Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSI</td>
<td>Lëvizja Socialiste për Intigrim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Socialist Movement for Integration [Albania]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTTE</td>
<td>Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAB</td>
<td>Man and the Biosphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A.I.S.</td>
<td>Master of Advanced International Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANPADS</td>
<td>Man-Portable Air Defense Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAS</td>
<td>Movimiento Al Socialismo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movement toward Socialism [Bolivia]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCDU</td>
<td>Military and Civil Defense Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDC</td>
<td>Movement for Democratic Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG/s</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDA</td>
<td>Mésures d’accompagnement financières et techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial and technical measures to accompany the reform of economic and social structures in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEP</td>
<td>Member of the European Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERCOSUR</td>
<td>Mercado Común del Cono Sur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Common Market of the South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIGA</td>
<td>Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINUCI</td>
<td>Mission des Nations Unies en Côte d'Ivoire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINUGUA</td>
<td>Mission de vérification des Nations Unies au Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINURSO</td>
<td>Mission des Nations Unies pour l'organisation d'un référendum au Sahara occidental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINUSTAH</td>
<td>Mission des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en Haïti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSME</td>
<td>Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNF</td>
<td>Multinational Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOP</td>
<td>Meeting of the Parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOTAPM</td>
<td>Mines other than Anti-Personnel Mines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTCR</td>
<td>Missile Technology Control Regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAC</td>
<td>New Agenda Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAFTA</td>
<td>North American Free Trade Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAM</td>
<td>Non-Aligned Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movement of Non-Aligned Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPincl</td>
<td>National Action Plans on Social Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARC</td>
<td>National Rainbow Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCEP</td>
<td>National Civil Education Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEEDS</td>
<td>Network of Europeans for Electoral and Democracy Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa’s Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO/s</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORAD</td>
<td>North American Aerospace Defense Command</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>Nuclear Power Plant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NPT  Non-Proliferation Treaty
      Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

NSG  Nuclear Suppliers Group

NTA  New Transatlantic Agenda

ÖAD  Österreichischer Austauschdienst
      Austrian Exchange Service

OAS  Organization of American States

OAU  Organization of African Unity

OCHA Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

ODCCP Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention

ODA  Official Development Assistance

ODIHR Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

OECD  Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OEZA  Österreichische Entwicklungs- und Ostzusammenarbeit
      Austrian Development Cooperation and Cooperation with
      Eastern Europe

OFID  OPEC Fund for International Development

OHCHR Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

OIC  Organization of Islamic Conference

OIF  Organisation internationale de la Francophonie
      International Organisation of the Francophone

ONUB Opération des Nations Unies au Burundi
      United Nations Operation in Burundi

OPCW Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

OPS  Overarching Policy Strategy

OPEC  Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

OSCE  Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ÖSD</td>
<td>Österreichisches Sprachdiplom Austrian German Language Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ÖSFO</td>
<td>Ökosoziales Forum Österreich Ecosocial Forum Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ÖSFK</td>
<td>Österreichisches Studienzentrum für Frieden und Konfliktlösung Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ÖVP</td>
<td>Österreichische Volkspartei Austrian People’s Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OZA</td>
<td>Ostzusammenarbeit Cooperation with Eastern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAIGC</td>
<td>Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAITHOM</td>
<td>Pakistan Austrian Institute for Tourism and Hotel Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAN</td>
<td>Partido Acción Nacional National Action Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAP</td>
<td>Pan-African Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PES</td>
<td>Party of European Socialists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PfP</td>
<td>Partnership for Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIC</td>
<td>Prior-Informed-Consent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PISA</td>
<td>Programme for International Student Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO</td>
<td>Palestine Liberation Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNR</td>
<td>Passenger Name Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PODEMOS</td>
<td>Poder Democrático y Social Social and Democratic Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POPs</td>
<td>Persistent Organic Pollutants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POVNET</td>
<td>Network on Poverty Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRI</td>
<td>Partido Revolucionario Institucional Institutional Revolutionary Party</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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PRSP  Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
PRTs  Provincial Reconstruction Teams
PSS  Pokret Snaga Srbije
      Power of Serbia Movement
PSSH  Partia Socialiste e Shqipërisë
       Socialist Party of Albania
PTS  Provisional Technical Secretariat
RACVIAC  South-East European Regional Arms Control Verification
         And Implementation Assistance Center
RCD  Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique
     Constitutional Democratic Rally
REEEP  Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership
RIS  River Information Services
SAA  Stabilisation and Association Agreement
SAARC  South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SADC  Southern African Development Community
SAICM  Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SALW  Small Arms and Light Weapons
SAP  Stabilisation and Association Process
SARD  Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
SARS  Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SCO  Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SCSL  Special Court for Sierra Leone
SDC  Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDP  Socijaldemokratska partija
     Social Democratic Party [Serbia]
SDPO  Srpski Demokratski Pokret Obnove
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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>SDSM</td>
<td>Socijaldemokratski Sojuz na Makedonija&lt;br&gt; Social Democratic Union of Macedonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECO</td>
<td>Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFOR</td>
<td>Stabilization Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGCI</td>
<td>Secrétariat général du Comité interministériel pour les questions de coopération économique européenne&lt;br&gt; Secretariat General of the inter-ministerial committee for questions on European economic co-operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHAPE</td>
<td>Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHIRBRIG</td>
<td>Standby Forces High Readiness Brigade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SICA</td>
<td>Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana&lt;br&gt; Central American Integration System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIPA</td>
<td>State Intelligence Protection Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIS</td>
<td>Schengen Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITCEN</td>
<td>EU Situation Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLM/A</td>
<td>Sudan Liberation Movement/Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMEs</td>
<td>Small and medium-sized enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC</td>
<td>Groupe Socialiste&lt;br&gt; Socialist Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPIS</td>
<td>Special Programme in International Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLM/A</td>
<td>Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPO</td>
<td>Srpski Pokret Obnove&lt;br&gt; Serbian Renewal Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPÖ</td>
<td>Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs&lt;br&gt; Social Democratic Party of Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPS</td>
<td>Socijalisti•ka partija Srbije&lt;br&gt; Socialist Party of Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS</td>
<td>Srpska Radikalna Stranka&lt;br&gt; Serbian Radical Party</td>
</tr>
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</table>
SRSG  Special Representative of the Secretary-General
ST-EP  Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty
SVP  Südtiroler Volkspartei
      South Tyrolean People’s Party
SWAC  Sahel and West Africa Club
SWAPs  Sector-wide approaches
SWAPO  South West Africa People’s Organization
SWISSCOY  Swiss Company

TABD  Transatlantic Business Dialogue
TACD  Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue
TACIS  Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
TCPR  Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system
TEC  Treaty establishing the European Community
TEMPUS  A Higher Education Cooperation scheme between EU Member States and Partner Countries
TEN  Trans-European Networks
TEU  Treaty on European Union
TIEA  Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement
TLD  Transatlantic Legislators Dialogue
TOURCOM  World Conference on Tourism Communications
TPB  Terrorism Prevention Branch
TRACECA  Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia
TRIPs  Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| UCK | Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës  
Kosovo Liberation Army |
<p>| UEL | Group of the Unified European Left |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNAIDS | Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS |
| UNAMA | United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan |
| UNAMI | United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq |
| UNAMSIL | United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone |
| UNCDF | United Nations Capital Development Fund |
| UNCHS | United Nations Commission on Human Settlements |
| UNCITRAL | United Nations Commission on International Trade Law |
| UN-CMCoord | United Nations Civil Military Coordination |
| UNCTAD | United Nations Conference on Trade and Development |
| UNDAC | United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination |
| UNDC | United Nations Disarmament Commission |
| UNDCP | United Nations International Drug Control Programme |
| UNDOF | United Nations Disengagement Observer Force |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNECE | United Nations Economic Commission for Europe |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNEO | United Nations Environment Organization |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNFCCC</td>
<td>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFF</td>
<td>United Nations Forum on Forests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFICYP</td>
<td>United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNGA</td>
<td>United Nations General Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN-Habitat</td>
<td>United Nations Human Settlements Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children's Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIDO</td>
<td>United Nations Industrial Development Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIDROIT</td>
<td>Institut international pour l'unification du droit privé International Institute for the Unification of Private Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIFEM</td>
<td>United Nations Development Fund for Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIFIL</td>
<td>United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIKOM</td>
<td>United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIOSIL</td>
<td>United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNISPACE</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMEE</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIBH</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIK</td>
<td>United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIL</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Liberia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIS</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in the Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMISET</td>
<td>United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMISUD</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMOVIC</td>
<td>United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNOCI  United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
UNODC  United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOMIG  United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
UNOMSIL  United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone
UNOTIL  United Nations Office in Timor-Leste
UNRWA  United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNSC  United Nations Security Council
UNSG  United Nations Secretary-General
UNTAET  United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
UNTOP  United Nations Tajikistan Office for Peacebuilding
UNTSO  United Nations Truce Supervision Organization
UNU  United Nations University
UNV  United Nations Volunteers Programme
UNWTO  World Tourism Organization
UPU  Universal Postal Union
USAID  United States Agency for International Development
VFTC  Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights
VIC  Vienna International Centre
VIDC  Vienna Institute for Development and Cooperation
VSAT  Very Small Aperture Terminal
WA  Wassenaar Arrangement
WAN  Wide Area Network
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEAG</td>
<td>Western European Armaments Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEOG</td>
<td>Western Europe and Others Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEU</td>
<td>Western European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIIW</td>
<td>Wiener Institut für Internationale Wirtschaftsvergleiche Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIPO</td>
<td>World Intellectual Property Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WKÖ</td>
<td>Wirtschaftskammer Österreich Austrian Federal Economic Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMD</td>
<td>Weapons of mass destruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMO</td>
<td>World Meteorological Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSIS</td>
<td>World Summit on the Information Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSSD</td>
<td>World Summit on Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZANU-PF</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZC</td>
<td>Zangger Committee</td>
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