Austrian Foreign Policy Yearbook
2006
Report by the Federal Minister for European and International Affairs
Federal Ministry for
European and International Affairs
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Austrian Foreign Policy Yearbook

2006

Report by the Federal Minister for European and International Affairs
Proprietor and Publisher:
Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs
A-1014 Vienna, Minoritenplatz 8
Austria

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The original German version is available at
www.bmeia.gv.at,
or in printed form in the Documentation, Information Management,
Library Department at the
Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs
PREFACE

Austria understood the Presidency of the EU Council it held during the first six months of 2006 as a service to Europe and the world. We wanted to add more confidence, more clarity and a new momentum to the European project.

Right at the beginning of our Council Presidency, therefore, we lent a focussed impetus to the debate on the future of Europe by organising the conference event “The Sound of Europe”. Subsequently, at the Klosterneuburg European Council of Foreign Ministers in May, we succeeded in adding a new dynamism to the quest for the best possible fundamental rules to govern the functioning of the European Union. The schedule we prepared to this end in Klosterneuburg proved its worth as a reasonable roadmap for the following EU Council Presidencies.

In this spirit, too we organised the “Europe is Listening” campaign to gain a better insight into the concrete problems and concerns shared by the citizens of Europe and to enable us to address these concerns in an even more targeted manner. For us, European policy always has been and remains focussed on implementing concrete projects, aimed for instance, at creating more jobs and promoting growth in Europe, enhancing energy security and safeguarding as well as further developing the European Way of Life we all share all across the continent.

However, the European peace project would remain incomplete without a credible and tangible EU accession perspective offered to all South East European states, as was secured in the Salzburg Declaration. To our neighbours in the Balkans this perspective is an indispensable driving force for democratic and economic reforms based on the rule of law. Hence it is a decisive factor for peace, stability and development in the entire region and thus also for Austria’s own safety and security.

The Balkans region was therefore a focus of our 2006 Council Presidency. In this spirit concrete steps were undertaken to move each individual Western Balkan state closer to Europe, including for instance the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Albania, the launch of negotiations on such an agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina and monitoring and supporting the peaceful inception of the new state of Montenegro. Another major concern of ours was to assist Serbia on its way towards Europe.
On 1 January 2007 we were able to welcome Romania and Bulgaria as Member States of the European Union. We also initiated the substantial accession negotiations with Croatia and closed the first negotiation chapter. It further proved possible to decouple these negotiations from those held with Turkey as every country has to be assessed according to its own achievements.

Austria has traditionally been committed to the Dialogue among Religions and Cultures. Our Council Presidency was thus clearly focused on promoting a more tolerant way of living together in the global village. Supported by the unshakeable strength of European values and Austria’s good contacts with the Muslim world, we were able to mediate in a credible manner in the so-called caricature dispute.

In line with the EU’s broad spectrum of external relations numerous meetings with third countries took place during our Council Presidency, many of these encounters being held in Austria. Among the meetings held, for instance, were 16 EU Troika meetings at foreign minister level, 11 meetings of EU foreign ministers within the framework of Association or Cooperation Councils with neighbouring states and regions, two Accession Conferences and a number of Summit Meetings, including those with the USA, Russia, Japan and the Latin American and Caribbean states.

In our activities both within the EU and beyond, the Austrian national colours, red-white-red, are synonymous with confidence-building. In particular, Austria is and remains a strong and reliable partner of the United Nations. We explicitly support the reforms the UN has embarked on and are standing as a candidate for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the period from 2009 to 2010.

The important role played by the Vienna-based UN agencies and organisations further increased in 2006, the latter acting as a key node in the international security architecture. As Vienna is the only UN headquarters in the European Union these agencies and organisations are an important hub for the close networking between the United Nations and the EU.

In 2006 more than 2,500 Austrians participated in international peace missions. Austria is represented in Kosovo with up to 600 troops, for instance, and 387 Austrian peacekeepers are based on the Golan Heights.
But the death of Major Hans Peter Lang at Khiam in Lebanon also reminded us very painfully of the risks inherent in the service to peace. Austria has undertaken every effort to ensure not only that the circumstances of this tragic accident are clarified, but also that the United Nations learns the necessary lessons from this fatality.

A cornerstone of our foreign policy is the Austrian Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe. It helps us build bridges to our near and more distant neighbours in the global village. The central objectives of the Austrian Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe are combating poverty, preventing conflicts, promoting human security, establishing rule-of-law structures and the sustainable use of natural resources. The strategic foundation is laid by the Three-year Programme 2006-2008, which is implemented by means of concrete projects realised in cooperation with NGOs and other committed partners.

More than one-third of all projects managed by the Austrian Development Agency focus on promoting democracy and human rights. In South East Europe we are helping to establish closer ties between the countries of the former Yugoslavia, Albania and Moldova and the EU. Moreover, every project managed by the Austrian Development Cooperation is scrutinised to ensure that it takes women’s interests and concerns into consideration.

With its active international cultural policy Austria shows its colours to the world. Our large pool of artists, scientists and academics adds an unmistakably colourful and multifaceted dimension to our international relations. The 30 Austrian Cultural Fora communicate awareness of what it means to be European, bring people together, arouse curiosity for other cultures and inspire people to learn from and about each other. They are a constant source of new momentum to the Dialogue among Civil Societies and Cultures and act as a door-opener for Austrian concerns and interests.

In 2006 we celebrated the anniversaries of Sigmund Freud and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and more than 100,000 people actively participated in related projects that were either initiated or supported by Austrian international cultural policy.

The Foreign Ministry sees itself as a modern resource facility at the service of Austrians worldwide. We provide advice and practical
support to our compatriots in distress far from home. We constantly work at improving the framework conditions for those Austrians who live abroad either permanently or over a longer period of time. They are the pioneers of a cosmopolitan Austria, the link between countries and continents. Offering optimum service to our compatriots abroad is the declared goal of our representations.

For Austria as a tourist destination and important business location, the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs is often the first point of contact between Austria and our foreign guests. Moreover, our visa offices abroad also represent a first external safety belt for our country, the high standard of which is constantly checked and, where necessary, further improved in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

In all these spheres of activity Austria continued to pursue its red-white-red foreign policy in 2006 in a spirit of teamwork based on reliability and continuity.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank State Secretary Hans Winkler, Secretary-General Johannes Kyrle and all employees at headquarters and in the Austrian representations abroad for their efforts. With huge personal commitment our 1,287 employees in Vienna and around the world tackle the challenges of an active foreign policy at the service of Austria every day anew: in 2006 they again did so with exemplary efforts and dedication which often required much talent for improvisation as well. I would also like to express my gratitude to their family members, partners and friends whose contribution to the successful representation of Austrian interests in the world is far too little recognised.

Dr. Ursula Plassnik
Federal Minister for European and International Affairs
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<tr>
<td>ABIS</td>
<td>Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Ireland and Switzerland [ICAO Group of States]</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACO</td>
<td>Allied Command for Operations</td>
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<td>ACF</td>
<td>Austrian Cultural Forum</td>
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<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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<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<td>ADC</td>
<td>Austrian Development Cooperation</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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<tr>
<td>ADS</td>
<td>Approved Destination Status</td>
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<td>AEMM</td>
<td>ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting</td>
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<td>AfDB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>AfDF</td>
<td>African Development Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFDRU</td>
<td>Austrian Forces Disaster Relief Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFTA</td>
<td>Asean Free Trade Area</td>
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<td>AG</td>
<td>Australia Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>a.i.</td>
<td>ad interim</td>
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<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Austria Institute</td>
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<td>AIAM</td>
<td>Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting</td>
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<td>XIV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIES</td>
<td>Austrian Institute for European Security Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIIA</td>
<td>Austrian Institute for International Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIT</td>
<td>Asian Institute of Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMIS</td>
<td>African Union Mission in Sudan</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMM</td>
<td>Aceh Monitoring Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMSDE</td>
<td>Annual Meeting of Sustainable Development Experts</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMU</td>
<td>Arab Maghreb Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| AÖWB         | Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund  
World Federation of Austrians Abroad |
| APEC         | Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation |
| ARF          | ASEAN Regional Forum |
| Art.         | Article |
| ASEA-UNINET  | Asean-European University Network |
| ASEAN        | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| 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 |
<p>| ATAU         | Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit |
| ATS          | Amphetamine-type Stimulants |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATT</td>
<td>Arms Trade Treaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATU</td>
<td>Action against Terrorism Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| AUC          | Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia
  United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia |
| AUCON        | Austrian Contingent |
| AußHG        | Außenhandelsgesetz
  Foreign Trade Act |
| AußHV        | Außenhandelsverordnung
  Foreign Trade Regulation |
| AWEPA        | Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa |
| BINUB        | United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi |
| BMaA         | Bundesministerium für auswärtige Angelegenheiten
  Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs |
| BMD          | Ballistic Missile Defense |
| BOMCA        | Border Management in Central Asia |
| BTWC         | Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
  Convention on the Prohibition of the Development,
  Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological)
  and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction |
| BZÖ          | Bündnis Zukunft Österreich
  Alliance for the Future of Austria |
| CADAP        | Central Asia Drug Action Programme |
| CAFTA        | Central American Free Trade Agreement |
| CAN          | Comunidad Andina
  Andean Community |
<p>| XVI          | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
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<tr>
<td>CARDS</td>
<td>Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation</td>
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<td>CARICOM</td>
<td>Caribbean Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>CARIFORUM</td>
<td>Forum of the Caribbean ACP States</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBD</td>
<td>Convention on Biological Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEMR</td>
<td>Council of European Municipalities and Regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCM</td>
<td>Chama Cha Mapinduzi Party of the Revolution [Tanzania]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCNM</td>
<td>Centre for Co-operation with Non-Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCNR</td>
<td>Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCPCJ</td>
<td>Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCWC</td>
<td>Certain Conventional Weapons Convention 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 Protocols)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Conference on Disarmament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDM</td>
<td>Clean Development Mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Congrès pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Congress for Democracy and Progress [Burkina Faso]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEATS</td>
<td>Central European Air Traffic Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDRO</td>
<td>Centro de Información y Educación para la Prevención del Abuso de Drogas Center for Information and Education for the Prevention of Drug Abuse [Peru]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEECs</td>
<td>Central and Eastern European Countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEEPUS</td>
<td>Central European Exchange Programme of University Studies</td>
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<td>CEFTA</td>
<td>Central European Free Trade Agreement</td>
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<td>CEI</td>
<td>Central European Initiative</td>
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<td>CENCOOP</td>
<td>Central European Nations’ Cooperation in Peace Support</td>
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<td>CEN-SAD</td>
<td>Community of Sahel-Saharan States</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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<tr>
<td>CFC</td>
<td>Common Fund for Commodities</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>
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<td>CGIAR</td>
<td>Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research</td>
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<td>CHR</td>
<td>Commission on Human Rights</td>
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<td>CIA</td>
<td>Central Intelligence Agency</td>
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<td>Centre for International Crime Prevention</td>
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<td>CIME</td>
<td>Committee on International Investment and Multinational Enterprises</td>
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<td>CIP</td>
<td>Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
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<tr>
<td>CITES</td>
<td>Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLC</td>
<td>Consulting and Research Center for Law and Institutions in Transition Countries</td>
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<td>CLRTAP</td>
<td>Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMCO</td>
<td>Civil-Military Coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMIT</td>
<td>Committee on Capital Movements and Invisible Transactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CND</td>
<td>Commission on Narcotic Drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coreper</td>
<td>Comité des représentants permanents Permanent Representatives Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG</td>
<td>Committee on Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COHOM</td>
<td>Groupe de travail droits de l'homme EU Council Working Party on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMESA</td>
<td>Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMKFOR</td>
<td>Commander Kosovo Force</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORET</td>
<td>Conifer Research and Training Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COSAC</td>
<td>Conférence des organes spécialisés dans les affaires communautaires et européennes des parlements de l’Union européenne Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST</td>
<td>European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPHRFF</td>
<td>Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPPNM</td>
<td>Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREAF</td>
<td>Centre de réflexion Europe-Afrique pour la prévention des conflits European and African Conflict Prevention Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROMAC</td>
<td>Croatian Mine Action Center</td>
</tr>
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</table>
CRT  Civilian Response Teams
CSCE  Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSD  Commission on Sustainable Development
CSDP  Common Security and Defence Policy
CSME  CARICOM Single Market and Economy
      Caribbean Community Single Market and Economy
CSN  Comunidad Sudamericana de Naciones
      South American Community of Nations
CSocD  Commission on Social Development
CSR  Corporate Social Responsibility
CSW  Commission on the Status of Women
CTBT  Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBT PrepCom  Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-
      Test-Ban Treaty Organization
CTBTO  Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
CTC  Counter-Terrorism Committee
CUF  Civic United Front [Tanzania]
CWC  Chemical Weapons Convention
      Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production,
      Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction
DA  Diplomatische Akademie
     Diplomatic Academy
DAC  Development Assistance Committee
DC  Development Centre
DCD  Development Co-operation Directorate
XX
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<td>Dept.</td>
<td>Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>DP</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Albania</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPA</td>
<td>Darfur Peace Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR-CAFTA</td>
<td>U.S.-Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUI</td>
<td>Democratic Union for Integration [Macedonia]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EACA</td>
<td>EC-ASEAN Co-operation Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAGGF</td>
<td>European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td>Environment Action Programm</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAPC</td>
<td>Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAS</td>
<td>East Asia Summit</td>
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<td>EASA</td>
<td>European Aviation Safety Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>EBRD</td>
<td>European Bank for Reconstruction and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECA</td>
<td>European Commission on Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAP</td>
<td>European Capability Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECCAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of Central African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECFI</td>
<td>European Court of First Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHO</td>
<td>European Community Humanitarian Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHR</td>
<td>European Court of Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECHRFF</td>
<td>European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECJ</td>
<td>European Court of Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECLAC</td>
<td>Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECMWF</td>
<td>European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOFIN</td>
<td>Economic and Financial Affairs Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>Economic and Social Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community Of West African States</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECPHR</td>
<td>European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECRI</td>
<td>European Commission against Racism and Intolerance</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECSEE</td>
<td>Energy Community South East Europe</td>
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<td>EDA</td>
<td>European Defence Agency</td>
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<td>EDF</td>
<td>European Development Fund</td>
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<td>EDG</td>
<td>European Democrat Group [Council of Europe]</td>
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<td>EEA</td>
<td>European Economic Area</td>
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<td>EEBC</td>
<td>Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission</td>
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<td>EEC</td>
<td>European Economic Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>EEF</td>
<td>European Development Fund</td>
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<td>EFTA</td>
<td>European Free Trade Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>exempli gratia for example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EGF</td>
<td>European Globalisation adjustment Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIB</td>
<td>European Investment Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIDHR</td>
<td>European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIT</td>
<td>European Institute of Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELAK</td>
<td>Elektronischer Akt</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Liberation Army [Colombia]</td>
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<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENPI</td>
<td>European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENVISAT</td>
<td>Environment Satellite</td>
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<td>EP</td>
<td>European Parliament</td>
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<td>EPA</td>
<td>Economic Partnership Agreement</td>
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<td>EPE</td>
<td>Energy Policy for Europe</td>
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<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPU</td>
<td>European Peace University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>European University Center for Peace Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERGEG</td>
<td>European Regulators Group for Electricity and Gas</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESF</td>
<td>European Social Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESPI</td>
<td>European Space Policy Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETC</td>
<td>European Training Centre for Democracy and Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU BAM</td>
<td>European Union Border Assistance Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUFOR</td>
<td>European Union Force Multinational stabilization force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUFOR RD Congo</td>
<td>European Union military operation in support of the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) during the election process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-LAC Summit</td>
<td>EU-Latin American and Caribbean Summit</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUJUST</td>
<td>EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUJUST LEX</td>
<td>EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUMC</td>
<td>European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUMETSAT</td>
<td>European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUMM</td>
<td>European Union Monitoring Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUNIC</td>
<td>European Union National Institutes for Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUPAT</td>
<td>EU Police Advisory Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUPM</td>
<td>European Union Police Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUPOL</td>
<td>European Union Police Mission</td>
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</table>
| EUPOL COPPS | European Union Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories  
“Co-ordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support” |
<p>| EUPT    | EU Planning Team |
| EURALIUS | European Assistance Mission to the Albanian Justice System |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EURASEC</td>
<td>Eurasian Economic Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>EURATOM</td>
<td>European Atomic Energy Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUREKA</td>
<td>European Research Coordination Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUROCONTROL</td>
<td>European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUROPOL</td>
<td>European Police Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUSE</td>
<td>EU Special Envoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUSEC RD CONGO</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUSR</td>
<td>EU Special Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUTELSAT</td>
<td>European Telecommunications Satellite Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUWI</td>
<td>European Union Water Initiative</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>FARC</td>
<td>Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia. Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia</td>
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<td>FATF</td>
<td>Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBI</td>
<td>Federal Bureau of Investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLG</td>
<td>Federal Law Gazette</td>
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<td>FMCT</td>
<td>Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices</td>
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<tr>
<td>FNL</td>
<td>Forces Nationales de Libération. National Liberation Forces [Burundi]</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPHC</td>
<td>Frontier Primary Health Care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FPÖ  Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs
Freedom Party of Austria

FRELIMO  Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique
Front for the Liberation of Mozambique

FRONTEX  Agence européenne pour la gestion de la coopération
opérationnelle aux frontières extérieures des États membres
de l'Union européenne
European Agency for the Management of Operational
Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States
of the European Union

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

G.m.b.H  Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung
Limited liability company

GFATM  Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

GFSE  Global Forum for Sustainable Energy

GMEF  Global Ministerial Environment Forum

GMES  Global Monitoring for Environment and Security

GMOs  Genetically modified organisms

GNI  Gross National Income
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>Global Positioning System</td>
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<tr>
<td>G4</td>
<td>Group of 4</td>
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<td>G8</td>
<td>Group of 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G77</td>
<td>Group of 77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| GRULAC  | Grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe  
Group of Latin American and Caribbean States |
| GSTP    | Global System of Trade Preferences |
| HCOC    | The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation |
| HIPC    | Heavily Indebted Poor Countries |
| HIV/AIDS| Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| HIFA    | Harare International Festivals of the Arts |
| HLS     | High-Level Segment |
| HRC     | Human Rights Council |
| HSN     | Human Security Network |
| HTP     | Harmful Traditional Practices |
| IAEA    | International Atomic Energy Agency |
| IAF     | International Arrangement on Forests |
| IBE     | International Bureau of Education |
| IBRD    | International Bank for Reconstruction and Development |
| ICAO    | International Civil Aviation Organization |
| ICC     | International Criminal Court |
ICCM  International Conference on Chemicals Management
ICCPR  International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICI  International Compact with Iraq
ICIMOD  International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ICJ  International Court of Justice
ICMPD  International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ICPD  International Conference on Population and Development
ICPDR  International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
ICPR  International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine
ICRC  International Committee of the Red Cross
ICRW  International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling
ICT  Information and Communication Technology
ICTY  International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IDB  Inter-American Development Bank
IDM  Institut für den Donauraum und Mitteleuropa
      Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe
i.e.  id est
      that is
IEA  International Energy Agency
IFAD  International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC  International Finance Corporation
IGAD  Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGASOM  Peacekeeping Mission of IGAD in Somalia
XXVIII
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
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<tr>
<td>IGF</td>
<td>Internet Governance Forum</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>
</tr>
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<td>IIC</td>
<td>Independent Inquiry Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIEP</td>
<td>International Institute for Educational Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIP</td>
<td>International Institute for Peace</td>
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<td>ILC</td>
<td>International Law Commission</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>IMEC</td>
<td>Industrialized Market Economy Countries</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>IMO</td>
<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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<tr>
<td>INTOSAI</td>
<td>International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPCC</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Instrument for Pre-accession</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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<tr>
<td>IPTF</td>
<td>United Nations International Police Task Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPU</td>
<td>Integrated Police Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISAF</td>
<td>International Security Assistance Force</td>
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<td>ISPA</td>
<td>Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession</td>
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<td>Abbr.</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITER</td>
<td>International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITF</td>
<td>Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITLOS</td>
<td>International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITPGR</td>
<td>International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture</td>
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<td>ITSO</td>
<td>International Telecommunications Satellite Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITU</td>
<td>International Telecommunications Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWC</td>
<td>International Whaling Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JEM</td>
<td>Justice and Equality Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>JIPTC</td>
<td>Jordanian International Police Training Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JIU</td>
<td>Joint Inspection Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPO</td>
<td>Junior Professional Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JREC</td>
<td>Johannesburg Renewable Energy Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JVI</td>
<td>Joint Vienna Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KANU</td>
<td>Kenya African National Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KFOR</td>
<td>Kosovo Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCs</td>
<td>Least Developed Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDC III</td>
<td>Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDK</td>
<td>Democratic League of Kosovo</td>
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<td>XXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDR</td>
<td>Liberal, Democratic and Reformers’ Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRA</td>
<td>Lord’s Resistance Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRTAP</td>
<td>Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSI</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>MALCA</td>
<td>Modern Austrian Literature and Culture Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>MANPADS</td>
<td>Man-Portable Air Defense Systems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| MAS     | Movimiento Al Socialismo  
Movement toward Socialism [Bolivia] |
| MCDU    | Military and Civil Defense Unit |
| MDC     | Movement for Democratic Change |
| MDG/s   | Millennium Development Goal/s |
| MEDA    | Mésures d’accompagnement financières et techniques  
Financial and technical measures to accompany the reform  
of economic and social structures in the framework of the  
Euro-Mediterranean partnership |
| MEP     | Member of the European Parliament |
| MERCOSUR | Mercado Común del Cono Sur  
Common Market of the South |
<p>| MIGA    | Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency |
| mill.    | million |
| MSME    | Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MNF</td>
<td>Multinational Force</td>
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<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>MTF</td>
<td>Maritime Task Force</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 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>
<tr>
<td>NPT</td>
<td>Non-Proliferation Treaty Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

XXXII
NRF  NATO Response Force
NSG  Nuclear Suppliers Group
NTA  New Transatlantic Agenda
ÖAD  Österreicher 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  Österreicherische 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
OJEC  Official Journal of the European Communities,
OJEU  Official Journal of the European Union
       [before 1 February 2003: Official Journal of the European
       Communities, OJEC]
ONUB  Opération des Nations Unies au Burundi
       United Nations Operation in Burundi
OPCW  Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OPS</td>
<td>Overarching Policy Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPEC</td>
<td>Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ÖSD     | Österreichisches Sprachdiplom
Austrian German Language Diploma |
| ÖSKF    | Österreichisches Studienzentrum für Frieden und Konfliktlösung
Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution |
| OSI     | Ost- und Südosteuropainstitut
Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies |
| ÖVP     | Österreichische Volkspartei
Austrian People’s Party |
| PaN     | Partner of all Nations |
| PAN     | Partido Acción Nacional
National Action Party [Mexico] |
| PAP     | Pan-African Parliament |
| PAROS   | Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space |
| PASPA   | Partenariat Stratégique pour la Paix en Afrique
Strategic Partnership for Peace in Africa |
<p>| PCA     | Partnership and Cooperation Agreement |
| PES     | Party of European Socialists |
| PfP     | Partnership for Peace |
| PHARE   | Action plan for coordinated aid to Poland and Hungary |
| PIC     | Prior-Informed-Consent |
| PISA    | Programme for International Student Assessment |
| PLO     | Palestine Liberation Organization |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PNR</td>
<td>Passenger Name Records</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>PRD</td>
<td>Partido de la Revolución Democrática Democratic Revolutionary Party [Mexico]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTs</td>
<td>Provincial Reconstruction Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Political and Security Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSS</td>
<td>Power of Serbia Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTS</td>
<td>Provisional Technical Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACVIAC</td>
<td>South-East European Regional Arms Control Verification And Implementation Assistance Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCC</td>
<td>Regional Co-operation Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCF</td>
<td>Regulatory Cooperation Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCD</td>
<td>Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique Constitutional Democratic Rally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REACH</td>
<td>Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restrictions of Chemical Substances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REEEP</td>
<td>Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIS</td>
<td>River Information Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAA</td>
<td>Stabilisation and Association Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAARC</td>
<td>South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SACU</td>
<td>Southern African Customs Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAICM</td>
<td>Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALW</td>
<td>Small Arms and Light Weapons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>Stabilisation and Association Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAPARD</td>
<td>Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SARD</td>
<td>Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDP</td>
<td>Social Democratic Party [Serbia]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDPO</td>
<td>Serbian Democratic Renewal Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDSM</td>
<td>Social Democratic Union of Macedonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECO</td>
<td>Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEECP</td>
<td>South-East European Cooperation Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEEMO</td>
<td>South East Europe Media Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESAR</td>
<td>Système européen de nouvelle génération pour la gestion du trafic aérien new generation European air traffic management system</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 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 Central American Integration System</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

XXXVI
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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, Socialist Group [Council of Europe]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Socialist Party [Albania]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPE</td>
<td>Socialist Group in the European Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPIDER</td>
<td>United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response</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>Serbian Renewal Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPÖ</td>
<td>Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs, Social Democratic Party of Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPS</td>
<td>Socialist Party of Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRSG</td>
<td>Special Representative of the Secretary-General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST-EP</td>
<td>Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVP</td>
<td>Südtiroler Volkspartei, South Tyrolean People’s Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAC</td>
<td>Sahel and West Africa Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAPs</td>
<td>Sector-wide approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAPO</td>
<td>South West Africa People’s Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWISSCOY</td>
<td>Swiss Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABD</td>
<td>Transatlantic Business Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TACD</td>
<td>Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAC</td>
<td>Treaty of Amity and Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TACIS</td>
<td>Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCPR</td>
<td>Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEC</td>
<td>Treaty establishing the European Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Trans-European Networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEU</td>
<td>Treaty on European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIEA</td>
<td>Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIM</td>
<td>Temporary International Mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLD</td>
<td>Transatlantic Legislators Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOURCOM</td>
<td>World Conference on Tourism Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPB</td>
<td>Terrorism Prevention Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRACECA</td>
<td>Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIPs</td>
<td>Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCK</td>
<td>Kosovo Liberation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UEFA</td>
<td>Union of European Football Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UEL</td>
<td>Group of the Unified European Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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XXXVIII
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMA</td>
<td>United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMI</td>
<td>United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMSIL</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNC</td>
<td>United Nations Charter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCCD</td>
<td>United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCDF</td>
<td>United Nations Capital Development Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCHS</td>
<td>United Nations Commission on Human Settlements</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCITRAL</td>
<td>United Nations Commission on International Trade Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN-CMCoord</td>
<td>United Nations Civil Military Coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDAC</td>
<td>United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDC</td>
<td>United Nations Disarmament Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDCP</td>
<td>United Nations International Drug Control Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDOF</td>
<td>United Nations Disengagement Observer Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNECE</td>
<td>United Nations Economic Commission for Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEO</td>
<td>United Nations Environment Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>United Nations Environment Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFCCC</td>
<td>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</td>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>UN-Habitat</td>
<td>United Nations Human Settlements Programme</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNIDIR</td>
<td>United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIDO</td>
<td>United Nations Industrial Development Organization</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>UNISPACE</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMAS</td>
<td>United Nations Mine Action Service</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>
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<td>UNMIL</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Liberia</td>
</tr>
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<td>UNMIS</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in the Sudan</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNMISET</td>
<td>United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor</td>
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<td>UNMISUD</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Sudan</td>
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<td>XL</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNMIT</td>
<td>United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMVIC</td>
<td>United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNOCI</td>
<td>United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNODC</td>
<td>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNOMIG</td>
<td>United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNOMSIL</td>
<td>United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNOTIL</td>
<td>United Nations Office in Timor-Leste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNOWA</td>
<td>United Nations Office for West Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNRWA</td>
<td>United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSG</td>
<td>United Nations Secretary-General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTAET</td>
<td>United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTOC</td>
<td>United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTSO</td>
<td>United Nations Truce Supervision Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNWTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPC</td>
<td>Union des Patriotes Congolais Union of Congolese Patriots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPU</td>
<td>Universal Postal Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VFTC</td>
<td>Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>Vienna International Centre</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
VIDC Vienna Institute for Development and Cooperation

VMRO-DPMNE Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization - Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity

VSAT Very Small Aperture Terminal

WA Wassenaar Arrangement

WAN Wide Area Network

WEAG Western European Armaments Group

WEOG Western Europe and Others Group

WEU Western European Union

WFP World Food Programme

WHO World Health Organization

WIFI Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut Institute for Economic Promotion

WIPO World Intellectual Property Organization

WMD Weapons of Mass Destruction

WMO World Meteorological Organization

WSIS World Summit on the Information Society

WSSD World Summit on Sustainable Development

WTO World Trade Organization

ZC Zangger Committee

ZWD Zimbabwe dollar

XLII
A. Austria in the European Union

I. The Austrian Presidency of the EU Council

On 1 January, Austria took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) in a difficult phase of European integration. In spring 2005, the two referendums in France and the Netherlands had resulted in a rejection of the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty. Moreover, the first round of negotiations concerning the Financial Perspective for 2007-2013 had failed in 2005. The Member States did not reach agreement until the end of 2005, and even then their proposal was not yet supported by the European Parliament. In consequence, the degree of EU scepticism among the citizens was increasing.

Right from the outset of its Council Presidency, Austria made every effort to help enhance trust in Europe, both among Member States and between the Union and its citizens. The aim was to emphasise common aspects at European level through specific projects and to highlight the added value Europe creates for its citizens.

In addition, the Austrian Presidency lent specific impetus to the debate on the future of Europe. The issue of a European identity was at the centre of an international conference entitled “The Sound of Europe” on 26 - 28 January in Salzburg, and the issue of subsidiarity was discussed at a conference entitled “Europe starts at home” on 18 and 19 April in the Lower Austrian capital of St. Pölten.

The spring meeting of the European Council on 23 and 24 March made an important contribution to promote growth and employment in Europe. The resolutions taken at this meeting primarily concerned measures to support micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), research and innovation policy, and employment possibilities, especially for young people, in accordance with the Flexibility through Security strategy and also included the definition of specific European employment objectives.

The political agreement on the Services Directive provided new opportunities, particularly for SMEs, while simultaneously avoiding social and wage dumping. The purpose of the directive is to eliminate legal and administrative obstacles to the rendering of cross-border services between Member States without damaging the social fabric.

Furthermore, the spring summit also laid the foundations for a common EU energy policy – one of the most significant course-setting decisions made by this Council Presidency. The triggering factor was Russia’s decision to provisionally suspend gas deliveries to Ukraine from 1 January. The issue of
energy still remains a challenge for the EU. The goal of the Union’s energy policy is to increase the transparency of the markets and reduce the level of interdependencies.

In April, the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission succeeded in reaching agreement on the Financial Perspective. The successful outcome of the negotiations created a binding foundation for the European Union’s financial planning in 2007-2013. During this period, 862 billion euros will be available for European tasks and activities.

After intensive preparations, the EU foreign ministers, at their informal meeting on 27 and 28 May in Klostereuneburg near Vienna, were able to reach agreement on the further procedure with regard to the EU Constitutional Treaty.

The second European Council under the Austrian Presidency on 15 and 16 July confirmed and substantiated this “choreography” of further joint steps and agreed to pursue a two-track approach in the further debate on the future of the EU.

On the one hand, specific work on a “Europe of Projects” will be continued and intensified in order to ensure the best possible use of the opportunities provided under the current treaties in the interest of the European citizens. Measures include, for example, the further enhancement of the EU’s crisis and disaster response capability for the protection of its citizens within and outside the Union; measures to reduce the number of traffic deaths by 2010; customer-oriented traffic and transport services; social services of general interest and better co-ordinated action to fight rare diseases. Concrete progress was also achieved with involving national parliaments in European policy work and with increasing the transparency of the activities of the EU Council. The European Council thus decided to make its deliberations open to the public during all phases of the co-decision procedure.

On the other hand, the Council determined the next steps in the constitutional process. In the first half of 2007, the German Presidency is to submit to the European Council a report assessing the status of deliberations and outlining possible future developments. The actual measures in the reform process are then to be taken by the second half of 2008 at the latest.

Finally, the European Council envisaged adopting a Declaration on European Values and Future Challenges for Europe on 25 March 2007, the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaties of Rome.

With regard to EU enlargement, the European Council agreed that the pace of enlargement has to take into consideration the EU’s capacity to absorb new
members. It tasked the European Commission to submit a report on all aspects of the EU’s absorption capacity by the end of the year.

In June, political agreement was reached on the comitology reform, which had mainly been negotiated under the Austrian Council Presidency. The reform constitutes an important step towards improving institutional co-operation and for the first time enables the European Parliament to exercise a genuine right of scrutiny over implementing measures proposed by the European Commission.

The many years of efforts made by Austria in support of an amendment to the Eurovignette Directive came to a successful end under the Austrian Council Presidency. The new directive takes into consideration both the polluter-pays principle and the principle of true costs.

At the foreign policy level the Austrian Council Presidency ensured a coherent line of EU action in numerous difficult situations, ranging from the natural gas crisis at the beginning of the year, diplomatic incidents and riots caused by the publication of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad in Danish newspapers, the election victory of the Hamas party and the situation in Belarus to the nuclear dispute with Iran.

In the sphere of foreign policy, the Austrian Council Presidency focused particularly on South East Europe. As a result of specific measures implemented for the individual countries in the region, it was possible to move each state of the Western Balkans closer to the European Community of Values. The common goal of all Member States was and remains that of creating an area of peace and stability in a region which has been dominated by war and conflict for a long period of time. The informal meeting of foreign ministers on 10 and 11 March in Salzburg was primarily dedicated to this region. The ministers' discussions with their counterparts from the Western Balkan states, who were invited to a conference held on the sidelines of the meeting, resulted in the Salzburg Declaration of 11 March, which affirmed the European Perspective of all of these states. Subsequently at the June European Council, this European Perspective was further confirmed by the Council Conclusions.

At the development policy level, fundamental political agreement was reached with the European Parliament concerning the simplification of the Community’s development instruments. The EC-ACP Council of Ministers which was held on 2 June in Papua New Guinea and co-chaired by Austria and the Dominican Republic, concluded the negotiations on the amount of funds allocated to the 10th European Development Fund (10th EDF) and agreed on an allocation of 24.7 billion euros.
All in all, Austria chaired about 200 conferences with third countries, including eleven summit meetings and 45 meetings of foreign ministers, highlights being the EU-Latin America/Caribbean Summit on 11 – 13 May in Vienna, the largest international conference in Austria since the Vienna Congress of 1815, and the EU-USA Summit on 21 June. The dynamism of the relations between the EU and the United States, which have been significantly deepened and intensified in the past few years, also continued under the Austrian Presidency.

The Organisation and Logistics of the Austrian EU Council Presidency

One of the Council Presidency’s obligations towards its partners in the EU is the preparation of a consistent meeting calendar for the bodies of the Council and the Council’s encounters with third-countries. Moreover, it fulfils numerous obligations vis-à-vis the European Parliament. The enlargement of the EU, the expansion of EU tasks and more complex institutional interrelations and processes have considerably increased the planning and organisational requirements of the individual Council Presidencies. Austria’s organisational and logistics efforts doubled compared to its first Council Presidency in 1998.

In the first half of the year, 1,900 meetings taking place at all levels of the European Union – from European and Ministerial Councils to expert and third-country meetings – had to be convened in Brussels alone. 750 of them were chaired by officials of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik and State Secretary Hans Winkler chaired six meetings of the General Affairs and External Relations Council, two informal meetings of foreign ministers in Austria, eleven Association and Cooperation Councils and 16 Troika Meetings at foreign minister level. Members of the Federal Government represented the Council in more than 100 meetings of the plenary and committees of the European Parliament. Austria was the venue of 265 Presidency events, 22 of which were large-scale conferences at political representation level.

Each EU Council Presidency first and foremost constitutes a service to the European Union. However, the six months of Austria’s Council Presidency also contributed to consolidating and further enhancing Austria’s positive image in the world. Austria’s European partners expressed their appreciation of the organisation and management of Austria’s EU Council Presidency.
II. The Enlargement of the European Union

1. Bulgaria and Romania

In October 2005, the European Commission submitted its monitoring reports on the state of preparedness of Bulgaria and Romania for EU accession. These reports clearly revealed that, despite a number of improvements, extensive efforts – mainly in the spheres of judicial and administrative reform, the fight against corruption, and agriculture and food safety – had to be made in order to maintain the accession date of 1 January 2007 foreseen by the Accession Treaty. After a more positive interim report in May, the European Commission was able in September to confirm the envisaged accession date due to significant progress made by both countries. However, because of remaining deficiencies it provided for a possible activation of the safeguard clauses, for example with regard to food safety or aviation security, where some specific measures are already in place, as well as for the creation of a mechanism to ensure the proper management of EU agricultural funds. Moreover a specific cooperation and verification mechanism was established for the particularly sensitive area of judicial reform and the fight against corruption in order to review progress in addressing certain benchmarks.

Austria completed the required national ratification procedure in June, but invoked the introduction of transitional measures with regard to the free movement of labour in order to avoid possible disturbances in certain sensitive services sectors on the Austrian labour market.

2. Croatia and Turkey

As agreed at the June 2006 European Council and on the basis of a special report by the European Commission on the EU’s capacity to integrate new members, the European Council of 14 and 15 December adopted a “renewed consensus on enlargement”. This enlargement strategy provides for the consideration of important elements such as the judgement of the candidate countries according to their own merits and the need for broad public support. It forms the basis for any future decisions related to the enlargement process and foresees that the pace of enlargement must take into account the capacity of the Union to absorb new members, a principle particularly important to Austria. The absorption capacity is to be assessed by means of impact studies, an instrument supported by Austria which is used by the European Commission to comment on the effects of accession on key EU policy areas.

After the official opening of accession negotiations, the European Commission started to examine whether legislation in the candidate countries complies with the *acquis communautaire*, which is divided into 35 chapters (Acquis
Screening). For Croatia, the European Commission submitted screening reports on 22 of the 35 negotiating chapters. On 16 chapters the screening procedure was finalized. Negotiations were opened on five chapters – science and research, education and culture, economic and monetary policy, enterprises and industrial policy, and customs union – and have already been provisionally closed on the first two. The first accession conference took place under the Austrian EU Council Presidency.

For Turkey, the European Commission submitted screening reports on 13 of the 35 negotiating chapters. The screening procedure was finalized for five chapters. Only one chapter, science and research, was opened and provisionally closed. The reasons for the slow progress are stated in the European Commission’s progress report on Turkey issued in November: a clear slow-down in political reforms – for example with regard to freedom of expression and freedom of religion, women’s and minorities’ rights and civilian control over the military –, in the harmonisation of national legislation with the acquis communautaire, and no change in Turkey’s position on the Cyprus issue. The latter relates to Turkey’s obligation under the Ankara Protocol to extend its customs union with the EU to all new Member States. According to an EU declaration of September 2005, failure by Turkey to implement its obligations in full will affect the overall progress in the negotiations. Consequently, on the basis of a European Commission recommendation, the EU foreign ministers decided in December to suspend negotiations on eight chapters related to the implementation of the Ankara Protocol – free movement of goods, right of establishment and freedom to provide services, financial services, agriculture and rural development, fisheries, transport policy, customs union and external relations – and not to provisionally close any chapter. The progress Turkey will have to make for a lifting of these measures will be reviewed by the Council on the basis of the European Commission’s annual reports.

During the term of Austria’s Council Presidency, the EU achieved a breakthrough in its efforts to mitigate the consequences of the current division of Cyprus for the Turkish-Cypriot community. The long-disputed adoption in February of a financial aid regulation to encourage the economic development of the Turkish-Cypriot community in the Northern part of Cyprus enabled the release of funds amounting to 259 million euros.

3. The European Perspective of the Western Balkan Countries

The overall aim of the EU’s engagement in the Western Balkans is the promotion of stability, security and prosperity by gradually integrating the region into European structures. In this context, Austria makes every effort to sustainably strengthen the relations between the countries of the Western Balkans and the EU and to gradually realise the EU Perspective of these
countries, which were granted the status of “potential candidate countries” in 2000. The EU strategy of providing comprehensive support to the Western Balkan countries in their efforts to move closer to the European Union, affirmed and expanded at the Western Balkans Summit in Thessaloniki in June 2003, was further implemented in the context of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP).

At the political level, particular importance was attached to the informal meeting between the EU’s foreign ministers and the foreign ministers of the Western Balkan states, which the Austrian Council Presidency organised in Salzburg on 11 March. Its final document, the Salzburg Declaration, confirmed the European perspective of the countries in this region. One of the major foundations of this meeting was the communication “The Western Balkans on the road to the EU: consolidating stability and raising prosperity” presented by the European Commission on 27 January. It evaluates the developments since the Thessaloniki Summit and identifies specific measures to strengthen the EU’s policies and instruments.

The rapprochement to the European Union will be governed by the principle of matching the pace of a country’s accession process to that of its individual reform efforts, which was reaffirmed in the European Commission’s Strategy Paper on Enlargement of November 2005. Besides the conclusion of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), the EU will consider a satisfactory track record in implementing the obligations under the SAA and full cooperation of each state with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) important criteria in the treatment of any application for accession.

The SAA with Croatia, which entered into force on 1 February 2005, will provide the framework for the country’s relations with the EU until Croatia formally accedes to the European Union. The second meeting of the Stabilisation and Association Council established under this Agreement was held in Luxembourg on 10 April. The EU delegation was headed by Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik in her capacity as President of the Council.

The main challenge facing Macedonia is the implementation of the obligations under its SAA, which entered into force on 1 April 2004. The European Council of December 2005 granted candidate status to Macedonia, linking the start of concrete accession negotiations to compliance with a number of further criteria.

The SAA negotiations with Albania, which started at the beginning of 2003, were concluded during the Austrian EU Council Presidency. The SAA was signed in Luxembourg on 12 June. Until its coming into force, which requires ratification by all EU Member States, the trade-related provisions of the
Agreement are already effective as a result of an interim agreement which entered into force on 1 December.

The SAA negotiations opened with Serbia and Montenegro in October 2005 were suspended in May by the European Commission because of Serbia’s failure to fully cooperate with the ICTY. In June, the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro was dissolved with Montenegro’s formal declaration of independence. The EU intends to re-open SAA negotiations with Serbia as soon as the country’s full cooperation with the ICTY is established.

SAA negotiations with Montenegro, which gained its independence in June, were opened in September and in substance continued the negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro that had been suspended in May. They were conducted swiftly and successfully, and it is anticipated that the SAA will be concluded in 2007.

Although the SAA negotiations opened with Bosnia and Herzegovina in November 2005 made significant progress, they require further reforms on the part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as the implementation of a police reform, in order to be concluded.

4. The External Aid Programmes and Administrative Partnerships of the European Union

The EU’s external aid programme “Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation” (CARDS) supported the Western Balkan countries in their efforts to move closer to the EU by implementing projects in the fields of infrastructure, education, environment and institution building totalling 4.65 billion euros in the period 2000-2006. With its participation in CARDS projects, Austria provided concrete support to the enlargement process.

Following the record outcome of Austria’s engagement in twinning projects last year, it was able to continue its successful activities in this field: Austria was awarded a total of 29 projects with an overall volume of more than 18 million euros, the geographical focus being on Croatia, Malta and Romania. Since the launch of the first twinning programmes in 1997, Austria has been able to establish 176 such partnerships totalling more than 88 million euros.

In June, the EU adopted a Regulation introducing a new single pre-accession instrument, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), which is to replace the previous instruments – the Action Plan for Coordinated Aid for Poland and Hungary (Poland and Hungary: Aid for Restructuring of the Economies, PHARE), the Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession (ISPA), the Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural
Development (SAPARD), the Turkey pre-accession instrument, and CARDS. It constitutes the legal basis for the EU’s future support to the candidate countries of Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey and the potential candidate countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia including Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244) on their road to the EU.

5. **Stability Pact for South East Europe**

Under the chairmanship of the re-appointed Special Coordinator Erhard Busek, the Stability Pact for South East Europe focused not only on its numerous thematic projects but also on the preparations for handing over responsibility for its core tasks to the countries and territories of the region. Under the Austrian EU Council Presidency, the Regional Table, the Stability Pact’s highest decision-making forum, at its meeting in Belgrade agreed on the principles laying the groundwork for this transformation. In mid-2008 the Stability Pact is to be replaced by a Regional Co-operation Council (RCC) closely interlinked with the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP). The EU’s involvement will be continued through the Council Presidency and the European Commission. The RCC is open to all partners and interested donor countries active in South East Europe. Austria has already expressed its interest in an RCC partnership. Upon the initiative of the Stability Pact and strongly supported by the European Commission, a multilateral regional free trade agreement (CEFTA 2006) was signed in Bucharest in December. This constitutes a major success with regard to the promotion of economic cohesion in the region.

III. **Reform of the European Union and its Institutions**

1. **The Debate on the Future of Europe**

In June 2005, the European Council decided to hold a **period of reflection** on the EU Constitutional Treaty. An assessment of the debates conducted in the individual Member States and a decision on the further procedure were to be made at the end of the Austrian Council Presidency.

The first large-scale conference under the Austrian Council Presidency already marked the beginning of a broad discussion on fundamental issues with regard to the future of Europe. The **“Sound of Europe”** conference was held to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in the town he was born in, Salzburg, on 27 and 28 January and was sponsored by the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Council. It linked up with a series of events organised by the Dutch Presidency under
the title of “Europe. A beautiful idea?” and provided representatives of the
civil society and of the fields of politics, art and science with a platform to
discuss European identity and cultural issues. Federal Chancellor Wolfgang
Schüssel defined peace, democracy and solidarity, the social market economy,
social cohesion and sustainable environmental protection as central aspects of
the European Way of Life. A number of other participants addressed the
citizens’ lack of trust in the European Union and the frequently felt Euro-
pessimism. Several participants expressed their wish for better communication
of the concept of Europe at the emotional level.

On 18 and 19 April, St. Pölten was the venue for a conference entitled “Europe
starts at home”, which had been convened by the Austrian Parliament,
Federal Chancellery and Province Government of Lower Austria and was
attended by high-ranking officials of all EU institutions. Together with
members of parliament and government representatives from the 25 EU
Member States and the accession countries of Bulgaria and Romania they
discussed possible improvements in the application of the principles of
subsidiarity and proportionality. The majority of conference participants
favoured stronger consideration of the “proper distribution of tasks” principle.
The conference brought the connections between subsidiarity and citizen-
oriented politics and subsidiarity and legislative improvements back into the
focus of attention and suggested that national parliaments, regions and
municipalities be integrated into subsidiarity control to a greater extent and at
an earlier stage. In response to the conference, the European Commission
committed itself to sending its legislative proposals directly to the Member
States’ national parliaments, which was generally welcomed since it provided
them with an opportunity to comment on these proposals.

On Europe Day, 9 May, the Council Presidency sponsored readings of famous
authors in selected cafés in the EU capitals and prompted discussions on
European issues under the motto of “Café d’Europe”, building on the
European tradition of coffeehouses as meeting places for entertainment and
discussion.

With their different characteristics these events were designed to contribute to
a broadening and deepening of the discussion on the future of Europe and
thus provided a clearer picture of the future course of European integration.

On 27 and 28 May, the Austrian Council Presidency invited the EU foreign
ministers to an informal meeting in Klosterneburg, the central topics of
which included the future of Europe and EU enlargement. The open
discussion on the EU Constitutional Treaty held by the EU foreign ministers in
Klosterneburg constituted an important success and re-introduced the
Constitutional Treaty to the EU agenda. The foreign ministers supported an
extension and stronger focussing of the period of reflection. In addition, the
ministers discussed practical improvements to the functioning of the EU which can be implemented on the basis of the currently valid treaties.

On 15 and 16 June, the European Council agreed to adopt a two-track approach to continue the reform process of European integration (see Chapter A.I). While from June 2005 the period of reflection was dominated by the “Europe is listening” initiative, the European Council of June adopted a wide range of measures under “Europe is acting” campaign. Based on the currently valid treaties, these measures are designed to achieve the concrete progress that is expected by the citizens in the EU’s major spheres of action. Simultaneously the Council Presidency was requested to submit, in June 2007, a report evaluating the status of deliberations on the Constitutional Treaty after extensive consultations with the EU Member States and to outline possible future developments.

In the second half of the year, the Finnish Presidency conducted preliminary consultations on the EU Constitutional Treaty with the Member States, the results of which were passed on to the German Council Presidency.

In November, the Vice-President of the European Commission, Margot Wallström, submitted a report on the disadvantages for the European Union arising from the failure of the EU Constitutional Treaty to enter into force, as had been envisaged for 2006. The report also implicitly outlined the current deficits of the EU in key fields such as security, fundamental rights, energy, healthcare and social affairs, foreign policy and participative democracy.

In its resolution of 13 December, the European Parliament described the conclusion of the constitutional process with the aim of creating a more efficient, transparent and democratic Union as an indispensable requirement for future enlargements of the European Union.

2. Overview of the Ratification Process of the Constitutional Treaty

In Austria, the Constitutional Treaty was adopted with a clear majority by both the National Council and the Federal Council and was deposited in Rome on 17 June 2005.

At the end of the year a total of 14 Member States had ratified the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovenia and Spain. In Germany and Slovakia the Parliaments had approved ratification, but the instruments of ratification had not yet been signed because the decisions of the national supreme courts concerning the lawfulness of the ratification procedures were still pending.
After the Constitutional Treaty had been rejected in the referendums held in France and the Netherlands in 2005, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and the United Kingdom postponed their ratification procedures for an indefinite period of time.

The EU accession of Bulgaria and Romania, which ratified the Constitutional Treaty *uno actu* with their Accession Agreements, will increase the number of ratifying states to two thirds of the EU Member States by 1 January 2007.

IV. The Policies of the European Union

1. Austria’s Role in the European Institutions

Since 22 November 2004, Benita Ferrero-Waldner has been the Commission Member responsible for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy. At the end of the year, 446 Austrians, including one Director-General, held posts in the European Commission, which is equivalent to a share of 2%. In comparison, Austria’s population accounts for 1.78% of the total EU population. Austria also provides a high proportion of senior officials to the Secretariat General of the Council.

On 14 January 2005, Hubert Weber, who had 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. From October 2000 to October 2006, Christine Stix-Hackl held the office of Advocate-General at the ECJ. Until October, Anne-Marie Sigmund held the post of President of the European Economic and Social Council. Since 2003, Gertrude Tumpel-Gugerell has been the Austrian member on the Executive Board of the European Central Bank.

1.1. European Parliament

In its preparations to ensure a particularly intensive cooperation with the European Parliament, which is essentially based on the maintenance of personal contacts as MEPs enjoy greater independence from party-political ties within their parliamentary groups than MPs in national parliaments, the future Austrian Council Presidency invited Members of the European Parliament to a total of twelve meetings in Vienna. These meetings and more than 90 further individual meetings in Brussels and Strasbourg provided Austria with the opportunity to discuss its Presidency Programme in detail with the major players of the European Parliament, including the President and the Secretary-General of the European Parliament, as well as with
representatives of the different parliamentary groups and committees. Just before the beginning of the Austrian Presidency, on 19 December 2005, the entire Federal Government of Austria met with the European Parliament’s Conference of Presidents and Chairmen of the Political Groups to coordinate its Presidency projects.

For the duration of its Presidency Austria represented the Council in the European Parliament. On 15 February, Federal President Heinz Fischer gave a speech before the plenary assembly of the European Parliament. Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel met with the President of the European Parliament a total of twelve times to discuss matters addressed by the Council Presidency. Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik and State Secretary Hans Winkler met with the European Parliament more than 20 times. On the whole, members of the Austrian Federal Government attended plenary debates of the European Parliament on more than 60 occasions during the Austrian Presidency. Ongoing informal contacts and negotiation meetings complemented the Presidency’s extremely close cooperation with the European Parliament and resulted in a large number of specific achievements, the most important of which relate to the Financial Perspective including the financial instruments for external relations, the Services Directive, the new comitology regulation and the completion of a number of conciliation procedures.

1.2. European Court of Justice and European Court of First Instance

The Republic of Austria is represented before the European Court of Justice and the European Court of First Instance by legal counsels of the Constitutional Service of the Federal Chancellery. Austrian courts initiated ten new preliminary ruling proceedings where a national court refers to the ECJ a question relating to the interpretation or validity of Community law.

By the end of the year, ten proceedings for alleged infringements of Community law were pending against the Republic of Austria. These infringement proceedings concern the inadequate implementation of Directive 2003/98/EC on the re-use of public sector information; the inadequate transposition of Directive 2000/52/EC on the transparency of the financial relations between Member States and public undertakings; the failure to provide notification of the measures taken to implement Directive 2001/45/EC concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for the use of work equipment by workers at work; the failure to provide notification of the measures taken to implement Directive 2003/105/EC on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances; the failure to provide notification of the measures taken to implement Directive 2003/4/EC on public access to environmental information; the issue of liquidity reserves held by credit institutions with central institutions (Article 25 Paragraph 13 of the
Austrian Banking Act); bilateral Austrian investment agreements with regard to their compatibility with Community law; conditions for the recognition of private inspection bodies in the field of organic farming; the inadequate implementation of Directive 92/43 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and, finally, the inadequate implementation of Directive 79/409 on the conservation of wild birds.

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 provision that only applicants having a head office in Austria may be approved as a boiler inspection body pursuant to the Boiler Act; the failure to provide notification of the measures taken to implement Directive 2003/9/EC laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers; the failure to provide notification of the measures taken to implement Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise; the failure to implement Directive 96/82 (Seveso II); the exemption from taxation of taxable persons not established in Austria who transport passengers; the infringement of Art. 49 TEC because of restrictions on the provision of cross-border services in accordance with Section 18 of the Foreign Nationals Employment Act; the failure to implement Directive 2001/19/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications for various medical professions; the inadequate implementation of Directive 89/391 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work; the infringement of the directive on the conservation of wild birds with regard to the “Lauteracher Ried” conservation area and the Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive) with regard to the authorisation of the construction of the S 18 Bodensee Schnellstrasse (Lake Constance expressway) and the failure to provide notification of the measures taken to implement Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation.

1.3. Committee of the Regions

In the Committee of the Regions, Austria is represented with twelve members. The Austrian 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.

The central item on the agenda of the first plenary session was the constitution of the Committee for its fourth mandate period from 2006 to 2010. The following Austrian members were appointed to the Bureau of the Committee of the Regions: Governor Herwig van Staa as Vice-President (Governor Hans Niessl as his alternate and Mayor Heinz Schaden as Member (Walter Zimper, Vice-President of the Association of Municipalities, as his alternate. At the
plenary session, State Secretary Hans Winkler presented the programme of the Austrian Presidency to the Committee of the Regions, which was received favourably by all political groups.

The Committee of the Regions’ extraordinary Bureau meeting under the Austrian Council Presidency was held in Innsbruck in May simultaneously with the General Assembly of European Municipalities and Regions.

1.4. European Economic and Social Council

Austria is represented in the European Economic and Social Council with 12 members. October marked the end of Austrian member Anne-Marie Sigmund’s two-year term as the President of the European Economic and Social Council. After numerous preparatory meetings between government representatives and the European Economic and Social Council in Vienna, Federal Minister of Economic Affairs Martin Bartenstein discussed the programme of the Austrian Presidency at the European Economic and Social Council’s plenary meeting held in Brussels on 18 January.


The cooperation between government and parliament in matters relating to European integration is based on the rights granted in Article 23e of the Federal Constitutional Act to the National and Federal Council. These rights comprise the right to information about new developments and 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 or to make a statement on an EU-related matter which would have to be regulated by a federal law or is geared towards passing 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.

Neither the Main Committee of the National Council nor the Standing Sub-Committee on matters relating to the EU nor the Committee of the Federal Council have passed formal opinions as defined under Article 23e of the Federal Constitutional Act. However, on 12 December the Main Committee of the National Council adopted a legally non-binding committee statement for the European Council meeting on 14 and 15 December, which outlined the Main Committee’s expectations of Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel with regard to the issues of EU enlargement, European asylum and migration policy and European energy policy.

Austria’s positions in the Committee of Permanent Representatives were 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.

At the request of the Presiding Committee of the National Council, the Federal Government 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.

3. Economy and Finance

Following the weak growth witnessed in the last few years, 2006 was characterised by a clear pickup of economic activity. The gross domestic product of the euro zone increased by 2.7% in real terms, while the GDP of the EU as a whole rose by 3%. The dynamic growth contributed to a marked reduction of the tensions on the labour markets. The rate of employment increased by 1.5% within the EU, and the unemployment rate decreased to 7.9%, reaching its lowest level since 2001. Despite the high oil price, inflation remained at a low level and amounted to slightly more than 2% on average.

The Austrian and Finnish EU Council Presidencies set out an ambitious work programme, focusing on the promotion of growth and employment and the strengthening of Europe’s external competitiveness. A particular challenge with regard to the coordination of economic and budgetary policy resulted from the consideration of the revised Lisbon Strategy and the reformed Stability and Growth Pact. A central concern of both Council Presidencies was that Member States consistently use and enhance the economic upswing to realise further structural reforms.
At their spring summit, the Heads of State and Government therefore agreed to implement a number of specific measures which will create an additional two million jobs per year until 2010. For reasons of transparency, and in order to ensure the verifiability of the implementation of these measures, the Member States confirmed existing target agreements and determined new quantitative targets, for example in the spheres of school education and youth employment and by improving the basic conditions for company start-ups.

A major success of European policy under the Austrian Council Presidency was the compromise on the Financial Perspective 2007-2013, which was achieved after lengthy and difficult negotiations. The new Financial Perspective provides a sound foundation for the financing of the Community’s policies and takes into account the special requirements related to the enlargement of the European Union. Moreover, the negotiations were used to further increase the quality of the EU’s financial management and auditing procedures.

4. The Lisbon Strategy – Growth and Employment

In March 2005, a fundamental review of the 2000 Lisbon Strategy led to a re-orientation of the strategy with a stronger focus on growth and employment. For this purpose, the European Council of 23 and 24 March adopted a number of important resolutions: the confirmation of the 3% target for research and development expenses by 2010; the establishment of the European Institute of Technology (EIT); the introduction of one-stop shops for company start-ups; giving precedence to the “think small first” principle as a guiding principle in the relevant legislation; the creation of two million jobs per year until 2010; offering every young person who has left school or university a job, an apprenticeship, additional training or another promotional measure within six months of becoming unemployed by the end of 2007, and within 4 months by 2010; the regular assessment of the Energy Strategy by the European Commission, the increase of the proportion of renewable energy and biofuels and the reduction of the EU’s dependence on energy imports.

In 2005, the revised Lisbon Strategy for the first time required the Member States to draw up national reform programmes for growth and employment. In October, following a series of consultations in Austria, the national coordinator for the Lisbon Strategy, Federal Minister Martin Bartenstein, submitted the Austrian implementation report to the European Commission. In December, the European Commission presented its assessment of the implementation reports, whereby the progress made by Austria was positively mentioned, reference was particularly made of the improvement of the international competitiveness of and basic conditions for enterprises, increased public investment in research and development and tax incentives
for private investment in research and development, the increase of its share of renewable energy, Austria’s stable macroeconomic conditions, its active labour market policy and the improvement of its apprenticeship system.

In addition, the new regulations concerning the Structural Funds, which provide the basis for the EU’s assistance schemes, were negotiated and adopted. The European Social Fund (ESF) is the main instrument used by the EU to implement common employment objectives. In Austria ESF funds are used primarily for so-called horizontal issues, such as equal opportunities for women and men and for persons with disabilities.

The European Globalisation adjustment Fund (EGF), which complements existing strategies and financing instruments, was adopted under the Finnish Council Presidency on the basis of the preparations undertaken during the Austrian Council Presidency and is to cushion the negative effects of globalisation on employment.

5. Single Market

During the Austrian Council Presidency, the Services Directive was of particular significance among the EU’s legislative projects. After intensive debate, the EU Council Presidency obtained a political agreement by a vast majority (23 yes votes, 2 abstentions) on 29 May. The final text, where the disputed country of origin principle had been replaced by the right to freedom of services, but had been cushioned in sensitive areas, will facilitate administrative matters for enterprises and simultaneously protect the rights of employees and consumers.

Moreover, successful projects were also implemented in a number of other important fields. The adoption of the conclusions on industrial policy paves the way for the establishment of a solid and dynamic industrial foundation in Europe. In this context, a more integrated industrial policy concept including sector-specific and horizontal measures constitutes the basis for increasing the competitiveness of European industry. The liberalisation of energy markets, better legislation and the promotion of innovations are the central issues of the EU’s new industrial policy.

The SME Initiative, launched by the Austrian Council Presidency served to firmly establish the “think small first” principle, promote entrepreneurship and facilitate SMEs' access to public contracts.

The negotiations for the new EU Framework Programme for Competitiveness and Innovation (CIP 2007-2013), which combines existing programmes promoting innovation and SMEs, were completed and the programme adopted by the Council in October.
In future, the cooperation between the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2007-2013) and the European Technology Initiative EUREKA will place particular emphasis on the promotion of SMEs under the EUROSTARS initiative, for example, by submitting and coordinating jointly supported projects in the field of market-oriented research and development.

In May, the European Commission presented a revised proposal for a Community action programme in the field of consumer protection (2007-2013), on which political agreement was reached at the Competitiveness Council on 25 September. The European Parliament adopted the action programme after its second reading.

In its efforts to improve medicines safety, the EU adopted a regulation on children’s medicines.

6. Transport

In order to contribute to a sustainable European transport policy the Austrian Council Presidency focused its efforts on road safety and inland navigation.

As one of Austria’s major concerns, the new Eurovignette Directive for the first time firmly establishes the cross-financing of railway infrastructure projects through a mark-up on tolls and requires Member States to relate toll rates to environmental protection aspects (varying toll rates according to emission levels) as of 2010. In addition it paves the way for a future inclusion of costs, particularly health-related and environment costs, which hitherto have not been borne by road users (external costs).

Austria also initiated the preparations for the signing of the Transport Protocol of the Alpine Convention by the European Community and the Marco Polo II programme (an EU programme to reduce congestion on European roads and improve the environmental performance of the whole transport system). December saw the adoption of the Driving Licence Directive, which is to replace the currently 110 different driving licence models by a single new model in credit card format.

Efforts to shift transport from road to environmentally friendlier transport modes were also at the centre of the conclusions on freight transport logistics adopted by the Council in December and the European Commission’s midterm review of the White Paper on Transport.

In May, the city of Salzburg was the venue of the European Aviation Summit. In June, the EU and the countries of the Western Balkans signed the European
Common Aviation Area Agreement, and in December a comprehensive air transport agreement was signed by the EU and Morocco. The negotiations aiming at the creation of an Open Aviation Area with the United States of America failed to make further progress. The European Commission received a new mandate for negotiations on a comprehensive air transport agreement with Ukraine and on terms for flights over Siberia with Russia.

In the legislative sphere, a Regulation concerning access to air travel for persons with disabilities was adopted in June. In the same month, the Transport Ministers’ Council agreed on a general approach on the proposal for a regulation on the establishment of a joint undertaking for the development of a new generation of air traffic management systems in Europe (SESAR). Moreover, the Council adopted regulations on common rules in the field of civil aviation security and for the establishment of a European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

7. Environment

With regard to environmental policy, the Austrian EU Council Presidency attached major importance to the issues of climate protection, environmental technologies, genetically modified organisms and sustainability.

In the field of climate protection, the processes launched at the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Montreal in 2005 were continued. The issue was addressed by the Austrian Council Presidency at several high-level meetings – the EU-LAC Summit in May, the EU-USA Summit and the EC-ACP Ministerial Council in June. The EU and the United States of America agreed to establish a high-level dialogue on climate change, clean energy and sustainable development.

Environmental technologies are of particular relevance to Austria, since they may contribute significantly to improving the quality of the environment and the quality of living and may enhance economic growth. This issue was discussed in detail at the informal Council of Environmental Ministers held in Eisenstadt in May.

The issue of genetically modified organisms (GMO) was dealt with intensively during the Austrian Council Presidency. The Environmental Councils in March and June discussed the current admission procedure and risk evaluation and identified weaknesses. At the Council of Environmental Ministers in December, Austria was able to maintain its ban on two genetically modified maize lines.
The European Council of June adopted the renewed EU Strategy for Sustainable Development, providing the EU with a suitable instrument to respond comprehensively to non-sustainable trends.

The EU’s 6th Environmental Action Programme (6th EAP) defines European environmental policy for the period 2002-2012. Of the seven thematic strategies laid down in the 6th EAP, the Austrian Council Presidency particularly promoted efforts in the fields of air pollution, waste prevention and the urban environment.

Owing to extensive preparations on the part of Austria, the Finnish Presidency was able to reach agreement on the new Euro 5 and Euro 6 regulations on the definition of limits for pollutant emissions from motor vehicles in their first reading. One of the EU’s major legislative projects – the REACH chemicals package – was completed at the end of the year, and the Austrian Presidency also reached political agreement on the new Directive on the assessment and management of floods.

8. Energy

The gas crisis at the beginning of the year clearly demonstrated the EU’s dependence on imports and caused the Austrian Council Presidency to push ahead with the elaboration of a common comprehensive EU energy policy. Following the preparations at the Councils of Energy Ministers and Foreign Ministers, the Heads of State and Government agreed on the basic features of a new Energy Policy for Europe (EPE) at their spring summit in March. The policy is based on the three pillars of security of supply, competitiveness and sustainability. Energy efficiency and the further development of renewable sources of energy constitute other essential elements. Simultaneously, energy policy interests are to be protected at the foreign policy level and uniform external action is to be ensured.

Security of energy supply is to be ensured by reducing the dependence on imports, diversifying energy sources and networks and further developing and intensifying the cooperation between producer, transit and consumer countries, while simultaneously promoting sustainability. The EU’s energy policy interests must also be considered in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy. The security of energy supply was an item on the agenda of nearly all bilateral and multilateral meetings, particularly in the dialogue with the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the major consumer countries China, India and the United States. Since the effects of the suspension of gas deliveries to Ukraine at the beginning of the year were also felt in Europe, energy policy relations with Russia have become a priority issue in the relations between the EU and Russia and are to be re-defined in the context of a new comprehensive agreement between the EU and
Russia on the basis of the principles of the Energy Charter. The efforts made by the EU and the Secretariat of the European Energy Charter in order to reach a consensus with Russia in the negotiations on the transit protocol failed to achieve the desired outcome and resulted in the non-ratification of the Charter by Russia.

The Nabucco gas pipeline, which is to deliver gas from the Caspian Sea to Austria and other EU Member States via Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary, is used to diversify energy networks as part of the redefinition of the Energy Policy for Europe.

In response to the gas crisis in January, the Gas Coordination Group developed concepts for crisis prevention. The European Regulators Group for Electricity and Gas (ERGEG) launched initiatives for strengthened regional cooperation.

The Treaty establishing the Energy Community became effective on 1 July after it had been ratified by all contracting parties, the European Commission on behalf of the EU on the one hand and the South East European countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and UNMIK/Kosovo – on the other. The Energy Community is to establish an integrated energy market among the South East European countries and the EU and in this way secure energy supply. The Vienna-based interim secretariat efficiently continued the activities started for this purpose in the previous year.

9. Education and Youth

In November, the Council on Education, Youth and Culture reached political agreement on the Programme for Lifelong Learning. By including the countries of the Western Balkans, the Austrian Council Presidency sent out an important signal for the further integration of the region into the enlarged European Education Area.

Austria for the first time incorporated the Education for Sustainable Development concept in the EU’s Sustainability Strategy. The revised Sustainability Strategy which was adopted by the European Council in June emphasises education as an essential basic requirement for sustainable development. In December, the Council and the European Parliament adopted the decision on the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.

In February, the Council adopted the second Joint Interim Report of the Council and the European Commission on progress under the “Education and Training 2010” work programme. The importance of education in its dual –
economic and social – role was firmly established in the conclusions of the European Spring Council. At the February Council, Commissioner Ján Figel’ presented the New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism. In May, the conclusions of the Council on the European Indicator of Language Competence were adopted. The recommendations on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning and the Quality Charter for Mobility were also approved.

The Council Conclusions on efficiency and equity in education and training and on enhanced European cooperation in vocational training and education were adopted in November. The Council agreed on a general approach to the European Qualification Framework.

10. Research

Building on the activities of the Austrian Council Presidency, the 7th Research Framework Programme was adopted under the Finnish Presidency with an overall budget of 54.2 billion euros.

The 7th Research Framework Programme promotes research in four main areas: transnational projects in nine thematic areas, basic research through the European Research Council, training and mobility of researchers and research capacities. Thus, the programme makes a significant contribution to achieving the 3% research quota target. Austria’s rate of return was increased to 115%.

Austria, Latvia, Malta, Poland and Slovakia rejected the promotion of research on human embryonic stem cells in the context of the 7th Research Framework Programme, but were outvoted.

The EURATOM programme, which had been negotiated in a package with the 7th Research Framework Programme, was adopted. Austria managed to ensure that the financial contribution to research relating to new fission reactor systems will be dedicated exclusively to safety and security issues.

The implementation of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project, the largest international research project in the world, led by the EU and with the participation of China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States, was adopted with the signing of the relevant agreement in Paris on 21 November, thereby laying the foundation for the start of the works at the ITER site in Cadarache (France) in 2008.

On 18 October, the European Commission submitted a proposal for a regulation on the European Institute of Technology (EIT), the deliberations on which started under the Finnish Presidency. The aim is for the institute to take up operations in 2009. On 7 November, Austria formally announced its candidacy as the seat of the EIT Secretariat.
The cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans was strengthened in accordance with the Declaration of Thessaloniki of 21 June 2003. The European Commission decided to establish a steering platform in Vienna for research cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans.

The participants of the EU-LAC Summit, which took place in Vienna from 11-13 May, agreed to increasingly focus research relations between these two world regions on issues such as information and communication technologies, nutrition and cultural heritage.

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

Significant progress was made in the implementation of the Hague Programme for 2005-2009. The programme was adopted by the European Council in November 2004 and is the second five-year programme following the Tampere Programme of October 1999.

In the field of justice, the introduction of the European Order for Payment Procedure was adopted under the Austrian Council Presidency. In future, EU citizens may request a competent court to issue a European order for payment, which becomes effective and enforceable in the whole of the European Union if the debtor does not file an official objection.

In the field of home affairs, a Partnership for Security between the EU and more than 50 states and organisations was adopted during the Austrian Council Presidency in implementation of the EU’s strategy for the external dimension of justice and home affairs. It has already been put into practice in the Western Balkans through the Police Cooperation Convention for Southeast Europe. The EU’s external strategy also included the adoption of an Action Oriented Paper responding to drug production and drug trafficking from Afghanistan. Finally, the Vienna Initiative marked the first efforts to establish a dialogue between the ministers of the interior of the EU, Russia and the United States.

The quality of border controls performed by the new Member States at the EU’s external borders was reviewed by ten evaluation missions under the Austrian Council Presidency. At the end of 2007, the decision on the full elimination of borders is to be taken unanimously by the Council.

With regard to the priority sphere of asylum, migration and border management, the Austrian EU Council Presidency saw the conclusion of a readmission and a visa facilitation agreement with Russia. On 14 December, the European Council confirmed the overall approach to European migration policy, which also applies to the Eastern and South Eastern neighbouring
regions of the European Union. The EU Border Management Agency (FRONTEX) will be strengthened and further developed.

Regional cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs between Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, implemented through the Salzburg Group, was successfully continued.

12. Combating Terrorism

Since the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. and the bombings in Madrid and London, the EU has attached major significance to the fight against terrorism. Numerous attacks with a terrorist background all over the world once again demonstrated that terrorism can only be combated effectively by close international cooperation.

At the European level, the adoption of a new Action Plan against Terrorism constituted the most important development in the relevant EU policy. It contains more than 130 different measures for an accelerated continuation of the Hague Programme and the EU Strategy to combat terrorism adopted in December 2005. In the meantime major progress has been made, above all in combating terrorist financing and the radicalisation and recruitment of terrorists and in elaborating a programme to protect infrastructures particularly at risk, named “critical infrastructures”.

While in many cases small amounts are sufficient to finance terrorist attacks, the maintenance of terrorist organisations requires considerable sums of money. In order to eradicate the financial basis of these organisations, the EU adopted a Directive on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing as early as 2005. This Third Money Laundering Directive of the European Union extended the Directive’s scope of application to combating terrorist financing and imposes an obligation to report suspicious transactions amounting to or exceeding 15,000 euros. To promote transparency within non-profit organisations and protect them against being abused for the purpose of terrorist financing, the European Commission has elaborated a Code of Conduct for the transparency of non-profit organisations. In May a contact group was tasked with working out the details of the Code. During the Austrian Council Presidency a number of EU events were held with selected third countries on the issue of terrorist financing: with Israel in Brussels in March, with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council in Brussels in April and with the United States of America in Vienna in June.
The implementation of the Strategy and the Action Plan to counter radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism adopted in December 2005 was an important task of the Austrian EU Council Presidency and consisted of three major efforts: disrupting the activities of criminal networks which recruit potential terrorists, ensuring that voices of moderation prevail over those of extremism, and promoting security, justice, democracy and opportunity for all. In this respect, special significance was attached to the promotion of an intercultural and inter-faith dialogue, the importance of which was underlined by the organisation of the “Islam in a Pluralistic World” conference in Vienna in autumn 2005 and a series of dialogue conferences and seminars in the spring.

The Media Communication Strategy of the EU to combat terrorism, negotiated during the Austrian Council Presidency, was adopted in July. Its core elements include key messages aimed at effectively communicating positive attitudes about the EU’s values and about tolerance and dialogue to Muslim groups within and outside the EU. Another new project is the compilation of a joint encyclopaedia which offers explanations and guidance on the use of difficult and often ambiguous terms spanning the field of conflict between different cultures and religions. Another thematic focus included radicalisation and recruitment in prisons, which was discussed at a multi-day seminar in Trier in March. With regard to third country relations, the EU started to gather information on cultural and religious groups willing to participate in dialogue, based on joint reports by the EU embassies in selected countries.

Further activities concerned the coordination of the EU’s position in the negotiations on the anti-terrorism strategy of the United Nations (UN), which was adopted by consensus by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in September.

V. 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 quest for a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict, the situations in Iraq and Iran, the caricature dispute and the continuation of the stabilisation process in the Western Balkans. Africa became a new priority within the CFSP. In addition, the EU also contributed to the strengthening of an effective multilateralism: it supported the establishment of the UN Human Rights Council and the UN Peacebuilding Commission and, particularly during the
Austrian EU Council Presidency, sought to improve cooperation with the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the UN.

The CFSP addressed nearly all current issues of foreign policy at EU level. The EU commented on issues of major significance in the declarations and conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council and the European Council. Furthermore it undertook numerous demarches, particularly in the field of human rights. The EU’s civilian and military operations have come to span the whole world, from the Balkans and the Middle East to Africa and Asia.

During the Austrian Council Presidency, two Joint Actions established new missions under the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP): the EU Planning Team (EUPT Kosovo) regarding a possible EU crisis management operation in the field of rule of law and possible other areas in Kosovo and the EU military operation to support the UN’s mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) during the electoral period in the DRC (Operation EUFOR RD Congo).

Another important measure was the adoption of a Common Position on the implementation of the comprehensive sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council (UNSC) through resolution 1718 (2006) on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The Council adjusted the sanctions against Belarus, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Myanmar, Sudan and Zimbabwe. In addition, it made changes to the list of persons subject to sanctions imposed as part of the action against the Taliban/al-Qaeda and other terrorist individuals and groups.

The implementation of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction adopted in 2003 was continued through the adoption of a new strategy against the Illegal Proliferation and Circulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW).

The European Union’s Special Representatives (EUSR) remain 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.

The CFSP budget amounted to 102.6 million euros. For 2007, funds were increased by 56.6 million euros to a total of 159.2 million euros. Most of the budget funds are spent on civil operations for crisis management, EUSRs, disarmament activities and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
1.2. The European Security and Defence Policy

The further development of the ESDP’s civilian and military instruments of crisis management made significant progress during the Austrian Council Presidency in accordance with the targets laid down under the Civilian Headline Goal 2008 and under the Military Headline Goal 2010.

1.2.1. Priorities of the Austrian EU Council Presidency

In the field of Civil-Military Coordination (CMCO), the coordination of the Union’s various crisis management instruments is being optimised, particularly with regard to the simultaneous employment of civilian and military instruments. During the Austrian Council Presidency, a document outlining specific options to improve coordination of the different EU instruments in the respective area of operations was elaborated.

The EU’s Security Sector Reform activities aim at supporting third countries in increasing efficiency in all security-related aspects of government, performed for example by the judiciary, police, intelligence services, border control authorities and armed forces, while ensuring rule of law, transparency and full democratic control. In the context of continually bringing the countries of the Western Balkans closer to the Union, which is of central interest to Austria, security sector reform also plays a prominent role. Building on the results of an expert conference held in Vienna in February, the Austrian Presidency presented a concept on how the necessary support for security sector reform could be incorporated in all aspects of the EU’s relations with these countries, including dedicated financial assistance and the coordination of EU activities with those of individual Member States and international organisations.

Progress was also made in improving the Union’s disaster and crisis response capability. Fulfilling a work assignment of the Austrian EU Council Presidency, the EU High Representative, Javier Solana, in May submitted a concept for the optimum use of ESDP transport and planning capacities for aid measures, for example following natural disasters. The efforts to lay down procedures for the swift identification of military capabilities available in Member States and the coordination of their deployment through ESDP institutions, if so required, which were started under the Austrian Presidency, were completed during the Finnish term.

A special concern of the Austrian Council Presidency was the implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000) of the UNSC on the role of women in conflict and crisis management in the context of ESDP crisis management activities. Based on Member States’ national reports on their implementation experiences a
checklist was drawn up for future guidance on the planning and conduct of ESDP operations. In November the Council adopted conclusions on the implementation of UNSC resolution 1325 (2000).

1.2.2. Ongoing Crisis Management Operations

Comprising 6,000 personnel, the **EUFOR-Althea** military operation to ensure security and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the largest EU crisis management operation. In accordance with its security policy focus on the Western Balkans, Austria is participating in this operation with up to 300 military personnel and held the command in the Northern Sector surrounding Tuzla until the end of November. Owing to the progress made with the stabilisation process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU has elaborated initial plans for a gradual reduction in the size of its force.

The European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (**EUPM**) launched at the beginning of 2003 is the EU’s first ESDP operation. In line with its new mandate, which was revised at the beginning of the year, the mission supports the country’s police reform as well as efforts to combat organised crime and corruption. Austria has been participating with five seconded police officers.

Since the end of May, **EUPT Kosovo** has been making preparations for the takeover of the police and judicial administrative functions from the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (**UNMIK**) by a civilian ESDP crisis management mission in the course of 2007. In this first phase, the planning team comprised 25 persons. Austria has seconded a judicial expert to this mission.

At the request of the UN, the EU started preparations for another military operation, **EUFOR RD Congo**, during the Austrian EU Council Presidency at the beginning of the year. The operation aimed at supporting the Congolese security forces and MONUC deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo through the preventive presence of additional troops in order to ensure regular and non-violent parliamentary and presidential elections. At the end of June, EUFOR RD Congo reached full operational capability with 2,500 soldiers. Only a few isolated violent incidents occurred during the election period. The operation accomplished its goal and was completed at the end of November according to plan. Austria participated in the operation with five staff officers.

Two further ESDP missions are operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since May 2005, the advisory and support mission to accompany security sector reform (**EUSEC RD Congo**), which comprises 37 persons, has been supporting the reform of the Congolese army. In the course of the year,
two further brigades consisting of members of the armed forces of the former civil war parties were integrated into the new 14-brigade-strong Congolese army. The tasks of the mission also include efforts to improve the chain-of-payment system of the Congolese army in order to cut back corruption within the armed forces and curb their assaults on the civilian population. Austria did not take part in the mission.

The police mission in Kinshasa for the Integrated Police Unit (EUPOL Kinshasa) launched in April 2005 comprises 30 experts for the mentoring and advising of police units in the Congolese capital. In June, the mission was temporarily reinforced by 30 additional persons to support the coordination of the Congolese police forces during the electoral process. Austria did not participate in this mission.

The EU’s civilian-military supporting action to the African Union’s AMIS II operation in the Darfur region (Sudan) was continued. This action supports both the military and the police component of AMIS II by providing experts in the fields of planning, training, coordination and air transportation and by providing military observers. Austria has seconded a legal advisor who works at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia).

Since June, the EU border assistance mission to Moldova/Ukraine has been continued as a Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) project. It supports the reforms in the field of border management, particularly the fight against organised crime and corruption, and in this way also contributes to finding a solution to the Transnistria conflict. Austria does not take part in this mission.

Since July 2005, the integrated rule of law mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX) has been operating in the country at the invitation of the Iraqi government to train Iraqi criminal law experts from all spheres of the legal profession (judges, public prosecutors, penal experts and police officers) and promote cooperation among them. To date more than 800 persons have been trained in EU Member States, major significance being attached to respect for human rights. Austria supported the mission by seconding two instructors from the fields of policing and justice.

Since November 2005, the EU has fulfilled the role of an independent third party monitoring the border crossing point and supporting the development of capacities of the Palestinian border control authorities under the border assistance mission at Rafah crossing point (EU BAM Rafah), based on an agreement between the Palestinian National Authority and the Israeli government. Following the deterioration of the situation in Gaza in June, the border crossing point was only sporadically open and the number of persons who were able to use the border crossing point was drastically reduced.
Austria participated in this mission with a female customs officer.

The EU police mission in the Palestinian territories (EUPOL COPPS) launched at the beginning of the year is supporting the Palestinian civilian police in the establishment of solid and effective policing structures in line with international standards. In consequence of the poor security situation in the Palestinian territories, the mission is understaffed and not yet fully operable. The mission maintains contacts with its major Palestinian partners and watches over the police cars and communication facilities which have been financed by the EU but not yet used for police operations. Austria supports the mission by seconding a police officer and a female legal expert.

The first ESDP mission in Asia monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement in Aceh (Indonesia) (AMM) took up its activities in September 2005. AMM was tasked with the role of an unbiased organisation to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement concluded on 15 August by the Indonesian government and the Movement for a Free Aceh (GAM). After the first free local elections had been held in Aceh, the mission was successfully wound up on 15 December. AMM comprised 220 experts from the EU, five ASEAN countries and Norway and Switzerland. Austria seconded two participants.

1.2.3. Development of Civilian and Military Crisis Management Capabilities

The activities carried out to accomplish the Civilian Headline Goal 2008 included the formulation of recommendations and guidelines for the recruitment of personnel to civilian EU crisis management missions, the preparation of an initial concept for mission support to civilian crisis management operations under the ESDP, the compilation of a list of the required mission support capabilities and the determination of third country commitments to improve the EU’s civilian crisis management capabilities.

The training of experts appointed to the pool of Civilian Response Teams (CRT) was completed. The CRT concept provides for the formation of teams of different sizes and compositions from an EU-wide CRT pool of about 100 experts, who can be deployed within five days after the decision on an ESDP evaluation mission or an intervention to reinforce crisis management operations has been taken. One expert from the CRT pool was seconded to an evaluation mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Austria provides two experts for the CRT pool.

Efforts to implement the Headline Goal 2010 to further develop the EU’s military capabilities, which was adopted in 2004, included the compilation of the Force Catalogue 2006. The document is based on the compilation of data on Member States’ commitments for those military capabilities which they can
make available for military ESDP crisis management operations, a process which was started during the Austrian Council Presidency. The Force Catalogue provides the foundation for a systematic determination of the capabilities lacking in order to meet the Headline Goal 2010.

The **battle group concept** constitutes one of the most important components of the Headline Goal 2010 and is designed to ensure the Union’s rapid reaction capability in military crisis management. 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), particularly at the request of the UN, for crisis management operations covering the whole spectrum of “Petersberg Tasks”. The envisaged full operational capability of two battle groups simultaneously on standby will be reached at the beginning of 2007. Together with Germany and the Czech Republic, Austria will form a battle group in 2012.

1.2.4. Cooperation with other international organisations

The successfully completed military operation EUFOR RD Congo, which was carried out at the request of the **United Nations**, underlined the close cooperation between the EU and the UN in the sphere of security policy. Yet it also demonstrated the need for intensified cooperation in certain fields, such as operations planning.

Under the Austrian Presidency, the increasing number of interlinked activities in the field of civilian crisis management performed by the EU and the **OSCE** and the resulting question of practical cooperation were discussed above all at the informal meetings of the ambassadors to the EU’s Political and Security Committee (PSC) and of the EU Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management with OSCE experts.

Cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was continued, particularly with regard to the development of military capabilities and the implementation of the EUFOR-Althea operation. The meetings between the PSC ambassadors and the ambassadors to the NATO North Atlantic Council and informal working meals attended by the foreign ministers of the EU and NATO countries provided a forum for political consultation and coordination between the two organisations.

Against the backdrop of numerous ESDP missions in Africa, the relations between the EU and the **African Union** are of major significance. An example of particularly close cooperation is the continued ESDP supporting action for the AU’s AMIS II operation in Darfur. In addition, the EU is endeavouing to improve its coordination of security-related cooperation programmes between individual EU Member States and AU Member States, both among each other
and with the respective EU activities. The main goal is to strengthen the capacity of the African Union, its members and other sub-regional organisations in Africa to undertake crisis management operations in the African continent autonomously.

2. The European Neighbourhood Policy

The aim of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is to integrate the EU’s neighbouring countries in the East and in the Southern Mediterranean region into a common zone of peace, security and prosperity. For this purpose, detailed Action Plans tailored to each individual country are foreseen. Based on the individual engagement of each partner country, an increasingly close relationship going beyond cooperation and including a considerable degree of economic and political integration shall be envisaged. In addition, this might entail the conclusion of new agreements. Key elements of the Action Plans are political dialogue and reform; trade, market and regulatory reforms; cooperation in the sphere of justice and home affairs; transport; energy; information society and environment; and contacts between the relevant civil societies.

Action Plans between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia were concluded on 14 November. Negotiations with Egypt and Lebanon achieved substantial progress. Implementation of Action Plans already concluded with Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Moldova, the Palestinian National Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine has been subject to periodic review.

With an Action Plan for Jordan, the EU provided its partner with an efficient instrument supporting Jordan’s national reform agenda. The formation of a government by the fundamental Islamist Hamas party in the Palestinian National Authority led to a temporary interruption of ENP cooperation. However, by introducing the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) the EU found a way to protect the population against the consequences of a complete financial collapse of the Palestinian administration.

As part of the first progress-review in December, the European Commission presented concrete proposals for the further development and strengthening of the ENP. The EU’s foreign ministers and Heads of State and Government confirmed the significance of the ENP as one of the core policies of the EU’s external relations and decided to continue its development and further strengthening.

The Austrian Council Presidency was able to reach agreement on a new and more flexible uniform European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) for the future financing of ENP measures in 2007-2013. This instrument will replace previous support programmes such as Technical Assistance for
the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) and MEDA (financial and technical support measures to accompany the reform of economic and social structures under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership). It will primarily focus on support of national reform efforts of partner countries and accompanying measures for the implementation of cooperation, partnership and association agreements and the ENP Action Plans.

3. South East Europe / Western Balkans

3.1. Developments in the Individual States

3.1.1. Croatia

Further progress was made in the field of return of refugees, but there are still problems in the fields of infrastructure, employment and compensation for deprivation of rights of residence. According to OSCE reports, 123,642 Serbs who had either fled or been displaced during the war, had returned to their home country Croatia by the end of the year.

No progress was achieved regarding the unresolved border issues with Slovenia in connection with the Bay of Piran and certain sections of the land frontier. The EU emphasised that it expected a bilateral resolution to these issues.

The bilateral Agreement between the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Croatia on Issues Regarding Property Restitution, initialled in November 2005, for the implementation of the 2002 amendment to the Croatian Law on Restitution granting Austrian citizens effective claims to restitution for expropriated property was not signed. Croatia envisaged amending the Croatian Law on Restitution in line with the bilateral agreement on restitution to the benefit of all foreigners. By the end of the year this legislation had, however, not been completed.

For the EU accession negotiations see Chapter A.II.2.

3.1.2. Serbia/Kosovo

Following the dissolution of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro on 3 June, attention within Serbia re-focused increasingly on the process of rapprochement with the EU. Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte repeatedly criticised Serbia because of lack of cooperation with the ICTY. Her assessment that Belgrade was lacking both the political and the actual will to take the necessary measures, particularly with a view to the extradition of the two most prominent suspected war criminals, Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadjic, resulted in the interruption of the SAA negotiations on 4 May. At the
suggestion of the Austrian EU Council Presidency the Serbian government prepared an action plan in July outlining concrete measures regarding cooperation with the ICTY. By the end of the year this action plan had, however, not produced sufficient results for a resumption of the SAA negotiations.

With the adoption of the new constitution by a resolution of Parliament on 30 September and a referendum on 28 and 29 October, the Serbian government had successfully accomplished a core item on its reform agenda. In spite of criticism voiced in connection with the procedure that led to its adoption and some controversial passages, the new constitution is considered a legal break with the Miloševic era. Slobodan Miloševic died in the ICTY prison on 11 March before his criminal proceedings were concluded.

Following the adoption of the constitution, parliamentary elections were scheduled for 21 January 2007. Presidential and local elections must be held by the end of 2007 at the latest. When Parliament set the date for the parliamentary election it also accepted the resignations of four ministers of the G17 Plus Party, including that of party leader and Finance Minister Mlajdan Dinkic and Deputy Prime Minister Ivana Dulic-Markovic, who had already handed in their resignations on 30 September because of the continuing interruption of the SAA negotiations. Until the formation of the new government after the elections, the G17 Plus ministers will, however, remain in office for the time being. The same holds true for Foreign Minister Vuk Draškovic and Defence Minister Zoran Stankovic, whose (Union) ministries had not been formally integrated into the Serbian government after the dissolution of the State Union with Montenegro.

Since December Serbia has participated in the Partnership for Peace (PfP) which represented an essential progress towards the country’s integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures.

The opening of negotiations on a visa facilitation agreement and a readmission agreement with the European Commission in November was met with approval in Serbia. The visa requirements for Serbian citizens in the Schengen area are perceived by the Serbian population as a symbol of exclusion and isolation. Visa facilitations are particularly directed at young people who have never had the opportunity of travelling to Western countries.

The negotiations on the future status of Kosovo could not be completed. At numerous technical discussions held at adviser level in Vienna, the status team headed by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Future Status Process for Kosovo, Martti Ahtisaari, succeeded in achieving a approximation of views by Belgrade and Pristina on certain individual aspects, including, for instance, the important issue of decentralisation as well as the protection of
religious sites and cultural heritage. The call for active participation of the Kosovo-Serbs in the Kosovar institutions, made by the international members of the team was, however, undermined due to pressure exercised by Belgrade. As regards the status issue itself, the positions remained unaltered: while Pristina insists on independence, Serbia is willing only to grant Kosovo far-reaching autonomy. Against this background, Ahtisaari did not see any scope for an approximation of the parties’ positions in further rounds of negotiations at the end of the year and held out the prospect of a presentation of his proposals for a resolution. Taking account of the Serbian parliamentary elections, however, he postponed this presentation to the end of January 2007.

President Ibrahim Rugova’s death in January led to comprehensive changes within the political structures of Kosovo. Only after a long internal discussion was the strongest party in government, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) able to agree on President Fatmir Sejdiu to succeed Rugova as party chairman. The status process is the central focus of Kosovar politics. The Kosovo-Albanian positions held in this context were elaborated by the Unity Team, which is composed of the parties forming the government coalition and the most important opposition parties.

The new head of the Mission and SRSG, the German Joachim Rücker, gave a positive assessment of new Prime Minister Agim Ceku’s cooperation with UNMIK. Rücker, who succeeded Søren Jessen-Petersen on 1 September, particularly recognised Ceku’s efforts aimed at getting the Kosovo-Serbian communities more strongly involved and motivating them to participate in the Kosovar provisional institutions (Outreach Programme). Together with the status process headed by Special Envoy Ahtisaari, the reform of UNMIK entered a decisive stage, the preparation for the completion of the status process and the phasing out of the UN presence. Over the course of the year, further competences were handed over to the “Provisional Institutions of Self-Government” (PISG).

The EU is aware that it will be assuming a leading role as regards the future international presence and the rule of law in Kosovo. Against this background EUPT has already started the relevant preparations.

In the field of security, the Kosovo Force (KFOR) continued to play a key role with its 17,500 personnel. The German General Roland Kather was newly appointed as Commander Kosovo Force (COMKFOR).

The elaboration of a Kosovar religion law was completed successfully. At the request of the competent institutions, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with law professor Richard Potz from the Department for Legal Philosophy, Law of Religion and Culture at the University of Vienna had contributed substantially to drafting the law.
3.1.3. Montenegro

The dissolution of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro dominated Montenegrin domestic politics until the referendum in Montenegro on 21 May. While the Serbian government had advocated to the very end the preservation of the State Union, the Montenegrin government had worked towards independence since the establishment of the State Union in February 2003. Based on the mediation efforts undertaken by Miroslav Lajčák, the Personal Representative of the EU High Representative Javier Solana, and after extensive negotiations, it was possible to reach an agreement between the independence camp and the Unionists supported by Belgrade on the date for an independence referendum and subsequently on the necessary voting procedure. At the referendum 55.5 per cent of the Montenegrin population voted in favour of Montenegro’s independence. The solemn declaration of independence by Parliament followed on 3 June.

Based on the EU Council Conclusions of 12 June, the Member States of the Union declared their recognition of Montenegro. Austria had already recognised the new state on 12 June, and on 12 July diplomatic relations were established and an Austrian embassy opened in Montenegro. On 22 June, Montenegro joined the OSCE and on 28 June the UN.

Relations between Montenegro and Serbia, which had been tense during the election campaign, soon normalised. Serbia recognised Montenegro on 15 June and on 22 June diplomatic relations between the two states were established.

Since then the country has undertaken efforts to build and expand its state structures and seek further rapprochement with the EU. Following the adoption of the relevant mandate, the European Union launched negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with independent Montenegro on 26 September. Previous negotiations with the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro had been suspended because of the unsatisfactory cooperation with the ICTY.

Since 14 December Montenegro has been participating in the PfP, enabling the country to take an important step towards integration into Euro-Atlantic structures.

3.1.4. Bosnia and Herzegovina

The main focus of the domestic reform process was on the negotiations on a SAA, the technical sessions of which started during Austria’s Council Presidency. On 14 December, the eleventh anniversary of the signature of the Dayton Peace Accords, it was possible to bring these negotiations to a
technical completion. However, because of lack of sufficient progress in reforms demanded by the EU in various areas, including broadcasting, administration and the police sector in particular, it has not yet been possible to initial the Agreement.

The country’s accession to the PfP on 14 December represented an important step towards integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures.

As the successor to Britain’s Lord Ashdown, the former German Minister for Post and Telecommunications, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, took office as the international community’s High Representative and the European Union’s Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 1 February. The High Representative stressed that the major priorities of his term in office were the gradual abolition of the “Bonn Powers” (legally binding decisions by the High Representative to realise reforms, which might otherwise have been postponed or never implemented at all) and the promotion of economic development as well as the facilitation of the visa regime for Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Schengen area and/or the EU.

In its capacity as the country holding the Presidency of the EU Council, Austria participated in the meeting held by the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council on 22 and 23 June, in which it was agreed that the gradual handing-over of responsibilities to the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina was in the interest of the country. Subsequently, the Office of the High Representative started to make preparations for its closure scheduled for 30 June 2007. In February 2007 the closure of the Office was to be reviewed in the light of the political situation in the country and the region.

A multi-party agreement on a reform of the complicated structures of the Dayton Constitution failed due to the lack of a two-thirds majority in Parliament in April.

On 1 October general elections took place. For the first time the election was conducted and the votes counted by Bosnia and Herzegovina instead of the international community headed by the OSCE.

The UNSC resolution on the extension of EUFOR-Althea’s mandate for a further twelve months was adopted by consensus on 21 November.

3.1.5. Albania

The main foreign and domestic policy event was the signing of the SAA on 12 June during Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council.
The contradicting views on principal political issues and political reform held by the government and the opposition dominated the country’s **domestic policy**. The preparatory process for the forthcoming local elections, which also included issues relating to a further reform of the electoral law and to the date for the elections, was difficult. Following stagnation in the first half of the year, the political discourse between the two political camps of Albania, the Socialist Party (SP) headed by Fatos Nano and the Democratic Party (DP) chaired by Sali Berisha, became increasingly controversial from the middle of the year onwards. Despite signals of compromise from both sides and mediation efforts by the international community it was not possible to find consensual solutions at the end of the year when all the legal deadlines had expired. Public discussion was also dominated by the dispute over the impeachment procedure against the Albanian Chief Public Prosecutor. On this issue, which led to a constitutional controversy between the legislative and the executive branches, the constitutional court ruled at the end of the year that Parliament had exceeded its constitutional competences.

Albania continued its constructive politics in the region, putting the main focus on the maintenance of regional contacts and emphasising its good relationships with Macedonia, Montenegro and Turkey as well as Greece and Italy. As regards the Kosovo issue both government and opposition assumed a rather reticent position.

In the **field of the economy**, the government took a number of initiatives and largely completed the restructuring of the relevant institutions. Budget policy reflects government efforts aimed at promoting dynamic development of production, trade and tourism as well as investment in human resources by setting priorities with respect to the development of infrastructure, education and health.

3.1.6. **Macedonia**

The conduct of the parliamentary elections of 5 July largely complied with international standards. According to international election observers, there were fewer acts of violence and irregularities than in previous elections.

The electoral coalition of the opposition party Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation-Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE), gained the relative majority and its party chairman Nikola Gruevski was charged with forming a new government by President Branko Crvenkovski. Gruevski started to engage in negotiations with the ethnic-Albanian Democratic Union for Integration (DUI), whose participation in government would have facilitated the adoption of laws requiring a “Badinter majority” (i.e. a second majority among those MPs who had declared themselves members of one of the ethnic minorities). The country’s
constitution requires such a double majority for all laws relating to topics like language use, ethnic groups, municipal autonomy, municipal borders, the school system, culture and primary health care. The DUI made its involvement in government dependent on a reference that it had won the elections within the Albanian ethnic group. Gruevski refused to continue negotiations with the DUI after several representatives of this party were not willing to publicly rule out the possibility of resuming the armed struggle of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK).

Eventually the ethnic-Albanian Democratic Party of Albania (DPA) and eight smaller parties of the ethnic-Slav Macedonians contributed to the formation of a new government majority. DUI MPs initially boycotted sessions in Parliament on government bills; the opposition party organised roadblocks and demonstrations against its exclusion from government. Representatives of the international community undertook efforts to sustain and deepen the dialogue between government and the DUI.

4. The Eastern European States

4.1. Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus

4.1.1. Ukraine

Ukraine is a priority country of the ENP. During the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council, the EU Foreign Ministers visited Kiev in Troika format on 6 March. An intensification of relations between Ukraine and the EU was noted and in this context huge progress was made, particularly with respect to the political elements of the EU-Ukraine Action Plan. The EU followed the conduct of the parliamentary elections of 26 March with particular attention. In a Presidency Statement on behalf of the EU, the free and fair conduct of the elections was welcomed and described as a milestone in the democratic election process. The EU stated that it was looking forward to continuing work aimed at deepening its partnership with Ukraine and declared its willingness to support the reforms in Ukraine.

On 6 April, the European Parliament adopted a resolution in which it expressed its hope for a swift conclusion of a visa facilitation agreement.

After long and difficult coalition negotiations the new Ukrainian government under Prime Minister Victor Yanukovych was sworn in on 4 August. The party supporting the President is no longer represented in the new government. Subsequently, cooperation between the government and the President sometimes proved difficult. The Prime Minister’s second trip abroad took him to Brussels for the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council meeting on 14 September, where Yanukovych stressed the progressive deepening of
cooperation in many areas but also pointed out that “EU romanticism” had given way to a more pragmatic attitude in his country.

At the end of September the European Commission presented the draft of a negotiation mandate for a follow-up agreement to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in force until 1 March 2008. The primary goal of this follow-up agreement is to enable further development towards a deepened free-trade area following Ukraine’s accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). The most important event of the EU-Ukraine Summit in Helsinki on 27 October was the initialising of the visa facilitation agreement and the readmission agreement. In a Declaration of 14 March 2006 by the Austrian Presidency, the EU welcomed the implementation of the Joint Declaration of the Ukrainian and Moldovan Prime Ministers on Customs Issues of 30 December 2005 on the introduction of a transparent and lawful customs regime at the Moldovan-Ukrainian border. Within the framework of its Border Assistance Mission to Moldova/Ukraine the EU contributes to strengthening the border regime.

4.1.2. Moldova

Rapprochement with EU structures tops the foreign policy agenda of Moldova. The EU-Moldova Action Plan adopted within the ENP in 2005 offers an important guideline for the implementation of reforms. This was also confirmed in April at the EU-Moldova Cooperation Council meeting chaired by Austria. On the margins of the Cooperation Council meeting an agreement on air transport services was signed between the European Community (EC) and Moldova. A Cooperation Committee meeting at Senior Officials level took place in October. Preparations for the updating of the review instrument for the implementation of the ENP Action Plan were completed during Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council. In November the Action Plan was formally reviewed and updated for the first time. The European Commission presented its proposal for a negotiating mandate on a visa facilitation and readmission agreement, which was adopted in December by the Justice and Home Affairs Council.

The European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for Moldova, Adriaan Jacobovits de Szeged, undertook numerous missions to mediate in the conflict concerning the separatist region of Transnistria. The negotiations in the “5-plus-2“ format, aimed at resolving this conflict and involving the Moldovan government, the Transnistrian regime in Tiraspol, the three mediators Russia, Ukraine and OSCE as well as the EU and the USA as observers, came to a standstill because the Transnistrian side had refused to return to the negotiating table due to the new customs regime at the Moldovan/Ukrainian border. However, the EU with its Border Assistance Mission to Moldova/Ukraine succeeded in contributing to an agreement: the registration
of a major number of Transnistrian export firms with the Moldovan central authorities led to a decline in smuggling, which is one of the economic pillars of the separatist regime in Transnistria. In a declaration issued in September, the EU announced that it did not recognise a referendum on the independence of the region held in Transnistria and its outcome, and it assumed the same position towards the subsequent Transnistrian “presidential” elections held in December.

4.1.3. Belarus

An amendment to the constitution adopted in 2004 had given President Alexander Lukashenko the opportunity to stand for further terms in office. According to official reports, he won 82.6 per cent of the votes at the presidential elections of 19 March. Both the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council and the election monitoring mission of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (ODIHR) stated that these elections had not complied with international standards. In its conclusions of 10 April, the General Affairs and External Relations Council described the elections as not having been fair and free and condemned the violent action of police forces against demonstrators as well as the arrests of opposition politicians. The Council adopted an extension of the visa ban (ban on travelling to the EU) to President Lukashenko and further 30 members of the Belarusian leadership and other officials as well as the freezing of these persons’ assets. In the course of the year more EU declarations were issued on attacks by the police forces, restrictions to the freedom of assembly and politically motivated action against members of the opposition. On the sidelines of an EU Council meeting in January, Lukashenko’s rival candidate Alexander Milinkevich held informal talks with EU representatives in Brussels and was received in Vienna by Council President Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel in April.

On 20 December the UNGA adopted a resolution in which it expressed its concern over the human rights situation in Belarus. Criticism focused on the arbitrary detention of journalists, opposition politicians and human rights activists as well as sentences passed in closed-door trials and the oppression of NGOs, religious groups, independent media, opposition parties and independent trade unions. The Belarusian government is called upon to cooperate with the UN Human Rights Council, release political prisoners, and respect the right to freedom of expression.

On 18 and 19 December, the EU Troika dispatched a mission to Minsk to meet representatives of the Belarusian government, opposition parties and NGOs. In their talks with government representatives, the EU Troika stressed that Belarus had to observe international human rights conventions and respect freedom of opinion and rule of law principles. Moreover, EU representatives
also explained an offer entitled “What the European Union could bring to Belarus”, which had been put together and finalised in November. This paper presents in detail the opportunities offered by the country’s inclusion in the ENP, if Belarus would undertake efforts aimed at democratisation, the respect of human rights and the rule of law. In November Belarus proposed the establishment of an energy dialogue to which the European Commission responded positively.

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 constitutes an essential element of this policy. A highlight in this connection was the trip of an EU Troika chaired by State Secretary Hans Winkler to the region in April and a visit at ministerial level in the Troika format paid to the region in October. At Cooperation Council meetings held with the partner countries in November, the ENP Action Plans were adopted. Important aspects covered by these Action Plans refer particularly to the strengthening of democratic structures and the rule of law, improved protection of human rights, enhancement of the macro-economic climate, strengthening of regional cooperation and steps towards a peaceful resolution of the conflicts in the South Caucasus.

In February, the Swedish diplomat Peter Semneby was appointed EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus to replace the long-serving Finnish EUSR Heikki Talvitie. The EU attaches prime importance to the task of finding solutions to the conflicts in the region.

In the first half of the year, relations between Georgia and Russia gradually deteriorated and touched bottom with the arrest of five officers of the Russian army in September. In October the Council of the EU appealed to both sides to undertake efforts aimed at a normalisation of relations. The EU expressed its grave concern over the measures imposed by Russia against Georgia and appealed to Russia to refrain particularly from measures against Georgians living in Russia. Only towards the end of the year was a first slight easing of the situation discernible.

In November a “referendum for independence” was held in South Ossetia, which was, however, not recognised by the international community.

Efforts aimed at resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh issue continued, and some momentum was perceptible in the discussions at the end of the year. On 10
December a “referendum on a draft constitution” was held in Nagorno-Karabakh but not recognised by the international community.

5. Russia

President Vladimir Putin is striving for a strong state that controls the political and economic processes in Russia. The country’s democratic institutions are to serve this goal. Following state control of the audiovisual media and strategic sectors of industry, which has already been in effect for some time, a law adopted in January imposed stringent registration provisions on NGOs.

Over the past five years, the Russian economy grew at an average rate of 6.7 per cent. This growth is mainly attributable to the increase in energy prices. The considerable revenues from oil and gas exports go to a stabilisation fund, which the Russian state intends to tap in the event of an economic downturn. Russia, moreover, paid back its foreign debt prematurely. State influence on the Russian economy and the expansion of state-owned public energy enterprises at the expense of private Russian and foreign companies as well as the protectionism of strategic economic sectors weakened domestic and foreign investors’ confidence.

Although an increasing number of Russian citizens are better off than ever before, the gap between rich and poor has widened. In response to this development President Putin raised social spending and charged the government with the realisation of “national projects” in the fields of education, health, housing and agriculture. More marked, however, was the recent increase in budgetary spending on internal security and national defence.

Although the situation in Chechnya had become somewhat calmer, the majority of the republics of the North Caucasus were hit by terrorist attacks. The human rights situation in this region continues to give cause for concern. At the biannual Human Rights Consultations between the EU and Russia, discussions centre on violations of fundamental rights and freedoms, deficiencies in the penal system, restrictions of the freedom of the media as well as the problems faced by NGOs and human rights defenders. Since 1999, the EU has made aid totalling 196 million euros available to alleviate the humanitarian problems in Chechnya. In April, the EU adopted a socio-economic development programme for Chechnya, Ingushetia and North Ossetia amounting to 22 million euros.

Relations with the other successor states of the former Soviet Union feature prominently on Russia’s foreign policy agenda. Russia wants to maintain its influence in the post-Soviet region in order to safeguard its security policy and economic interests. Moscow has drawn the obvious conclusions from the
political changes in a number of the former Soviet Union’s successor states, the fading relevance of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the scant chances for the realisation of the project aimed at establishing a “Single Economic Space” (SES) together with Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. New integration structures have been created in which the states loyal to Russia participate. These include the Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC) in the economic sector and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) in the field of security policy.

Russia uses energy policy as a powerful foreign policy instrument. Successor states of the former Soviet Union that behave well towards Russia get Russian energy supplies at preferential prices, others at market prices. Disputes with Ukraine at the beginning of the year and with Belarus at the end of the year led to a temporary suspension of Russian gas and/or oil deliveries to these two countries. This also had an impact on Central and Western European countries, which are supplied with Russian gas and oil by pipelines running through these two transit countries.

Russian gas accounts for 40 per cent of the EU’s entire gas imports and Russian oil for 25 per cent of the Union’s entire oil imports, making the EU the most important destination for Russian energy exports. Against this background the EU made the issue of energy security a central topic of the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue. Russia responded to the EU’s demand for secure energy supply by demanding “purchase commitments” in the form of long-term supply contracts. At the EU-Russia Summit held during the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council in Sochi (Russia) on 25 May, agreement was reached on a number of principles, including bringing down barriers to trade, transparency and reciprocity in terms of access to markets, on which the international energy relations should be based. At the G8 Summit in St. Petersburg, these principles were enshrined in a declaration in July.

In view of the interdependence between the EU and Russia in terms of energy policy, the EU intends to include the energy partnership in the future EU-Russia Framework Agreement, which is to replace the current PCA after 2007. During Austria’s Council Presidency consultations were held on its essential contents. The agreement is to remain valid for an unlimited period of time and in terms of the topics dealt with, it should refer to the “Common Spaces”, i.e., 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. In addition its wording should be flexible enough to enable a further development of this strategic partnership. Moreover, it should provide for the establishment of a free trade area, which could be realised after Russia’s accession to the WTO.
At their Sochi Summit, the EU and Russia also signed visa facilitation and readmission agreements.

6. The Middle East, North Africa and the Mediterranean

6.1. Political Developments

In Iraq, Parliament passed a vote of confidence on 20 May in the government led by Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, which had been formed after last year’s election. However, the government did not succeed in stabilising the security situation which had been deteriorating increasingly since the bombing of a Shiite shrine in Samarra on 22 February. The Austrian Presidency of the EU Council was represented in Baghdad by Special Envoy Gudrun Harrer, under whose chair the representatives of the present EU embassies agreed on a first joint report on the situation in the country. Negotiations on a Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the EU were initiated on 20 November.

After the Iraqi High Tribunal’s appellate chamber upheld Saddam Hussein’s death sentence passed by the Iraqi Special Tribunal on 5 November, he was hanged on 30 December. In a statement on the execution of the death sentence, the EU referred to its repeated condemnation of the systematic human rights violations committed under Saddam Hussein’s regime, at the same time, however, recalling its opposition in principal to the death sentence.

In Yemen, President Abdullah Saleh won the presidential elections of 20 September, taking 77.2 per cent of the votes. In spite of certain deficiencies, the EU Election Observer Mission recognised the elections as an open and genuine contest and a major milestone in the development of the country’s democracy. The United Arab Emirates, too undertook cautious steps towards democratisation.

The ruling houses of Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar continued to permit a careful opening of their political systems. The last few years have seen the launching of domestic policy reform measures, which are most clearly reflected in the right to vote and stand for public office, granted to women for the first time at the parliamentary elections in Kuwait. Bahrain, also conducted parliamentary elections, which were for the first time not blocked by the Shiite majority of the population. The sovereignty and integrity of these three states are guaranteed by the USA, which has made them important cornerstones of its military strategy in the region.

On 1 June, the E3 Foreign Ministers (Germany, France and Great Britain) and the EU High Representative as well as the foreign ministers of China, Russia and the USA met in Vienna and agreed on a comprehensive package for Iran, which included both economic incentives and multilateral talks, including
with the USA. The prerequisite for substantial talks on the basis of this “Vienna Package” was Iran’s suspension of all uranium enrichment related and reprocessing activities. Discussions held by the EU High Representative with the Iranian chief negotiator Ali Larijani did not, however, produce any results. Subsequently on 23 December, the UNSC adopted resolution 1737 imposing economic sanctions under Article 41 of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

During its Presidency of the EU Council, Austria succeeded in reaching agreement with Iran on the modalities for holding the Human Rights Dialogue. However, the next round envisaged for the beginning of December in Helsinki, was cancelled by Iran.

6.2. The Middle East Peace Process

The beginning of the year saw some far-reaching changes in the Middle East Peace Process. The serious illness of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon meant the absence of a dominant personality in the political arena. Almost simultaneously, the result of the first elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council since 1996 led to the taking-over of government responsibility by Hamas, which had participated in the elections as the “List for Change and Reform” election movement and is classified as a terrorist group by the EU.

The Hamas’ refusal to make an unmistakeable commitment to the principles outlined by the Middle East Quartet (EU, Russia, USA and the UN) – recognition of Israel’s right to exist, renunciation of violence and observance of all existing agreements including the Road Map of 2003 – led to the discontinuation of direct financial assistance to the Palestinian National Authority following the formation of a Hamas-led government. During Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council, the donor community elaborated a payment mechanism for the continued granting of financial aid to critical sectors like healthcare and education. According to this mechanism, funds would be paid out only directly or disbursed exclusively through President Mahmoud Abbas’ Office but not through the Hamas-led ministries.

A wide range of efforts aimed at reaching an understanding between the Fatah, the faction of President Abbas that had dominated over decades, and the new majority party, Hamas, failed. In fact, the tensions within the Palestinian political groups constantly increased and from autumn translated into direct armed clashes between the security forces in the President’s sphere of influence and those directly loyal to the Hamas-led Ministry of the Interior. By the end of the year, these clashes had claimed dozens of fatalities and hundreds of casualties on both sides.
The take-over of power by Hamas also resulted in a further deterioration of the Israeli-Palestinian relationship. When the new Palestinian National Authority took office, Israel began to withhold Palestinian customs revenues and tax receipts refusing to pass them through to the Palestine authorities. These duties are paid by Palestinian merchants and consumers on imports and exports to and from the Occupied Territories and are levied in a fiduciary manner by the Israeli customs authorities pursuant to an agreement with the Palestinian National Authority. The loss of the most important source of own budget income and the international boycott of direct cooperation lead to the de facto breakdown of the public sector in the Palestinian territories.

Israel responded to the abduction of an Israeli soldier from a military base by a Palestinian commando group at the middle of the year by launching its most massive military action in the Gaza Strip since the disengagement of its troops last year.

A short time later, a similar assault by members of the Hezbollah at the Lebanese-Israeli border in the course of which two other soldiers were abducted, triggered a large-scale military operation by the Israeli army, aimed at expelling Hezbollah from South Lebanon and eliminating their missiles threatening the North of Israel. After four weeks of war, which spread over large parts of Lebanon and entailed grave humanitarian consequences and the destruction of central civilian infrastructure, the UN obtained a cease fire and adopted a massive increase of the United Nations Interim Force (UNIFIL) based in South Lebanon (on the bombardment of a UN observer post in Khiam in which Austrian Major Helmut Lang was killed, see Chapter E.III.3.1.). Israel withdrew from Lebanon. Assisted by UNIFIL, the regular Lebanese army was able to move back into position in the South of Lebanon for the first time after a long absence.

As a direct consequence of the Lebanon war, the Disengagement Plan (Israel’s unilateral withdrawal from the occupied territories of the West Bank) propagated by the new Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was abandoned. Hope for a revival of the Peace Process was inspired by a keynote address delivered by Prime Minister Olmert at the end of November at the tomb of the founder of the State of Israel, David Ben-Gurion, in which Olmert laid out his vision for a peaceful coexistence of Israelis and Palestinians as well as the prospect of a meeting between himself and President Abbas on 23 December.

The EU and Austria continue to view the Road Map as the only promising approach to achieve a permanent peace acceptable to both sides based on the two-state solution. In this context, the intensive involvement of the Middle East Quartet and the inclusion of the neighbouring Arab states are indispensable for reaching this goal.
6.3. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona Process)

The new momentum added to the Barcelona Process by the summit to celebrate its tenth anniversary in November 2005 had a first impact on the joint activities launched under the Partnership. To supplement the three original chapters of cooperation under the Barcelona Process (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) a fourth chapter on cooperation in the areas of justice, security, migration and social integration was opened by the Heads of State and Government at the Barcelona anniversary summit. Cooperation in this area became urgently necessary due to the growing number of migrants moving from and through the North African region. As first consultations regarding further work on this chapter proved complicated, an informal Euromed meeting of high-level experts on migration was held on 3 February. On the basis of their work, it was possible to achieve a breakthrough at the 8th Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs on 27 and 28 November and to agree on holding a Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers on migration in 2007.

The Euromed Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism adopted in Barcelona provides for a number of regional activities under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. On 15 May, the Austrian Council Presidency organised an ad hoc meeting on tolerance, dialogue and prevention; the implementation of the Code of Conduct started with the preparation of a specific priority paper.

During Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council, a meeting of Euromed Trade Ministers was held in Marrakech on 24 March, while the Finance Ministers met in Tunis on 25 and 26 June. The trade ministers started negotiations on the liberalisation of services, which will represent an important step towards the establishment of a Free Trade Area by 2010. The finance ministers’ deliberations centred on the issue of promoting investments in the Southern Euromed partner states. Negotiations on liberalising trade in agricultural products and fisheries products, as stipulated in the Five Year Work Programme adopted at the 2005 Summit, were initiated with Israel, Jordan and Tunisia. During the Finnish EU Council Presidency, the Euromed Ministers of Industry met in Rhodes from 21-22 September, the Ministers for Women’s Affairs convened in Istanbul on 13 and 14 November and the Environment Ministers in Cairo on 20 November. At the latter meeting a road map for further action and a monitoring mechanism were adopted and an essential impetus was provided for further work, for instance in the field of water pollution control. The Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Tampere on 27 and 28 November adopted a joint declaration and, for the first time, an annual schedule for the implementation of the Five Year Work Programme.
Against the background of the caricature dispute which broke out at the beginning of the year, the seminar “Racism, Xenophobia and the Media” prepared by the Euromed bodies and held in Vienna on 22 and 23 May was of particular importance. A second seminar entitled “Europe and the Mediterranean – Inclusion and Diversity”, which took place in Vienna on 28 June, served to revive the dialogue and enhance the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership’s visibility.

In response to the constantly recurring debate on a reform of the Barcelona Process, structural measures aimed at further enhancing both the efficiency and visibility of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership were initiated during Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council. In view of the large number of reform proposals submitted, a study group was established, which took up work in May.

For the Anna Lindh Foundation see Chapter K.VIII.3.

The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) held its second annual plenary session from 26 to 27 March. The Parliamentary Assembly adopted resolutions which had been elaborated by two preparatory committees, the political and the economic committee. The EMPA offers a platform for the discussion of the region’s topical issues at the level of parliamentarians and supplements the Euromed meetings held at the level of ministers and officials and between representatives of civil society.

6.4. Organisations Furthering Multilateral Cooperation

6.4.1. Arab League

The 18th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Arab League took place in Khartoum (Sudan) on 28 March. Because of the venue chosen, only 13 of the 22 Heads of State participated in the meeting. Secretary-General Amr Moussa was re-appointed for a second five-year term.

In their final declaration, the Heads of State and Government of the Arab League called for an enhanced dialogue and mutual respect of civilisations and religions in connection with the caricature dispute. Referring to the Middle East Peace Process, they criticised the Israeli “separation barrier”, but confirmed the Beirut Declaration of 2002, which offered peace and normal relations to Israel in return for its withdrawal to the borders of 1967. They called upon the international community to respect the democratic election of Hamas and not to interfere with domestic Palestinian affairs (the Palestinian side was represented in Khartoum by President Abbas, as government representatives of Hamas had not been invited).
The Arab League supports the preservation of the national unity of Iraq. However, by the end of the year it had not been possible to hold the “reconciliation conference” envisaged by the League. The members of the Arab League make a takeover of AMIS II by UN troops contingent on Sudan’s explicit approval. The financial assistance for AMIS II, which the League had already pledged at the March summit, could not be substantiated until the end of the year. The mediation efforts undertaken by Secretary-General Moussa to achieve a settlement of the domestic disputes and the formation of a national unity government in Lebanon were not crowned with success.

6.4.2. Gulf Cooperation Council

Cooperation with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), founded in 1981 by Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates is of particular political and economic importance for the EU. Since 1989 the EU and the GCC have been collaborating under a Cooperation Agreement. The GCC is the EU’s sixth largest export market and the Union’s most important trading partner in the Arab world, accounting for roughly half of the EU’s entire trade with the Arab states.

Particular significance is attributed to the negotiations on the conclusion of a free trade agreement conducted since 1991. During Austria’s EU Council Presidency, new dynamism was added to the negotiations especially by an EU-GCC ministerial-level meeting held in Brussels on 15 May and a meeting between EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson and the GCC ministers of finance in Abu Dhabi on 10 June. An exploratory trip that took the European Commission to all GCC countries in September subsequently resulted in an approximation of viewpoints. Progress was achieved especially in the field of public procurement, but with respect to services there are still some unresolved issues.

7. North America

7.1. The United States of America

In the elections for the US Congress of 7 November, the opposition Democrats succeeded in securing a majority both in the House of Representatives (Democratic Party 233 seats, Republican Party 202 seats) and in the Senate (both parties 49 seats each; two independent representatives who support the Democratic Party). Democratic Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi from California was elected Speaker of the House and Harry Reid from Nevada Senate Majority Leader. President George W. Bush made important personnel changes in his administration. Following the Congressional elections he announced the resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and
appointed former CIA Director Robert Gates as the latter’s successor. Prior to this reshuffle, the Secretary of the Interior and the Ministers of Transport and of Finance had been replaced.

President Bush set the following **domestic policy priorities** for his second term in office: a fundamental reform of the social security system, a reform of the tax law and education system as well as a comprehensive immigration reform. The legislative successes scored by the 109th Congress included the passage of a package of laws on transport and energy. The Democrats announced a 100-day programme, which was to be implemented in the first working sessions of the 110th Congress starting on 4 January 2007. The most important plans outlined in this programme included an increase in the minimum wages, the extension of stem cell research, the discontinuation of subsidies to oil companies, new ethics rules for the Congress and the implementation of the recommendations submitted by the 9/11 Commission.

In spite of the appointment of a new Secretary of Defense, President Bush was striving for continuity in his **foreign and security policy**. Bush’s foreign policy priorities included the fight against terrorism, the creation of stable democracies, the promotion of freedom and the establishment of an “effective multilateralism”. The US engagement in Iraq remained a central pillar of foreign policy. On 6 December, a bipartisan Iraq Study Group of government elders co-chaired by former Secretary of State James A. Baker and former Congressman Lee H. Hamilton recommended a radically different approach from President Bush’s current policy in Iraq, including the withdrawal of most US combat troops by early 2008. In the face of a rising number of casualties among US soldiers (3,000 fatalities by the end of the year), costs amounting to at least 8 billion US dollars a month and the escalating civil war between the three most important groups of the Iraqi population, roughly three-quarters of US Americans finally rejected the Iraq policy pursued by the Bush Administration.

In the dispute over the nuclear programme of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the USA, in cooperation with the People’s Republic of China, succeeded in achieving a resumption of the six-party talks. In connection with the efforts aimed at preventing the nuclear weapon capability of Iran, the USA successfully urged the UNSC to impose sanctions. At the same time, the USA supported the negotiation efforts undertaken by the E3/EU. Nevertheless, the Bush Administration did not rule out the option of a preventive military operation. The USA concluded an agreement on the civilian use of nuclear technology with India.

The USA attaches prime importance to transatlantic relations and its relationship to the EU, which has been emphasised repeatedly by President Bush since the start of his second term in office. At the **EU-USA Summit in**
Vienna, in which he participated together with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Adviser Stephen S. Hadley from 20 to 21 June, President Bush particularly emphasised the importance of these relations. The EU was represented at the summit talks by Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel and Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik representing the EU Council Presidency, the High Representative of the EU Javier Solana, Commission President José Manuel Barroso, Commissioner for External Relations and Neighbourhood Policy Benita Ferrero-Waldner and Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson. In Vienna, President Bush indicated for the first time that his administration was considering closing the detention camp at Guantánamo Bay Naval Base.

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 has traditionally been decidedly multilateralist, and the degree of concordance in the two countries’ voting behaviour in the UN General Assembly is extremely high (96 per cent in 2003, for instance). Canada and Austria cooperate closely in a broad spectrum of areas ranging from the Ottawa Process, NATO’s Partnership for Peace Trust Fund Project for the destruction of anti-personnel in Serbia to activities within the framework of the Human Security Network (see Chapter G.VI.).

For Canada the USA is a pre-eminent foreign trade and foreign policy factor. In its foreign policy Canada always attaches particular importance to keeping a balance between its multilateral stance and its wish to be a dependable partner of the USA. Since the new Conservative government headed by Prime Minister Stephen Harper took office in January, there has, however, been a clear shift in focus: Canada has been undertaking clearly perceivable efforts aimed at improving relations clouded because of the criticism it voiced in response to the war in Iraq. These efforts are reflected in the fact that the deployment of Canadian troops in Afghanistan was extended to 2009, and the announcement by Canada’s Head of Government that his country was not able to and would not fulfil the Kyoto targets in the environmental area is also seen in this context. At the same time, Prime Minister Harper is trying to establish Canada as an energy superpower.

The new government no longer attached the same importance to relations with the EU as the previous government. Neither during the Austrian nor during the Finnish Presidency of the EU Council was an EU-Canada Summit held; negotiations on the conclusion of a Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement (TIEA) were suspended (see Chapter A.V.7.3.2).
Domestic political developments in Canada were dominated by the taking of office of Prime Minister Harper and his Conservative minority government. By uniting all the Conservative forces in the country in 2003 and the assumption of the party chairmanship in 2004, Harper succeeded in securing electoral victory over his Liberal predecessor Paul Martin, who had been weakened by scandals. The new Prime Minister made the following five concrete election pledges: to fight corruption, reduce the VAT, fight crime, make improvements in the fields of child benefits and the healthcare system, and change the fiscal equalisation scheme. The new government’s first year in office was dedicated almost exclusively to the implementation of this agenda.

The debate on the multicultural nature of the country, which culminated in the recognition of Québec as a nation within the Canadian state continues: notwithstanding its limited concrete political impact, the relevant resolution by Parliament is of major symbolic importance and has a huge signal effect.

7.3. The Institutionalised Transatlantic Dialogue

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 aware of the significance of a close partnership for realising common political goals.

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 institutional framework was set by the Bonn Declaration of 1999. 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 EU-US Task Force and expert group meetings. The EU-US dialogue is the most intensive of all institutionalised dialogues between the EU and third countries.

The Joint EU-US Work Programme adopted at the EU-US Economic Ministerial Meeting in November 2005 under the Initiative to Enhance Transatlantic Economic Integration and Growth contains guidelines which were put into further concrete terms under the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council. In preparation for the Vienna EU-USA Summit, the areas of regulatory and standards cooperation, open and competitive capital markets, money laundering and terrorist financing cooperation, spurring innovation and the development of technology, enhancing trade, travel and security, promoting energy efficiency, intellectual property rights, investment,
competition policy, government procurement and services were dealt with in detail.

After transatlantic relations had undergone a difficult phase due to the war in Iraq, they got off to a new start in 2005. The positive momentum was continued by the EU-USA Summit held in Vienna on 20 and 21 June during Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council. The talks with President Bush took place in an excellent atmosphere and were characterised by an open and frank discussion climate, even during deliberations on controversial issues. By adopting one declaration and two progress reports, the EU made the signing of a large number of documents, ten at the 2005 summit for instance, no longer necessary.

After the revitalisation of relations and the identification and establishment of a broad spectrum of areas for cooperation achieved last year, essential progress could be realised at the Vienna summit with respect to the deepening of cooperation in selected areas, including the promotion of democracy and human rights, combating terrorism, and intellectual property rights. Moreover, it was possible to extend cooperation to new, sometimes controversial areas like climate change and energy security. The EU and the USA jointly underscored the fact that they belonged to a common political and legal community of values.

A large number of topics were dealt with at the summit and addressed in the final declaration including the issues of energy and energy security; climate change; social systems and migration; trade relations and the WTO; regulatory cooperation; the risk of pandemics; UN reform; the fight against terrorism; the situation in Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Russia, Africa, the Western Balkans and Latin America as well as the Visa Waiver Programme (the EU’s call for waiving visa requirements for citizens of the new EU Member States when entering the USA).

The concrete thematic issues established included cooperation in the fields of energy security and a high-level dialogue on climate change as well as clean energy and sustainable development. Joint actions were adopted with respect to the enforcement of intellectual property rights in third countries; a common approach was agreed upon with respect to the promotion of democracy as well as the stepping-up of efforts in the fields of conflict prevention and crisis management; and on the sidelines of the summit a new EU-US education agreement was signed by the Commissioner for External Relations and Neighbourhood Policy Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

During the Austrian EU Council Presidency, the constitutive meeting of the US-EU high-level Regulatory Cooperation Forum (RCF) took place. The goal
of this forum is the harmonisation of norms and standards by way of an expert
dialogue between the European Commission, the Member States and the
independent US regulatory authorities. Agreement was reached on
cooperation in the fields of pharmaceuticals, product safety and energy
efficiency, and a working group on intellectual property rights was
established, which met twice during Austria’s EU Council Presidency and
prepared a work programme which *inter alia* included a joint approach
towards third countries. Moreover, a bilateral agreement, which had been
negotiated over 20 years, was eventually concluded on trade in wine.

Under the EU-US Financial Markets Regulatory Dialogue particular progress
was made in the fields of convergence of corporate accounting standards and
the banks’ equity requirements (Basel II regulations).

In the lead-up to the summit, a Troika meeting of the EU Ministers of Justice
and Home Affairs was held with the US in Vienna on 3 May. After the summit
three further EU-US Troika meetings at ministerial level were held during the
Finnish EU Council Presidency. The foreign ministers met on the margins of
the UNGA on 22 September; the talks of the economic affairs ministers who
met in Washington, D.C. on 9 November centred on energy, innovation in the
healthcare sector and the ongoing WTO negotiations (Doha Round), and the
ministers of justice agreed on the establishment of a high-level working group
on data protection when they met in Washington, D.C. on 6 November.

At the first meeting of the EU-US High-Level Dialogue on climate change,
clean energy and sustainable development in Helsinki (24 to 25 October)
potential measures for the promotion of environmentally benign emission
technologies were discussed.

As the previous regulation, which had been annulled by the European Court
of Justice, expired on 30 September, the EU and the US adopted an interim
agreement, which was signed in Luxembourg on 16 October and in
Washington, D.C. on 19 October, on the continued use of passenger name
records as part of the fight against terrorism.

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. The institutional framework was laid
down in the Bonn Declaration of 1999. Numerous meetings at the various
levels of working groups, expert groups, and senior-level public officials 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.

In the past, the EU-Canada summits at the political level had offered an outstanding opportunity to deepen the excellent cooperation between the EU and Canada on issues relating to multilateralism, follow-up measures to UN summits, environmental policy and development policy. The calling-off of EU-Canada summits – the last one took place in June 2005 – was regretted by the EU. Meetings between European and Canadian leaders held on the sidelines of other summits, like NATO and G8, could not fully compensate for that.

7.4. The North American Free Trade Agreement

The agreement on the establishment of a North American Free Trade Area between the USA, Canada and Mexico (NAFTA) 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 economy from the South. Between 1993 and 2005 the volume of trade between the NAFTA states rose from 297 billion to 810 billion US dollars, which is equivalent to an increase of 173 per cent.

The NAFTA Agreement contains a conflict settlement mechanism for the resolution of competition issues. The five-member arbitral panels established upon request are binational bodies as they are exclusively composed of members of the two parties to the dispute.

8. Latin America and the Caribbean

8.1. Political developments

Elections took place in 13 Latin American and Caribbean countries including Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela. The economic growth recorded by the region for four consecutive years continued unabated and reached 5.3 per cent on average. Due to dynamic economic developments, increasing investments and current account surpluses the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) considers growth in the region to be more solid and sustainable than previously. Social asymmetries are, nevertheless, a common feature shared by almost every country in the region. Although some states of the region were faced with political crises, their democratic institutions were not called into question and political solutions were sought to problems. Commitment to democracy, the rule of law, market economy, regional integration and international opening are widely accepted in Latin America and the Caribbean. Strategic cooperation between the EU and the Latin American and Caribbean States was strengthened and received some important new impetus at the IV EU-LAC
Summit that took place in Vienna from 11 to 13 May. The “Vienna Declaration” adopted at the summit includes a large work programme aimed at further intensifying bi-regional cooperation.

In Mexico, the conservative candidate Felipe Calderón Hinojosa from the National Action Party (PAN) won the presidential elections of 2 June by only a slim majority. The election result entailed a political, economic and social polarisation of Mexican society. The defeated rival candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador from the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) unsuccessfully contested the election outcome, mobilised large-scale demonstrations of his followers and even proclaimed a “counter-government”. President Felipe Calderón Hinojosa was sworn in on 1 December. Relations with the USA were dominated by migration issues. The US government’s decision to build an approximately 1,100-km (700-mile) fence along its border with Mexico by the end of 2008 represented a major setback for the Mexican government. With respect to the EU-LAC process, Mexico acted successfully as coordinator for the LAC region and together with Austria chaired the Vienna EU-LAC Summit in May.

As a result of a corruption scandal, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil was able to secure his re-election only in the second ballot of 29 October. President Lula announced the continuation of his efforts aimed at implementing social and economic reforms 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. Brazil’s priority foreign policy objectives included obtaining a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, regional integration, the diversification of trade relations and strengthening Brazil’s role in international politics as one of the mouthpieces of emerging markets and developing countries.

Argentina’s economy continued to grow, leading to a record budget surplus at persistently high inflation rates. Rigid price regulations for goods and services, institutional weaknesses and frequent changes in the legal framework caused insecurity among foreign investors. At the beginning of the year, the Argentinean government paid back its debts with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other international finance institutions. By paying back the majority of its debts, the government wanted to make the country more attractive to foreign investors again. The massive tensions between Brazil and Uruguay arising from the construction of two pulp mills on the Uruguayan side of the Rio Uruguay border river not only strained bilateral relations but increasingly impacted the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR), challenging its cohesion.
In Chile, Michelle Bachelet became the first woman to be elected President after winning a run-off ballot on 15 January. The Bachelet Administration continued the successful policies pursued by former President Ricardo Lagos, putting a stronger emphasis on social and environmental policies. When the controversial Chilean ex-dictator General Augusto Pinochet died in December, the Chilean government refrained from holding a state funeral. In the field of international economic relations Chile has successfully steered a liberal course, which is based on comprehensive unilateral customs tariff reductions with a flat rate of only 6 per cent since 1 January 2003 and a dense network of economic agreements.

In Colombia, President Álvaro Uribe was re-elected on 28 May, winning a clear majority of 62 per cent of the vote. The parties closely associated with him also scored a clear victory at the general elections held in the middle of the previous March. Factors that contributed to the electoral success of the Uribe Administration were the improved security situation and significant progress achieved in asserting government control over the entire territory of Colombia after its policy of “democratic security” (dismantling or weakening of illegal guerrilla groups and drug gangs) pursued primarily by military means, had proved successful. The comprehensive demobilisation process with the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC) guerrilla group encompassing just under 31,000 members was formally completed at the beginning of May, and more than 17,500 weapons were handed in. However, the implementation of the law on “Justicia y Paz” (justice and peace), which was adopted in 2005 and forms the legal framework particularly for the investigation and prosecution of the non-political crimes committed by AUC and providing redress for victims, progressed only slowly. While the talks that had been going on with the National Liberation Army (ELN) since December 2005 in Havana, gave cause for cautious optimism, official contacts to the significantly larger guerrilla group Revolutionary Armed Force of Colombia (FARC) had remained broken off since 2002. During the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council, the EU called upon the FARC at the end of February on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the abduction of former presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt, to assume a constructive attitude regarding the conclusion of a humanitarian agreement.

In Cuba, Fidel Castro, who had fallen seriously ill, for the first time ever handed over official business – formally only for the time being – to his younger brother Raúl Castro and senior Politburo and government members on 31 July. The Cuban government focuses on the continuity of the Communist system, which is also being pursued by a new collective leadership. The European Union’s Common Position on Cuba of 1996 lays the groundwork for the EU’s relations with Cuba. At the annual evaluation of the Common Position by the General Affairs and External Relations Council during Austria’s Council Presidency in June, it was noted that the human
rights situation has not improved. The Cuban regime continued to put representatives of the peaceful opposition and dissidents under substantial pressure by aggressively intimidating them and restricting freedom of assembly as well as freedom of opinion and expression. In the medium and longer term, the EU hopes that Cuba will make the transition to a pluralistic and democratic system. The EU continued to support dissidents and opposition parties by pursuing its “dual-track approach” but also sought dialogue with the government and advocates of reform within the state system as well as civil society representatives. By the end of the year, the number of political prisoners had fallen from 330 to 283, the majority of these conditional releases being granted for health reasons.

In Peru, the newly elected President Alan García took office on 28 July. He took over a country displaying a consolidated democracy and economic growth. President García started his second term in office (he had also been President of Peru from 1985-1990) embarking on a moderate foreign and economic policy course, advocating cooperation and progress in the field of integration within the Andean Community. He announced a continuation of the market-economy course steered by his predecessor Alejandro Toledo. The prime domestic policy objective was combating poverty. In April, Peru signed a free trade agreement with the USA.

In Venezuela, President Hugo Chávez was re-elected in the presidential elections of 3 December, winning 63 per cent of the votes cast. The first joint candidate of the opposition, Manuel Rosales, was able to score a succès d’estime by securing 37 per cent of the votes. Since the boycott of the parliamentary elections of December 2005, the opposition parties have not been represented in the national assembly in which the parties from the government camp hold all 167 seats. Following his re-election President Chávez announced far-reaching nationalisations in the raw material sectors, the continuation of the “Bolivarian Revolution” and the establishment of a “21st Century Socialism”. This term might be used to describe a strong concentration of power in the hands of the President and a socialist economic and social model, which could exhibit authoritarian features. Venezuelan society remains divided on the country’s political course.

In Guatemala, noteworthy success in the fight against corruption, lack of security and safety as well as impunity failed to materialise also during the third year of President Óscar Berger Perdomo’s government. Due to lack of budgetary funds and support in Congress, the government could only lend limited support to the concerns of the poor and indigenous population. High oil prices and the destruction caused by the tropical storm “Stan” in October 2005 prevented more pronounced economic growth and thus ambitious projects aimed at promoting the country’s economic development including “Vamos Guatemala”. The border and territorial conflict with Belize continued.
Progress made in the field of respect of human rights won international recognition by the country’s election into the UN Human Rights Council. Following a tug-of-war and a series of crucial ballots, Guatemala and Venezuela had to withdraw their candidacies for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the benefit of Panama. In July, a free trade agreement with the USA (Dominican Republic – Central America Free Trade Agreement, DR-CAFTA) entered into force for Guatemala.

For **Nicaragua**, the Dominican Republic – Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA) with the USA entered into force in April.

In **Bolivia**, Evo Morales, who had emerged victorious from the December 2005 elections, became the first indigenous person to assume the office of Head of State on 22 January. The Movement towards Socialism (MAS) he heads had secured 54 per cent of the votes, making it the most important player in the country. President Morales achieved first successes with reforms aimed at combating poverty, involving the indigenous majority of the population in political life, literacy campaigns and the fight against corruption. As regards the controversial nationalisation of the natural gas sector, agreement was reached on a large number of aspects regulating the new contractual situation with foreign companies active in the sector of natural gas production in Bolivia. The Morales Administration had set itself the goal of introducing a new fundamental social and state order, including the controversial land and agricultural reform, which it wanted to get adopted by the constitutional assembly (Asamblea Constituyente) in its first meeting on 6 August. This was, however, met by decisive resistance from the opposition parties and subsequently led to a polarisation and radicalisation of Bolivian society. The more prosperous departments of the Bolivian lowlands, Beni, Santa Cruz and Tarija, pushed for the introduction of regional autonomy.

In **Ecuador**, Rafael Correa won the second ballot of the presidential elections of 26 November, succeeding Alfredo Palacio. President Correa, who does not enjoy much backing in the country’s Congress, announced a leftist-national course for the country and the calling of a “constituent assembly”.

### 8.2. Relations with the European Union

After the European Commission had pushed this region of the world back into the limelight of EU attention by presenting its strategy paper on “Stronger Partnership between the European Union and Latin America” in December 2005, the relevant Council Conclusions were adopted on 20 February under the Austrian Presidency. In the European Commission’s Communication, Latin America is presented as a partner region close to the EU sharing common values (human rights, democracy, multilateralism), a common history and culture. In analogy to the Communication on Latin America, the
European Commission adopted a Communication on the Caribbean entitled “An EU-Caribbean Partnership for Growth, Stability and Development” in March. The Council also reacted to this Communication by adopting Conclusions on 10 April.

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 the Latin America and 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, the CARIFORUM, Mexico and Chile.

The **EU-LAC summit process** defines the strategic direction for the further development of relations. Four bi-regional summit meetings have been held since the inception of the process in 1999: at the first summit of the Heads of State and Government of both regions held in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) on 28 and 29 June 1999, joint principles and a bi-regional action programme were adopted. The second summit in Madrid, from 17 to 18 May 2002, and the third summit in Guadalajara (Mexico), from 28 to 29 May 2004, were dedicated to the deepening of relations in the fields of social cohesion, multilateralism, strengthened cooperation in fighting terrorism and drug trafficking as well as interregional cooperation with Chile, Mexico, the MERCOSUR, Central America and the Andean Community.

8.2.1. The IV EU-LAC Summit in Vienna

Bringing together a record number of 45 Heads of State and Government as well as 20 special guests and representatives of international organisations, the **IV EU-LAC Summit** convened in Vienna from 11 to 13 May. The summit’s agenda focused on strengthening the bi-regional strategic partnership. The initiation of association agreements with the Central American states and the Andean Community were politically endorsed; an environmental policy dialogue adopted; energy and biodiversity firmly established as new and important topics for bi-regional relations and cooperation among both regions. Joint efforts aimed at the reconstruction of Haiti were also agreed upon. The creation of a “positive climate for investors” was laid down in both the EU-LAC summit document and the final document of the EU-MERCOSUR Summit. The continuation of the efforts aimed at strengthening “social cohesion” was emphasised. The European Commission set up a specific fund (EUROsociAL) for the LAC region and agreed to commit 30 million euros to it. Peru expressed its willingness to host the V EU-LAC Summit in Lima (Peru) in May. In July, Peru took over the function of coordinator for the LAC region from Mexico.
At the initiative of the Austrian Federal Government, the first **EU-LAC Business Summit**, in which some 500 senior business people from both regions participated, took place at the same time as the EU-LAC Summit. Deliberations focused particularly on ways and means for deepening trade. In a final memorandum, which was presented to the Heads of State and Government, the doubling of the volume of trade and investments between both regions by the year 2012 was laid down as an ambitious, yet realisable goal.

A large number of preparatory events were held in Austria in the lead up to the IV EU-LAC Summit. The topics of harmonisation and adjustment were discussed at a **forum** bringing together government officials responsible for development cooperation of seven Central American states and donor organisations. The final working session for the REAL 2006 project, conducted by the Austrian Latin America Institute, was held in April as was a meeting between European ombudsmen/ombudswomen and Latin American human rights procurators.

### 8.2.2. Other Meetings between the EU and Latin America

Within the framework of the IV EU-LAC Summit, summit meetings were held on 13 May between the EU and Central America, the Caribbean Forum of ACP States (CARIFORUM), Mexico and Chile, a ministerial level meeting between the EU and the MERCOSUR as well as an informal meeting with the Presidents of the Andean Community states.

The agenda of the **III EU-Mexico Summit** was dominated by topics relating to migration, the UN system and the association agreement in force since 2000.

At the **II EU-Chile Summit**, stock was taken of the association agreement that had entered into force in 2005, and issues relating to social cohesion as well as an enhanced dialogue on education, science and energy were discussed.

The **II EU-CARIFORUM Summit** was dedicated to intensified development cooperation, particularly with a view to the vulnerability of Caribbean national economies as a result of natural disasters and changes to the global economic framework conditions.

At the **II EU-Central America Summit**, agreement was reached on launching negotiations on a future bi-regional association agreement.

The **EU-MERCOSUR Ministerial Meeting** focused on current developments in connection with the WTO negotiations (Doha Round) and the negotiations on a bi-regional association agreement that had been initiated in 1999.
At the informal meeting between the members of the EU Troika and the Presidents of the Andean Community states, the topic of future negotiations on an association agreement between the EU and the Andean Community was discussed.

8.3. Regional Integration Fora

The 30th Summit of the MERCOSUR States (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela), which was chaired by Argentina, took place in Córdoba (Argentina) on 20 and 21 July. At this summit a gradual liberalisation of services as well as a protocol on government procurement was adopted. The liberalisation of services will primarily affect long-distance connections, legal services and tourism agencies as well as transportation and shipping. The goal of the decisions taken in the field of government procurement is to grant equal treatment in public tendering procedures to all suppliers across the entire MERCOSUR.

The political decision on Venezuela’s accession to the MERCOSUR of December 2005, the fact that the summit of the Andean Community, which should have led to its further consolidation, had been postponed indefinitely, and the successful conclusion of bilateral free trade agreements between the USA and Peru as well as the USA and Colombia led to strong tensions within the Andean Community (CAN). On 19 April, the Venezuelan President announced that his country would leave the Andean Community. An extraordinary meeting of the four Presidents of the Andean Community member states (Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru) was held on 13 June in Quito (Ecuador). Venezuela, which had left the Andean Community in May, did not take part. The chair was taken over formally by Bolivia. On 20 September, Chile announced that it wanted to join the Andean Community as an associate member.

Within the Central American Integration System (SICA), the Central American states work at enhancing harmonisation in the economic sector. The priority item on the agenda of both the 28th Summit held in Panama on 11 July and of the 29th Summit held in San José (Costa Rica) on 16 December was the further deepening of regional integration.

At the 27th CARICOM Summit in Bird Rock (St. Kitts and Nevis) from 3-6 July, the establishment of a CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS), a treaty on cooperation in the field of security and the participation of the six member states of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States in the single CARICOM market were adopted. Since 2002, the EU has been conducting negotiations on an Economic Partnership Agreement with CARICOM, which is to be concluded by the end of 2007 at the latest and will eventually lead to a free trade agreement. The Caribbean
states’ view of the European trade instruments is not uncritical. In the banana sector, for instance, the EU is accused of not protecting the Caribbean sufficiently against competition from Latin America. Besides, the EU’s new sugar regime is criticised by the Caribbean states as they fear that it might result in a contraction of their markets. The EU made available a total of 40 million euros for structural adjustments in the Caribbean sugar producing states.

Under the Austrian Council Presidency, a joint Council of Ministers’ meeting between the EU and the group of the African, Caribbean and Pacific states (ACP States) was held in Papua New Guinea on 1 and 2 June at which a financial package of 24 billion euros from the 10th EEF was adopted for the period 2008-2013.

The 36th General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) convened in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) from 4-6 June. The central topic discussed at the meeting was good governance and the development of a knowledge-based society. The member states were called upon to encourage and promote the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) with a view to facilitating citizens’ participation in public life and strengthening the democratic form of government.

The 16th Ibero-American Summit took place in Montevideo (Uruguay) from 3-5 November. The thematic focus was on the adoption of a declaration of principle on migration.

The second summit meeting of the South American Community of Nations (CSN) was held in Cochabamba (Bolivia) on 8 and 9 December. Deliberations focussed on the South American states’ physical integration through joint energy and infrastructure projects. The Community’s long-term goal lies in setting up a comprehensive integrated South American area.

9. Sub-Saharan Africa

9.1. General Developments

Africa saw diverging developments. There were a number of conflicts where only little progress was made: the Darfur crisis in Sudan further aggravated despite the conclusion of a peace agreement between the government and a rebel group; hardly any progress was made in the implementation of the North-South Agreement, which was time and time again impacted by violent incidents; in the East of Chad the instable situation deteriorated as a result of the effects of the Darfur crisis in neighbouring Sudan; in Somalia the situation came to a head when Ethiopian troops came to assist the Somali transitional government in dispelling the Islamic forces, which had temporarily acceded to
power; the peace process in Côte d’Ivoire came to a complete standstill; the peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea was on the brink of failing.

Some other developments, however, pointed in a positive direction: in the Democratic Republic of the Congo the first democratic elections in 40 years were conducted successfully with the support of the EU and the UN; in Liberia the transitional period was successfully completed; in Uganda the government and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) entered into negotiations for the first time. Elections were held in Benin, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gambia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Uganda and Zambia.

9.2. Regional Developments

9.2.1. The Horn of Africa

In Sudan, the conflict in the Darfur crisis region (West Sudan) aggravated. On 15 May the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was signed in Abuja (Nigeria) between the Sudanese government and a faction of the rebel group Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) headed by Minni Minawei. However, the remaining rebel groups did not participate in the agreement. The DPA did not lead to an easing of the situation in Darfur, where both the humanitarian and the security situation had continuously deteriorated since the summer. The Sudanese government refused to agree to the dispatching of a UN peace mission involving more than 20,000 personnel as adopted by UNSC resolution 1701 of 30 August; the AU peace mission AMIS II was not able to put an end to the violent clashes and serious human rights violations. The implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which had been signed between the Central Government and South Sudan in January 2005, made only slow progress and there were again some isolated violent incidents. Only the smouldering conflict between the government and rebel movements in East Sudan was ended by the signing of a peace agreement by both parties on 15 October. As a result of the high oil prices, Sudan’s related revenues increased substantially.

The peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea initiated by the Algiers Peace Agreement of December 2000 has reached an impasse. After Eritrea had continued to restrict the work of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), it dispatched troops and tanks for the purpose of “harvesting purposes” into the temporary security zone and took over the UNMEE checkpoints in the Sector West for a time. On 20 November, the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) demarcated the border on 45 detailed maps and one overview map in The Hague. In the event that on-site demarcation was not possible by the end of November 2007, the EEBC considers its function to be terminated.
In Somalia, the so-called Islamic Courts, which are accused of having links to the al-Qaeda terrorist network, seized power of the capital Mogadishu in June and by mid-December had advanced their control to two-thirds of the country with the exception of Somaliland und Puntland. In July, Ethiopia dispatched troops for the protection of the internationally recognised Transitional Federal Government of Somalia to Baidoa (Somalia), the provisional seat of government, and for training the latter’s troops. In its resolution 1724 of 29 November, the UNSC reiterated the arms embargo against Somalia and in resolution 1725 of 6 December resolved to deploy a peacekeeping mission of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) in Somalia (IGASOM) involving up to 8,000 personnel. After the Islamic Courts had declared “holy war” against Ethiopia, the country intervened on the side of the Transitional Government at Christmas. Within one week the Islamic fighters were driven out of Mogadishu and Kismayo and pushed to the country’s border with Kenya.

In Djibouti there is a sizeable US military presence deployed to fight international terrorism. It was also involved in combating the extremist elements of the Islamic Courts and suspected followers of al-Qaeda in Somalia.

9.2.2. Southern Africa

South Africa continued its peace efforts on the continent. In recognition of its services in this context it was elected a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the period 2007/2008.

The political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe reached a new peak. Domestically, the polarisation between government and opposition became more deeply entrenched. The opposition accused the regime of Robert Mugabe of massive manipulation of the 2005 parliamentary elections and consequently denied its legitimacy. Government increasingly restricted the courts’ independence and pluralism in the media. Due to a lack of political dialogue, the readiness to resort to violence rose. Merely cosmetic financial operations of the country’s central bank, including the depreciation of the Zimbabwe dollar (ZWD) in July and the deletion of three decimal places on prices, were unable to put a halt to the progressing process of economic contraction linked to hyperinflation, which reduced people’s living standards to level of the 1950s.

In Zambia, the country’s democratic development continued with the presidential elections of 28 October, which resulted in the clear re-election of President Levy Mwanawasa.
In Madagascar, presidential elections were held on 3 December from which the incumbent Marc Ravalomanana emerged clearly victorious.

9.2.3. Great Lakes Region

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo the first democratic elections since 1960 were successfully held. Following the parliamentary and presidential elections of 30 July, Interim President Joseph Kabila and Vice President Jean-Pierre Bemba had to stand for a run-off ballot on 29 October, which the former won with a clear majority of 58 per cent. On 6 December, Kabila was sworn in as the first directly elected President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In spite of the enormous logistic and security-technology challenges, the elections were conducted in a largely peaceful atmosphere. They were monitored and accompanied by approximately 2,000 international observers, the EU had sent some 300 election observers including eight Austrians to the country. At the request of the UN, the European Council had agreed to dispatch the European Union Force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EUFOR RD Congo) to support MONUC during the elections (see Chapter A.V.1.2.2.).

In Uganda, domestic policy developments were dominated by the presidential and parliamentary elections held on 23 February and the initiation of peace negotiations with the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). A constitutional reform passed in August 2005 had lifted the restriction limiting the president to two terms in office, enabling the incumbent Yoweri Museveni to run again. He actually won the elections with a clear majority of 59 per cent and was sworn in as president for his third term in office on 12 May. The tensions that had emerged during the election campaign subsided after President Museveni had declared his intention to cooperate constructively with the opposition. In the armed conflict with the LRA, which had been going on for 20 years, the negotiations mediated by the Sudanese government and launched in July in Juba (Sudan) between the government and the LRA gave for the first time cause for hope of a termination to the conflict. A first tangible result was achieved on 26 August with the signing of an agreement on the cessation of hostilities. The negotiation process was, however, difficult and repeatedly disturbed by incidents and mutual accusations. The arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against the LRA leader Joseph Kony and four other top commanders on 30 November 2005 represent a key element of the negotiations. The indictees demand a lifting of the ICC arrest warrants as a prerequisite for the conclusion of a peace agreement.

In Burundi, the arrest of former President Domitien Ndayizeye and Vice President Alphonse-Marie Kadege following rumours of an attempted coup gave rise to concern after the first year in government of the democratically elected President and former rebel leader Pierre Nkurunziza.
A comprehensive ceasefire agreement was concluded with the last Hutu rebel movement that was still fighting, the Forces for National Liberation (FNL), on 7 September. The troops of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) were replaced by the AU troops as of the end of the year. The UN will remain engaged in the country through the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (Bureau Intégré des Nations Unies au Burundi, BINUB).

9.2.4. East Africa

Domestic political developments in Kenya were already marked by the presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for the second half of 2007 and characterised in particular by a restructuring of the country’s party landscape. The National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), which had been in power since 2002, had de facto disbanded in the aftermath of a referendum held in December 2005 on a new constitution. Subsequently, a new party, NARC-Kenya, was founded by politicians loyal to the government and supports the candidacy of President Mwai Kibaki for another term in office. Likewise, the opposition, which also includes some former members of the government that had been dissolved at the end of 2005, re-organised and founded its own election platform, the Orange Democratic Movement-Kenya, but could not agree on a presidential candidate. Domestic political discussions continued to centre on the large corruption scandals in the country and the lack of decisive progress achieved in their investigation and clarification.

In Tanzania, the new government led by President Jakaya Kikwete was sworn in on 9 January, after the Party of the Revolution (CCM), which had been governing the country since its independence, had scored a clear victory at the parliamentary and presidential elections at the end of 2005.

9.2.5. West Africa

In Nigeria, the senate unanimously rejected aspirations by the incumbent President Olusegun Obasanjo, who sought a third term in office on the basis of a constitutional amendment. In the elections scheduled for spring 2007, President Obasanjo supports Umar Musa Yar’Adua, a northern Nigerian Muslim, who is expected to continue the present government’s policy. The anti-corruption authorities repeatedly had top politicians in their sights, and several governors were removed from office and arrested. The wave of violence in the oil-rich Niger Delta remained almost out of control.

In Benin, Thomas Yayi Boni won the presidential elections of March.

In Togo, agreement with the opposition on a government of national unity was reached in August under the auspices of Burkina Faso’s President Blaise Compaoré, but had not yet been implemented.
The Republic of the Congo has been holding the African Union chairmanship since the beginning of the year.

In Chad, the army put down a rebellion in April. Following a constitutional amendment, President Idriss Deby Itno was elected for a third term in office. The highly unstable internal situation was aggravated by the impact of the Darfur crisis in neighbouring Sudan.

Initially, the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire made some progress under the leadership of Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny, but from July onwards the domestic political situation deteriorated mainly over the debate on the identification of people entitled to vote. The International Working Group established by UNSC resolution 1633 (2005) stated that the peace process had come to a complete standstill. On 1 November the UNSC adopted resolution 1721, which defined a new and final transition period not exceeding the date of 1 November 2007, authorised the extension of the mandates of both the Prime Minister and the President until the end of the transition period, and strengthened the President’s authorities. Presidential and parliamentary elections are to be held not later than the end of October 2007.

Gambia saw an attempted coup in March, which was quickly put down by the government and entailed a massive wave of arrests. In the aftermath to these events, the domestic situation clearly deteriorated, particularly with a view to human rights. The AU held its summit in Banjul (Gambia) in July. Although the country had shifted closer to the limelight of international attention, the situation hardly changed. The divided opposition did not succeed in agreeing on a joint rival candidate to President Yahya Jammeh for the presidential elections held in September, and the latter was re-elected for the third time, taking 67 per cent of the votes.

Guinea-Bissau successfully overcame the government crisis which had erupted at the end of 2005. In March, a political dialogue was initiated within the framework of the Estates-General. The return of former president Kouriba Yala after more than a year in exile and the round table with donors in Geneva in November gave cause for hope of improvement. The reconciliation process made only scant progress due to distrust, intolerance and irreconcilable differences at the domestic policy level. The economic situation remained extremely tense.

In Liberia, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was inaugurated on 13 January, bringing the transitional period of two years provided for in the 2003 peace treaty to a successful conclusion. As announced during her electoral campaign, the President immediately embarked on the implementation of her
determined approach against corruption and mismanagement. In spite of resistance the security situation remained calm yet tense.

In Senegal, the domestic climate tightened in the lead-up to the presidential elections scheduled for February 2007. The opposition parties were unable to agree on a common candidate for the elections. Despite all efforts, the crisis in the Casamance region again led to clashes with the Senegalese military in the South and internal fights within the rebel organisation, in which finally troops from Guinea-Bissau also intervened.

In Mauritania, the schedule set for the transfer of power from the Military Council, which had come to power in August 2005 following a bloodless coup d’état, to a civilian administration was observed. In June, the new constitution was adopted in a referendum. The municipal elections held in November and December and the elections to the national assembly did not result in clear majorities due to the large number of independent lists.

9.3. Relations with the EU

The Africa Strategy adopted by the EU in December 2005 gave a fresh impetus to the dialogue between the EU and Africa, not least because of the steps towards implementation initiated during the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council. The Austrian efforts focused on engaging in an intensified political dialogue with the AU, regional organisations and the individual countries, focusing particularly on topics like human rights and migration. These issues also featured prominently on the discussion agenda of the EU-Africa Troika meeting and the EU-ECOWAS Troika meeting, which both took place at the foreign ministers’ level in Vienna in May. Moreover, a special Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development was held in Rabat in July (see Chapter H.I.2.). In order to strengthen partnership between the EU and Africa, a further development of the EU’s Africa Strategy into a Joint EU-Africa Strategy is envisaged. The outlines of this joint strategy were agreed upon at the EU Foreign Ministers’ Troika meeting with Africa in Brazzaville (Congo) in October, and a second EU-Africa Summit was envisaged to be held in Lisbon at the end of 2007. The first took place in Cairo in 2000.

9.4. Regional Integration Fora

At the 6th African Union (AU) Summit held in Khartoum (Sudan) from 16 to 24 January, the Republic of the Congo took over the chairmanship for the period of one year. The 7th AU Summit took place in Banjul (Gambia) from 25 June to 2 July and was dedicated to the recognition of the regional economic communities which had by then been reduced to eight: the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of Central
African States (ECCAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (Communauté des Etats Sahel-Saharan, CEN-SAD) and the East African Community (EAC).

Kenya, which had in the last few years rendered substantial services, particularly to the peace processes in Sudan and Somalia, took over the chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development at the 11th IGAD Summit in Nairobi (Kenya) on 20 March. IGAD’s work was mainly determined by the Somalia crisis and the planning and despatching of the IGAD peace mission to Somalia. IGAD offered its services as mediator for talks between the Somali Transitional Government and the Council of Islamic Courts of Somalia. On 5 September an Extraordinary IGAD Summit was held in Nairobi. It was dedicated exclusively to the peace efforts for Somalia. Because of opinion differences on the deployment of an IGAD peace mission, Djibouti and Eritrea did not take part in this meeting. The IGAD Capacity Building Programme Against Terrorism (ICPAT) took up work in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia).

ECOWAS adopted far-reaching structural changes aimed at achieving its objective of regional integration. The Secretariat will be transformed into a Commission. The goal of a free trade area is to be fostered by the establishment of a Community Court of Justice. The conflict prevention capacities were stepped up further, and the development of the ECOWAS Stand-by Force made swift progress.

Within the EAC, which had been re-launched in November 1999, the customs union between its founding members Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda entered into force on 1 January 2005. At the EAC Summit held in Arusha (Tanzania) on 30 November, the Heads of State adopted the EAC’s extension by Burundi and Rwanda, which will become effective as of 1 July 2007. The EAC’s agenda includes the establishment of a monetary union and a single market involving the free movement of goods, persons and capital. The goal is the foundation of a political union with a common president appointed on the basis of rotation.

The consolidation of the peaceful developments in the Great Lakes Region, which had been torn by military conflicts in the past, is continuing. This trend was also reflected in the second summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region held in Nairobi on 14 and 15 December. The representatives of eleven countries, including six Heads of State, signed a Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes region. The core of the Pact is composed of ten legally binding protocols by which the countries undertake to commit themselves to far-reaching fundamental political principles, including non-aggression, mutual defence, democracy and good
governance, prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Following ratification by eight countries, the Pact will enter into force. In the institutional segment, it was agreed to convene a summit at the level of Heads of State and Government every other year, to establish a conference secretariat based in Bujumbura (Burundi) and to appoint the Tanzanian diplomat Liberata Mulamula to the office of first Executive Secretary. Until the next summit, which is scheduled for 2008 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya will hold the chair of the various conference bodies.

At the SADC Consultative Conference held in Windhoek (Namibia) on 26 and 27 April, the Windhoek Declaration was adopted to put the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness into practice for the SADC region. This constitutes a prerequisite for the preparation of effective regional programmes by donors. At the SADC Summit in Maseru (Lesotho) in August, the Prime Minister of Lesotho, Pakalitha Mosisili, took over the SADC chair.

10. Asia

10.1. General Developments

Asia was again one of the regions boasting the most dynamic economic development. China, India and Japan spearheaded this trend, the impact of which reached far beyond Asia, and which, as a driving force of economic integration in Asia also contributed to political stability in the region. The EU further expanded its Strategic Partnerships with China, India and Japan. Because of the economic and political weight these three countries carry, they are indispensable in coping with the global challenges both as countries holding responsibility and as partners. The EU was able to add some new impetus to its relations with the states forming the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). During Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council, the EU also attached particular importance to consolidating its partnership relations with the Asian states and to offering swift and sustainable bi- and multilateral assistance to concrete political, economic and humanitarian problems.

10.2. Developments in the Regions

10.2.1. North-East Asia

The People’s Republic of China has traditionally been pursuing a non-alignment, non-alliance and bilateral course in its foreign policy. China also demonstrated stronger engagement in the regional and multilateral fields, for instance at the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
(APEC). China continued to pursue its goal of rising to the leading power in Asia. This approach was informed by a policy of economic cooperation and good neighbourhood focused on dismantling old fears and prejudices. At the global level, Beijing sought to strengthen the concept of multi-polarity, for instance, by expanding relations with the EU, with which Beijing established a Strategic Partnership in 2003. A regular Human Rights Dialogue forms part of this partnership (see Chapter G.II.2.). However, in all important aspects, the USA remained the key reference. China continued to extend its presence on the international political stage and undertook efforts to present itself as guarantor of the interests of the Third World, particularly within the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). Being a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China has traditionally underscored the role played by the UN with respect to global political issues. The successful holding of the APEC Summit in Shanghai in October 2005, the awarding of the bid for the organisation of the 2008 Olympic Summer Games to Beijing and to Shanghai for the 2010 World Exposition meshed well with China’s striving for greater prestige.

After passing the controversial “Law on Taiwan”, the People’s Republic of China had taken a number of confidence-building measures. Tensions remained between the People’s Republic of China and President Chen Shuibian, who had been accused of wishing to separate Taiwan from the mainland and lead it to independence. Irrespective of these developments, the economic relations between Taiwan and the People’s Republic of China are flourishing. The establishment of additional air connections between Taiwan and the mainland were the visible expression of these increasingly closer relations.

The strategic partnership with the USA remained the cornerstone of Japan’s foreign policy. Dependence on the USA even increased under the government of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. An expression of this approach was, for instance, Japan’s active support of the US operations in the Indian Ocean and the country’s cooperation in developing a joint missile defence system. But on 20 June the Japanese government nevertheless decided to withdraw the Japanese contingent of approximately 600 ground troops from Iraq, while maintaining the air transport support. The viewed threat posed by North Korea – which had recently conducted several tests involving numerous missiles on 5 July as well as a nuclear weapon on 9 October – and the modernisation and expansion of the Chinese army led to a reorientation of Japanese security policy. In line with the relevant view held by the USA, Japan gradually expanded its defence and deterrence capabilities and further enhanced the scope of its self defence capacity. Moreover, it eased the self-imposed moratorium on arms exports to permit such shipments to the USA. Parliament eventually decided to upgrade the Japan Defence Agency into a full-fledged ministry of defence.
The priority item on the foreign policy agenda of the Republic of Korea was to aim for a peaceful solution of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s nuclear problem and the establishment of peace on the Korean peninsula. The other focus of foreign policy interest was relations with the four powers in the region – China, Japan, Russia and the USA – while economic interests represented the focus of relationships with other countries. A huge success scored by the Roh Moo-hyun Administration was the campaign for the election of former foreign minister Ban Ki-moon to be the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The Republic of Korea continued its policy of reaching out to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea but came under increasing pressure with its “Sunshine Policy”. In spite of large-scale aid supplied to the North, Seoul had been unable to preventing the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea from conducting missile tests on 5 July and a nuclear test on 9 October. In principle, the EU supports the South Korean policy of reconciliation aimed at leading the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea out of its self-isolation. After 13 months of interruption the six-party talks between China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the USA were resumed on 22 December in Beijing.

10.2.2. Central Asia

A lot more of attention was attached to the EU Central Asia policy on account of both the new EU Member States’ closer relations with the region and the increased strategic and economic importance of Central Asia. In this context the EU focused, on the one hand, on the development of its energy relationship to the Central Asian countries and, on the other hand, on problems like drugs, migration, terrorism and organised crime. Trade relations between the EU and Central Asia were further expanded, investments increased and cooperation in the fields of water, energy and environment was strengthened. An EU-Central Asia regional dialogue, chaired by State Secretary Hans Winkler, was held in Astana (Kazakhstan) on 7 April. During the Finnish Council Presidency, the EU started to elaborate a Central Asia Strategy. In October, Pierre Morel was appointed EUSR for Central Asia. Under the new Development Cooperation Instrument, the European Commission will increase its financial assistance to Central Asia to 719 million euros for the period 2007-2013.

On 18 July a meeting of the EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Council was held. In view of Kazakhstan’s WTO accession process, deliberations focused inter alia on issues relating to the investment climate, other topics discussed included energy cooperation, border and migration management as well as regional cooperation. In December the EU and Kazakhstan signed a Memorandum of Understanding which will lay the groundwork for intensified cooperation in
the field of energy. Moreover, an Agreement on the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy was initialled.

The main topics of the EU-Kyrgyzstan Cooperation Council on 18 July were the political stability in Kyrgyzstan, the reform process, good governance, human rights and regional cooperation. In the second half of the year, Kyrgyzstan was dominated by a constitutional dispute between the Parliament and the President. Several days of mass demonstrations in Bishkek and other Kyrgyz cities ended on 9 November when agreement was reached on a new constitution, parts of which were, however, reversed by new amendments on 30 December.

The PCA between the EU and Tajikistan has not yet entered into force as some EU Member States had not yet ratified the agreement. By the end of the year, ratification processes were completed in eleven Member States including Austria. On 6 November, presidential elections were held in Tajikistan, which were won by the incumbent President Emomali Rakhmonov with a huge majority. In a declaration following the elections, the EU expressed its satisfaction with the peaceful and smooth conduct of the elections but at the same time also regretted that they had not been in full compliance with democratic standards. The EU called upon Tajikistan to improve the legal framework for presidential elections.

The 3rd EU-Turkmenistan ad hoc human rights dialogue was held during Austria’s Council Presidency and chaired by Ambassador Heidemarie Gürer. On 21 December, the President of Turkmenistan Saparmurad Niyazov died unexpectedly. Until the presidential elections scheduled for 11 February 2007, the current Minister for Health Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister, Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, serves as acting Head of State.

The agenda of the EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council meeting held in Brussels on 8 November included human rights and the events in Andijan. On 13 November the EU prolonged some of the restrictive measures against Uzbekistan including the arms embargo and the visa ban. Dialogue in the PCA committees was resumed. In the middle of December a group of EU experts travelled to Tashkent and Andijan to hold human rights discussions.

10.2.3. Afghanistan

In Afghanistan the difficult process of political and economic reconstruction was continued. In some areas, such as health care and education, for instance, some progress was discernible, while hardly any progress was made in other areas, including the fight against the cultivation of and trafficking in drugs. The security situation deteriorated particularly in the South and South-East of the country where the number of attacks by the Taliban and other groups
clearly increased. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), in which Austria continued to participate with four staff officers in Kabul, extended its mission to the entire country in October. The continued international engagement in reconstruction was confirmed on 31 January, when the Afghanistan Compact was adopted at the International Conference on Afghanistan in London. Until 2010 this Compact will serve as the basis for the partnership between the international community and Afghanistan. Both at this conference and at the informal EU Troika meeting with the Afghan Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah on 31 January, Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik, in her capacity as President of the EU Council, reiterated the Union’s readiness to support Afghanistan in the long term. The priorities of EU assistance, which has amounted to 3.7 billion euros since 2002, are the strengthening the structures of the rule of law and good governance as well as rural development and the healthcare sector.

10.2.4. South and South-East Asia

The process of detente between India and Pakistan proved stable and sustainable and was continued even after a series of bombings hit Mumbai on 11 July. Both governments had sought to take confidence-building measures and further improve bilateral relations. In the course of the implementation of the 2005 Joint Action Plan, the EU and India were able to intensify cooperation and dialogue in a number of areas and further deepen the Strategic Partnership they formed in 2004. At their 7th summit held in Helsinki on 13 October, the EU and India reaffirmed their interest in initiating negotiations on a bilateral trade and investment agreement. During Austria’s Council Presidency the first high-level EU-India Security Dialogue was held on 22 May and chaired on the part of the EU by the Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs Johannes Kyrle. International attention was attracted by an agreement on the start of full civilian nuclear cooperation. It was signed by India and the USA on 2 March.

In Bangladesh, the political tensions between the two largest political parties increased in the lead-up to the parliamentary elections scheduled for January 2007. Controversies arose in connection with ballot rules and regulations, particularly regarding the composition of the election commission.

After 34 years in office as King and Head of State of Bhutan, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck abdicated on 9 December in favour of his son Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. The new king is expected to continue the democratisation process consistently prepared by his father.

Nepal saw large-scale changes. On 24 April King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev gave in to the pressure of a broad protest movement and reinstated Parliament, which had been dissolved in 2002. A transitional government
composed of representatives of the loose association of the seven largest political parties took over the affairs of state and started peace talks with the Communist Party of Nepal/Maoists. On 21 November a peace agreement was signed, which opened a historic opportunity for peace after more than ten years of civil war. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement contains provisions on the handing over and control of weapons and arms, which are to be monitored and verified by the UN, and provides for the inclusion of the “Maoists” in a transitional government and a transitional parliament. By the middle of June 2007 elections to a constituent assembly are to be held, which will then decide on Nepal’s future form of government. The EU welcomed and supported the democratisation and peace process in Nepal. The EU’s policy towards Nepal focuses on promoting the peace process, strengthening the democratic institutions and undertaking measures to eradicate poverty.

In Sri Lanka, the long-standing conflict between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were further exacerbated and the peace process came to a full standstill. Talks mediated by Norway and held on 22 and 23 February as well as on 28 and 29 October could not bring to a halt the vicious spiral of violence and counter-violence, the growing number of human rights violations and the systematic violations of the 2002 ceasefire agreement. In public declarations and in direct contacts the EU repeatedly and emphatically urged the two parties to the conflict to put an end to violence and resume the peace process. Against the background of the continuous violent actions by the LTTE, the EU put it on the list of terrorist organisations on 29 May. In doing so, the EU stressed that this decision was in no way directed against the Tamil population and that the Sri-Lankan government also held co-responsibility for the escalation. The EU further stressed that it would continue to lend active support to the peace process and Norway’s mediation efforts.

In Indonesia, the Aceh Peace Process made major progress. The law on the administration of Aceh, which grants the province a number of additional autonomy rights, was adopted by the Indonesian parliament and entered into force on 1 August. Gubernatorial and district elections held on 11 December in Aceh were conducted in an orderly manner and free of violence. The civilian Aceh monitoring mission of EU and ASEAN, which had started in September 2005 and to which Austria also contributed by dispatching experts, played a substantial role in making the peace process a success and terminated its work as planned on 15 December.

The military regime in Myanmar was still not prepared to comply with the international demands for democratic reforms, a comprehensive national reconciliation process and respect of human rights. Despite international protests, including by the EU, the house arrest of opposition leader and Noble Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi was again extended by one year on 27
May. Talks held by UN Under-Secretary-General Ibrahim Gambari in Myanmar and the discussion of the situation in Myanmar in the UNSC on 29 September did not result in tangible progress. On 27 April, the EU extended its Common Position on Myanmar, which provides for targeted sanctions against the military regime but at the same time also for humanitarian aid to the population and the support of civil society in Myanmar.

In the **Philippines**, allegations raised against President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo for alleged manipulation of the presidential elections of 2004 led to domestic policy tensions. Alluding to an imminent coup d’état the President declared a state of emergency on 24 February, which was, however, lifted a week later following international criticism.

After months of political crisis in **Thailand**, the military took over power on 19 September. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was abroad during the bloodless military putsch. A civilian transitional government installed by the military and led by Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont was sworn in on 9 October. The transitional government committed itself to drafting a new constitution and holding democratic elections within one year. The EU criticised the assumption of power by the military and demanded a speedy return to democracy.

In **Timor-Leste**, the dismissal of approximately 600 members of the army triggered a political crisis which the East Timorese government was able to manage only with the assistance of international security forces. On 25 August, the UNSC adopted the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), which led to a re-stabilisation of the situation in the country.

**Vietnam** saw a change of generations among state leaders. At the end of June, the National Assembly elected Nguyen Minh Triet as President and Nguyen Tran Dung as Head of Government. The new Vietnamese leadership declared its commitment to the continuation of economic reforms. On 11 January 2007 Vietnam will officially join the WTO as the 150th member.

### 10.3. The EU-Asia Partnership

The activities of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) were marked by the tenth anniversary of ASEM’s inception. The ASEM VI Summit took place in Helsinki on 10 and 11 September. At this summit six new members were accepted: Bulgaria and Romania as well as India, Mongolia, Pakistan and the ASEAN Secretariat, which brought the number of ASEM members to 45. Cyprus and Malaysia hosted the 2nd ASEM Interfaith Dialogue in Larnaca from 3-5 July.
At the foreign ministers level, the EU and ASEAN maintain a regular formalised dialogue, that has been held at intervals of two years since 1978. During Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council a meeting of EU-ASEAN senior officials took place on 21 March at which both the EU and ASEAN stressed their interest in a further intensification of cooperation. In this context the EU seeks to join the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in South-East Asia and, in addition, is considering the initiation of negotiations on a free trade agreement with ASEAN. The EU actively contributes to the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the only permanent multilateral institution dealing with security issues in the Asian-Pacific region.

10.4. Regional Organisations

ASEAN (Brunei, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) continued to remain the driving force behind and centrepiece of the integration process in South-East Asia. Due to the increasingly closer interrelations of the ASEAN states with China, Japan and the Republic of Korea a second level of integration, ASEAN+3, is developing in parallel. In mid-January 2007 the 12th ASEAN summit will be held together with the second East Asia Summit (EAS) on the Philippines and deal *inter alia* with the planned ASEAN Charter. ASEAN’s more distant goal is the establishment of an Asian Community by 2020 comprised of three pillars, namely political and security cooperation, economic cooperation and socio-cultural cooperation.

11. Australia, New Zealand, Oceania

11.1. Australia

Priorities of Australia’s foreign policy were the fight against international terrorism, the strengthening of relations with the USA and an intensification of economic ties with Asian partners. Intensifying the relations with China and the conclusion of free-trade agreements with Singapore and Thailand were of great importance in this regard. Regular political dialogue at foreign minister level between Australia and the EU was lately continued with meetings of Foreign Minister Alexander Downer with the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, and the European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, in Helsinki on 26 September.

11.2. New Zealand

Securing its output markets for mostly agricultural products and a liberalisation of world trade under the WTO negotiations (Doha Round) were priorities of New Zealand’s foreign policy. In this connection New Zealand
also made efforts to intensify its relations with the EU. Further rapprochement with South-East and East Asia and negotiations concerning the conclusion of a free-trade agreement with China advanced well. In July 2005, New Zealand signed a treaty of amity and cooperation with its Asian partners and subsequently participated as a full member in the 2005 East Asia Summit. In the framework of neighbourhood policy in the South Pacific region, New Zealand pursued the maintenance of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone and environmental policy concerns. The establishment of a regional whale protection zone in the Pacific was another substantial objective of New Zealand’s foreign policy.

11.3. Oceania

All Pacific island states belong to the community of ACP member countries. Second to Australia and ahead of New Zealand, the EU is the second largest donor of development assistance with approximately 69 million euros annually. China and Taiwan too have great influence in this region. The international community’s efforts to exert a direct influence on the development of individual Pacific island countries are not only manifested by security-policy interventions but also by a strengthening of regional cooperation, such as in the fields of air traffic and logistics as well as in the common fight against money laundering and terrorism. The Australian-led multinational intervention into the Solomon Islands proceeded successfully. The coup d’état in Fiji that took place on 5 December strained the country’s relations with the EU.
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 Summit of NATO Heads of State and Government in Riga on 28 and 29 November emphasised that the NATO-led mission in Afghanistan (ISAF) was a key priority for the Alliance. After ISAF had additionally taken over responsibility for security in the southern and eastern provinces of the country from the US-led Enduring Freedom coalition in the course of the year, the territory covered by ISAF extended throughout the whole country. By the end of the year, ISAF comprised approx. 35,000 troops from 37 nations, approx. 1,200 of which were soldiers from eleven non-NATO member states. ISAF now operates 25 small Provincial Reconstruction Teams constituted of military staff and civil experts throughout Afghanistan. The Teams strengthen the authority of the Afghan government in the provinces by assisting with maintaining security at local level and with reconstruction activities by local authorities, and by planning and carrying out small projects to improve people’s living situation.

While no decision was adopted at the Riga Summit regarding enlargement, NATO declared its intention to extend further invitations for accession at the next summit in 2008 – an announcement primarily directed to the three South East European candidate states Albania, Croatia and Macedonia.

Furthermore, full operational capability of the NATO Response Force (NRF) was declared at the Summit. The force made up of land, air, sea and special forces components numbering approximately 25,000 troops can start to deploy some of its elements to any crisis region of the world at five days’ notice.

Finally, the NATO Riga Summit Declaration affirmed that the NATO-EU strategic partnership should be further expanded.

1.2. NATO-Partner Relations

At the Summit in Riga the Alliance underlined the special importance of NATO’s various partnerships, the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the Mediterranean Dialogue with the states of North Africa and the Middle East and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative with the countries of the Gulf region. The Summit also showed NATO’s increasing interest in security-policy cooperation with countries in
other regions of the world, these **Contact Countries** include Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea.

At its Riga Summit, NATO also invited Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia to join the Partnership for Peace and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, an important step towards full integration of the whole South East European area into Euro-Atlantic structures. With Georgia, which aspires to NATO membership, NATO commenced an Intensified Dialogue in September. An Intensified Dialogue is also being conducted with Ukraine; however, the country is no longer actively pursuing accession since the taking of office of the new government under Viktor Yanukovych.

### 1.3. Austria in the Partnership for Peace and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council

In 2006 Austria again participated actively in PfP. The Partnership plays an important role for Austria, *inter alia* as regards participation in the **ESDP**: the mechanisms developed within PfP to ensure interoperability between NATO and partner troops in crisis management operations are as indispensable as the interoperability of Austrian forces with those of other EU Member States, of which 21 are NATO Allies. For Austria the EAPC is an important forum for consultation and cooperation in security-policy matters in the Euro-Atlantic region.

Austria, deploying around 600 soldiers, provided the largest contingent from a Partner country within the NATO-led peace force **KFOR** in Kosovo. Furthermore, four Austrian staff officers are on duty with **ISAF** in Afghanistan.

Austria continued its support for three **PfP Trust Fund Projects**: for the destruction of more than 1.3 million anti-personnel landmines in Serbia (the contribution was increased by 35,000 euros to a total 285,000 euros); for the destruction of small arms and light weapons and surplus ammunition in Ukraine (30,000 euros), and for the destruction of SALW in Kazakhstan (3,400 euros). With the project for the destruction of anti-personnel landmines, Austria was the first Partner country to assume, along with Canada, the lead role in a PfP Trust Fund Project in 2005.

### 2. The Western European Union

Although the Western European Union (WEU) has been reduced to a few residual responsibilities since 2001, 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 parliamentary
collaboration within the WEU Assembly, to which Austria also sends representatives, is being continued.

II. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

1. Introduction

At the Ministerial Council Meeting held in Ljubljana in 2005, the Belgian OSCE Chairmanship assumed the task of further institutional development of the organisation. The OSCE reform process was formally completed with the relevant decisions taken during the Ministerial Council Meeting in Brussels on 4 and 5 December. Progress in the area of regional conflicts largely failed to materialise. The issue of the Kazakh application to chair the organization in 2009 was not solved. On June 22, Montenegro was admitted as the 56th participating State in the OSCE.

The Austrian EU Council Presidency had declared the further improvement of cooperation between EU and OSCE as one of its targets. Attention within the EU for the OSCE was to be enhanced in particular through a joint declaration by the EU and the OSCE on stronger cooperation towards conflict prevention. The Austrian initiative for this declaration was continued by the Finnish EU Council Presidency; the present text still requires adoption by the OSCE Permanent Council. Within the OSCE, the EU not only speaks with one voice in the Permanent Council but also issues at least coordinated statements of principle in the meetings of other bodies. On behalf of the EU Austria issued 102 statements in the Permanent Council and 125 statements in other bodies. The EU Member States and third States that endorse the EU statements constitute an important opinion group within the OSCE.

2. Regional Issues and Field Activities

The OSCE maintained 19 field operations in South East Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to which the largest portion of the OSCE budget (75%) and human resources were devoted. Austria seconded 30 civilian experts to over half of these field operations, the vast majority of whom was active in South East Europe.

2.1. South East Europe

The OSCE’s biggest field activities continue to focus on South East Europe, with missions in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, including Kosovo. The progressing transfer of competencies from the international community to the national and local
authorities resulted in reductions of both headcounts and budgets with the
two biggest missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo. The OSCE’s
field operations still represent an important contribution to the building-up
of democratic and rule-of-law structures as well as the development and
consolidation of multiethnic societies in South East Europe. In some areas,
the role of the OSCE has shifted towards 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

Hardly any progress was made in the status negotiations between Moldova
and the separatist province of Transnistria (see Chapter A.V.4.1.2.). The
Belgian OSCE Chairmanship attempted to bring the parties back to the
negotiating table by presenting new proposals relating to the status issue,
peace missions, and socio-economic projects, yet largely without success. No
progress was achieved either on the central issues of the reduction of Russian
troops and weapon stocks in Transnistria. As a result, the OSCE Ministerial
Council once again failed to adopt a regional declaration on Moldova. Russia
and Transnistria showed a sign of good will by opening the Russian
ammunition site in Kolbasna for 30 OSCE ambassadors during their three-
day stay in Moldova in November. The last inspection of Kolbasna had taken
place in March 2004.

2.3. Belarus

The activities of the OSCE Office in Minsk focused on project management in
the areas of business and environment, the development of democratic
institutions, the rule of law, and civil society. A painstaking registration
procedure for activities to be carried out constrained the Office in its work on
several occasions. The monitoring function assumed by the Office as regards
compliance with the commitments undertaken within the OSCE, particularly
in connection with the freedom of assembly and imprisonments, was deemed
by the Belarusian authorities as being inconsistent with the existing mandate.

According to the ODIHR election observation mission, the presidential
elections of 19 March did not meet OSCE standards; the mass protests that
took place due to the elections were violently broken up. A press statement
by the Russian ODIHR election observers issued in clear violation of the
relevant code of conduct triggered a controversy.
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 – under the leadership of the UN – Abkhazia. In South Ossetia, the OSCE took over the monitoring of the peacekeeping operation of the conflict parties and Russia by employing additional observers. At a donors’ conference on 14 June, funds were raised for a rehabilitation programme for South Ossetia.

The training mission for Georgian border guards set up in 2005 continued its work. The mission, in which five Austrian experts participated, has been headed by the Austrian Burghard Arlow since November.

2.5. Ukraine

The mission in the Ukraine involves the Office of a Project Co-ordinator that does not assume a political role or observation function. In close collaboration with the authorities and civil society, the office conducts projects to support the economy, combat trafficking in human beings, foster democratisation, and promote civil society.

According to the ODIHR assessment, the parliamentary elections of 26 March were compliant with international standards.

2.6. Central Asia

The OSCE is one of the most important international players in the countries of Central Asia. The OSCE field missions focus on the one hand on supporting the governments through the provision of expertise, e.g. strengthening the rule of law, development of pluralistic social structures, respect of human rights, democratic media policy, and anti-corruption measures. On the other, the OSCE is involved in a number of training activities. The OSCE Academy in Bishkek, which was supported by Austria from the very beginning, has been active for five years in communicating European values through its master programme in political science and in several short training courses. Moreover, the police training courses organised by the OSCE Centre in Bishkek and co-financed by Austria are proving successful. The Austrian Sabine Machl is the Deputy Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek.

Wherever possible, the OSCE endeavours to develop its activities in all three dimensions – the human dimension, the politico-military dimension, and the economic and environmental dimension. Although it succeeds in doing so to a satisfactory degree in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, collaboration with the governments in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan remains problematic. The
OSCE presence in Uzbekistan was converted into a project co-ordination office.

3. The OSCE Human Dimension

Human rights and democracy are the supporting pillars of the OSCE’s “comprehensive security” concept. Since April 2003, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in Warsaw has been headed by the Austrian Christian Strohal. Several annual events are organized by the ODIHR, the most important being the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (Warsaw, 2 – 13 October), which examines the entire spectrum of the implementation of commitments assumed in the area of human rights. Three Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings have already taken place in Vienna: human rights defenders and national human rights organizations (30 and 31 March); freedom of the media, protection of journalists, and access to information (6 and 7 July); strengthening of democracy through effective representation (2 – 3 November). The annual Human Dimension Seminar (Warsaw, 10 – 12 May) was devoted to the issues of rule of law and fair criminal proceedings.

The ODIHR carries out valuable work in the areas of voting rights and election monitoring and has organized observation missions for 20 national as well as regional and local elections. Austria seconded 47 short-term observers to Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Tajikistan, and the Ukraine, and two long-term observers to Belarus and Montenegro.

Three meetings dealt with issues of tolerance (combating anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia, and discrimination): “Promoting inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue” on 12 and 13 June in Almaty (Kazakhstan), “Education to promote mutual respect and understanding including Holocaust remembrance” on 23 and 24 October in Dubrovnik (Croatia), and “Addressing the hate crime data deficit” on 9 and 10 November in Vienna. In office since December 2004, the appointments of the Personal Representatives to promote greater tolerance and combat racism, xenophobia and discrimination were extended in 2005. Anastasia Crickley (Personal Representative on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also focusing on intolerance and discrimination of Christians and members of other religions), Professor Gert Weisskirchen (Personal Representative on Combating anti-Semitism), and Ömür Orhun (Personal Representative on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims) thus continued their activities. The OSCE dealt with the caricature dispute both during a formal and an informal joint meeting of the Permanent Council on 16 February with the Representative on Freedom of the Media. The OSCE made a contribution to advancing the Alliance of Civilizations by submitting a report
to the UN General Assembly in New York on the main topics of education, media, youth, and migration on 26 June.

On 17 March, a top-calibre "High Level Conference on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (especially in women and in children)" took place in Vienna. The OSCE mechanism for combating trafficking in human beings was restructured. On 19 October, Finnish MP Eva Biaudet succeeded former Federal Minister Helga Konrad as Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

Rolf Ekeus has been the High Commissioner on 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. 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.

4. The OSCE Politico-Military Dimension

The Forum for Security Cooperation, the standard-setting body for politico-military issues, implemented three decisions adopted by the Ministerial Council Meeting in Ljubljana in 2005: firstly, by holding a Military Doctrine Seminar on 14 and 15 February in Vienna on the challenges facing military forces through new threats, and on the benefits and risks of new technologies; secondly, by convening a special session on small arms and light weapons on 17 May in Vienna to exchange opinions on the implementation of the 2000 SALW document and the practical guidelines on SALW; and thirdly, by holding a seminar on 8 November in Vienna to support the effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on the Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The major topics of the weekly security dialogue included rapidly deployable forces, regional measures to combat terrorism, and civil-military cooperation. The 16th annual meeting for the assessment of compliance with the 17 commitments for reporting on the implementation of agreed confidence- and security-building measures (AIAM) took place in Vienna on 7 and 8 March. The discussions focused on the ongoing implementation process and on exploring ways and means of improving implementation and enhancing efficiency.

The Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) took place in Vienna on 27 and 28 June. On 27 September, a special meeting was held on the code of conduct.
Emphasis was put on the increasing importance of **non-military security aspects** such as terrorism, organised crime, trafficking in drugs and human beings, as well as money laundering; a working group met once to twice a month for this purpose. The Ministerial Council Meeting in Brussels adopted decisions on combating organised crime, preventing the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes, and on measures against the criminal use of lost or stolen travel documents. Combating terrorism is a permanent focus of the OSCE. Apart from the responsible working group, there is an “Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU)” at the OSCE-Secretariat and an internal network for the exchange of confidential information.

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

The economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE was dominated by the topic of **secure transportation networks** to ensure regional economic cooperation and stability, chosen by the Belgian Presidency for the 2006 Economic Forum. For the first time, the Economic Forum was split into two parts, one in January in Vienna and the other in May in Prague, both preceded by preparatory meetings. The Ministerial Council in Brussels managed to adopt a decision on the future dialogue in the area of transport, although this topic originally failed to obtain the support of some participating States due to the fear of duplications with the activities of expert organisations.

As a result of the gas crisis between Russia and the Ukraine, the issue of **energy security** became the centre of attention. Although Russia had submitted a proposal for a conference on energy security in 2005 in connection with this issue, which was received with reserve by the Western participating States, the positions were reversed when Russia rejected any role by the OSCE in this area. Eventually, a decision taken by the Ministerial Council Meeting in Brussels on the issue of energy security brought about a positive change, securing the role of the OSCE as a political discussion forum for energy security between East and West.

As the country holding the Chairmanship in 2007, Spain proposed “Challenges in the area of environmental security and sustainable development” as the major topic for the Vienna Economic Forum in January 2007. The first seminar on the preparation of the Economic Forum took place in November in Bishkek at the invitation of the Kirghiz Government, and dealt with the issues of desertification, land degradation and soil contamination.
6. The OSCE Reform

The decisions adopted at the 14th Ministerial Council Meeting in Brussels on the OSCE’s further institutional development concerned three areas: establishment of a permanent working group for the preparation of a convention that will give legal personality to the OSCE; setting-up separate institutional session committees for each of the three dimensions of the OSCE as of 2007, and strengthening the role of the OSCE Secretary General.

In November the ODIHR presented a report assigned by the Ministerial Council Meeting in Ljubljana on the implementation status of the OSCE commitments in the human dimension, including elections. The report was treated in a separate resolution by the Ministers in Brussels, which called upon the ODIHR to implement the recommendations contained in the report for the further development of its activities in connection with elections, and to report to the Permanent Council of the OSCE during the next working year.

7. Headquarters

The reconstruction work for the new permanent OSCE headquarters in the centre of Vienna, which began in December 2004, was continued, and is scheduled to be completed in 2007.

8. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

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 56 participating States. The 15th annual session was held from 3 to 7 July in Brussels. During this session, Göran Lennmarker (Sweden) was elected new President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Wolfgang Grosbruck, Member of the Austrian National Council and Rapporteur of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security on the topic of the “Role of the OSCE in the Western Balkans“, was elected Vice President of the Parliamentary Assembly for the period 2006/2007. The Winter Meeting of the Assembly, which has been held in Vienna every year since 2002, took place on 23 and 24 February.

III. Council of Europe

2006 marked the 50th year of Austria’s membership of the Council of Europe. Austria's exceptional commitment within the Council of Europe was honoured at a ceremony attended by State Secretary Hans Winkler, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Terry Davis, the President of the
Parliamentary Assembly, René van der Linden, and all Austrian members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. During the five decades of its membership, Austria has produced three Secretaries General of the Strasbourg-based Council of Europe, two Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly and one President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.

During its Presidency of the EU Council, Austria was able to contribute more extensively to the work undertaken by the Council of Europe. Federal Chancellor Schüssel gave a speech to the Parliamentary Assembly to mark the presentation of the "Juncker Report". State Secretary Winkler presented the programme of the Austrian Council Presidency to the Committee of Ministers in January and represented the EU Presidency at the Quadripartite EU-Council of Europe Meeting in March.

1. Political Developments

Activities of the Council of Europe were largely dedicated to the implementation of resolutions adopted at the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Council of Europe held in Warsaw in 2005: focussing the activities of the Council of Europe on the promotion of democracy, human rights and rule of law; 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 following measures initiated the implementation of the objectives of the Warsaw Declaration: the launching conference for the Council of Europe campaign "Building a Europe for and with children" in Monaco on 5 and 6 April; a pan-European programme of action on children and violence, also addressing the social, legal, health and educational dimensions of the various forms of violence against children; the presentation of the report by the Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker on relations between the Council of Europe and the European Union on 11 April; the start of the Europe-wide youth campaign "all different – all equal" for diversity, human rights and participation in society on 29 June; the first meeting of the Forum for the Future of Democracy to provide momentum for the further development of democracy in the Member States of the Council of Europe in Moscow on 18 and 19 October, dealing with the role of political parties in democracy-building; submission of the Committee of Wise Men's report on the long-term effectiveness of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) to the Committee of Ministers on 15 November, and the high-level launching conference of the pan-European campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence, in Madrid on 27 November.
2. Relationship with other International Organisations

During Austria’s EU Council Presidency a common EU position was prepared on the draft Memorandum of Understanding to further develop cooperation between the Council of Europe and the EU presented by the Romanian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe. Negotiations were continued during the Russian Chair from May to November, but have not yet been concluded. San Marino will continue the negotiations in its capacity as next Chair of the Committee of Ministers.

The report presented by Luxembourg’s Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker in April, which will be partly integrated into the Memorandum of Understanding on the future relationship between the Council of Europe and the EU, contains several recommendations, such as accession of the EU to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights, stronger cooperation of the EU with the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe; creation of joint mechanisms to promote and consolidate democracy, coordination of the respective legal texts and accession of the EU to the Council of Europe by the year 2010.

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. Topics of the meeting held on 15 March under Austria’s EU Presidency were the Memorandum of Understanding, the ENP (European Neighbourhood Policy), the SAP (Stabilisation and Association Process), the Fundamental Rights Agency of the EU, and joint programmes of the EU and the Council of Europe concerning the situation in Belarus, Serbia and Montenegro and Ukraine. The quadripartite meeting on 3 November dealt with the Memorandum of Understanding, the Juncker Report, the Fundamental Rights Agency of the EU, the ECHR, a common European judicial area and intercultural dialogue.
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, Secretaries General and as necessary the Presidents of the Parliamentary Assemblies of both organisations). They are held annually. The 3+3 meeting in January, in addition to coordination of the activities of both organisations, addressed the situations in Kosovo, Transnistria, the South Caucasus, Belarus and Ukraine. The third meeting of the OSCE/CoE Co-ordination Group at the level of Permanent Representatives of both organisations’ Member States and Secretaries General of both organisations was held in Vienna on 6 March. The meeting discussed cooperation in the fight against terrorism and trafficking in human beings, the protection of national minorities and the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination. In addition, public officials hold regular working meetings. As regards election observation, there has already been very intensive cooperation with the ODIHR.

Regular contact is also maintained between the Council of Europe and the UN. A high-level tripartite meeting prepared by the UN between the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the UN took place in Geneva on 5 July. The central theme of the high-level meeting was “Peacebuilding from a European regional perspective: preventing the recurrence of conflict”.

3. Human Rights

See Chapter G.V.

4. Monitoring

Monitoring compliance with the commitments accepted by the Member States of 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 Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Monaco, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro and Ukraine, making fact-finding visits for this purpose. 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: 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 freedom of expression in Member
States in 2006, and specific post-accession monitoring (monitoring of new Member States). The latter dealt with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Serbia and Montenegro. It 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. Austria is a member of this Ago Group, which is named after its initiator, Italy’s former permanent representative to the Council of Europe, Piero Ercole Ago. 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 also being monitored by the Committee of Ministers. The Secretariat furthermore issues quarterly reports on Bosnia and Herzegovina and on Serbia to the Committee of Ministers, and half-yearly reports on Montenegro.

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, Chisinau, Yerevan, Podgorica, Pristina, Sarajevo and Tbilisi, as well as Skopje and Tirana – report on the developments in the respective countries on an almost monthly basis.

5. Assistance Programmes

The Council of Europe strives to implement its priorities in the framework of assistance programmes. These concentrate on backing political, legislative and constitutional reform in the following areas: 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 of 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. The assistance programmes to meet these objectives geographically concentrated on South East Europe, the Caucasus and Russia. In the field of these programmatic activities a total of some 12 million euros were made available to support activities and programmes for collaboration with 24 Member States and other countries such as Belarus. More than 3.5 million euros went to multilateral activities. The wide range of assistance programmes can be seen from the variety of projects supported by the Council of Europe: in the core areas of protection of human rights and promotion of democracy these also include the further development of intercultural dialogue, support for Roma and Sinti communities and fostering of social cohesion, in addition to reforms of the judiciary and administration. The concrete activities consisted primarily in providing experts and organising training schemes. The programmes also
served to fund the Council of Europe’s information offices and local offices. Within the framework of Joint Programmes with the European Commission, 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 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 116th Session was held on 19 May in Strasbourg and chaired by Romania’s Foreign Minister, Mihai-Razvan Ungureanu. Austria was represented by State Secretary Hans Winkler. The main topics on the agenda were consolidation of the European human rights protection system, the relations between the Council of Europe and the EU and implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Warsaw Summit, especially the Council of Europe’s Forum for the Future of Democracy, intercultural dialogue and institutional reform of the Council of Europe. The Ministers’ Deputies normally meet four times a month. These meetings are prepared by a number of thematic committees.

6.2. **Parliamentary Assembly**

The Parliamentary Assembly is composed of 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/Christian Democrats (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 representatives and six substitutes, who are appointed by the National Council and the Federal Council (see Annex VIII.6.). The members also form “national delegations”. The Austrian delegation was headed by Member of Parliament Michael Spindelegger up to 29 October, and as from 20 December by Member of Parliament Gisela Wurm. The Parliamentary Assembly meets four times annually 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 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 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 important tasks, 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 meeting the aims the Council of Europe was set up for in London on 5 May 1949. The main goal is to achieve greater unity among the CoE’s members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are 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 2,200 employees. Since September 2004 Terry Davis from the United Kingdom has been the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

7. The Council of Europe and Austria

Austria shows a great deal of commitment to the Council of Europe’s activities and has up until today 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 the area of "e-Democracy", reinforcement of Europe’s social dimension and further development of the Forum for the Future of Democracy. 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 heads of two divisions of the ECHR and a section head with the Secretariat of the Convention for the Prevention of Torture.

The Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings, opened for signature at the Warsaw Summit, was ratified by Austria on 12 October.

Austria’s Permanent Representation to the Council of Europe actively contributed to enabling the Memorandum of Understanding between the EU and the Council of Europe, particularly within the Ago Group and the Venice Commission, and took care to ensure that the EU Fundamental Rights Agency was considered in the documents of the Council of Europe.

IV. Central European Initiative

Headed by Austrian Director General Ambassador Harald Kreid, 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. With Montenegro's accession on 1 August, the CEI now comprises 18 European countries with a total of approx. 320 million inhabitants. Since Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU on 1 January 2007, the CEI has been made up of 50 per cent EU Member States and 50 per cent non-EU Member States. This clearly demonstrates the importance of the CEI as a forum for the exchange of knowledge beyond EU frontiers.

The major event was the CEI Summit of Heads of Government chaired by Albania in Tirana on 23 and 24 November. In their Final Document, the heads of government honoured the progress made towards European Integration reflected in the signing of accession treaties, ongoing EU accession negotiations, granting of candidate status and advancement of the Stabilisation and Association Process and implementation of the bilateral Action Plans of the EU. They also emphasised the importance of supporting non-EU CEI Member States in meeting EU standards and values. They further stressed the importance of the role of the CEI Know-how Exchange Programme.
In Tirana, the Heads of government approved the CEI’s new Plan of Action 2007-09 which had been elaborated to consolidate and concentrate CEI activities in view of rapidly changing geopolitical conditions. Austria backs this objective and is in favour of closer cooperation with other regional organisations in order to avoid duplication and harness synergies.

V. Neighbourhood Policy

1. Regional Partnership

The concept of the Regional Partnership with the neighbouring EU Member States – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and “cultural neighbour” Poland –, the informal Presidency of which Austria assumed in July, is a logical continuation of the existing close cooperation in Central Europe. Prior to the enlargement of the EU, the Regional Partnership served to reduce potential sources of friction and to support the partner countries in their accession preparations. It was also used as a 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 those networks that put 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.

Following initiatives for the future of Kosovo and for the further development of the EU Action Plan for Ukraine in 2004, the partner countries made a durable and concrete contribution to supporting the integration work of the countries of the Western Balkans by establishing the Budapest Process at the Budapest Western Balkans Conference of the Regional Partnership in the autumn of 2005. In addition to continuing work in the six working groups of the Budapest Process, the Seventh Meeting of Foreign Ministers chaired by Austria and held in Vienna on 14 September agreed to provide specific support for Serbia on its road to Europe and to further strengthen consular cooperation between the Regional Partnership countries. The latter is based firstly on experiences with intensified integration of national and European efforts in coping with disaster and emergencies, and secondly on the wish to implement, within common structures, the European legislation relating to aliens as well as biometric data collection in an economical and expedient way, in light of the forthcoming participation of all Regional Partners in the Schengen area.

Cooperation between the relevant ministries was continued with a meeting of the Ministers of Education of the Regional Partnership countries and those of
the countries of the Western Balkans in March and with the “Salzburg Forum” in July, in the framework of which the group of the Ministers of the Interior, expanded by Bulgaria and Romania, cooperate under a security partnership.

The Foreign Ministers of the Partner countries meet roughly every six months in the country holding the Presidency, and at intervals on the margins of the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels. 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 with this neighbouring country are marked by a set of tightly-knit treaties and the traditionally lively exchange of visits at all levels. With a total trading volume of approx. 8 billion euros, Switzerland is also one of Austria’s most important trading partners. Intensive preparations were undertaken in connection with Austria’s and Switzerland’s joint hosting of the European Football Championship 2008 (see also Chapter K.V.).

In the field of European policy, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed under Austria’s EU Council Presidency setting up the arrangements by which Switzerland will provide financial assistance to the new EU Member States, which was approved by the Swiss population voting in favour of the Eastern Europe Cooperation Act in a public referendum held on 26 November. Three further agreements under the Bilateral II package (bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU) – environment, statistics and MEDIA – were ratified by both partners.

The Federal Council adopted the Europe Report 2006 concerning the orientation of Swiss European policy on 28 June. In this context, the success of the present bilateral course was highlighted. Existing bilateral agreements with the EU are to be implemented and applied efficiently. New agreements in further areas of interest should be concluded where this seems reasonable and feasible. Switzerland defines its relations with the EU on the basis of its material as well as non-material interests. As regards the bilateral agreements with the EU, central aspects are the preservation of Switzerland’s independence, autonomy of decision-making and institutional particularities such as federalism and direct democracy. Accession to the EU was described as a longer-term option. The next objectives are an electricity agreement, extension of the Agriculture Agreement and participation in various EU projects such as GALILEO and the health agency.
Swiss foreign policy pursues objectives that are oriented towards peace and neutrality. A special point of focus was the Western Balkans, where Switzerland engaged in the co-financing of stability programmes. In Kosovo, Switzerland continued to participate with one company in the Austrian AUCON battalion. Switzerland further performed intermediary activities in the Middle East, Colombia, Sudan and Sri Lanka. Federal President Moritz Leuenberger made Africa one of the priorities of foreign policy. In the field of external economic relations, exploratory talks and negotiations concerning free trade agreements with third countries took place, inter alia with Japan. A free trade agreement with the South African Customs Union (SACU) was signed, and another with the Republic of Korea came into force.

2.2. Liechtenstein

Austria and Liechtenstein maintain close and excellent relations in all spheres of public life, also characterised by centuries-old ties between the Princely House and Austria. There is a regular exchange of visits between the two countries. Furthermore, more than 6,000 individuals commute daily from Austria to Liechtenstein, and more than 2,000 Austrians reside in the Principality.

A member state of the UN, the Council of Europe, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Economic Area (EEA) as well as the WTO, Liechtenstein orients its foreign policy towards preservation of its sovereignty, free access to European and non-European markets as far as possible and fostering of the relationships with its neighbours. 21 June saw the culmination of foreign policy efforts when under Austria’s EU Presidency the protocol on the agreement between the EU/EC and Switzerland concerning Liechtenstein’s association with the Schengen acquis and the protocols on acceptance of the Dublin/Eurodac agreement were initialled. The protocols will be put into effect simultaneously for Switzerland and Liechtenstein in 2008. By the end of the year no agreement was reached as regards any increase in cohesion payments for the benefit of the new EU Member States acceding in 2007, Bulgaria and Romania, by the EFTA/EEA Member States Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Domestic policy was marked by the festivities to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Liechtenstein’s sovereignty. The official ceremony in Vaduz on 12 July was attended by the Heads of State of Liechtenstein’s neighbours, Austrian Federal President Heinz Fischer and his Swiss counterpart Moritz Leuenberger as well as high-level representatives from Germany, France and Russia.
3. South Tyrol

On 9 and 10 April parliamentary elections were held in Italy. With 182,703 votes, the South Tyrolean People’s Party (SVP) was able to hold its six seats despite a loss of votes compared to the previous elections. On the whole the SVP received 53.5 per cent of votes cast, which is approx. 8 per cent less than five years ago but roughly as much as in the province elections of 2003. Votes went over to the Liberals, on the one hand, and on the other hand to the Greens as well as to Forza Italia, which moved ahead of Alleanza Nazionale in South Tyrol. The SVP is represented in the Chamber by Giacomo Bezzi, Siegfried Brugger, Karl Zeller and Hans Widmann, and in the Senate by Helga Thaler Ausserhofer, Oskar Peterlini and Manfred Pinzger. The votes of the three senators can be decisive because of the Italian government’s slim majority in the Senate.

On 5 September a ceremony was held at the Bolzano provincial parliament to mark the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Paris Agreement (Gruber-Degasperi Agreement), the foundation stone of South Tyrolean autonomy. Among the guests were the former Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, who in 1946 was secretary to the then Italian Foreign Minister Alcide De Gasperi, as well as the former Austrian State Secretary and Ambassador Ludwig Steiner.

On 21 September the Austrian National Council, with the votes of ÖVP, SPÖ, FPÖ and BZÖ, adopted a motion for a resolution to embody Austria’s protective function for South Tyrol in the planned new constitution: “In the course of a constitutional reform the National Council supports the inclusion of a provision in the Austrian federal constitution enshrining the protective function for the Austrian ethnic group in South Tyrol. Observance of the protective function of other states for their ethnic groups living in Austria (Art 8(2) Federal Constitutional Law) shall likewise be included in the constitution. The federal government is asked to proceed accordingly.” This initiative started from a petition of Tyrolean and South Tyrolean marksmen’s associations which was signed by nearly all South Tyrolean mayors and several North and East Tyrolean mayors and handed over to the President of the National Council, Andreas Khol, in January.

On 16 November 2005, the Italian Parliament passed a draft constitutional reform whose possible negative effects on the development of South Tyrol’s autonomy were essentially resolved through intensive parliamentary negotiations conducted by the South Tyrolean representatives in parliament with members of the then centre-right majority. On 25 and 26 June a referendum was held on the draft constitution, which was rejected by the majority of the population. In South Tyrol 76.4 per cent voted against this draft, and in Italy as a whole 61.4 per cent.
4. Nuclear Safety

Protection of the population and the environment and thus the necessary safety, especially of nuclear power plants near borders, are issues of the highest priority for the federal government. Efforts aimed at an EU-wide withdrawal from the utilisation of nuclear power were also continued.

Austria acknowledges the progress made with the Temelín nuclear power plant as described in the final report of the Federal Environment Agency on the Road Map, the Brussels Agreement with the Czech Republic concerning the Temelín nuclear power plant. At the same time, however, the report pointed to a number of open questions regarding nuclear safety. Therefore it is absolutely essential to continue the safety dialogue.

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 concerning the safety of nuclear power plants, radiation protection and any cross-border consequences of radiological hazards and their effects were held as planned.

Furthermore, the federal government made all-out efforts to optimally represent Austria’s interests in nuclear safety relevant procedures in neighbouring countries, such as Switzerland, Slovakia and Hungary, and to enable interested citizens to represent their interests themselves. Although it honoured its commitment as Presidency of the EU Council in the first half of the year, Austria continued to voice its critical position on the utilisation of nuclear power as a source of energy. At the international donors’ conference held in Kiev on 26 April to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster Austria, for instance, emphasised that the reactor accident of 20 years ago was not an inevitable natural disaster but one caused by human error.

Bulgaria and Slovakia met the agreed closure commitments according to the EU accession treaties: the reactors Bohunice V1 unit 1 and Kozloduy 3 and 4 were shut down on 31 December.

Austria endeavours to promote non-nuclear energy options at international level and to show possible alternatives to nuclear power utilisation by means of “energy partnerships”. Despite some setbacks and delays, concrete projects were further developed or implemented with Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Ukraine.
5. Alpine Convention

Meetings of the Alpine Convention’s Compliance Committee were held under the Austrian Presidency in February, April and June. The meetings served to conduct a first review of compliance of States Parties with the obligations of the Convention and its implementing Protocols. The Meeting of the Permanent Committee in Alpbach on 7 and 8 November adopted a progress report by the Compliance Committee, which forms the basis for its further work. The progress report was brought to the notice of the 9th Alpine Conference in Alpbach on 9 November, which mandated the Compliance Committee to continue its work. The 9th Alpine Conference, which inter alia adopted the Alpbach Declaration, marked the end of Austria’s two-year Presidency of the Alpine Convention. France succeeded Austria and will hold the Presidency until the 10th Alpine Conference in 2009.

During the Austrian Presidency, the Protocols in the fields of soil conservation, tourism and energy were signed by the European Community and the entry into force of the Mountain Farming Protocol was prepared. Furthermore, Austria made intensive efforts to have the European Community become a Party to the particularly important Transport Protocol, which was eventually signed by the latter on 12 December. The European Community thereby agrees to take measures aimed at a more sustainable transport situation in the Alpine area, such as abandoning the construction of new primary roads crossing the Alps, reducing pollutants and increasing cost efficiency in application of the polluter-pays principle.

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 River Basin, the European Commission and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. It is designed to broaden and deepen already existing cooperation in the Danube region, to give it clear political and economic dimensions and to harmonise and focus the various regional activities and organisations with a view to enhancing economic and political stability of this – in many respects – very heterogeneous region. At the Second Ministerial Conference in Bucharest in July 2004, the participating members of the Danube Cooperation Process agreed on various priority actions to be pursued under the six dimensions – environment, economic development, navigation and sustainable transport, tourism, cultural cooperation and sub-regional cooperation.

After a preparatory meeting of the initiators of the Danube Cooperation Process chaired by the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South
Eastern Europe, Erhard Busek, in Vienna in July, the preparations for the third Ministerial Conference scheduled to take place in Belgrade in the autumn led to a meeting of high-level officials in Bucharest in September. Shortly thereafter, Serbia was compelled to postpone the Ministerial Conference until spring 2007 for domestic reasons.

With Bulgaria’s and Romania’s accession to the EU on 1 January 2007, the Danube region is moving closer together and its importance as an element linking Central Europe with the Black Sea region will increase. Against this backdrop, the intensification of political cooperation particularly supported by Austria will contribute to the forming of a genuine cultural, environmental and economic region.

6.2. Danube Navigation

Greece, Montenegro and Cyprus were granted observer status in the Danube Commission. In July a celebration in Budapest attended by State Secretary Winkler commemorated the Treaty of Paris which established free passage of ships on the Danube in public international law in 1856 and the related founding of the first International Commission for Danube Navigation headquarterd in Galati (Romania). Part of the spring meeting of the Danube Commission was therefore held in Bucharest. The years of disruption of navigation on the Danube which had lasted until October 2005 had impaired the development of this waterway as a route of transport in the long term. The Danube was designated as a priority axis of transport in the guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN Guidelines).

With the EU accession of Bulgaria and Romania, the majority of the Danube Commission will consist of EU Member States. In light of this changing framework for economic and integration policy along the Danube, the renewal of the Danube Commission aimed at making it a modern, international organisation is also expected to prepare the ground for enhancing the Danube’s position as a competitive means of transport in a European network of inland waterways. In order to achieve this goal, the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council advocated within the EU a revision of the Belgrade Convention on which the Danube Commission is based, and was able to lay the groundwork for the signing of a protocol amending the Convention within the framework of a diplomatic conference in Belgrade.

6.3. Danube River Protection Convention

Since coming into effect in 1998, the Convention on Co-operation for the Protection and Sustainable Use of the River Danube (Danube River Protection Convention) has governed cooperation and transboundary water management in the fields of water protection and water use in the Danube River Basin. To
implement the Convention, the **International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)** was established with a permanent secretariat in Vienna.

The 9th Ordinary Meeting of the ICPDR was held in Vienna at the Vienna International Centre (VIC) on 11 and 12 December. The Commission adopted a number of documents outlining further steps for the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive in the whole Danube River Basin and approved adaptations to the joint process of monitoring of water quality. Furthermore, the states parties to the Convention were called upon to drive forward the work on their national flood control action plans.

To increase public awareness and solidarity among all Danube countries, a “Danube Day” was organised on 29 June with a large number of activities in the states parties to the Convention.
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 Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs offers consular assistance 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, etc. 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 sickness, accidents or deaths abroad (2,680 cases in 2006). In this regard, cases of support for mentally unstable or sick Austrian citizens in a foreign country or their repatriation from abroad rose. The financial means made available to assist Austrian nationals in emergencies or serious difficulties abroad amounted to 211,000 euros.

The travel notes on the website 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 500,000 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.

At the Vienna International Holiday, Travel and Leisure Fair which took place from 12 to 15 January, the Citizens’ Service presented to the interested visitors the travel notes on the website 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

Natural disasters, terrorist attacks and civil wars clearly demonstrated the increasing importance of the crisis prevention measures implemented by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the representations abroad. In order to further improve the crisis response capability, 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 course of the war in Lebanon (July), the terrorist attacks in Dahab (April) und Turkey (August), the forest fires in Greece (August) and with many other crises in the world, the rapid and efficient operation of the crisis response teams on site as well as the Citizens’ Service hotline provided the best possible support for those affected.

In November an Austrian citizen who works for a Kuwait-based security company was kidnapped in Iraq. Austrian authorities have cooperated closely with Iraqi authorities and the partners represented in Baghdad and Basra. The network of contacts in the region also includes NGOs.

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, which was especially increased during the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council. 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, hospitals 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.

Cooperation between the Austrian ministries and embassies as well as with the partner states from the Union impressively proved its worth in the evacuation of EU citizens during the war in Lebanon in July and August. Owing to the closure of Beirut airport, all citizens willing to leave the country had to be evacuated by land or sea. This led to an exemplary collaboration between the EU Member States, who provided one another with transport capacities. Consequently, more than 300 Austrians were evacuated from the whole state territory of Lebanon in the first ten days of the crisis. Until the ceasefire of 14 August 328 expatriate Austrians in total were transported to safety in twelve road convoys to Syria, on 16 ship crossings to Cyprus and on three flights by the Hercules aircraft of the Austrian Federal Armed Forces and special flights operated by other EU Member States. During the entire duration of evacuation operations Austria also brought 143 citizens of other EU Member States to safety.

3. **Assistance in Civil and Criminal Matters**

Legal assistance was provided in a total of 2,884 cases.

4. **New Treaties**


The Treaty between the Republic of Austria and the Czech Republic on Police Cooperation and the Second Amendment to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters of 20 April 1959 signed in Vienna on 14 July 2005 took effect on 1 July.

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 the Protocol on Implementation and the Agreement between the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Austria and the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina on Police Cooperation were signed in Vienna on 5 May.
5 May also saw the signing in Vienna of the Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on the Readmission of Persons Residing Without Authorisation, including its Protocol on Implementation.

Negotiations concerning an agreement on cooperation in the field of internal security were conducted with France.

Two rounds of negotiations were held with Croatia in Vienna and Zagreb concerning an agreement on police cooperation.

A round of negotiations was conducted with Libya in Vienna concerning an agreement on police cooperation.

II. Tourist and Cross-Border Traffic

1. Visas

Austrian nationals holding a regular passport are free to enter 93 states without a visa, including all neighbouring states, Canada, Japan, the USA and many other states in Africa, Asia and South America. Citizens of 137 countries need a visa to travel to Austria.

The Agreement with Serbia and Montenegro on the Abolition of Visas for Holders of Diplomatic and Official-Duty Passports signed on 13 April 2005 entered into force on 1 January.

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 and entered into force on 1 April. Application of the Agreement on its Implementation was commenced as per 1 July on selected posts.

The Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on the Abolition of Visas for Holders of Diplomatic and Official-Duty Passports was signed in Vienna on 28 December.

The cancellation of the temporary suspension of the Agreement existing since 1 September 1992 between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Republic of Albania on the Abolition of Visas for Holders of Diplomatic and Official-Duty Passports was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 21 December. As from 31 December, holders of Albanian
diplomatic and official-duty passports may therefore again travel to Austria without having to obtain a visa.

Possibilities of cooperation in visa matters and other consular matters were sounded out with Switzerland.

Within the Regional Partnership, the establishment of common visa centres was examined by experts.

The European Commission received mandates to negotiate a combined agreement with the Western Balkan countries and Moldova for visa facilitation and readmission of persons who have crossed the border illegally.

Austrian foreign missions issued 396,230 visas, which was 34,417 or 8 per cent less than in the previous year. This decrease is mainly attributable to the abolition of visas for third-country nationals residing in Switzerland and holding a Swiss residence permit, who accounted for approx. 20 per cent of all applicants there.

1.1. Visa Commission

At a press conference on 18 January Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs Johannes Kyrle presented a report prepared by the independent external commission which is not bound by instructions and had been set up to investigate the allegations made regarding the issuance of visas (Visa Commission) and chaired by former federal minister Peter Jankowitsch. The Commission’s work yielded no indications of the existence of a criminal network within the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The ideas for improvement and suggestions contained in the report have already been implemented through a number of measures by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in agreement with the Ministry of the Interior. These measures are to guarantee an even more abuse-proof system and thus ensure preventive action to counter any future attacks by organised crime.

In compliance with the recommendation of the Austrian Court of Audit, the Inspector General’s Office at the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs which is responsible for internal audits was expanded by a second team of auditors at mid-year.

Intensified and specific training and continuing education measures, in close collaboration with the Federal Ministry of the Interior, will serve to further enhance awareness among personnel issuing visas at Austrian representations abroad. Since 2006 a specific training course in corruption prevention conducted by specialists from the Austrian Criminal Intelligence Service has
also become part of the compulsory training programme for employees of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs before any posting abroad.

Instructions issued to the representations abroad laid down comprehensive details regarding the administration and organisation of the visa centre, storage of the visa stickers and control of their use, processing of visa applications and handling of the visa procedure as well as the duties of supervision, control and reporting vested in the heads of office.

The establishment of common visa application centres for the Schengen states, as also proposed by the independent Visa Commission, is a priority that is being pursued by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in negotiations at EU level and particularly within the Regional Partnership.

2. Border Treaties


The instruments of ratification of the Treaty between the Republic of Austria and the Czech Republic on Border Crossings on Tourist Routes and Border Crossings in Special Cases were exchanged in Prague on 7 April. The Treaty came into force on 7 May. The Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Czech Republic on Establishing Fixed Points on Tourist Routes for the implementation of the said Agreement also came into force on 7 May.

The instruments of ratification of the Treaty between the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Italy on the Maintenance of Border Marks and the Survey and Marking of the Common Border including the subsequent exchange of notes were exchanged in Rome on 7 June. The Treaty including the Final Protocol, Exchange of Notes and Annexes came into force on 1 September.

The Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Republic of Hungary on Border Crossings on Cross-Border Tourist Routes alongside the Common State Border was signed in St. Margarethen on 2 November. The Agreement came into force on 1 December.

III. Social, Labour and Health Policy

Measures to be taken in advance and in the event of a human influenza pandemic caused by the avian influenza virus were at the centre of health policy during the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council. Efforts culminated in an International Conference on Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza Preparedness in Vienna on 6 and 7 June, which was attended by more than 110 delegations.

In connection with the international fight against avian influenza and to prevent the outbreak of a pandemic, the federal government made available 1 million euros to enable the building of laboratory capacities, including the training of specialists, in the South Caucasus.

The agreements on social security with Bulgaria and Romania entered into force on 1 April and 1 December respectively.

IV. Austrians Abroad

Support for and service to, Austrian citizens residing abroad are among the core tasks of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Austrian embassies and consulates (general) are the first points of contact and service with regard to passport, citizenship and election matters, for further contact with authorities and information about Austria, providing effective crisis preparedness and coordination as well as assistance with or organisation of Austria-related events. Furthermore, the dedicated website of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs for Austrians abroad at www.AuslandsoesterreicherInnen.at is an important link to Austria.

As there is no obligation to officially register one’s residence abroad, the figures concerning Austrian citizens living abroad are often based on estimates. Austrian embassies and consulates abroad hold records for more than 450,000 Austrians residing abroad, for 370,000 Austrians these record entries contain up-to-date addresses. The majority of expatriate Austrians reside in Germany (230,000), Switzerland (40,000), the U.S.A. (30,300), South Africa (20,000), Australia and the U.K. (15,000 each) as well as Argentina and Brazil (11,000 each).
The number of “Austrians at heart” (those who feel especially attached to Austria thanks to their former Austrian citizenship, ancestors or other relatives or for other reasons) can only be estimated and probably comprises several hundred thousand persons.

1. **Organisations representing Austrians Abroad**

Links between Austria’s expatriates and their home country are maintained for the most part through **associations of Austrians abroad** and other Austria-related societies in foreign countries. There are about 400 such associations and societies in approximately 50 countries worldwide, a list of which can be found at [www.AuslandsoesterreicherInnen.at](http://www.AuslandsoesterreicherInnen.at).

The Vienna-based Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund (AÖWB), the World Federation of Austrians Abroad, is an umbrella organisation, interest group and service platform for Austrian associations and individual Austrian citizens abroad. Since 1 July 2004 Gustav Chlestil has been the President of the AÖWB, while Irmgard Helperstorfer holds the office of Secretary-General. The Federation publishes the magazine “ROT-WEISS-ROT”. The meeting of Austrians abroad organised every year in Austria by the AÖWB was held in Klagenfurt from 7 to 10 September and attended by Federal Minister Plassnik. The AÖWB received a direct 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 publishes a periodical magazine, “Die Burgenländische Gemeinschaft”. Walter Dujmovits holds the office of President of the Burgenländische Gemeinschaft.

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 serious difficulties. Financed by subsidies from the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the nine federal provinces, it provided assistance totalling 610,000 euros to 892 needy Austrians in 62 countries in 2006. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees appointed by the federal government is former Ambassador Georg Hohenberg, the office of Managing Director is held by Stefan Bagyura.

The federal law that forms the basis of the Fund was replaced by the **“Federal Act on the Fund for Austrians Abroad”** (Bundesgesetz über den Auslandsösterreicher-Fonds or AÖF-G). Former citizens who had to give up their Austrian citizenship for important, cogent reasons and have remained Austrians at heart may now receive financial support for the first time.
In the course of the “Christmas Campaign”, which the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs organises every year, donations in cash and in kind worth approx. 67,000 euros were provided to 618 needy Austrians in 59 countries.

For Austrians living abroad who are aged or severely ill and no longer able to care for themselves, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs can arrange for repatriation including accommodation in a suitable institution in Austria. 30 expatriate Austrians from twenty countries benefited from this service, which is twice as many as in the previous year.

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

For the parliamentary elections on 1 October, 52,637 Austrians abroad were registered on the electoral roll and some 19,000 election packs (including ballots and return envelopes) were mailed to Austrian citizens abroad. The number of Austrians residing within the country who vote abroad is constantly increasing. As compared to the parliamentary elections of 2002, the number of election packs received increased to 75,384 or by 14 per cent. The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs sent out 283,000 personal letters together with the forms necessary for voting. 330 Austrian representations offered the possibility to have one’s casting of vote confirmed and the ballot papers forwarded to Austria.

Details concerning the right to vote of Austrians abroad and Austrians temporarily abroad on election day can be found at www.wahlinfo.aussenministerium.at.

4. E-Government, E-Governance, E-Democracy, e-Voting

The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, along with Austrian scientists, supports applications of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the field of communication and civic participation in democratic processes, including elections. In this context, the website www.AuslandsoesterreicherInnen.at, established on 14 January 2002 has assumed a pioneering function. The e-democracy pilot project conducted by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, www.aoe-umfrage.at, concerning views and suggestions by Austrian citizens residing abroad on citizenship issues, as well as their willingness to use an e-democracy tool received international notice and showed that many Austrians abroad use ICT. On 13 and 14 December, the 2006 Coordination Meeting of the Council of Europe’s Committee on e-Democracy, chaired by Austria, was held at the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.
D. 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). ADC coordinates all its programmes and projects along with the local partners, thereby systematically taking local cultural and general social conditions into consideration. ADC especially focuses on equality between women and men and the involvement of women in decision-making processes. Furthermore, ADC takes special account of the needs of children and people with disabilities. Intensive efforts to increase the quality of collaboration, especially to enhance coherence and harmonisation, are objectives which contribute to a higher degree of efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.

1. International Background

In September 2000, the Heads of State and Government adopted eight fundamental Millennium Development Goals within the United Nations Millennium Declaration to fight global poverty and its consequences in a more effective and coordinated manner than in the past. Human dignity and equality, peace, democracy and ecological sustainability shifted into the centre of international development policy. These objectives have increased global awareness of the urgently needed efforts to eliminate poverty and have led to an intensification of development cooperation. Within the EU this was reflected notably in the Council Decisions on increasing the development cooperation funds taken in 2005. The Millennium Development Goals to be attained are ambitious targets. They make it necessary for policies to be better coordinated, because progress can only be achieved within a coherent development policy. At the same time, the partner countries’ governments also face special challenges, as they need to create the necessary basis for the implementation of the policy objectives.

2. 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. Since 2004 the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) has performed the operational tasks associated with ADC. The strategic
framework for the ADA’s activities is established by Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

3. Additional Budget for Development Cooperation

Official development assistance (ODA) amounted to 1,266 million euros or 0.52 per cent of gross national income (GNI) in 2005 and thus exceeded the target of 0.33 per cent for 2006 contained in the Barcelona commitments. In 2006 the volume of funds spend on official development assistance was again above target at 1,205 million euros or 0.48 per cent of GNI, according to the preliminary data reported to the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC). The other figures shown in this Section are likewise based on preliminary data. In the years to come Austria will continue to undertake every effort to meet its international commitments and to spend 0.51 per cent of GNI on ODA in 2010 in compliance with the decisions taken by the European Council in 2005.

4. Sustainable Development

A crucial criterion for the sustainability of development is that those affected have a say and assume the initiative themselves. The long-term success of development cooperation is contingent on the strengthening of institutional competences and capacities in the partner countries. Decision-making needs to be decentralised, and democratic structures and procedures are to be built and promoted. Improved public services can thus result in increased acceptance and identification and thus strengthen sustainability. Good governance was therefore a special focus of ADC’s activities.

5. Policy Coherence to promote Development

The objectives and principles of Austria’s development policy are to be taken into account in all policy areas affecting developing countries. The principle of “policy coherence for development” thus explicitly enshrined in the DCA is an important key element for the effectiveness of development cooperation and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. This principle has gained in importance at both the international and the EU level. On Austria’s initiative, the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the European Union adopted conclusions in April and October, which set out priorities for action and a process for the Council and the Commission in order to improve policy coherence. Preparatory work was performed for a European progress report in this field.
II. Bilateral Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe

1. Bilateral Development Cooperation

1.1. Key Region Central America

At the EU-LAC Summit in Vienna in May, a forum of the EU with the Central American Integration System (SICA) was held concerning issues relating to harmonisation of international development cooperation and alignment with national strategies.

Rural development, the promotion of small enterprises and healthcare are ADC’s priorities in Nicaragua. In the field of health services, ADC along with Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the World Bank made a collective contribution to support the country’s national health strategy. Bilateral ADC assistance (net payments) amounted to 5.88 million euros.

In Guatemala, programmes were supported to foster the traditional institutions and the customary law of the indigenous population as well as bilingual and intercultural education programmes. ADC’s cooperation partners are local civil society organisations. Bilateral assistance under ADC (net payments) amounted to 2.21 million euros.

In El Salvador, ADC concentrated its assistance on rural development and small entrepreneurs. Training courses for university-trained specialists in Austria were also continued under the North-South Partnership. ADC assistance (net payments) to El Salvador amounted to 1.03 million euros.

1.2. Key Region West Africa

The Country Strategy Programme 2005-2007 agreed with Burkina Faso provided for support in the areas of rural development, vocational education and training, as well as in the establishment of small and micro enterprises and the promotion of trades and crafts, for which an amount of 13 million euros was earmarked. Aligning its activities with national priorities and adapted instruments to combat poverty continued to be a central concern of ADC. Bilateral assistance paid under ADC totalled 4.21 million euros.

In Senegal, ADC continued to support sustainable rural development within the framework of the country sector programme, concentrating its cooperation efforts on the south of the country. The central focus was on improving agricultural productivity and market access through local development measures. Projects in the fields of agriculture, the promotion of trades and crafts and the protection of the environment were carried out in this context.
Support for professional associations and cooperation with local NGOs at municipal level strengthened the Senegalese civil society, which in turn contributed to democratisation and peacekeeping. Bilateral ADC assistance (net payments) amounted to 2.94 million euros.

The priority country Cape Verde succeeded in improving its macroeconomic stability to the extent that it lost its status as “least developed country” (LDC). The country programme agreed in 2006 built on this new situation, in the framework of which the central themes of sustainable management of natural resources, decentralisation and regional development on Santiago Island will be further pursued. Cooperation projects in the educational sector were also continued. The volume of bilateral ADC funds (net payments) provided was 2.41 million euros.

1.3. Key Region East Africa

In the priority country Ethiopia ADC was engaged in the fields of healthcare, food security, energy supply, and science and research and contributed bilateral ADC funds (net payments) in the amount of 5.52 million euros.

Austrian Development Cooperation in the priority country Uganda was based on the country’s national Poverty Eradication Action Plan. Measures aimed at decentralisation, local development and local justice in Northern Uganda, a region affected by civil war, were prioritised. In the water sector, small public supply and sanitation systems in rural regions have been established since 1997. In the private sector, particular support was given to microcredits and business development services (non-financial services for business development) as well as organic farming. Vocational training through grants for courses in Uganda and Austria and assistance to a theatre project were continued. A special programme for social rehabilitation was conducted with regard to the conflict situation and humanitarian crisis in Northern Uganda. In the field of investment promotion, cooperation projects among companies were funded by ADC together with the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). Bilateral ADC assistance (net payments) amounted to 8.04 million euros.

In Burundi, the focus of ADC was mainly on supporting measures to improve water supply. All in all, bilateral assistance (net payments) in the amount of 0.35 million euros was provided under ADC.

In Rwanda, ADC concentrated its efforts on the setting up of a water supply fund and, through strengthening of the local Gacaca tribunal system, on the judicial appraisal of the genocide that took place between the ethnic groups in 1994. Bilateral ADC assistance (net payments) amounted to 0.2 million euros.
Priority areas in Kenya were the water sector, collaboration with NGOs and research cooperation, for which bilateral ADC funds (net payments) amounting to 1.53 million euros were made available.

In Tanzania, the focus of ADC was limited to decentralisation and the preparation of district development plans, to which bilateral ADC funds (net payments) amounting to 0.97 million euros were contributed.

1.4. Key Region Southern Africa

A thematic focus in Southern Africa was the promotion of local and regional development plans. Measures aimed at the decentralisation of state administration and the strengthening of local and smaller economic cycles combined the objective of poverty reduction with the development of basic democratic structures. At the regional level, ADC’s active participation in the common development policy dialogue between national and decentralised administrations as well as regional organisations like the SADC and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) was driven forward through existing structures in Maputo (Mozambique).

In Mozambique, ADC supported the strengthening of municipalities and local administrations in seven selected districts in the province of Sofala and furthermore prioritised projects relating to the promotion of smallholding family agriculture as well as water supply and sewerage. Bilateral assistance (net payments) amounted to 5.14 million euros.

Efforts in South Africa centred on municipal development in disadvantaged regions as well as on rural topics. Bilateral ADC funds (net payments) amounted to 0.41 million euros.

In Zimbabwe, projects by local civil society actors were supported and bilateral ADC funds (net payments) amounting to 0.86 million euros provided.

1.5. Key Region Himalayas/Hindu Kush

ADC increasingly supported common goals of the region such as sustainable mountain ecology, energy supply and protection of the environment in the framework of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

In the past few years the priority country Bhutan has made considerable progress with respect to the development of its infrastructure, healthcare and education systems. ADC contributed to this successful development through programmes in the fields of energy, tourism, culture and forest ecology by
making available funds amounting to 1.28 million euros (net payments). The Basochhu hydro-power plant, one of the largest infrastructure projects carried out by ADC, has been in full service since 2005.

In Nepal, ADC continued its cooperation 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 partner organisations and provided an amount (net payments) of 1.59 million euros.

In Pakistan, a longstanding project in the field of tourism was completed.

1.6. Key Region Palestinian Territories

ADC supports the Middle East Peace Process and, in compliance with the “Road Map”, the establishment of a viable, independent, democratic Palestinian state (see also Chapter A.V.6.2.) ADC’s engagement covered the areas of health, water, capacity building and conflict prevention as well as the dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians. Cooperation on site was effected through Palestinian NGOs and international organisations such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA). The considerably augmented ADC budget amounted to 4.1 million euros, including the Austrian contribution of 1 million euros to the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) in the healthcare sector, which Austria made as one of the first international partners. Austria’s contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), comprising 771,000 euros from the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and 750,000 euros from ADA, was increased by another 200,000 euros following an emergency appeal made by UNRWA to secure the humanitarian supply to Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

2. Bilateral Cooperation with Eastern Europe

2.1. Key Region South East Europe

The region of South East Europe, especially the Western Balkan countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia including Kosovo constituted the geographical focus. The economic and social situation in the region has remained tense despite general headway made with the integration of individual countries into European structures. ADC actions under the Three-year Programme 2006-2008 focused on private sector and development, education, environment, water and energy as well as the rule of law and civil society.
In the priority country Albania, ADC mainly supported projects in the sectors of energy and water, vocational education and training as well as regional development and a sustainable, poverty-reducing development of the tourism industry. The geographical focus was on the Shkodra area. ADC thus made an essential contribution to offering perspectives for the population in isolated areas and reducing migration from the rural areas to cities. The results of a comprehensive evaluation of the programme carried out thus far formed the basis for developing the country programme 2007-2009. Bilateral ADC assistance (net payments) amounted to 2.72 million euros.

In the priority country Bosnia and Herzegovina, the current country programme 2005-2007 with a special focus on private sector and development as well as education was implemented. In addition, actions to strengthen the common identity of the entire state of Bosnia and Herzegovina were promoted. ADC collaborated closely with the mobilising forces in the country, especially the youth. A mid-term evaluation of the programme took place at mid-year and recommended that the support priorities be continued. Under ADC bilateral funds (net payments) amounting to 2.41 million euros were provided.

In the priority country Macedonia, the country programme 2005-2007 prioritised the fields of environment, water and energy. The improvement of infrastructures as a prerequisite for economic development and the promotion of low-cost, environmentally friendly energy solutions are measures to reduce poverty and contribute to a sustainable, socially balanced development. It was recommended that actions be more strongly oriented towards EU integration and capacity building. In 2006 ADC funds (net payments) in the amount of 2.28 million euros went to Macedonia.

Cooperation with Montenegro was further increased following the opening of a coordination office in Podgorica in 2005. The focussed support for regional tourism development in the north-east region was continued, and a new tourism project in the region around Lake Scutari was launched. Programmes to improve higher education, vocational education and environmental protection complement the current programme. Bilateral ADC funds (net payments) amounted to 1.84 million euros.

In Serbia/Kosovo, cooperation was defined by the country programme 2006-2008. ADC focused its activities on private sector and development as well as education, thereby concentrating on the regions of Vojvodina and south Serbia. Important projects funded by ADC included support for the reform of land-related legal areas in Serbia and for regional development in Vojvodina. Opening up and integration were embedded as cross-cutting themes. Together with the Austrian and Kosovar ministries of education ADC initiated an institutional partnership in the field of higher education in Kosovo and funded
actions to promote economic development. Thanks to an increase in staff at the coordination office in Pristina, intensified emphasis can now be placed on programme development and evaluation of previous activities. Bilateral ADC assistance (net payments) for Serbia including Kosovo and Montenegro amounted to 6.8 million euros.

Taking account of the advancing process of EU integration, ADC’s engagement in Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania was reduced while that in Bulgaria and Romania will phase out with their accession to the EU.

In addition to the bilateral programmes, ADC will fund comprehensive regional cooperation programmes in the years to come (South East Europe Regional Programme). In this context, the focus will be placed on ensuring peace and development in the entire region in the long run. In the framework of Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council, Vienna was the venue of the first “Balkan Case Challenge”. This very successful event combined a case study competition with a job fair for South East European students.

2.2. Eastern Europe and Central Asia

With the exception of Moldova, funding in Eastern Europe and Central Asia was only given to selected projects with multilateral programmes or globally available ADC instruments because of the necessary concentration of ADC funds. The regional concept for the Southern Caucasus 2006-2008, prepared in 2006, takes account of the need for regional problem resolution. Actions to strengthen the rule of law and promote civil society are aligned with the EU Neighbourhood Programme approach and designed to contribute to preventing and resolving conflicts in the region.

The expansion of cooperation with Moldova launched in 2004 will continue in the programme period 2006-2008. ADC aims to create life perspectives in rural areas, e.g. through improvement of water supply and sanitation systems or modernisation of vocational education in agriculture. Migration and the fight against human trafficking and especially trafficking in women are further important topics for ADC in Moldova. ADC funds amounting to 0.76 million euros were provided to Moldova.

3. Special Programmes

3.1. Afghanistan

Austria supports the reconstruction and constitution-building process in Afghanistan. ADC especially focuses on the struggle against illegal drugs and the promotion of women, as well as on capacity building. It cooperated both with NGOs and with the UNDP, the United Nations Office on Drugs and
Crime (UNODC), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Funding totalling 500,000 euros was provided in this context in 2006.

3.2. Iraq

The establishment of a democratic, stable state of Iraq is one of Austria’s concerns. In solidarity with the international community and the Iraqi population and in collaboration with NGOs and multilateral organisations such as UNHCR, ADC made a contribution through bilateral technical assistance and capacity building measures. As an essential feature of support for Iraq, the Federal Ministry of Finance offered debt relief amounting to about 1.7 billion euros for the years 2005-2008.

4. Themes and Sectors

The primary objective of ADC is to reduce global poverty in all its dimensions and enable the people in the developing countries to develop their economic capacities and political interests, to satisfy basic human needs and to ensure safety, taking into account socio-cultural factors. These basic goals were further pursued in the international donor fora under the OECD Development Assistance Committee’s Network on Poverty Reduction (DAC POVNET), the European Commission and the World Bank. A documentation, indicator and monitoring system, an essential requirement in this context, was outlined on the basis of specific country programmes. Furthermore, the ADC policy document on poverty reduction was completed and further steps regarding the necessary requirements for effective operational implementation were taken.

Austria has recognised expertise in the field of rural development, especially in the fields of organic farming and regional development. By sharing this expertise ADC thus contributed substantially to poverty reduction in the partner countries. The majority of the poor population live in rural areas, where infrastructure and access to basic services and public utilities are scarce and participation in the decision-making process is insufficient. The living conditions of the rural population were improved by employing the appropriate technologies, transferring knowledge and information concerning production and marketing, and building up basic infrastructure. In the framework of rural development, ADC is especially active in African countries, but also in Central America and Nepal and increasingly in the countries of South East Europe, pursuing cooperation at both the project level and increasingly also at the programme level. Furthermore, efforts within international coordination fora such as the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD) and the Neuchâtel Initiative, an informal group of
representatives of bilateral and multilateral agencies for development cooperation in the field of agricultural consulting, also took account of the harmonisation and alignment agenda.

The promotion of local development and good governance at the local level was a priority within the framework of support to decentralisation processes in the ADC partner countries. Activities centred on capacity building of all actors at local level, empowerment of the population and the use of social capital. In addition, specific activities depending on the local context and based on local development plans were funded in order to improve the living conditions of poor population groups in disadvantaged regions and enhance their future opportunities.

In the fields of **good governance – human rights, democratisation, peacekeeping** – the focus was on strategic anchoring of the thematic complex in the work of ADC, building on existing experiences. Three new ADC policy guidelines on “Good Governance”, “Human Rights” and “Peacekeeping and Conflict Prevention” were adopted in April and relevant further training events organised for ADC staff, e.g. on the topic of transitional justice. At programme and project level, contributions for the current country programming in the field of good governance and peacekeeping were elaborated, e.g. for Bhutan and the Himalayan, Southern Caucasus and West African regions. On the other hand, new foci were set by supporting global and regional initiatives, *inter alia* with a project to strengthen African parliaments and the continuation of projects in the area of conflict prevention and global networking of non-state and civil society actors. Another project focus was on early detection of looming conflicts. 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.

**Equality between women and men** and **empowerment of disadvantaged women** is an essential principle of ADC. The ADC policy guidelines prepared in 2005 on “Gender equality and the empowerment of women” were implemented in the country and project programming by strengthening the institutional structures and capacity building. Thematic foci included gender (gender equality) and conflict as well as human trafficking/trafficking in women. During the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council, Austria contributed to the 50th session of the Commission on the Status of Women by sharing its gender expertise. The foreign policy position “Zero Tolerance for Violence against Women” was stressed in fora such as the EU, UNFPA and UNIFEM.
In the activity area of **Private Sector and Development**, implementation of the three areas defined in the ADC guidelines on “Private Sector and Development” were driven forward: improvement of the framework conditions for local enterprises and foreign investment, strengthening of the private sector in the partner countries and cooperation with Austrian and European business sectors. Within the first “pillar”, innovative multi-donor initiatives such as the regional Programme of Accounting Reform and Institutional Strengthening (REPARIS) in South East Europe were supported, on the basis of which the World Bank will establish a secretariat in Vienna in 2007. The funds to promote the local private sector were increased to approx. 6.5 million euros. Within the third pillar, the development and business partnerships with domestic enterprises introduced in 2005 were intensified: in 2006 about 4 million euros were earmarked for such projects and the number of current projects increased to 26. ADC also set a new focus by joining the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG), a group of donors to mobilise private investments in infrastructure in Africa.

Austria is committed the UN goal “Education for All”: for the sector of **education** the six Education for All goals together with the Millennium Development Goals form the most important international framework of reference. ADC’s educational programmes focused on the building of institutional and personnel capacities in the partner countries, especially in the fields of vocational education and training and higher education including science and research. Work on the elaboration of the ADC “Education Sector” guidelines was commenced in August. Furthermore, a sector evaluation was carried out, the results of which will be available in February 2007. ADC participated in the formulation of policies in the framework of the EU and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). As regards cooperation with EU candidate countries, an enlarged European education, higher education and research area is being established.

ADC continued to strengthen its profile successfully in the focus area of **energy** at bilateral project level and at multilateral level. The guidelines on “Energy for Sustainable Development” were finalised and form the strategic basis for the future orientation of this sector. In addition to its ongoing support for the EU Energy Initiative and Energy Facility, ADC arranged for two big international conferences in Vienna to better integrate the issues of energy and climate into multilateral development cooperation. During Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council ADC organised a Senior Officials Seminar on Energy in the Context of Development Cooperation at the beginning of the year. Based on preparatory work done by ADC, common quality principles for the implementation of energy projects in EU Development Cooperation were worked out, which were formally taken note of by the General Affairs and External Relations Council in April. At the end of the year, ADC hosted the Sixth Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (www.gfse.at), which focused on
the topic “Africa is energising itself”, thus making an important contribution to the preparation of the 15th Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15) in April and May 2007.

In the water sector, the focal point lay in the further development and harmonisation of bilateral regional programmes in the priority countries Cape Verde, Kenya, Mozambique and Uganda as well as the Palestinian Territories. In Uganda, Austria assumed the task of donor coordination for the water sector for one year in September. ADC’s largest individual water project in the country, South Western Towns, was at the same time changed into a national water management fund co-financed by the EU. Participation in a uniform Ugandan water sector programme is being prepared. At European level, Austria was actively involved in the EU Water Initiative. An ERA-NET project, which will be launched in 2007, was co-initiated in order to better coordinate applied research in the water sector. In the multilateral field, the cooperation with the World Bank’s “Water and Sanitation Programme” was continued. For the first time, funding and experts were provided to support the African Water Facility. Work on the ADC “Water and Settlement Sanitation” guidelines will be completed in 2007.

As regards the global protection of the environment, ADC’s efforts aimed at national and international networking proved successful. At EU level, topics such as the embodiment of environmental aspects in new funding instruments and improved cooperation at expert level in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness were pursued. National and international specialist networking concentrated on themes related to the preservation of biological diversity and responses to the negative effects of climate change. Furthermore, to mark the international year of deserts and desertification a number of activities related to development cooperation and desertification were launched.

5. 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.

Eight Austrian NGOs were awarded framework agreements for a total contractual amount of just under 10 million euros and implemented more than 80 projects in the fields of training and education, rural development and healthcare. The framework agreements also funded the posting of experts. The increase by about 1.5 million euros over the contractual amounts of previous years resulted from the new guidelines on NGO Framework Programmes,
which provide for three-year instead of one-year contracts in future. Three-year agreements have already been entered into with two contractual partners.

Within the framework of individual NGO projects, 16 projects in developing countries in the South as well as twelve projects in South East Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia were approved. 40,000 euros were awarded to eight micro-projects by Austrian NGOs.

As regards ongoing projects co-financed by the EU, contractually agreed co-financing amounts of 1.3 million euros were paid. Moreover, ten new funding agreements providing for assistance in the amount of 1.5 million euros for the next few years were entered into.

The Regional Partnership Programme, a three-year project aimed at better integrating development policy work in the civil societies of the EU Member States Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia was continued. The largely ADC-funded programme is being co-financed by those countries.

6. Evaluation

The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the ADA continued or completed several strategic evaluations on the basis of the 2006/2007 two-year programme for evaluations. In compliance with the agreed sharing of labour, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs was responsible for selecting the strategic evaluations and their themes while the ADA was in charge of their operational control. Strategic evaluations generally cover specific ADC themes, sectors or country programmes and do not address individual projects. These strategic evaluations are tendered Europe-wide according to the law on public procurement and carried out by organisations and companies which are selected on the basis of a technical appraisal of their detailed content-related and methodical concepts and awarded contracts to perform the services. In this context, the search for competent and independent evaluation teams who are familiar with the subject matter and local conditions to be able to cope with the complex task descriptions proved increasingly difficult. Strategic evaluations in 2006 centred on the fields of development information and communication, educational cooperation, culture and the promotion of cultural heritage by ADC, on harmonisation and alignment of donor programmes with the needs and priorities of the recipient countries, and on development cooperation work with Burkina Faso and Kenya.

In contrast to the strategic evaluations, the responsibilities for project evaluation lie with ADA employees who cooperate closely with the implementing organisations and coordination offices involved. In this regard, the number of evaluations for which an interim or final evaluation was
already agreed in the preparatory and initial approval phase has fortunately increased in the past few years. This increasingly served to fulfil the requirement that no project should be carried out without evaluation. The role played by the ADA Evaluation Desk and the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in these evaluations is limited to an advisory function.

At the international level, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the ADA were represented in the respective bodies and networks responsible for evaluation within the EU and within the framework of the DAC, as well as within the group of German-language evaluation services (DACH), which is composed of Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria.

III. Multilateral Development Cooperation

2005 was the year of fundamental decisions at international level and within the EU: in the framework of the DAC, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was adopted; the 2005 UN World Summit set out the necessity and key features of reform of the UN development architecture; inside the EU the European Consensus on Development was adopted, setting out a common framework of cooperation policy principles that is binding on both the European Commission and the EU Member States. All these decisions were based on the awareness that the Millennium Development Goals can only be achieved if the efficiency of the development system is increased considerably, in addition to the provision of additional funds. The international community started to implement these decisions in 2006.

1. United Nations

In February UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed a new High-Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance, Environment to work out concrete proposals for reform of the United Nations development architecture. The High-Level Panel convened, inter alia, in Vienna on 15 May. The first discussion of the topic within the EU was organised in the form of a high-level seminar in Vienna on 9 June. The report of the High-Level Panel dated 9 November, contains approaches for a comprehensive restructuring of the system of United Nations representations in developing countries and important reform proposals for the areas of sustainability and gender. The conclusions were supported by the EU.

Thematically the international community centred on two issues: the campaign against HIV/AIDS and international migration and development. The High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS took place from 31 May to 2 June. The final document moved the agenda forward on issues in the area of children
and young people, the rights of women and the right of general access to prevention programmes as well as assistance and care. The international discussion on international migration and development culminated in the UN High-Level Dialogue on 14 and 15 September, which was preceded by the 39th Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development held in New York from 3 to 7 April. Austria, holding the Presidency of the EU Council, advocated the strengthening of the status of vulnerable groups and the offer of development cooperation to become active in rendering support in the field of migration.

About 4.9 billion US dollars were available to UNDP and were used according to the Funding Framework 2006-2007 to further the five strategic goals of organisation, democratisation, poverty reduction, energy and environmental protection, crisis prevention/reconstruction and the campaign against HIV/AIDS. Austria increased its contribution to the UNDP core budget to 4.3 million euros. In addition, the Thematic Trust Funds on Energy/Environment, Democratic Governance and HIV/AIDS were funded with an amount of 500,000 euros each. These thematic priorities were tied to the implementation of UNDP programmes in Austrian partner countries. This helps to back up bilateral thematic and geographical focal points from the multilateral side as well.

The UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) has been vested with the mandate to support structures and democratic development processes at local level, issues of planning, management and the participation of civil society being especially to the fore. UNCDF not only renders assistance with the establishment of the financial sector through local development programmes and microfinance projects, but also supports the building of democratic structures at local level. Austria is especially interested in intensifying its relationship with UNCDF with regard to the latter and increased the Austrian contribution to the core budget to 82,000 euros, as well as contributing an amount of 172,500 euros for a project to strengthen local administrative structures in Northern Uganda.

UNFPA is a relatively small and decentralised UN programme which supports projects for monitoring demographic developments. The organisation plays an important role in the central theme of reproductive health, both focusing on the prevention of HIV/AIDS and strengthening the role of girls and women. Austria raised its contributions to the core budget to 700,000 euros and supported UNFPA by financing a campaign to combat obstetric fistula in Ethiopia as well as making contributions totalling 376,000 euros to the Common Funds for Commodities.

UNICEF started to implement the Medium-Term Strategic Plan it adopted in the previous year. The five priorities set forth in this Plan further bundle the
Organisation’s efforts. In recognition of the work achieved by UNICEF, Austria raised its contribution to the core budget to 1.2 million euros. In addition, 750,000 euros were allocated to the fight against polio and 100,000 euros to combating the spread of HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia.

From Austria’s perspective, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) plays a central role in achieving equality between women and men. Austria therefore increased its contribution to the core budget to about 100,000 euros. In addition, an amount of 300,000 euros was made available for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security adopted by the UN Security Council and another 100,000 euros were provided to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. The report prepared by the High-Level Panel recognises the central role of gender equality in sustainable development, a position long held by Austria.

In the development context, the issue of urban agglomeration is increasingly important and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) does excellent work in this field. In recognition of these achievements Austria increased its contribution to 66,000 euros.

At the beginning of the year, the new Director-General of UNIDO, Kandeh K. Yumkella (Sierra Leone), took office. On 28 November, the Organisation celebrated its 40th anniversary. At the ceremony international recognition was expressed for this organisation which, after years of restructuring, has become one of the most efficient UN organisations in the field of development cooperation. Austria’s high level of financial contributions remained unchanged: in addition to its contributions to the core budget, UNIDO programmes for environmentally sound production technologies were again funded with 1 million euros. In order to increase the international visibility of the Organisation, Austria financed a UNIDO side-event during CSD-14 on the main topics of energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change.

The European Commission is one of the biggest contributors to the UN funds and programmes in the field of development. As a net contributor to the EU budget, Austria makes an indirect contribution to these.

2. European Union

One of the central tasks during Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council was putting the fundamental development policy decisions made in 2005 into practice at the EU level as well. A fundamental political agreement on the future design and simplification of development instruments was reached with the European Parliament: instead of over 20 external financing
instruments, there will be only two instruments in the development field in future besides the EDF – a financing instrument for development cooperation and a financing instrument for the global promotion of democracy and human rights. Furthermore, the new Stability Instrument was established as a novel and globally effective instrument of Community assistance.

The ACP-EC Council of Ministers, meeting in Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea) on 2 June, agreed on the provision of resources to the 10th European Development Fund. The EU set the aggregate amount of Community aid to the ACP States at 24.71 billion euros for the period 2008-2013, including the funds from the European Investment Bank (EIB), thus impressively underpinning its financial commitment to development.

Austria followed the negotiations between the European Commission and the ACP States to work out regional economic partnerships and called, inter alia, for the incorporation of development components. The criteria for the procedure and form of the mid-term review scheduled for the beginning of 2007 concerning the progress made in the negotiations on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) were defined, in which context special importance was attached to the area of Aid for Trade. The EU confirmed its pledge to raise annual trade-related development spending to 2 billion euros by 2010. Against the background of slackening world trade talks, the success of the EPA negotiations was all the more important.

Regarding the Africa Peace Facility which was established in the 9th EDF and whose funds were almost completely used up, the General Affairs and External Relations Council decided on 10 and 11 April to continue allocating funds also in the 10th EDF.

Collaboration among the EU donors was improved. A comprehensive action plan was designed to accelerate measures of adjustment, simplification and enhanced coordination within the EU. Specifically, a common framework for the country strategy papers was adopted, which all EU Member States are also to use for their bilateral country planning. Furthermore, the second half of the year saw a political debate on models of sharing of labour between the EU Member States and the European Commission in the field of development cooperation.

In 2006, the pledges made by the European Council in 2005 to increase the development policy coherence of external EU activities were put into concrete terms in the relevant working plans.

As far as the Caribbean and Pacific regions are concerned, specific EU regional policies were elaborated which take full account of the specific features of partnership with these regions. In relation to the Africa strategy, a Road Map
was drawn up. With respect to the implementation of the European Consensus on Development Cooperation and the EU-Africa Strategy, details relating to a Global Governance Initiative by the EU and an EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure were elaborated. These will be supported by an EIB trust fund to which Austria will also contribute.

The relation between migration and development was repeatedly at the centre of political debates and Council conclusions at EU level.

2.1. Assignments completed by Young Austrians

Thirteen young Austrians were given the opportunity to serve on limited duty tours as Junior Professional Officers (JPO) with UN organisations to gain development policy experience. Austrian JPOs were employed with UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR and UNFPA, working either at the headquarters of organisations or in external representation networks, such as Addis Ababa, Bratislava, Jerusalem, Nairobi and Peru.

Furthermore, four young Austrian professionals were posted for a period of two years to delegations of the European Commission in Ethiopia, Mexico, Namibia and Vietnam. In analogy to the JPO Programme, the Community’s “Junior Experts in Delegation” Training Programme enables qualified university graduates to complete a one to two year duty tour in the External Service Delegations of the European Commission, fully funded by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and/or the European Commission.

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 competent Federal Ministry of the Interior. The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs supports humanitarian emergency actions, the launch of reconstruction measures and disaster prevention. The funds for international humanitarian aid can be provided to either international organisations or NGOs.

Austria continued to contribute to the large-scale international aid operation that was launched at the beginning of 2005 for the regions in the Indian Ocean rim countries affected by the devastating tsunami disaster of 26 December 2004. In 2005, an amount of 11 million euros in subsidies was provided by the federal government, the federal provinces and municipalities for projects in
the fields of school cooperation, national reconciliation, protection of children and women, reconstruction of villages, protection of the environment, mine clearance, water treatment and purification, infrastructure building, economic recovery, education and training, as well as tourism. The overall funds (net payments) for such measures amounted to 5.6 million euros in 2006.

In connection with the war in Lebanon in July and August, the federal government agreed to provide humanitarian emergency aid in the amount of 500,000 euros from the Relief Fund for International Disasters. This assistance managed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and NGOs primarily served to provide emergency services to the population who were severely affected by the acts of war in Southern Lebanon, as well as to internally displaced persons. At the Conference for Lebanon’s Early Recovery and the Humanitarian Situation in the Palestinian Territories on 31 August in Stockholm, Austria pledged to provide another 400,000 euros for mine and cluster ammunition clearance. The programme is handled by the ADA through the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).

In the framework of international disaster relief, Austria rendered assistance to the regions that were struck by severe floods in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia. Further aid in connection with flood disasters was provided to Ethiopia, Kenya and Namibia.

In May, a severe earthquake hit Java (Indonesia). Austria provided emergency aid within the Civil Protection Mechanism of the European Commission. Humanitarian aid was further provided in the wake of the severe earthquake that beset Kashmir in October 2005.

Moreover, the federal government provided humanitarian aid on a worldwide scale through the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), whose budget amounted to some 670 million euros.

1.1. Austrian Anti-personnel Mine Campaigns

The mine action programme of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs includes mine clearance projects in affected areas, socio-economic rehabilitation of mine victims, general information and awareness building concerning mine risks. Funds spent in 2006 in this connection focused on Ethiopia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, Mozambique and Southern Sudan and amounted to 1.8 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 in collaboration with the ADA. Prioritised areas were the traditional crisis regions of Africa. In the framework of the International Food Aid Convention, Austria made a contribution of 1.5 million euros. The funds provided to Eritrea (200,000 euros), Kenya (490,000 euros), Malawi (200,000 euros), Mozambique (300,000 euros) and Niger (300,000 euros) were processed through the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

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 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. Austria continued to hold its traditional chairmanship of the Consultative Group on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets. Funds provided by Austria amounted to 93,000 euros.

The programme of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) system was supported through funds from the Federal Ministry of the Interior amounting to some 15,000 euros.

2.2. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The 57th Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme met in Geneva from 2 to 6 October and dealt with the role of UNHCR in the treatment of refugees, internally displaced persons and complex migration movements. With a budget of about 1 billion US dollars, UNHCR is one of the largest relief organisations operating worldwide. In future, UNHCR will increasingly engage with issues related to internally displaced persons, a topic which is also a priority of Austria’s human rights policy.

Against the backdrop of the humanitarian fate of thousands of so-called boat people on the West and North African coasts and other victims of human trafficking and smuggling, UNHCR strove to implement the 10-Point Plan of Action presented at the EU-Africa Conference on Migration and Development in Rabat (Morocco) in July.

In addition to its untied payment to the core budget amounting to 450,000 euros, Austria supported UNHCR by funding concrete projects, for instance in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Kenya.

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2.3. The International Committee of the Red Cross

Austria supported the important global contribution of the ICRC to alleviating humanitarian distress in Ethiopia, Lebanon, Uganda and the East African region by providing almost 1.5 million euros. Austria contributed 555,000 euros to the ICRC headquarters budget, thus considerably increasing its core budget contribution over the previous year.

In addition to the successful conclusion of the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in June, at which Austria – holding the Presidency of the EU Council – was decisively involved in the creation of the Red Crystal emblem as a new protection symbol (see Chapter G.VII.5.), the operations in Lebanon and Sudan are to be emphasised. In the Lebanon crisis, the ICRC provided important emergency measures to the civilian population from the onset and was able to gain the confidence of both parties to the conflict. In Sudan, and particularly in the Darfur region from which many international relief organisations had to withdraw because of considerable security problems, about 2,000 relief personnel from the ICRC maintained a presence.
E. Global Cooperation – The United Nations

I. Introduction

Within the framework of the UN Austria is particularly committed to promoting the protection of human rights and rule of law, its active contribution to peace and security being based on extensive participation in peacekeeping operations worldwide. In order to support these targets and further strengthen an effective international cooperation, Austria is standing as a candidate for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC) for the period 2009–2010.

The implementation of the reform decisions of the 2005 World Summit dominated the work of the UN and of the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council during the first half of the year. An agreement on the establishment of the Human Rights Council, the composition of the Peacebuilding Commission, and important progress in the administrative reform of the UN Secretariat were achieved. In terms of content, the work focused on the representation of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in the UN Security Council on Ethiopia/Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Somalia, Timor-Leste, as well as on Kosovo and the Middle East. On 9 May, Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik delivered a statement on Sudan in the UN Security Council on behalf of the EU. During its EU Council Presidency, Austria contributed to consolidating the EU’s coherent appearance and thus to enhancing its visibility as a credible and strong partner of the UN.

Succeeding Kofi Annan, Ban Ki-moon was sworn in as the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations in December.

II. The United Nations General Assembly

1. Procedural Matters

1.1. General Debate

The General Debate of the 61st UN General Assembly (UNGA), which took place in New York from 19 to 27 September, was dedicated to the implementation of a global partnership for development. With the exception of Djibouti, the Palestinian Authority, and the Holy See all Member States took the floor.

Addressing the UNGA on 21 September, Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik appreciated the achievements of the outgoing UN Secretary-General Kofi
Annan. In her speech entitled “United in Diversity” the Federal Minister focused on the role played by the UN in promoting peace and security, the empowerment of women and the dialogue among civilizations. She stressed the importance of a dialogue among civilizations and cultures that should not only take place on an international level but also begin in our societies and be integrated in the daily work of the United Nations. Minister Plassnik also addressed the situation in the Middle East, in Sudan and in the Western Balkans, referred to climate change as a major challenge and pointed to Austria’s commitment in this area. Finally, she promoted Austria’s candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the period 2009-2010.

During the annual Ministerial Week, Federal Minister Plassnik held bilateral talks with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the President of the UN General Assembly Sheika Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa as well as with the Crown Prince of Qatar and the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Ghana, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Syria and Turkey. Federal Minister Plassnik also met with the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea, Ban Ki-moon. State Secretary Hans Winkler also held a number of bilateral talks during the Ministerial Week. On the sidelines of the General Debate, Federal Minister Plassnik participated in a meeting of female foreign ministers on the topic of "Women’s Empowerment" organised at the initiative and invitation of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. The meetings of the Human Security Network and of the Alliance of Civilizations provided further opportunities for contacts and discussions. The EU Foreign Ministers met for talks with President Mahmud Abbas, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, as well as the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Future Status Process for Kosovo Martti Ahtisaari.

After longer consultations on seven candidates and four informal voting procedures, the UN Security Council reached agreement on the future UN Secretary-General on 9 October: Ban Ki-moon was recommended to the UN General Assembly as the successor to Kofi Annan. On 13 October, the UN General Assembly formally appointed Ban Ki-moon as the eighth UN Secretary-General. In both the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly decisions were taken by acclamation and not by secret ballot, which was regarded as a show of confidence. The five-year term in office of Ban Ki-moon, who was Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Austria from 1998 to 2000, will begin on 1 January 2007.
2. Political Affairs

2.1. The Middle East

The Middle East issue dominated the discussions during the autumn meeting of the 61st UN General Assembly, a fact that was reflected in two special sessions and various committees of the UN General Assembly.

The enlarged EU adopted a common voting policy regarding the 19 annual resolutions on the Middle East, with the exception of the resolution on the “Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People” and the resolution on a “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, continued to vote in favour of these resolutions.

Moreover, as a result of the Lebanon war in the summer, Lebanon introduced resolutions against Israel in the Second Committee (Economic and Financial) on the “Lebanese oil spill”, which was supported by the EU, and in the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) on the “Human rights situation in Lebanon”, on which the EU abstained from voting.

After more than 20 civilians had died during an Israeli attack on the village of Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip on 8 November, and a UN Security Council resolution failed to pass as a result of a US veto, the 10th Emergency Special Session of the UN General Assembly was resumed to discuss the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. The negotiations between the Palestinians and the EU resulted in a balanced text, so that the EU unanimously voted in favour of the resolution on 17 November.

Since the International Court of Justice (ICJ) had established in a legal opinion in 2004 that the construction of the Israeli Separation Wall on occupied Palestinian territory is in violation of international law, and that Israel is therefore obliged to pay compensation for damage caused by its erection, the 10th Emergency Special Session in July 2004 had called upon the UN Secretary-General to establish a Register of Damage arising from the construction of the wall by Israel. After the UN Secretary-General had presented his report in October, the 10th Emergency Special Session decided during its resumed session on 15 December to establish the Register of Damage and an office of the Register at the UN Headquarters in Vienna. The EU voted unanimously in favour of this resolution.
2.2. Disarmament and International Security

A stocktaking of the multilateral disarmament instruments carried out during the session of the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) from 1 to 30 October was rather disillusioning. The limited progress achieved is attributable to the increasing divergence of views between the USA and the international community in general, and between the USA and the EU in particular.

No progress was achieved in the area of nuclear disarmament. The session was overshadowed by the nuclear bomb test carried out by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea on 9 October, which was directly reflected in the work of the committee.

The adoption of a resolution for a future Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) helped strengthen the political framework in the area of conventional weapons. The resolution, which was proposed by the United Kingdom and supported by all EU Member States, was adopted with 139 votes in favour and demands the negotiation of a treaty on the regulation of trade with conventional weapons. The USA was the only UN Member State to vote against the resolution.

On behalf of like-minded states Austria presented an initiative for an international law instrument concerning cluster ammunition, thus underscoring the traditional humanitarian commitment of its foreign policy.

Despite resistance from the USA, Austria’s lobbying to hold the preparatory committee for the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 2007 in Vienna was finally crowned with success.

2.3. Small Arms and Light Weapons

Three months after the failed Review Conference of the UN Action Programme against the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) clear stances were adopted. 172 states supported the Action Programme in a resolution and decided to hold the next Biennial Meeting of States not later than 2008. The USA remained isolated in its rejection of the resolution.

2.4. The United Nations Disarmament Commission

The working session of the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) ended on 28 April without producing any substantial results. Neither the ”official“ and/or ”unofficial“ nuclear powers, nor the majority of the members of the Non-Allied Movement (NAM) showed any willingness to compromise. During the session, the EU presented itself as a united and constructive power.
The lengthy procedural debate and the unwillingness of many members to reach a result acceptable by all sides are raising questions as to the future of UNDC.

3. Economic, Development, and Environmental Affairs

In the field of development, a resolution was adopted under Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council which reaffirms the will to implement the measures necessary to accomplish the Millennium Development Goals. Consultations on a reform in the field of the environment involved an initial stocktaking and a discussion over a coherent and efficient structure for the widely ramified area of International Environmental Governance. The discussions revealed a wide range of possible approaches, such as the establishment of an International Environmental Organization (UNEO), the strengthening of the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) and greater coherence between international environmental treaties.

See Chapter D.III.1. on the High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development.

On 18 and 19 September a review meeting was held on the implementation of the Brussels Action Programme for the Least Developed Countries for the decade 2001-2010, which had been adopted at the Third UN Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDC III) in May 2001.

The Second Committee discussed issues like strengthening the voice of the South in economic and financial institutions, trade and globalisation, climate change, desertification, and biodiversity. Macroeconomic aspects remained a controversial issue. No consensus was reached on the importance of international trade for development. The majority of the other resolutions were adopted unanimously. The committee also adopted a comprehensive review of the results of the International Conference on Development Funding in Doha in the second half of 2008. The year 2009 was declared the Year of Natural Fibres, 2010 the Year of Biodiversity, and 2011 the Year of Forests.

4. Human Rights

See Chapter G.III.

5. Drug Control and Crime Prevention

See Chapters H.II. and H.III.
6. Social Policy

The 44th session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) that took place in New York from 8 to 17 February was dominated by both the main topics defined in 2001, the evaluation of the first UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) and review of the implementation of action plans for social groups, as well as the working methods of the Commission and its choice of topics for the coming years.

On 13 December, following a five-year negotiation process, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities by consensus. As a mechanism for its implementation the Convention provides for the establishment of an expert committee for the review of country reports and individual complaints.

7. International Women’s Affairs


8. Humanitarian Affairs

In March, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), proposed in the final document of the 2005 World Summit, was established for the funding of humanitarian measures in the UN system. By the end of the year, 372 million US dollars out of the initially envisaged amount of 500 million US dollars for 2007 were raised, thus establishing an initial sound basis for the funding of humanitarian operations.

The majority of resolutions on humanitarian affairs were adopted by consensus in the Third Committee and in the Plenary Session. Only the text of the resolution on assistance to the Palestinian people was adopted in a voting requested by the USA, due to its lack of reference to the principles of the Middle East Quartet.

9. Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

This year’s sessions of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and its subcommittees achieved positive results. The committee members agreed on the formulation of guidelines for space debris and on the involvement of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the elaboration of safety standards for nuclear-powered energy sources. The debate focused on the creation of a new unit as a one-stop shop to support those involved in disaster management, and to act as a platform for information exchange in the area of space technology support to disaster
management. By decision of the UN General Assembly, this unit was established as a new programme within the Vienna-based United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs with offices in Bonn and Beijing, thus setting-up the network "UN Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response" (SPIDER).

As in previous years, a space symposium on "Space tools for monitoring air pollution and energy use for sustainable development" was organised in Graz. An international group of participants discussed topics like the use of space technologies to monitor air pollution, energy production and energy use, and the participation of women in the relevant decision-making processes.

10. Administrative and Budgetary Affairs

The dominant issue of the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) for the period 2007-2009 was the UN scale of assessments. The agreement reached on 22 December is based on the calculation methodology employed for the 2001-2006 scale of assessments. The Austrian share in the regular budget of the UN for the period 2007-2009 will amount to 0.887%.

Following several years of negotiations, the UN General Assembly reached an agreement on the project strategy and funding of the overall capital master plan for the aged UN Headquarters in New York. This plan provides for a total cost of 1.88 billion US dollars. The rehabilitation will be carried out in stages from 2007 to 2014, and will be funded by the Member States in accordance with the scale of assessments for 2007.

As regards the implementation of the management reform adopted at the World Summit, progress was achieved in the fields of information technology, financial management, improvement of transparency and reporting, human resources, procurement and auditing. The limitation of the expenditure authorisation to 950 million US dollars, which was imposed on the 2006-2007 budget in December 2005 after pressure from the USA and Japan, was lifted by consensus in July as a result of the progress achieved in management reform. The EU assumed an important mediating role in this context.

With 5.25 billion US dollars, the annual budget approved for peacekeeping operations from July 2006 to June 2007 is slightly above previous year's budget.
11. International Law

Work in the area of international law focused on the issues of terrorism (UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism), the rule of law and on the discussion of the report presented by the International Law Commission during the “International Law Week”. The Sixth Committee (Legal) also dealt with the work of the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), the criminal accountability of UN staff and experts, the reform of the administration of justice system in the UN, and the relationship of the UN to the USA as the host nation.

11.1. Terrorism

On 8 September, after just four months of negotiations that began during the Austrian EU Council Presidency in May, the UN General Assembly adopted the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by consensus in the presence of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the President of the UN General Assembly Jan Eliasson. The adoption of the strategy represented a strong political signal for the role and unity of the UN General Assembly in the fight against terrorism and an important success in the implementation of the 2005 UN World Summit results. The 62nd UNGA will examine the progress of implementation and possible updates to the strategy.

In contrast, negotiations on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism did not produce any significant progress, despite the declared intent in the World Summit document to complete the negotiations by the end of the 60th UN General Assembly. Especially the issue of an exception for freedom fighters remains controversial. The negotiations will be resumed in February 2007.

11.2. Rule of Law

The new agenda item “Rule of law at the national and international levels“, which was proposed by Mexico and Liechtenstein and had been prepared under the Austrian initiative for strengthening the rule of law, was met with great interest. During the debate in the Sixth Committee, attended by more than 80 states from all regional groups, Austria was able to establish its demand for a quick establishment of a unit in the UN Secretariat with a broad mandate for the coordination of all UN activities on the rule of law as a common EU position. In accordance with this demand, which received the support of a large majority, the UN Secretary-General, on 20 December, presented a report on the establishment of a coordination group with a Secretariat unit.
On 4 December, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 61/39 by consensus, in which it confirms the necessity for universal compliance with and implementation of the rule of law at national and international levels as recognised by the 2005 UN World Summit, as well as the commitment to an international order based on the rule of law and international law. Moreover, the UN General Assembly called upon the UN Secretary-General to prepare various reports on the topic of the rule of law for the 62nd and 63rd UN General Assembly, in particular an inventory of all activities of the UN System and a report on the identification of possibilities for strengthening and coordinating these activities.

11.3. International Law Week

The International Law Week, named after an Austrian proposal, was held from 23 to 27 October and brought together legal advisers from capitals of UN Member States to discuss international law issues in the Sixth Committee. As in previous years, the top item on the meeting’s agenda was the debate on the report prepared by the International Law Commission (ILC) which dealt with a number of current international law issues such as diplomatic protection, international liability, shared natural resources, responsibility of international organisations, reservations to treaties, the effects of armed conflicts on treaties, “aut dedere aut iudicare” (either extradite or try), and fragmentation of international law.

Following the success of the previous years, 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 Executive?" on 26 October. The event attracted more than 120 participants and was one of the highlights of the International Law Week. Under the Austrian-Swedish initiative to add new momentum to the Sixth Committee, three interactive discussions took place on the future topics to be dealt with by the ILC and on the issue of the preparation of conventions on diplomatic protection and the principles of liability based on the relevant ILC drafts.

III. The United Nations Security Council

1. Introduction

The UN Security Council consisted of the five permanent members China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and the elected members Argentina, Congo, Denmark, Ghana, Greece, Japan, Peru, Qatar, Slovakia, and Tanzania. To replace Argentina, Denmark, Greece, Japan,
and Tanzania, whose term ended at the end of the year, the 61st UN General Assembly elected Belgium, Indonesia, Italy, Panama, and South Africa to the UN Security Council. After a stalemate in 47 election rounds between the Latin American candidates Guatemala and Venezuela, Panama was elected as a compromise candidate to the UN Security Council.

A large number of open debates, 20 during the Austrian and 19 during the Finnish Presidency, enabled the EU Council Presidency to maintain the visibility of the EU in the UN Security Council. The successful implementation of the EU military operation in support of MONUC during the election process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo further enhanced the EU’s visibility. As President of the EU Council, Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik made a statement on Sudan during the open debate at ministerial level on 9 May.

Austria is standing as a candidate for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the period 2009-2010. 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.

2. The Reform Debate

The negotiations on a reform of the UN Security Council have been going on for several years. The primary topic is an enlargement of the UN Security Council and a reform of its working methods. Despite considerable support for the present proposals in connection with the working methods, no specific steps towards reform have been taken so far.


3.1. The Middle East

In a Presidential Statement of 3 February, the UN Security Council closely followed the statement of the Middle East Quartet of 31 January, in which the latter had welcomed the free and fair holding of elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council but had at the same time defined the renunciation of violence, the recognition of Israel, and the observance of all previous agreements as a fundamental requirement for cooperation with a Hamas-led government. Following the abduction of an Israeli soldier at the border to the Gaza Strip and military action by Israel in response, the USA with its veto blocked the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution on 13 July. During a debate in the UN Security Council at ministerial level on 21 September, in which UN Secretary-General Annan identified the conflict between Israelis
and Palestinians as the core of the problems in the region and demanded a more active role by the Middle East Quartet, there was a broad consensus on the need to revive the Middle East Peace Process. After an Israeli attack on a village in Gaza on 8 November, which killed more than 20 civilians, the USA with its veto once again blocked the adoption of a resolution by the UN Security Council. On 11 December, the UN Secretary-General presented a comprehensive report on the Middle East Peace Process, in which he demanded more clarity on the final result as a basis for future progress.

The consultations of the UN Security Council on Lebanon were dominated by the Israeli campaign in Lebanon, which began after Hezbollah supporters had abducted two Israeli soldiers on 12 July. For a long time, the UN Security Council could not reach agreement on the steps to be taken. On 25 July, four military observers, including the Austrian Major Helmut Lang, were killed by an Israeli air strike at a post of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in Khiam. In a Presidential Statement of 27 July, the UN Security Council expressed its shock and grief over the death of the four observers, extended its condolences to the bereaved families, demanded a comprehensive investigation into the incident, and underscored the obligation under international law to ensure the safety and security of UN personnel. Austria called for further measures to increase the safety and security of UN peacekeepers, in particular to improve the communication between UN troops and the armed forces of the host country and/or the parties to a conflict in order to establish a quick and effective link in emergency situations, as well as the explicit proscription of the location of illegal armed groups in close proximity of UN positions in future mandates of the UN Security Council for peace operations. After the Israeli attack on the village of Qana, the UN Security Council expressed its shock over the death of dozens of civilians in a Presidential Statement on 30 July and called for an end to the violence. On 11 August, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1701, in which it called for a full cessation of hostilities. An increase of UNIFIL troops to up to 15,000 troops and the creation of a Maritime Task Force (MTF) laid the groundwork for the withdrawal of Israel behind the Blue Line and a simultaneous joint occupation of this area by the Lebanese army and UNIFIL. The UN Security Council imposed a weapons embargo against all parties except the government, demanded the extension of Lebanese control to the entire state territory and called upon Israel and Lebanon to support a permanent armistice and seek a lasting solution.

The head of the International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIIC), which was established to support the Lebanese authorities in the investigation of the bomb attack on former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in 2005, Serge Brammertz, reported at quarterly intervals to the UN Security Council on the progress made by the commission. On 18 December, he reported that the final report of the forensic experts contained clear links
between the attack on the former Lebanese Prime Minister and the 14 other bomb attacks that the UNIIIC was responsible for investigating. Although Brammertz described Syrian cooperation as "generally satisfactory", there were delays in connection with cooperation requests to ten other states. On 15 June, UNSC resolution 1686 extended the mandate of the IIC by one year. In response to the assassination of the Lebanese Industry Minister Pierre Gemayel the mandate was expanded on 21 November to include this case too. In November, the draft of a treaty between the UN and Lebanon for the establishment of a "Tribunal with International Character" on the assassination of the former Lebanese Prime Minister, and the draft of the status of the tribunal were approved by the Lebanese government and the UN Security Council. The tribunal is to be established outside Lebanon, apply Lebanese criminal law, and have a mixed bench of judges. Jurisdiction for the 14 other cases is possible if the tribunal deems this proper following examination of certain criteria. All the evidence collected by the UNIIIC will be handed over to the tribunal, which has to decide on its admissibility.

3.2. Iraq

In a Presidential Statement of 14 February, the UN Security Council welcomed the announcement of the preliminary results of the Iraqi parliamentary elections of 15 December 2005, and congratulated the Iraqi people on their commitment to a peaceful, democratic process. In its Presidential Statement of 24 May, the UN Security Council welcomed the inauguration of the elected government established on a broad basis, and described this as a milestone in the Iraqi transition process.

The head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), SRSG Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, and the USA reported to the UN Security Council on the situation in Iraq at quarterly intervals. The rampant sectarian violence became an increasingly prominent issue in the public sessions. During the open debate on 14 September, SRSG Qazi spoke of the "most violent conflict zone" in the world, which is threatening to descend into civil war. He pointed out that the greatest challenge was to reach national reconciliation and an improvement of the security situation, which could only be achieved through negotiations. UNAMI sought to strengthen human rights and the rule of law in the country. The permanent representative of the USA, John Bolton, admitted setbacks in the fight against the insurgents, but described the gradual transfer of responsibility for the security situation to Iraqi security forces as a progress. The Iraqi ambassador emphasized the importance of the government’s "national reconciliation plan" and rejected the notion of a civil war in Iraq.

On 10 August, UN Security Council resolution 1700 extended the UNAMI mandate by another twelve months. On 28 November, UN Security Council resolution 1723 extended the mandates of the Multinational Force (MNF), the
Development Fund for Iraq, and the International Monitoring Council until 31 December 2007, though these mandates will be subjected to a review by 15 June 2007. Moreover, the UN Security Council acknowledged the importance of the International Compact with Iraq (ICI) as an Iraqi initiative for a long-term development partnership with Iraq and welcomed the important role of the UN as co-chair of the ICI.

3.3. Iran

Since the reference of the Iranian nuclear programme to the UN Security Council by the IAEA Board of Governors on 4 February, the UN Security Council has been deliberating on this issue. In a Presidential Statement of 29 March, the UN Security Council expressed its serious concern over the large number of IAEA reports and resolutions on Iran. The Security Council called upon Iran to take all the steps demanded by the IAEA Board of Governors and to suspend all activities in the area of uranium enrichment and reprocessing.

Since Iran did not take the steps called for within the 30-day period set by the UN Security Council, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1696 on 31 July with one dissenting vote by Qatar. Invoking Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the resolution called upon Iran to immediately take all the steps demanded by the IAEA Board of Governors and to suspend all enrichment and reprocessing activities. The UN Security Council endorsed the “3+3 countries” package of incentives put forward by China, Russia, and the USA as well as Germany, France, and the United Kingdom, with the support of the European Union for Iran, and threatened economic and diplomatic sanctions in case Iran failed to implement the provisions of the resolution.

Since Iran also failed to comply with this 30-day deadline, after months of negotiations the UN Security Council on 23 December unanimously adopted resolution 1737 under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, imposing sanctions on Iran for the first time. The UN Security Council issued an import/export ban for sensitive goods that could be used for uranium enrichment, reprocessing, construction of a heavy water reactor, or the development of nuclear weapon delivery systems. Moreover, it introduced a notification obligation for international travel movements of persons who are involved in the Iranian nuclear programme as well as financial sanctions, ordered restrictions to the technical cooperation provided by IAEA to Iran, and established a sanctions committee. The UN Security Council threatened to introduce further sanctions should Iran continue to fail to comply with its demands.

3.4. Afghanistan

On 15 February, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1659 endorsing the Afghanistan Compact, which emphasizes the obligations of both sides, and
its annexes which provide the framework for the development partnership with Afghanistan. On 23 March, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1662, extending the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) by another twelve months, thus agreeing with the recommendations made by the UN General Assembly regarding an adjustment of the mandate and welcoming the proposal to extend the reach of the regional offices. Austria appointed Brigadier Wohlgemuth as the senior military advisor to this mission. On 12 September the Council decided in resolution 1707 to extend the ISAF mandate for a period of 12 months, leaving the content of the mandate unchanged.

The trip undertaken by the UN Secretary-General to Afghanistan from 11 to 16 November and the open debate in the UN Security Council on 7 December confirmed that the security situation has significantly deteriorated especially in the East, South, and South-East of the country, that the cultivation of opium poppy had reached unprecedented levels, and that there is a risk of compromising the progress made since 2001 unless quick and concentrated efforts are undertaken to create a secure environment, to fight the cultivation of and trafficking in drugs, corruption, bad governance and impunity, as well as to foster economic development in all regions of the country. A central role was attributed to the cross-border cooperation with Pakistan.

3.5. Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

On 15 July, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1695 condemning the missile tests carried out by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea on 5 July, and demanding a suspension of all relevant activities and a return to the previous moratorium. After the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea had carried out a nuclear bomb test on 9 October, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1718 on 14 October, in which it condemned the test and demanded the return of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the IAEA Safeguards Agreements. The resolution also demanded that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea abandoned all programmes in connection with missiles, atomic and nuclear weapons, and other weapons of mass destruction. To enforce the resolution, the UN Security Council imposed a weapons embargo, a trade embargo on all goods that could contribute to the North Korean weapons of mass destruction programmes, and an embargo on luxury goods. Moreover, the UN Security Council decided to freeze North Korean assets and to impose travel restrictions, and established a sanctions committee.
3.6. Timor-Leste

The mandate of the UN Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) was scheduled to expire on 20 May. Due to domestic policy escalation in May, which required another military intervention led by Australia, the UN Security Council had to review its approach. On 25 August, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1704 establishing UNMIT, which is significantly larger than its predecessor, for a period of six months. Apart from its strong security component, UNMIT has a mandate to promote political stability and the reconciliation process, to provide assistance in the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2007, to restore public safety, review the security sector, build institutional capacities, and assist the investigation into human rights violations committed in 1999.

3.7. Myanmar

During informal consultations, the alarming situation in Myanmar and the Good Offices of the UN Secretary-General were discussed. In September, Myanmar was officially placed on the agenda of the UN Security Council after a voting in which China, Congo, and Russia voted against the proposal. Towards the end of the year, the USA increased its lobbying for a resolution, the adoption of which was, however, blocked by the veto of China and Russia.

3.8. Kosovo

See Chapter A.V.3.1.2.

3.9. Bosnia and Herzegovina

See Chapter A.V.3.1.4.

3.10. Cyprus

After the failure of the referendum on the Annan Plan on the Greek side on 24 April 2004, no new initiatives were launched by the UN towards a solution of the Cyprus issue. Following a visit to the region, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Ibrahim Gambari reported to the UN Security Council in August that there were still diverging positions between the parties. The UN Security Council continued to support the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and called upon Cyprus to implement the agreements by both sides of 8 July on further steps towards a resolution of the conflict. On 15 December, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution on the extension of the mandate of the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) by another six months until 15 June 2007.
3.11. Africa

The trends of the last few years continued. On the one hand conflicts in Africa account for most of the work of the UN Security Council, which is also reflected in the fact that the majority of soldiers and civilians involved in peacekeeping missions are deployed in Africa. Once again, the destination of one of the two trips undertaken by the UN Security Council to Africa was Sudan and Chad. On the other hand, the Security Council increasingly sees its role as being complementary to that played by regional organisations such as the AU, ECOWAS and IGAD and assists in resolving conflicts through regional mediators (see Chapter A.V.9.2.).

The situation in Sudan was a major focus of the consultations held by the UN Security Council. UN Security Council resolution 1706 of 31 August provided for a takeover of AMIS by a UN mission, but could not be implemented due to the resistance of the Sudanese government against a UN mission in Darfur. During a crisis meeting on Darfur between representatives of the UN Security Council Permanent Members, the AU, the EU, and the Arab League in November in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) a hybrid force of the AU and the UN was proposed as a compromise solution. Although the Sudanese President Omar Hassan Ahmed el-Bashir had at first agreed “in principle” to this solution, the Sudanese side denied this the days after. In December, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan once again intensified his diplomatic efforts in favour of the UN proposal. In late December, the Sudanese government seemed to abandon its resistance and, in a written reply to a letter by UN Secretary-General Annan, agreed to the 3-phase plan for Darfur and thus to the deployment of a hybrid peace force of the AU and the UN. Sudanese Foreign Minister Lam Akol, however, denied the view held by the UN Secretary-General according to which President el-Bashir had agreed to the deployment of a hybrid force and made it clear that President el-Bashir did not accept a joint force made up of AU and UN soldiers. The UN would only be allowed to provide equipment and logistics, communication and other technology but not soldiers for the Darfur operation.

Due to cross-border activities, the security situation in the border region to Chad and the Central African Republic remained precarious. Chad and the Central African Republic agreed to a UN mission along their borders to Sudan, yet the practical implications of this remained unclear.

On 28 April, the UN Security Council authorised the EU operation EUFOR RD Congo for a period of four months after the first round of the presidential and parliamentary elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to stabilise the security situation during the elections. The operation was regarded as a model and a milestone for further operations in the successful cooperation between the EU and the UN. However, violent clashes continued in the region.
of Nordkivu in the east of the country. MONUC took steps toward a stabilisation of the security situation in the eastern provinces. On 31 July, the UN Security Council renewed the existing sanctions regime, extending it to persons who recruit or use child soldiers. Moreover, the UN Security Council called upon the expert group responsible for monitoring the weapons embargo to propose measures to prevent the illegal exploitation of mineral resources.

The UN Security Council adopted resolution 1725 authorising an African peace mission for Somalia, and at the same time called upon the transitional government of Somalia and the Islamists to resolve their disagreements through dialogue. Although the USA strongly supported the deployment of peace troops to protect the transition government, especially the African members of the UN Security Council and Qatar emphasized the importance of dialogue. The search for troop-contributing countries for an African peace mission was difficult.

At the end of the year, the UN mission in Burundi was converted from a peacekeeping operation into an integrated office (BINUB). The main task of the BINUB will be to support the Burundian government in the areas of peacebuilding, reform of the security sector, and human rights.

On 31 May, the UN Security Council decided to reduce the number of UNMEE troops down to 2,300 soldiers. The USA had originally pushed for a more significant reduction of the mission. The tensions in the Temporary Security Zone between Ethiopia and Eritrea continued. No progress was achieved in the demarcation of the border. The UN Security Council considered a possible extension of the UNMEE mandate in case no progress was made in the demarcation of the border until 31 January 2007. After unsuccessful efforts to move the peace process between the two states forward, the USA was ready to pass on its mediating role to others.

4. Peacekeeping Operations

At the beginning of the year, 19 UN peacekeeping operations were in place, with 112 states contributing personnel. The ONUB mandate expired on 31 December.

As a result of the war in Lebanon, UNIFIL was given a new mandate and a significantly larger number of staff. The UN mission in Sudan (UNMIS), MONUC, and the UN operation in the Ivory Coast (UNOCI) were expanded, while UNMEE was reduced. UNOTIL will be continued with a new mandate as UNMIT, and ONUB as BINUB. By the end of the year, the total troops’ strength comprising the military and police personnel dispatched amounted to 80,368 (31 December 2005: 69,838). The largest operations were MONUC
(18,296 personnel), UNMIL (14,898 personnel), UNIFIL (11,563 personnel) and UNMIS (10,006 personnel). As has been the case during the last few years, the Asian and African states contributed the largest numbers of personnel.

The Special Committee for Peacekeeping Operations discussed the safety and security of the UN personnel, the strengthening of African capacities for peacekeeping operations, the increase of UN capacities for peacekeeping operations, and combating sexual abuse by UN staff. The group of legal experts appointed by the UN Secretary-General presented a report on the accountability of UN staff and experts on mission in connection with criminal offences during peacekeeping operations. Moreover, negotiations began on the development of a comprehensive support strategy for the victims of sexual abuse. Austria continued to advocate that police personnel charged with executive tasks be granted the same legal status as armed military personnel in peacekeeping operations.

In total, 2,503 male and 36 female Austrians participated in peacekeeping operations authorised by the UN Security Council. As of 31 December, 422 Austrians (380 troops, 14 military observers and 28 police officers) were serving in eight UN peacekeeping operations, and 566 military personnel in the KFOR operation authorised by the Security Council. Four Austrians participated in the ISAF authorised by the UN Security Council, and 276 Austrians in EUFOR-Althea. Five Austrians took part in the EU-led operation EUFOR RD Congo, which expired at the end of November. By the end of the year, Austria contributed the seventh-largest number of personnel out of all EU Member States (after Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Poland, and Ireland) to UN-led missions and peacekeeping operations, thus occupying rank 36 among the 114 troop-contributing UN member countries.

IV. The Economic and Social Council

1. General

On 20 November, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 61/16 on the reform of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The major elements in strengthening ECOSOC are the establishment of a high-level biennial Cooperation Development Forum and of an annual Ministerial Review Meeting. Moreover, the role of ECOSOC in humanitarian issues and its relation to the Peacebuilding Commission were defined. The reform of the ECOSOC will apply for the first time during its working session in the summer 2007.
The ECOSOC Working Session took place in Geneva from 3 to 28 July. Austria is a member of ECOSOC for the period 2006-2008. The main topic of the Session’s high-level segment was the creation of an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating productive employment and decent work for all in order to promote sustainable development. The member states adopted a Ministerial Declaration in which they confirmed the essential importance of a positive growth and investment climate for the creation of new jobs.

During the Session’s coordination segment, members discussed topics such as the coordination of the various players in the field of sustainable growth and social development, the creation of synergies between the ECOSOC Functional Commissions, and the implementation and follow-up of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). Another segment dealt with the implementation of the last Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of operational development activities of the UN System, and with issues relating to the financing of the Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies. The humanitarian segment focused particularly on the issue of transition from emergency assistance to structural assistance, for instance after conflict situations or during reconstruction after natural disasters. Other topics involved inadequately financed crises that no longer received media attention, and the establishment of CERF.

2. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

As one of the five UN regional commissions, the 56-member 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. At the beginning of the year, Marek Belka (Poland) assumed his duties as the new Executive Secretary of UNECE. The annual meeting in February decided on a UNECE reform which led to a streamlining of the organisation’s institutions and a strengthening of the core areas of environment and transport.

V. The International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), which celebrated its 60th anniversary in April, is the only international court with a universal character and general jurisdiction. 192 States are parties to the statute, 65 of which accepted the Court’s compulsory jurisdiction in accordance with Article 36, paragraph 2 of its statute.
On 3 February, the ICJ dismissed on all counts the (new) application filed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo against Rwanda in the Case concerning Armed Activities on the Territory of the Congo. The Court concluded that none of the bases of jurisdiction put forward by the DRC could be upheld. The Court ruled that the Democratic Republic of the Congo had failed to prove that Rwanda had entered binding obligations under international law that would justify the jurisdiction of the Court and that it therefore had no jurisdiction to entertain the Application.

In its decision of 13 July, the ICJ declined the request for the indication of provisional measures submitted by Argentina in the Case concerning Pulp Mills on the Uruguayan side of the River Uruguay (Argentina v. Uruguay). According to the Court, Uruguay’s decision to authorise the construction of these pulp mills did not jeopardize conservation of the environment of the river and areas affected by it, i.e. the ecological system of the Uruguay River or the economic and social interests of the people living on the Argentine side of the river.

Dominica submitted a dispute to the Court concerning alleged violations of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and other rules and instruments of international law in relation to a diplomatic envoy of Dominica to the United Nations in Geneva, but shortly afterwards requested the Court to make an order officially recording the unconditional discontinuance of the case instituted by the application filed on 26 April and directing the removal of the case from the General List.

In the case of the application of the Genocide Convention (Bosnia and Herzegovina against Serbia and Montenegro) the hearings were completed on 9 May.

From 27 November to 1 December, the ICJ dealt with the preliminary objections raised by the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) against the jurisdiction of the Court and the admissibility in the application filed by Guinea in the case concerning Ahmadou Sadio Diallo (Republic of Guinea v. Democratic Republic of the Congo) pending since 1998.
VI. The United Nations Specialized Agencies and Related Organizations

1. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The main tasks of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are the fight against global poverty and hunger at the normative and operational levels, the support of agricultural structural reforms, and the strengthening of rural areas in securing food security. Belarus and Russia were admitted as members of the FAO.

Several successful conferences took place during the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council. In its final declaration on necessary land reforms, the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in Porto Alegre (Brazil) established the access to land and the concept of Food Sovereignty, still inadequately defined within the FAO, as well as the call for fair trade and sustainable agriculture and development as ways to eradicate hunger and poverty. The 25th FAO Regional Conference for Europe in Riga dealt with the role of FAO as a provider of public goods, the contribution of rural development in Europe to the realisation of the goals defined at the World Food Summits and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as combating avian influenza.

The 32nd Session of the Committee on World Food Security focused on the issues of aid and investment, agrarian reform and rural development, as well as trade and globalisation. Apart from a reference to the precarious financial situation of the Organization, the 131st Session of the FAO Council dealt with the ongoing FAO reform process initiated in 2005. Another topic was the transfer of the FAO Regional Office from Rome to Budapest.

On the occasion of this year’s FAO World Food Day, the Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management together with the Ecosocial Forum Austria organised a panel discussion on “Food Security through agricultural investment”.

2. International Labour Organization

A major focus of the work of the International Labour Organization (ILO) was the promotion of decent work towards a worldwide reduction of unemployment and poverty. In February, the 94th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference adopted the Maritime Labour Convention of 2006. It seeks to promote decent working conditions for seafarers and establish fair competition conditions in the shipping sector worldwide.
In June, the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference adopted the convention and the recommendation on the promotional framework for occupational safety and health, and the recommendation on the employment relationship. This session also focused on the eradication of the worst forms of child labour and on the discussion over forced labour in Myanmar. On the occasion of the Session, Federal Minister Martin Bartenstein hosted an informal meeting with representatives of the countries of the Western Balkans to discuss the issues of flexibility and security regarding employment in these states.

3. International Telecommunications Union

The Geneva-based International Telecommunications Union (ITU) is a Specialized Agency of the United Nations in which government and industry representatives coordinate the establishment and operation of global telecommunication networks and services, in particular the use of the radio frequency spectrum and the satellite orbit. The ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, the top policy-making body that meets every four years, took place in November in Antalya (Turkey). During the Conference, Hamadoun Touré (Mali) was elected as new ITU Secretary-General.

Together with other UN agencies, the ITU is considered the initiator of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) that was held in two phases in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005. With a strong participation from the civil society and the private sector, WSIS dealt with the latest technological and social challenges posed by the development of the modern information society. The main problem areas identified included regulation of the Internet, network security, the role of the media, human rights, intellectual property, and funding of the envisaged measures for the developing countries.

During Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council, the World Information Society Day was celebrated for the first time on 17 May. In autumn, the first Internet Governance Forum (IGF) took place in Athens addressing issues such as Internet access, human rights, security, spam, linguistic diversity and local content. This Forum will be held each year in a different host country.

4. International Fund for Agricultural Development

The central task of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is to mobilise 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. In the last 25 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. Austria is a founding member of IFAD and has so far contributed approximately 34 million euros to the capital of the institution.

5. **International Civil Aviation Organization**

The work of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) focused on the improvement of flight safety standards. Moreover, special attention was placed on enhancing the transparency of safety information. Public access to the results of operational safety checks represents a milestone toward greater improvement of safety standards. Stricter security measures on board of aircrafts constitute another major focus. In the aftermath of the planned attacks with liquid explosives that were uncovered in the United Kingdom in August, the ICAO adopted new regulations concerning the x-ray screening of hand luggage for liquids, gels, and aerosols that can be used to make dangerous explosives on board.

In March, the ICAO Council elected Roberto Kobeh González (Mexico) as its President and reappointed Taib Chérif (Algeria) as Secretary-General of the ICAO. As a member of the ICAO Council and during its EU Council Presidency in the first six months, Austria contributed actively to the reform plans aimed at improving the efficiency of the ICAO.

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

UNESCO successfully continued the ambitious medium-term strategy for 2002-2007 aimed at contributing to peace and human development through education, science, culture, and communication. With the exception of the field of education, the first steps towards reform of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had already been implemented by the end of the year.

The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which obtained the required number of 30 ratifications by the handing over of the ratification documents of the EC and twelve EU Member States in Paris on 18 December, will enter into force in March 2007. Austria completed the national ratification procedure on 7 August. The Convention establishes a binding basis under international law for the right of all states to have independent cultural policies. For the first time the EC became party to a UNESCO convention. The European Commission contributed to the negotiations as an observer with an extended status within the UNESCO
context, both as an independent negotiation partner and on behalf of the EU Member States. A Code of Conduct will govern and coordinate all Convention-relevant working processes between the European Commission and the EU Member States in the bodies of the UNESCO Convention.

The International Convention on Anti-Doping in Sport and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage also obtained the ratifications and memberships required for their entry into force. Together with the World Heritage Convention, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is to guarantee the worldwide protection of intellectual and cultural heritage in future. Traditional healing methods and locally handed down and/or neglected knowledge on prevention and management strategies in handling natural hazards were the main topics identified for Austria.

During the 30th meeting of the World Heritage Committee in Vilnius from 8 to 16 July, 18 world cultural and natural heritage sites from 30 countries were added to the World Heritage List, which now comprises 830 World Heritage Sites in 138 countries. In the Man and Biosphere (MAB) programme, the Vienna Woods was recognized by the UNESCO as a biosphere reserve and thus as a landscape protection area.

The association of UNESCO with the commemorations of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sigmund Freud and Bertha von Suttner in the biennium 2006-2007 was made visible through a series of events in many countries.

7. World Health Organization

Margaret Chan (China) was elected as new Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) to succeed the previous Director-General Lee Jong-wook who had died in May.

The first conference of the parties to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control took place in Geneva from 6 to 17 February. In her speech as EU Council President, Federal Minister Maria Rauch-Kallat pledged the full support of the EU in the fight against tobacco abuse. Austria’s role as EU Council Presidency was acknowledged through the election as the First Vice President of the Conference of the Parties. Moreover, the conference adopted the establishment of a Permanent Secretariat, of working groups on cross-border advertisement and smuggling, and of an ad hoc experts’ group on economically practicable alternatives to tobacco cultivation.

In her speech at the 59th World Health Assembly held from 22 to 27 May, Federal Minister Maria Rauch-Kallat as EU Council President addressed the strategic importance of health professionals. Other major topics on the
meeting’s agenda included the early application of international health regulations on a voluntary basis, planning and reaction in crisis and disaster situations, the eradication of polio, international trade and health, international copyright protection, as well as prevention and control of sexually transmitted infections.

Apart from its compulsory contribution to the WHO budget, Austria made a voluntary contribution of 600,000 euros to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for activities in Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

8. **International Atomic Energy Agency**

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which was established in 1957, is based in Vienna and currently employs 2,200 staff members. The Agency’s principal task 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 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The 50th IAEA General Conference was dominated by the discussion on regional conflicts, particularly in the Middle East. The main topic of the year was Iran’s nuclear programme (see Chapter E.III.3.3.). Austria supported the development of a new IAEA Safeguards System for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and this year also prepared a resolution on this topic on behalf of the EU, which was adopted by consensus after extensive consultations.

In this context the Additional Protocol to the existing Safeguards Agreements plays a pivotal role since it requires states to deliver more comprehensive information and provide prompt and unhindered access to sensitive nuclear installations for IAEA inspectors. In future, this will allow the IAEA to gain a more detailed insight into all its members’ nuclear activities. Austria’s second focus was once again on nuclear safety. Another topic discussed was the establishment of a fuel exchange at the IAEA which will guarantee those countries who chose to use nuclear energy a controlled supply with low enriched uranium.

In September, the IAEA Board of Governors elected Austria as one of its 35 members for a period of two years, and the Austrian Governor Thomas Stelzer as one of its two Vice-Chairs.
9. World Tourism Organization

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the leading international organisation in the field of travel and tourism and serves as a global forum for tourism policy, tourism know-how and statistics. The Madrid-based UNWTO has been a Specialized Agency of United Nations since 2003. Austria has been a full member since 1975 and member of its Programme Committee since 1995, in which it took over the chair in September 1999.

The first seminar on “Ethics in Tourism“ evaluated the basic principles of the Global Code of Ethics for tourism adopted in 1999. An agreement was signed with Microsoft on the promotion of information and communication technology in tourism. The objective is to supply systems and programmes designed to enhance the competitiveness and quality of tourism services in growth markets with a focus on Africa.

10. Universal Postal Union

The Strategy Conference of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) took place in Dubai from 14 to 16 November and forms the basis of the World Postal Strategy. This strategy defines the major postal issues and the direction of the Universal Postal Union for the years to come. The World Postal Strategy is an important topic on the agenda of the next Universal Postal Congress (Nairobi 2008). This year’s conference discussed issues like globalisation, the increased use of new technologies, increasing competition in the postal sector, the requirements of postal customers, the role of the postal sector in the information society and postal reform.

11. World Meteorological Organization

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) supports and coordinates the worldwide development of a meteorological and hydrological network for measurement and observation. Moreover, it ensures an efficient exchange of data, i.a. in the areas of aviation, navigation, and agriculture, and works towards both the standardisation 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.
F. 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. During its Presidency of the EU Council, Austria supported progressive common positions within the EU and the universalisation of the respective treaties and agreements.

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

1. Nuclear Weapons

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the basis of the international nuclear regime under international law. With 189 contracting states the treaty represents the major pillar of nuclear non-proliferation and obliges its members to denounce nuclear weapons, while granting them the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. In return, the five nuclear-weapon states recognised in the NPT, China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the USA commit themselves to nuclear disarmament and to the objective of a complete elimination of nuclear weapons. India, Israel, and Pakistan are the only states not party to the NPT. Although the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea declared its withdrawal from the NPT in 2003, this withdrawal is not internationally recognised.

The last NPT Review Conference had ended without any results in 2005. There were irreconcilable differences between nuclear-weapon states on the one hand, which mainly wanted to discuss non-proliferation issues, and the remaining NPT members on the other, who called for greater disarmament efforts to be undertaken by the nuclear-weapon states. The Common Position on the 2005 NPT Review Conference constitutes the basis for the EU approach. The next NPT Review Cycle begins with the first Preparatory Committee Meeting in Vienna from 30 April to 11 May 2007.

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 all other nuclear explosions. In 2006, the treaty celebrated its 10th
anniversary. In late August, State Secretary Hans Winkler opened a scientific symposium on “Synergies between CTBT and Science 1996-2006” in Vienna. So far 177 states have signed the CTBT and 137 have ratified the Treaty, including 34 of the 44 key States named in Annex 2 of the Treaty whose ratification is necessary for the CTBT to enter into force. In view of the North Korean nuclear activities, a large number of NPT signatory states in autumn once again appealed to the key States and in particular to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. Austria had ratified the Treaty on 13 March 1998.

The Vienna-based Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) of the CTBT Preparatory Commission for the Organization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT PrepCom) took up its work in March 1997 and employs some 270 staff members. Its main task is to develop the international Verification System provided for in the Treaty, consisting of 321 monitoring facilities, 16 radionuclide laboratories and an International Data Centre in Vienna. At the 27th meeting of the CTBT PrepCom, it was announced that the installation of 75% of the international monitoring stations had been completed. Seismic data are regularly sent to a tsunami warning system. The only facility in Austria that is part of the Verification System is the radionuclide laboratory in Seibersdorf.

3. Geneva Conference on Disarmament

The Geneva Conference on Disarmament (CD), which is composed of 65 Member States (Austria since 1996) was considerably more active than in the previous years. Although it was not possible to adopt a work programme and begin with the negotiations, structured debates took place on the major topics of the CD such as nuclear disarmament, the treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, FMCT), negative security assurances, and the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS). For the first time since 2002, agreement on five joint statements by the EU was reached by the Austrian Council Presidency. The European Union thus again played an active role within the CD.

4. Chemical Weapons Convention

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which entered into force in 1997, introduced a ban on all chemical weapons, which makes violations a criminal offence, and calls for the phased destruction of existing chemical weapons. With six new states, the CWC now consists of 181 members, thus constantly approaching its target of a worldwide elimination of chemical weapons. Clear progress was made with respect to the destruction of existing stockpiles in
Albania, India, the Republic of Korea, Libya, Russia, and the USA. Out of a total of 71,373 tons of chemical weapons declared by these states, 15,629 tons or 22% of the reported stocks have already been destroyed. The chemical weapon states, however, and above all Russia and the USA are far from achieving the CWC’s declared target of destroying all stocks by 29 April 2007. Both states have already requested an extension of this period until the last possible deadline of 29 April 2012.

In a new Joint Action, the EU provided for support in the amount of approximately 1.7 million euros for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

5. Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

Signed in 1972, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) covers the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons. Progress was made for the first time since efforts to strengthen the BTWC by creating a verification mechanism had failed in 2001. The 5th BTWC Review Conference that took place from 20 November to 8 December ended with a substantial Final Document introducing an intersessional work programme for the period 2007-2011, the establishment of an Implementation Support Unit and greater efforts towards further universalisation of the BTWC. For the first time since 1996, it was possible to adopt a document on the review of the entire convention.

Following comprehensive internal preparations within the EU, the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council was able to act as a constructive player and achieve most of the objectives set out in the Joint Position of 20 March.

6. Ballistic Missiles

The Hague Code of Conduct (HCOC) against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, the only normative instrument for the non-proliferation of ballistic and cruise missiles, consists of 126 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 mainly focuses on confidence-building measures such as the advance announcement of missile launches and annual reports on space programmes.

The regular annual meeting of the Subscribing States took place in Vienna from 22 to 23 June and was chaired by Morocco. The meeting mainly dealt
with universalisation efforts, lobbying and information activities with the chair’s future focus on Africa and the Middle East, and better implementation of the HCOC standards.

II. Restriction and Control of Conventional Arms and Weapons

1. Anti-Personnel Mines

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, entered into force in 1999, and currently comprises 152 States Parties. As one of the leading states of the Ottawa Process, Austria is particularly committed to the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and to their destruction. Austria continued its active contribution to the international process for the enforcement of the Ottawa Convention and the implementation of the Austrian Mine Action Programme. Since 1999 the programme has been funded by a dedicated budget, which in 2006 amounted to approx. 1.4 million euros. The regional focus, especially on South East Europe and Africa was set by taking the priorities of development cooperation and humanitarian aspects into account, promoting in particular the training of locals in mine clearance, raising awareness, rehabilitation of landmine victims, and the universalisation of the Convention. In September, Austria took over the chair of the Committee on Mine Victim Assistance, presenting an ambitious programme for the best possible support of the multilateral process and a focus on the implementation of the Convention in the most affected countries.

2. Excessively Injurious Arms and Weapons

At the third Review Conference of the 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) held in Geneva from 7 to 17 November, agreement was reached on a document for the review of the CCWC, a mechanism for ensuring compliance with the convention and its protocols, an action plan for the universalisation of the convention, and a discussion mandate on cluster munition. However, the negotiations on a protocol on anti-vehicle mines (Mines other than Anti-Personnel Mines, MOTAPM) which began five years ago failed. On 12 November, Protocol V of the Convention on Explosive Remnants of War, which was already adopted in 2003, entered into force.
A parliamentary resolution on 12 July called upon the Federal Government to support particularly within the CCWC a ban on cluster munitions with a high rate of unexploded ordnance. Austria has taken the lead in the efforts to reach a binding treaty under international law on cluster munitions and, together with 26 other states including 15 EU Member States, calls for opening negotiations on this issue within the CCWC. Moreover, Austria and 24 other states jointly issued a statement at the Review Conference, which calls for a ban on the use of cluster munitions in areas of civilian concentration and a ban on the development, production, stock-piling, trade, and use of cluster munitions involving a particularly high humanitarian risk.

The events in Lebanon in the summer underscored the urgency to take action. According to UN estimates, Israel used between 700,000 and one million individual explosive ordnance and submunitions. A high percentage of this explosive ordnance has an effect similar to that of anti-personnel mines. Austria provided 400,000 euros for the clearance of explosive ordnance and for assistance to the victims in Lebanon.

3. Small Arms and Light Weapons

Five years after the adoption of the UN Programme of Action against the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), the first Review Conference took place in New York from 26 June to 7 July. The conference failed to adopt a final document mainly due to resistance from the USA against a substantial follow-up within the UN, and also due to the lack of political will by China, Cuba, India, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, South Africa, and Venezuela regarding enhanced control of illicit weapons transfers. Nevertheless, the Conference received great international attention and confirmed the validity and effectiveness of the Programme of Action as a reference system for the fight against the illicit trade with SALW, which are increasingly being regarded as the true weapons of mass destruction, as they cause some 500,000 casualties each year.

Under the Austrian EU Council Presidency, the European Union further consolidated its leading role in the SALW process. Together with the African and Latin American countries most affected by this problem, it was possible to focus on the main topics proposed by the Union: transfer controls, marking and tracing, regulations for brokering, ammunition, inclusion of SALW measures in development assistance, and the follow-up of the SALW process. A worldwide lobbying of the Austrian Council Presidency laid the necessary groundwork. State Secretary Hans Winkler stressed that the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW presents a threat to peace, development, democracy and human rights.
Austria supported projects for the destruction of SALW in Kazakhstan and Ukraine as well as a study of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

4. Export Controls on Conventional Arms and Weapons

In Austria, arms exports covered by the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports are governed by the 2005 Foreign Trade Act (Federal Law Gazette I 50/2005) and – as lex specialis for war material – the War Material Act (Federal Law Gazette I 540/1977 as amended by Federal Law Gazette I 50/2005). The new Foreign Trade Regulation (pursuant to §4(2) 2005 Foreign Trade Act, Federal Law Gazette II 121/2006) entered into force on 18 March. Defence equipment subject to approval is defined in § 1 (1) of the Foreign Trade Regulation in conjunction with the Annex, which corresponds to the current version of the Wassenaar Munitions list and the Common Military List of the European Union.

The politically binding Code of Conduct on Arms Exports adopted in 1998 obliges the EU partners to comply with certain standards for the export of items listed in the agreed EU Common Military list. For this purpose, the EU Code of Conduct contains eight criteria Member States have agreed to apply when assessing individual export applications. The operative provisions of the EU Code of Conduct include an information and consultation procedure. National data is compiled into a consolidated annual report. This enhances the transparency of arms exports controls across the EU, advances their harmonisation and promotes the creation of equal conditions of competition.

The Council Working Group on Conventional Arms Exports achieved significant progress in updating and expanding the User’s Guide which is essential to the implementation of the Operative Provisions of the Code of Conduct. Moreover, the eighth EU Annual Report was improved. A pending issue, however, continues to be the political conclusion of the review of the Code of Conduct. Significantly updated and extended to include issues such as the control of brokering, transit, and technology transfer the new document should be adopted as a legally binding Common Position.

In addition, a special contact group was set up to promote the initiative for an Arms Trade Treaty.

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 (non-proliferation). 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. The national implementation of these instruments is covered for the most part by the 2005 Foreign Trade Act.

Nuclear-related exports are covered by the Zangger Committee (ZC) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) consisting of 35 and 44 members respectively. These draw up lists of sensitive nuclear goods and equipment, in particular with the aim of preventing especially uranium enrichment and plutonium processing for non-peaceful purposes. The Australia Group (AG), which comprises 39 members, assumes a similar function in the field of chemical and biological weapons. No agreement could be reached on the admission of Croatia and Russia to the AG. The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), consisting of 34 members, controls the proliferation of missile technology (guided missiles and cruise missiles) capable of carrying nuclear weapons. No agreement could be reached on the admission of twelve states, including seven EU Member States and Romania to the MTCR.

The Wassenaar Arrangement (WA), whose Secretariat is based in Vienna, contributes to regional and international security and stability through enhanced transparency and the prevention of destabilising accumulations of conventional weapons and dual-use goods and technologies. South Africa was admitted as the 40th participating State, while no agreement was reached on the admission of Cyprus. A series of additions to the control lists was adopted to take better account of technological developments and the international security situation. On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the WA, State Secretary Hans Winkler opened an official ceremony in the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs on 7 December.
G. The International Protection of Human Rights

I. Introduction

The promotion of the worldwide implementation of international human rights standards is a central concern of Austria. 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 promotion of democratisation and good governance, human rights education, and international humanitarian law. Especially during its Presidency of the EU Council, Austria set important priorities within EU bodies dealing with human rights and international organisations including the UN, the Council of Europe and the OSCE, as well as in bilateral political dialogue with governments throughout the world. In addition, Austria intensively promoted strengthening civil society and NGOs working in the field of human rights.

II. Human Rights in the European Union

1. EU Human Rights Policy

The task of the EU 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 Council Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM) and in cooperation with geographical Council working parties and the Human Rights and Democracy Committee chaired by the European Commission. Austria was the first EU Council Presidency to include human rights as a separate chapter in the Presidency programme. Based on this programme, Austria committed itself to a better integration of human rights in all EU policy areas and carried out an evaluation of EU guidelines on human rights defenders and a campaign for the protection of women human rights defenders. During its Council Presidency, Austria was actively engaged in promoting the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on the role of women in post-conflict situations and issued more than 100 demarches and public statements to support the human rights of individuals around the world. The Austrian Presidency of the EU Council also undertook intensive efforts to achieve progress in the negotiations on the creation of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights. In addition, Austria, representing the EU, contributed decisively to the successful completion of the negotiations on the establishment of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) in March.
1.1. The Integration of Human Rights in the ESDP

As part of the efforts towards a better integration of human rights in all work areas of the EU, the Austrian EU Council Presidency focused its work on the integration of human rights aspects in the planning and conduct of ESDP missions. On 1 June, the SPC adopted the paper “Mainstreaming of Human Rights in the ESDP and other EU Policy Areas”; in September, the non-paper (discussion paper) “Mainstreaming of Human Rights in the ESDP” based on it was presented, which provides for a comprehensive integration of human rights in the planning, conduct, and evaluation of ESDP missions. The promotion of the rights of children and women was a priority area of activity. Efforts were also undertaken to accelerate the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) that began in autumn 2005. The resolution provides for the inclusion of women in peace processes and missions and for measures aimed at the protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. Moreover, apart from a checklist on children in armed conflicts, the Austrian Council Presidency also initiated a checklist on women in ESDP peace missions in June, which was eventually adopted by the General Affairs and External Relations Council in November.

1.2. EU Guidelines

Under the Austrian Council Presidency, an implementation strategy and a checklist were set up on the integration of the Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict into ESDP operations, which had been prepared on an Austrian initiative in 2003. The worldwide abolition of the death penalty is a priority of Austrian human rights policy. During its Council Presidency, Austria pursued this objective through demarches based on the Guidelines for an EU policy towards third countries on the death penalty, and through a stronger focus on this issue in regional and international bodies. Austria initiated demarches in more than 50 individual cases of persons sentenced to death and repeatedly issued public statements. In her statement on the 4th World Day against the Death Penalty on 10 October, Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik reaffirmed that the fight against the death penalty remains a core human rights policy issue for Austria. With regard to the Guidelines against Torture, the Austrian Council Presidency initiated demarches in more than 40 countries aimed at granting a visitor permit to the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, the ratification of the UN Convention against Torture, and compliance with the relevant reporting obligation. The implementation of the Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders was a major focus of both the Austrian and the Finnish Council Presidency. Under Austria’s Presidency of the Council, these guidelines were subjected to an evaluation. Moreover, a worldwide campaign for the protection of women as human rights defenders was launched. The Austrian embassies intensified their contacts to local human rights defenders and publicly acknowledged their work. Federal
Minister Ursula Plassnik and State Secretary Hans Winkler met with local human rights defenders during the EU-LAC Summit and the Troika visit to Southern Caucasus. Interventions in favour of acutely threatened human rights defenders led to releases in Cambodia, Nepal, and Uzbekistan.

1.3. The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights

On 4 December, the Justice and Home Affairs Council agreed on the establishment and the mandate of an EU Agency for Fundamental Rights based in Vienna. In December 2003, the European Council had decided to transform the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) into a fundamental rights agency. The political agreement was preceded by intensive negotiations in the responsible ad-hoc Council Working Party on Fundamental Rights and Union Citizenship during the Austrian and Finnish EU Council Presidencies. Austria’s efforts focused on granting the agency the broadest possible mandate and also supported quick progress in the negotiations by elaborating compromise solutions.

The most important task of the Agency will be to provide advice to EU institutions and EU Member States on the development and implementation of EU law. By collecting data and preparing analyses, expert opinions and recommendations, the Agency is to support decision makers in the EU and to contribute to higher coherence in the EU’s human rights policy. In line with the agreement achieved, the Agency will become active in the area of Community law (First Pillar) and, upon approval by the affected EU institution and/or EU Member State, also in the area of police and judicial cooperation (Third Pillar). The Agency’s mandate does not include ongoing monitoring of the general human rights situation in the Member States and in order to avoid duplications it will cooperate closely with other institutions, particularly the Council of Europe. The national working group consisting of representatives from all ministries involved, which was set up in connection with the establishment of the Fundamental Rights Agency, contributed to a successful, concerted approach of Austria both at national level and in the respective European forums.

The eighth EU Human Rights Forum that serves the exchange of opinions and experiences between EU Member States, the Union’s institutions and civil society representatives, was held in December in Helsinki and focused on the topic of integration of human rights aspects in all EU policy areas. Moreover, working groups were organised on the topics of human rights and crisis management, human rights defenders, and human rights and counter-terrorism.

The updating of the human rights country fact sheets, which are based on an Austrian initiative, by the heads of EU missions in third countries continued.
The implementation of concrete projects and programmes in the field of EU human rights policy is carried out by the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). The majority of EIDHR projects is subject to public tender and implemented by NGOs. In autumn, a new instrument for promoting democratisation and human rights was negotiated as part of the reorganisation of the EU foreign policy instruments that was adopted by the EU Council in December. The new instrument will receive additional funds and, in addition to human rights, it will also support the promotion of democracy and EU election monitoring in third countries.

The 2006 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.

EU election monitoring missions organised by the European Commission, are an important component in implementing the EU’s human rights policy. Since 2000, the EU dispatched approximately 50 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, ÖSK). In 2006, over 70 Austrians participated in EU election monitoring missions in Bolivia, Congo, Fiji, Indonesia, Yemen, Mauritania, Mexico, Nicaragua, Uganda, and Venezuela and Zambia as well as in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip.

2. Structured Human Rights Dialogues

In December 2001, the EU adopted Guidelines on Human Rights Dialogues, that identify different forms of dialogue: structured human rights dialogues, ad hoc dialogues, dialogues with groups of states (e.g. based on the Cotonou Agreement or as part of the Barcelona Process) and expert meetings with like-minded states in preparation for major human rights events.

The structured human rights dialogue that has been conducted between the EU and China since 1995 was continued in meetings held in May and October. The round of talks in May took place in Vienna under Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council. In addition to the meetings at government level, expert seminars on specific human rights issues took place involving participants from the academic world, NGOs and official representatives of the EU and China. The issues regularly addressed at these meetings refer to the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) by China, cooperation with UN human rights mechanisms, the reform of the “re-education through work” system, the reform of the judicial system,
developments in Tibet and Xinjiang, the persecution of supporters of
democratic movements, religious groups and the Falun Gong movement, and
issues such as the prohibition of torture, death penalty, and religious freedom.
The EU also regularly addresses individual human rights cases. The EU
General Affairs and External Relations Council regards this dialogue as an
important information platform and instrument of cooperation with China.

The human rights dialogue that has been conducted between the EU and Iran
since late 2002 practically came to a standstill after the fourth round in June
2004. In spring 2006, Iran showed interest in a resumption of the human rights
dialogue. After several years of standstill a breakthrough was achieved with
the agreement on the modalities for a resumption of the dialogue during
Austria’s Presidency of EU Council. The fifth round of talks scheduled for
December, however, was cancelled by the Iranian side after the EU co-
sponsored a draft resolution by Canada on the human rights situation in Iran
in the UN General Assembly. Austria attaches great importance to the human
rights dialogue with Iran and advocates a continuation of the dialogue.

The third and fourth rounds of Human Rights Consultations between the EU
and Russia were held in Vienna in March and in Brussels in November. The
EU Troika especially addressed the situation in Chechnya, the lack of
implementation of the sentences passed by the ECHR, human rights violations
in the armed forces and by the police, and the restrictive legislation on NGOs.
Prior to the consultation rounds, the EU delegation met with representatives
of the Russian civil society.

During Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council the first meeting of the EU-
Israel informal working group was held in June as part of the 6th Association
Council EU-Israel. The most important issues addressed by the EU were the
Separation Wall built by Israel, unlawful killings by Israel in the Occupied
Territories, the situation of the Arab minority, as well as humanitarian issues
in connection with the situation of the Palestinian population.

In addition to the existing dialogues, both the Austrian and the Finnish
Council Presidency advocated the launching of a human rights dialogue with
Uzbekistan and of human rights consultations with the African Union.

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 human rights promotion as well as conflict prevention and
peace building include the establishment and strengthening of the rule of law,
good governance, an active civil society and local human rights structures as well as measures in the field of human rights education at all levels of society.

1. The Human Rights Council

On 15 March, the 60th UN General Assembly adopted the resolution on the establishment of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in an election demanded by the USA: 170 countries voted in favour of the resolution, four against (Israel, Marshall Islands, Palau, and the USA) and three abstained from voting (Belarus, Iran and Venezuela). Despite their resistance in the UN General Assembly, the USA announced that they will cooperate in the HRC to make it as effective as possible. Having held the EU Council Presidency during this period, Austria played a key role in the successful completion of the negotiations. On 9 May, the UN General Assembly elected the 47 members of the HRC for the first time.

The Geneva-based HRC is replacing the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) as the driving and coordinating force in the field of universal human rights and represents a new beginning in the United Nations’ human rights efforts. The establishment of the HRC represents an important step towards strengthening the universal protection of human rights and towards a reform of the United Nations. In this context Austria and the EU attach central importance to enabling the new Council to effectively respond to acute human rights crises, thus representing a genuine added value for human rights. This is to be guaranteed by regular sessions and a simplified mechanism for convening special sessions. Apart from thematic human rights issues, the HRC is also equipped with the mandate to deal with specific country situations in case of severe and systematic human rights violations. The direct and individual election of members requiring an absolute majority among all Member States of the United Nations is seen as a further improvement compared to the previous CHR. Moreover, there is also the possibility to suspend members of the HRC in case of severe and systematic human rights violations. A Universal Periodic Review of all states in the field of human rights aims at invalidating the allegations regarding double standards and selectivity.

Apart from its three regular sessions, the HRC also held four special sessions. The first session from 19 to 30 June was considered a success because it essentially set the course for the future work of the new body. Four working groups were established for the following tasks: implementation of the forthcoming review of the mandates of the special rapporteurs for the time being; definition of the modalities for the Universal Periodic Review; Confidential Complaint Procedure in cases of human rights violations, and the issue of a future advisory body of experts to replace the previous subcommission. The EU objective of ensuring a continuation of the work of
the special rapporteurs was achieved by extending all mandates until summer 2007. In the first session, important thematic EU priorities were implemented with the unanimous adoption of the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People.

The second session from 18 September to 6 October and from 27 to 28 November was dedicated to the extensive dialogue with the special rapporteurs on torture, Guantánamo and religious freedom and defamation of religions.

The third session held from 29 November to 28 December mainly discussed the reports of the working groups on the development of HRC institutions, but no substantial progress was made on these topics. With regard to racism, two resolutions sponsored by the African Group were adopted, in which it was agreed to hold a Review Conference in 2009 on the results of the 2002 World Conference against Racism in Durban (South Africa).

By and large, the work of the HRC during its first year was characterized by an increasing deterioration of cooperation between the regional groups, in which especially the issue of religious intolerance and the situation in the Middle East played a role.

Apart from the three regular sessions, the HRC also held four special sessions during the first half year after its inception. The two sessions on the occupied territories and the special session on Lebanon were problematic due to the unilateral character of the initiatives put forward by the OIC. Although the EU supported a more balanced debate on the situation in the Middle East, the resolutions were adopted by a majority of votes. A priority issue for the EU was the human rights crisis in Darfur. The special session, which was initiated by the EU, convened in December and adopted the establishment of a mission to assess the human rights situation in Darfur.

2. The General Assembly

The 61th Session of the UN General Assembly and of the Third Committee discussed around 60 resolutions. The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance adopted by consensus on 20 December represents a milestone. The Convention is the first independent international treaty that defines the enforced disappearance of individuals as a human rights violation. It prohibits the detention of individuals in secret prisons, and obliges the Contracting States to keep registers of all detained persons.
On 13 December, the International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities and its Additional Protocol were adopted by consensus. Agreement on a large part of the text of the Convention had already been reached in the penultimate round of negotiations at the beginning of the year involving the active participation of the Austrian EU Council Presidency. The Convention is considered the first comprehensive human rights convention of the new millennium and aims at enabling more than 650 million people with disabilities worldwide to fully exercise all existing civil and social rights. The Convention also underscores the importance of international cooperation in implementing its goals, and is thus consistent with the Austrian Development Cooperation Act, which stipulates that special account be taken of the needs of persons with disabilities.

The International Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, however, could not be adopted. While the EU had supported the immediate adoption of the declaration, a number of states, however, demanded renegotiations of the declaration’s text.

The EU introduced Resolutions on the human rights situation in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and in Myanmar, the USA presented the resolution on the human rights situation in Belarus and Uzbekistan and Canada the one on Iran. With the exception of the resolution on Uzbekistan, which could not be put to the vote due to the adoption of a motion for non-action, all resolutions were adopted.

In the resolution on Myanmar, the UN General Assembly calls upon the country’s government to stop systematic human rights violations, to immediately resume the dialogue with all political players, and to define a clear timetable for the transition to democracy. In connection with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the UN General Assembly expressed great concern about the severe, systematic, and widespread human rights violations and the precarious humanitarian situation in the country, as well as the lack of willingness to cooperate with the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The UN General Assembly urges the government to cooperate with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn, and to allow him free and unrestricted access to the country. In connection with the situation in Belarus, the UN General Assembly calls upon the government to cooperate with the UN human rights mechanisms, to adapt the election system to international standards, to stop politically motivated prosecution of representatives of the opposition, release all political prisoners, dismiss all public officials responsible for human rights violations including enforced disappearance and torture, and to respect the freedom of opinion, association, and religion. The UN General Assembly also condemns the grave human
rights situation in Iran and demands concrete measures from the government for the protection of human rights. In response to these resolutions, Iran introduced a draft resolution on the situation of the indigenous population and immigrants in Canada, and Belarus presented a draft resolution on the situation of democracy and human rights in the USA, which were rejected upon vote.

The EU presented two thematic resolutions. The resolution on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance was introduced largely unamended, and, as in the previous year, 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. Major provisions in the resolution are based on the UN Study on Violence against Children presented by Prof. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro. Prof. Pinheiro was assigned to further pursue the recommendations of the study in cooperation with the UN Member States, regional organisations and civil society, and to submit proposals for a continuation mechanism until the 62th UN General Assembly. The resolution focuses on children and poverty and calls upon the UN Member States and the international community to increase their efforts in fighting poverty among children.

Further important thematic resolutions on the prohibition of torture and the protection of human rights in the fight against terrorism were once again adopted by consensus. For the first time the EU was unable to support the resolution on the Right to Development presented by Cuba on behalf of the NAM, because Cuba insisted on the preparation of a legally binding convention on the Right to Development, which was unacceptable to the EU and other states. The comprehensive resolution on racism presented by South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 (G77) was adopted by an overwhelming majority.

On the initiative of the EU, Finland read out a declaration on behalf of 85 signatory States, which demands the abolition of the death penalty worldwide or the imposition of a moratorium on the execution of the death penalty in those countries which still apply it.

Three resolutions on gender were presented. A particular success was the agreement on a comprehensive resolution on the eradication of all forms of violence against women, which provides for further measures on the basis of the study on violence against women which was presented by the UN Secretary General in October and supported by Austria. Following intensive negotiations, it was possible to agree on a wording for the rejection of religious and cultural justification of violence against women and for violence against women and HIV/AIDS, including a mention of sexual and reproductive
health. Further resolutions dealt with the issue of trafficking in women and the follow-up to the Beijing World Conference on Women.

Both within the EU and within the UN Member States, Austria continued its committed efforts towards strengthening international human rights protection.

3. The Commission on the Status of Women

The main topics of the 50th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in February and March were greater involvement of women in development and equal participation of women in decision-making processes on all levels. When the new methods of work and topics for the coming years were defined, the Austrian Council Presidency was able to successfully represent the position of the European Union on the establishment of a review system for issues already discussed in the CSW.

The resolution on HIV/AIDS adopted at this session demands above all gender-specific counselling and health care for women and girls. No agreement could be reached over a resolution on the establishment of the position of a UN Special Rapporteur on Laws that Discriminate against Women. The Austrian delegation at the CSW was headed by Federal Minister Maria Rauch-Kallat. At an event on the topic of “Zero tolerance for tradition-based violence against women”, the initiatives Austria had launched in this context were presented.

IV. Human Rights in the OSCE

See chapter B.II.3.

V. Human Rights in the Council of Europe

The protection of human rights in the Council of Europe is largely based on the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the activities of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The rise in the number of Member States of the Council of Europe from 23 in 1989 to 46, and the strong increase in individual applications to the ECHR from 4,000 in 1989 to as many as 50,500 required reforms. In addition to Protocol No. 14 on the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2005 amending the Convention’s control system (ratified by Austria in December 2005), on 15 November a Group of Wise Persons,
established in May 2005 in line with a decision taken at the Warsaw Summit, presented an assessment on the long-term effectiveness of ECHR and Protocol No. 14. The recommendations of the Group of Wise Persons provide for more flexibility in the amendment of the ECHR structure and the establishment of a "filter system" in connection with the admissibility of applications. Moreover, the Group recommends enhancing the role of the Human Rights Commissioner of the Council of Europe in the control system and strengthening cooperation between the ECHR and national courts. Finally, the Group of Wise Persons recommends the use of alternative conflict resolution mechanisms on a national level and/or within the Council of Europe.

On 1 April, Thomas Hammarberg (Sweden) succeeded Álvaro Gil-Robles as the Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights. His task is to engage in the protection of human rights in Europe, to support the Member States in the implementation of the Council of Europe’s human rights standards, to promote education and public awareness in the area of human rights protection, and to detect existing deficiencies in the protection of human rights in legislation and practice.

VI. The Human Security Network

The Human Security Network (HSN) is a supraregional, interdisciplinary and action-oriented interest group of 14 states (Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland, South Africa (as observer) and Thailand) which was established in the initial stages of the Ottawa process for the preparation of the Anti-Personnel Mine-Ban Convention. 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. The HSN concentrates on the following topics: landmines, small arms, children and armed conflict, women, peace and security, human rights education and the dialogue among civilizations. 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 and armed conflict. 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 on Human Rights Education “Understanding Human Rights” that has already been translated into 11 languages, a strategy paper in support of the rights of the child, and a training curriculum. Austria continued its engagement in these two focal areas. As part of a new focus, Austria also supported the development of legal standards within the HSN to restrict the use of cluster munitions.
This year’s Ministerial Meeting held in Bangkok on 1 and 2 June was dedicated to development policy and the protection against new epidemics and HIV/AIDS. In the second half of the year, the Slovenian Chair, in agreement with Austrian priorities, focuses on the promotion of intercultural dialogue through human rights education, on violence against children, and children and armed conflict, as well as on the use of the HSN as a supraregional network at UN level. At the meeting of the representatives of the HSN states at ministerial level on the sidelines of the 61st UN General Assembly on 20 and 21 September, the focus was placed on elaborating a common position on the Alliance of Civilizations. Moreover, Slovenia proposed the development of an HSN strategy on human rights education for children.

VII. Priorities

1. Human Rights of Children

The topic of children and armed conflict is one of the priorities of Austrian human rights policy. Within the EU, Austria was actively involved in the evaluation of the guidelines for the protection of children in armed conflicts. So far the most important result has been a checklist prepared by Austria on the integration of these guidelines in all phases of civil and military EU missions. Apart from guidance on practical measures for the protection and support of children in EU operations, such as monitoring and reporting of violations of children’s rights taking special account of the situation of girls, the checklist contains strict rules of conduct to avoid misconduct by mission staff. Moreover, EU operations must have expertise in the protection of children. Austria successfully supported the inclusion of a paragraph on the protection of children’s rights in all relevant mandates of the EU Special Envoys and Representatives.

On a national level, Austria prepared a training curriculum on the rights of the child for civil and military missions abroad, which will also be used in the priority countries of the ADC (Austrian Development Cooperation). On the initiative of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the topics of the rights of the child and child protection were included in the training programmes of all Austrian organisations that carry out missions abroad. In autumn, the “1st EU-UN Child Protection Training”, which served the exchange of experiences between EU and UN experts in the area of child protection, took place at the Burg Schlaining Peace Centre.

On the UN level, Austria supported the efforts towards an effective implementation of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms on children and
armed conflict provided for in UN Security Council resolution 1612 (2005). Projects linked to the rights of the child will be continued as part of the Austrian Development Cooperation scheme. Projects for the reintegration and rehabilitation of war-traumatised children on the Balkans and in Iraq were financed. Projects for the rehabilitation of former child soldiers in Northern Uganda and children orphaned or otherwise traumatised by the civil war in Northern Uganda were made possible through co-financing by the Austrian Development Cooperation scheme. The implementation of the National Action Plan on the Rights of Children and Young People adopted at a Special Session of the UN General Assembly on children in line with the commitments undertaken at the 2002 World Children Summit, is being advanced by an interministerial working group in which the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs is participating.

2. Human Rights of Women

In connection with the Austrian priority topic of “Violence against Women”, a study was published in October, which had been presented by the UN Secretary General in the UN General Assembly, and which Austria had co-funded with 90,000 euros. The study received widespread attention and is expected to advance the discussion on this topic in the UN. Austria also funded a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) for the Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women.

Regarding the involvement and protection of women in conflict situations, Austria, in connection with the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission successfully called for providing this commission with gender expertise. Moreover, Austria pushed for the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in the ESDP (see chapter A.V.1.2.1.). In April, the ADC organised the conference on “Building Peace – Empowering Women” chaired by Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik, at which more than 300 participants and a panel involving international experts discussed topics like improving the position of women and efforts aimed at preventing violence against women in conflict and crisis regions. Work on a national action plan for a better integration of these issues in Austrian participations in peace operations was taken up in the summer.

In ADC projects, Austria engaged in the fight against female genital mutilation and other tradition-based practices by funding information and awareness-raising projects in North-Eastern Ethiopia. Moreover, Austria assisted the African Union Gender Office in implementing UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and in fighting female genital mutilation. Austria contributed approximately 500,000 euros to the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), of which 300,000 were earmarked for South-East Europe and 100,000 euros for the Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women.
3. 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. In this context, Austria particularly supports the further development of protection standards for more than 25 million internally displaced persons worldwide by making substantial contributions. Supported by Austria and in cooperation with the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, the SRSG for Internally Displaced Persons, Professor Walter Kälin is developing model legislation for the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement in national legislation. In September, an expert meeting was held in Vienna at the invitation of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights. In November, an evaluation report on the performance of the Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division established at OCHA in January 2004, was presented.

4. Human Rights Education

The United Nations World Programme for Human Rights Education has been in place since 2004. 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. The translation of the manual into Serbian and Thai, and a second English edition were completed in May; translations into Japanese, Macedonian, Portuguese, and Romanian are in preparation. The manual was used in seminars for judges, public prosecutors and police officers in Ethiopia, at a working session on freedom of expression and freedom of the media in Sarajevo, and at a seminar on freedom of the media and the press in Beijing, which were conducted by the European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (ETC) in Graz. Moreover, it was used during the training of human rights observers in Kabul and at working sessions in Albania, Macedonia, and Serbia, and the Arab version of the manual was used at a training seminar for judges from Iraq held in Italy. The Croatian and Russian versions were presented at seminars organised by the Council of Europe and at the University of Zagreb. The manual was also used in the European Master Programs for Human Rights and Democratisation in Sarajevo and Venice. Since training material is available online at the ETC Website, the manual is accessible to a wider public.

5. International Humanitarian Law

During the Austrian EU Council Presidency, the “European Education Leadership Conference on Exploring Humanitarian Law” was held in Vienna on 9 and 10 May. This conference, which was jointly organized by the ICRC,
the Austrian Red Cross and the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs as well as
the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, discussed the
integration of the ICRC youth education programme entitled “Discover
International Humanitarian Law” in the education systems and curricula of
the EU Member States.

The 29th (extraordinary) International Conference of the Red Cross and Red
Crescent took place in Geneva on 20 and 21 June. The Conference adopted an
amendment to the statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent
Movement to include the Red Crystal emblem, created at the diplomatic
conference in 2005, as an additional protection sign. Under the active
participation of the Austrian EU Council Presidency, the conference also
agreed on the recognition of Israel’s Magen David Adom Society and the
Palestine Red Crescent Society as members of the International Red Cross and
Red Crescent Movement and their admission to the International Federation of
Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.
H. The Humanitarian Dimension in International Relations

I. Migration and Refugee Issues

1. Migration and Refugee Movements

Migration, which is mainly attributable to conflicts and instability, to global economic, demographic and social disparities and to easier means of travel and communication is a key issue for the international community. The number of people who fled across international borders from war, persecution, and human rights violations rose from 8.4 million in 2005 to 9.9 million. The UNHCR provided support to approx. 4.5 million of these refugees, approximately 218,000 more than in 2005. Moreover, an estimated 25 million people are displaced within their own countries because of domestic armed conflict. The UNHCR provided support to approximately 14.2 million of these internally displaced persons.

2. Migration and Refugee Policy in Austria

In its refugee and migration policy, Austria places emphasis on a holistic approach, which takes political, human rights and development aspects into account.

In connection with the Global Approach to Migration that was introduced by the European Council in December 2005 and initially focused on the Mediterranean region, Austria supported the inclusion of the migration flows via East and South East Europe as well.

The Austrian EU Council Presidency contributed to the thematic preparation of the Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development in Rabat in July, and actively participated both at this conference and at the EU-African ministerial meetings on migration and development in Tripoli in November. The declarations and/or action plans adopted by these conferences aim at strengthening cooperation between origin, transit, and destination countries in Africa and Europe towards a joint management of migration in this region.

Within the EU, Austria makes financial, staff, and material contributions to FRONTEX, the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union, which was set up to avoid tragic incidents with migrants in the Mediterranean sea.

At the UN level, efforts aimed at international cooperation in the field of migration were intensified and a High Level Dialogue on International
Migration and Development was held in September. Austria participated in this dialogue and its follow-up.

Being one of the EU Member States with the highest percentage of asylum seekers compared to its population, Austria supports the implementation of the common European asylum system planned under the Hague Process by 2010. The total number of asylum applications in Austria amounted to 13,349, which corresponds to a 40.57% decrease compared to 2005. The number of asylum proceedings dealt with finally and conclusively totalled 15,488, of which 4,063 were recognised and 5,867 were rejected. The remaining cases were stayed, became irrelevant or the applications were withdrawn or dismissed.

Serbia was the most common country of origin, with 2,515 applicants, followed by Russia (2,441), Moldova (902), Afghanistan (699), Turkey (668), Georgia (564), Mongolia (541), India (479), Nigeria (421), and Iraq (380).

3. International Organization for Migration

Today, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which was founded in 1951 by European states, is the most important international organisation for migration issues. The IOM consists of 120 states and, after Spain rejoined, now includes all EU Member States. 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 sustainable migration management, going beyond legislation on foreigners to include economic and humanitarian aspects. The IOM Vienna Office also serves as the National Contact Point Austria of the European Migration Network which was set up by the European Commission in 2003. In November, a joint consultation meeting on “Cooperation, Priorities and Future Programming in the challenging field of migration management, irregular migration, counter-trafficking and return migration” involving international and Austrian cooperation partners was held in Vienna.

II. International Drug Control

Drug abuse remains a global threat. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) combats all aspects of drug abuse (cultivation, production, trade and consumption) and criminal side effects using a balanced set of measures designed to reduce supply and demand.
At the 49th Session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) held from 13 to 17 March, UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa, who serves his second term in office, addressed the containment of the worldwide drug problem stating that this was a success attributable to the UN drug control regime. He also pointed to the need for action in reducing demand, especially on the part of wealthy Western societies. Against the background of the domestic changes in the country, Bolivia repeatedly criticised the ignorance of the international drug control regime towards the cultural importance of coca bush for the indigenous people in the Andean and Amazonian regions, and called for a re-evaluation of the coca plant in list 1 of the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs of 1988.

In the 49th CND the Austrian EU Council Presidency mainly focused on the preparation of the 10-year review of the declarations and action plans adopted by the UNGA Special Session in 1998. A resolution prepared together with the Council Working Party “Horizontal Drugs Group” established a preparatory body of experts, thus contributing to the improvement of the methodology and data available for the evaluation of the worldwide policy on drugs of the last ten years. A proposal for the improvement of the UNODC management structure was also based on an EU initiative. Although the thematic debate emphasised the importance of alternative development as an indispensable element of the drug control strategy in drug-producer countries, there were diverging opinions as to the role of the UNODC. Where some countries emphasised the role of the UNODC as a catalyst and coordinator of alternative development, others suggested that the UNODC itself should continue to conduct alternative development 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 reveal that drug cultivation is still concentrated on a few countries: Afghanistan for opium poppy and three Andean states for coca. Afghanistan continues to be by far the largest producer of opiates with alarming developments both with regard to cultivation areas (+59%) and the amount of opium produced (+49%). With a total of 6,100 t Afghanistan accounts for 92% of the total raw opium produced worldwide. It is estimated that the current production of opium and heroin is 30% above demand, which led to a decline in prices for these particularly dangerous substances. Especially in the Southern provinces of Afghanistan, a correlation is to be noticed between the instable security situation and an increase in the opium production.

The entire region is affected by the impact of trafficking in opium and heroin from Afghanistan. The Paris Pact of 2003 is an initiative that aims at integrating the fight against Afghan heroin from the production sites to the
transit countries and the consumers. At the second ministerial conference that met in Moscow in June on Russian initiative, UNODC developed a project on the continuation of the initiative that is also co-funded by Austria. Apart from the strengthening of the Pact’s operational focus, a significant new aspect of this Phase II (2007-2009) is the inclusion of demand reduction as a permanent topic for the consultation mechanism, which had been the main demand of the EU. According to an external evaluation in the spring, the Paris Pact proved an efficient instrument for improving coordination; the Automated Donor Assistance Mechanism (ADAM) database in Sofia received a positive evaluation.

As in the previous years, cannabis was the most widely consumed illicit drug worldwide. As regards problematic drug use (i.e. drug use with serious impact on the user, often accompanied by addiction and health, social, and legal consequences) opiates played a predominant role worldwide, especially in Europe and Asia, and cocaine in North and South America. In Africa, however, cannabis was the most widely consumed drug. There were regional deviations from the worldwide trend, such as, for instance, an increase in the consumption of cocaine in Europe, which reached new social classes.

The topic of HIV/AIDS remains of great significance for the work of UNODC: on the one hand, intravenous drug abuse represents the main source of HIV transmission in some regions of the world such as Eastern Europe, Russia, and South-East Asia and on the other, HIV/AIDS is spreading in prisons around the world. Both the 49th CND and the 15th session of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) confirmed the role of UNODC as the leading unit among the UN Institutions in the fight against HIV/AIDS in connection with these two topics.

On 1 December, the UN Vienna Civil Society Award, established in 1999 by the UNODC, the City of Vienna and the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs for outstanding achievements by civil society representatives in combating drugs and crime was presented in the Vienna City Hall to the Moroccan NGO “Association Marocaine d’aide aux enfants en situation précaire”, to Mrs. Ana María Maraño from Bolivia, and to a social initiative founded by Murad A. Saad from Kenya. All winners’ projects focus on the protection of individuals at risk, especially children and young people, which also includes drug prevention and intervention.

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 business 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 globalisation.

The 15th session of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) was held in Vienna from 24 to 28 April. At this session, the first UNODC report on “Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns“ was presented. The report reveals that, though each country is affected by human trafficking, international cooperation in combating human trafficking is uncoordinated and unsystematic, not least due to a lack of data and their exchange. Apart from eliminating organised crime, which is at the bottom of it, important counter measures cited by the report include the reduction in demand (especially with regard to sexual exploitation and exploitative working conditions) and the protection of victims.

While Austria held the Presidency of the EU Council, the Union launched a number of initiatives. A draft resolution, which was based on the consultations of an informal working group, was presented on the transfer of budgetary sovereignty from the Crime Prevention Fund to the CCPCJ. A draft resolution on the improvement of safety at major events presented by the EU was met with great approval and laid down a closer cooperation between states in the preparation of such events. Moreover, the EU successfully protested against the merging of CND, CCPCJ, the Drug Fund and the Crime Prevention Fund as it feared that drugs would be added as a sub-aspect to crime prevention which could result in a potential diminution of its health and social component.

In accordance with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) that entered into force in 2003, the third conference of the States Parties took place in Vienna. The main task of the conference was to implement the Convention’s provisions on international cooperation and technical assistance and to advance the review of its implementation. Diverging views regarding the degree of political will required for the implementation of the convention led to an intensive discussion on the review of the implementation efforts of the States Parties.

One year after the UN Convention against Corruption entered into force, the first conference of the State Parties took place in Jordan from 10 to 14 December. The conference focused on the review of the implementation of the Convention, on technical cooperation, and on the return of assets obtained through corruption. Following careful preparation, in particular by the Group of Friends of the Convention against Corruption under Austrian co-chairmanship, principal decisions regarding the process for the Convention’s implementation were adopted. In view of the difficult initial situation, the conference was regarded a success.
The **Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy** adopted by the United Nations in September will considerably strengthen the mandate of the UNODC and its Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB). For the first time, reference is made not only to the TPB but also to the entire work of UNODC, especially in the areas of corruption, money laundering and the rule of law. Terrorism prevention was identified as an interdisciplinary (horizontal) task. Moreover, the strategy attaches particular importance to building up national capabilities for terrorism prevention and the provision of technical assistance by the United Nations. In November, UNODC prepared a document on its role in the implementation of the strategy and invited the UN Member States to a dialogue on the topic.

Against the background of UN reform and the financial constraints of the office, the definition of a clear strategic direction for UNODC in recognition of its added value constitutes a priority. An initial draft was presented in September; the "Group of Friends of the Chair of CND and CCPCJ“ will continue to work on it until the sessions of the CND and CCPJC in March and April 2007 respectively.

### IV. The International Criminal Court

The **ICC**, based in The Hague, is a permanent and independent court established by the Rome Statute of 1998 with jurisdiction over the most severe crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The issue of the inclusion of the crime of aggression into the Rome Statute is being intensively debated by the contracting parties with a view to the Conference on the Revision of the Rome Statute scheduled for 2009. The ICC is based on the principle of complementarity and will therefore not act when a case is being investigated or dealt with under national jurisdiction, except if the affected state is unwilling or unable to do so. With more than 100 States Parties to the Rome Statute, the ICC has established itself as an essential element of the international peace order.

Following applications submitted by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda and the Central African Republic and due to UN Security Council resolution 1593 on the launch of investigations into the situation in Darfur, four cases are pending before the ICC.

The fifth session of the Assembly of the State Parties to the Rome Statute was held in The Hague from late November to early December and was marked by the transition of the ICC from its start-up to its operational phase. At the same time, public hearings were held for the first time against the leader of the Union des Patriotes Congolais (UPC) Thomas Lubanga.
Since the establishment of the ICC, Austria has been a member of the Bureau of the Assembly of the State Parties. For the period 2005-2008 Austria holds a Vice-Presidency. Austria was the first State Party to sign an agreement with the ICC on the enforcement of prison sentences.
I. Multilateral Economic Policy

I. The World Trade Organization

Although certain progress was made in the negotiations, it was not possible to meet the deadline of late April 2006 set at the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference in December 2005 for an agreement on "full modalities" for trade with agricultural and industrial products. After the failure of efforts to reconcile the positions at Ministerial Meetings of the main players in Geneva in June and July, WTO Director General Pascal Lamy proposed a temporary informal suspension of the Doha Round negotiations on 24 July. The subsequent period of reflection should be used by the Member States to review their positions and to join forces in order to seek possible solutions by engaging in "quiet diplomacy". In November, the Doha Round was resumed in what was carefully described as a "soft" resumption - between "quiet" diplomacy and fully-fledged negotiation activity.

By the end of the year, however, it had not been possible to bridge the differences between Member States on the three core issues. With regard to trade in agricultural goods, this concerned the extent of the reduction of tariffs on the one hand and the extent of the reduction of trade-distorting domestic subsidies on the other. While especially the EU is called upon to make concessions in connection with the reduction of tariffs for agricultural goods, it is especially the USA which is called upon in connection with trade-distorting domestic subsidies and food aid. Finally, concessions are demanded especially from emerging economies in connection with the level of tariff reductions to be agreed upon with respect to trade with industrial products. The resolution of these core issues continues to remain crucial to a successful completion of the Doha Round.

Although the major outlines of a revised offer on services had been prepared by the EU, it could not submit its offer officially due to the suspension of the negotiations in June.

For 2007, there is only one window of opportunity for the Doha negotiations, which will depend on the deadline for the expiration of the special authorisation of the US President to sign trade agreements, the "Trade Promotion Authority" on 30 June 2007. According to this provision, the US Congress can either fully accept or reject a trade agreement signed by the US President in its entirety.

Irrespective of the Doha development agenda, the "Aid for Trade" initiative launched in Hong Kong was continued. This initiative involves targeted measures to promote the integration of developing countries, especially LDCs, in the global economy by improving their supply capacities and trade-related
infrastructure. The recommendations made by the relevant Task Force were adopted in July as part of this initiative, which is co-sponsored by international organisations such as the World Bank or the IWF. Preparatory work for their implementation has been underway since July.

In November, the WTO General Council decided to admit Vietnam as the 150th member of the WTO, though its membership will not enter into force until 11 January 2007. 27 membership applications are pending, including those of Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, and Ukraine. Austria’s Permanent Representative in Geneva, Wolfgang Petritsch, chairs the accession working group for Bhutan.

II. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

On 1 June Mexico’s former Minister for Finance and Foreign Affairs José Angel Gurria Trevino took office as the new Secretary General of the OECD. Austria accounts for a share of approximately 1% percent in the organisation’s budget of approximately 340 million euros. In addition, the OECD received more than 60 million euros in voluntary contributions.

1. Enlargement and Foreign Relations

After the OECD had succeeded for the first time in defining a strategic framework for its relationships with non-member states, it is now identifying those countries that could become OECD members in the foreseeable future. The relevant list will be presented at the OECD Ministerial Council in May 2007.

2. International Economy and Finances

As regards the drivers of growth within the OECD, there was a shift in the course of the year. While growth in the USA was below expectations, there was a clear increase in momentum in European national economies, above all in Germany. Economic growth also continued in Japan. The structural policy debates focused on the following topics: globalisation and inflation, the OECD Jobs Strategy, product market regulation and productivity growth, competition on product markets in the Member States, political economy of structural reforms, migration, efficiency of public spending in education, real estate markets and macroeconomic impact. The OECD Financial Market Committee, which has been chaired by the Austrian Thomas Wieser since November 2005, mainly analysed the current developments in the financial markets.
3. Labour Market and Social Issues

The OECD’s most important labour market policy recommendations were outlined in a new version of the OECD Job Strategy and are based on four pillars: stable macroeconomic framework conditions, removal of obstacles to participation in the labour market and job search, removal of obstacles to demand in the labour market and improvement of training measures.

4. Priorities of Development Cooperation

As of 1 July, the OECD accommodates a Secretariat of the Africa Partnership Forum (APF), which comprises the G8 and some OECD members, including Austria. The main focus of the OECD Development Assistance Committee was the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of March 2005. The volume of Official Development Assistance from bilateral donors increased significantly as a result of international obligations.

5. Information and Communication Technology

The OECD examined the latest developments in the electronic communication markets and their technological, political, and economic impact. The secondary marketplace for trading in domain names contributed significantly to the continued successful growth of the Internet.

6. Environmental Policy

The Environmental Country Reviews are an important instrument for the implementation of national environmental schemes; those of Chile and China were successfully completed.

7. Sustainable Development

In recent years, the third pillar of sustainable development, the social aspect, was increasingly integrated in the work of the organisation. The “Annual Report on Sustainable Development in the OECD 2006” was discussed on 13 and 14 September. During this debate the importance of the contributions made by the various committees was recognised as a practical implementation of the sustainability principle within the OECD. Moreover, it was decided to take account of the sustainability perspective in future country reviews and publications on the OECD’s future prospects.
8. Agriculture

For the first time, the OECD Committee for Agriculture did not agree to the declassification of one of the major OECD documents published on a regular basis, its monitoring of OECD agricultural policies. The majority of the EU Member States, including Austria, rejected the presentation of agricultural subsidies proposed by the OECD using the “Producer Support Estimate” (PSE), since it does not take account of the EU agricultural reform and the decoupling of subsidies from production. Under Austria’s EU Council Presidency, however, the EU Member States agreed on a common position, thus convincing the Agriculture Committee to accept an interim solution and deviate from the previous presentation system. Subsequently a model accepted by all OECD Member States was developed that will be applied in the following years.

9. Ministerial Council Meetings

At the joint Meeting of the Environment and Development Ministers on 4 April, a joint Declaration on Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Development Cooperation was adopted. The Meeting of the Economics and Finance Ministers on 23 and 24 May focused on current trade policy issues. Austria was represented by Federal Minister Martin Bartenstein and State Secretary Alfred Finz. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to a successful conclusion of the negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda. Chaired by the Greek Minister of National Education and Religious Affairs Marietta Giannakou, the OECD Education Ministers met in Athens on 27 and 28 June to exchange views on the future of higher education. The OECD Secretary General advocated a “PISA programme for higher education“ aimed at creating improved indicators for measuring quality and performance.

10. International Energy Agency

The International Energy Agency (IEA) undertook efforts to strengthen the international dialogue on energy issues, particularly with China, India, and Russia.
J. Global Sustainability Policy

Much has been achieved in recent years on the basis of the visions and targets defined at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 1992: numerous conventions and legal instruments have been negotiated and ratified (climate, biodiversity, desertification, dangerous chemicals), important principles of the Rio Declaration have been integrated in national and European legislation, and sustainable development is becoming a central guiding principle in politics. The EU is continuing its efforts towards the transformation of UNEP into a UN Specialized Agency. One of the big challenges is the elaboration of an international agreement for the time after the expiry of the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol in the year 2012.

I. Follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development

The CSD-14 met in New York from 1 to 12 May. The session focused on a review of the progress achieved on the four topics of the second implementation cycle of the Johannesburg Agenda: energy for sustainable development, air pollution/atmosphere, climate change, and industrial development. The high-level segment of the session from 10 to 12 May was also attended by Ministers of Economic Affairs for the first time. The CSD-14 was dominated by the energy agenda, focusing above all on renewable sources of energy.

The sixth Conference of the Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (GFSE), entitled "Africa is Energizing Itself" was held in Vienna from 29 November to 1 December (see Chapter D.II.4.). The meeting, which was attended by 181 representatives from Europe and Africa, discussed issues like biomass, hydroelectric power, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and funding.

The sixth session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) took place in New York from 13 to 24 February. Open issues from the fifth session of the 2005 Forum on Forests were taken up and important steps taken towards worldwide forest management. Following a negotiation process of almost 15 years, the international community for the first time managed to agree on common targets for forests. In combination with improved implementation instruments, the new “four global goals for forests” are expected to enable concrete progress in sustainable forest management and forest protection worldwide by 2015.
II. The United Nations Environment Programme

The International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) took place in Dubai (United Arab Emirates) from 4 to 6 February. It was followed by the ninth Special Session of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF) from 7 to 9 February at the same venue. The ICCM agreed on the Strategic Concept for International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and adopted the Global Plan of Action and the Overarching Policy Strategy (OPS). SAICM is considered the first important step towards management of the global “chemicals issue”. At the ninth Special Session of the GMEF the mandate for the implementation of SAICM was assigned to UNEP and an interim review of UNEP activities conducted, including the areas of capacity-building and technology support to developing countries (Bali Strategic Plan) and monitoring of the global environmental situation (Environment Watch).

III. Global Environmental Protection Agreements

The third Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety took place in Curitiba (Brazil) from 13 to 17 March. Reports on current activities were presented and a total of 18 resolutions adopted. The most important result was an agreement on the definition of labelling provisions for bulk products, reached after several years of negotiations.

The eighth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was held after the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol at the same venue from 20 to 31 March. A total of 36 resolutions were adopted in the plenary session, including decisions on marine areas in need of protection, as well as on access to genetic resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits. The EU was able to defend its positions in most areas.

The second Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) took place in Geneva from 1 to 5 May. The conference adopted resolutions on DDT, exemptions from the convention, financial resources and mechanisms, implementation, and synergies. The negotiations on a compliance mechanism were continued.

The first Meeting of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGR) was held in Madrid from 12 to 16 June. Among other topics, the meeting negotiated and defined a private-law model agreement regulating access to plant genetic resources and the sharing of benefits arising from the use of these resources.
The fifty-eighth annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) took place in St. Kitts and Nevis from 16 to 20 June. The topics discussed at the meeting included the existing moratorium on commercial whaling, the regulation of quotas for “scientific” whaling, the establishment of protection areas and the protection of dolphins.

The third 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 Geneva from 9 to 13 October. The meeting mainly focused on the work programme and the budget for 2007-2008 and on the issue of cooperation and coordination between the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions. The negotiations on a compliance mechanism were continued.

The eighteenth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer took place in New Delhi (India) from 30 October to 3 November. Deliberations focused on the challenges that will arise in the next ten years in connection with the protection of the ozone layer.

The second Conference of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol was held in Nairobi (Kenya) from 6 to 17 November, in parallel to the twelfth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The continuation of work regarding an international agreement for the time after the expiry of the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol in 2012, the review of the Kyoto Protocol and important decisions on adaptation to climate change, CDM and capacity-building with a focus on Africa were discussed. The dialogue with those states that have not yet committed themselves to emission reductions was continued. In view of the fact that expectations were rather low, the outcome of the conferences is seen as positive.

The eighth Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal took place in Nairobi from 27 November to 1 December. The central topic discussed at the conference was the issue of “electronic waste”. At total of 30 resolutions were adopted, including one on the work programme for the period 2007-2008.
K. International Cultural Policy

I. Priorities

Austrian foreign policy is committed to a pro-active, constructive international cultural policy which is implemented via a network of 30 Austrian Cultural Fora (CF) and 51 Austria Libraries, and all Embassies and Consulates General. The objective is to promote worldwide interest in Austria by conveying a contemporary image of Austria as a cultural, academic and scientific nation. At the same time this policy also contributes to the dissemination of European values, above all those of dialogue, democracy and tolerance.

In addition, Europe’s cultural identity in all its diversity is to be presented internationally by means of joint cultural activities by Austria and its Central European neighbours. In this spirit the activities of “Platform Culture - Central Europe”, the cultural organisation set up in 2001 within the framework of the Regional Partnership with the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia are being continued with the joint realisation of a large-scale project in the capital city of each respective Member State holding the EU Presidency. To mark the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council the conference-with-concert series “Musik.Verfolgung.Freiheit – verfolgte Musikschaffende, verdrängte Musik in den totalitären Regimen im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts“ (“Face the Music - A Tribute to Persecuted Musicians and Suppressed Music in Totalitarian Regimes of 20th Century Europe”) was put on in cooperation with the Orpheus Trust, while the Finnish Presidency was celebrated with the interactive multimedia project “Memory” by the Slovenian designer Martin Bricelj, presented at the Kaapelitohdas Cultural Centre in Helsinki.

The Austrian EU Council Presidency provided the opportunity to place Austria in the spotlight as a cultural as well as an academic and scientific nation, not only in Brussels but also worldwide. These efforts were supported by two major anniversaries: the 250th anniversary of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s birth and the 150th anniversary of Sigmund Freud’s birth. The Mozart anniversary year offered Austria, traditionally the “country of music”, a global opportunity for comprehensive promotion of its contemporary cultural achievements as well, by organising a large number of concerts and academic and scientific events. At the same time, all Austrian Cultural Fora addressed the topic of Sigmund Freud, emphasising the importance of his work to modern-day trends under the motto of “Unveiling the 21st Century”. The Cultural Fora were also symbolically designated “Freud Institutes“ for a period of several days in May.

This year’s International Cultural Policy Conference dedicated to the topic of “Media/Power/Culture“ focussed on the influence of the media on people’s
perception of culture. The conference also highlighted the significant
contribution of culture as a “soft power” in foreign policy.

1. **Selected International Cultural Policy Projects Worldwide**

1.1. **Music**

Around 1,000 music projects were realised worldwide, the majority of which
were devoted to contemporary music. Within the context of the Mozart
anniversary year modern interpretations as well as special classical
performances and premières received support, including “The Magic Flute” in
Hanoi (Vietnam), “La Clemenza di Tito” in Istanbul and Ephesus (Turkey) and
at the Tchaikovsky Theatre in Moscow (Russia), a Mozart Week in Tehran
(Iran) featuring Prof. Loris Tjeknavorian, Thomas Fleodoroff and Gottlieb
Wallisch which attracted more than 10,000 visitors, the “Wolfgang Amadeus
Mozart” competition at the National Conservatory of Music in Lima (Peru), a
Mozart Festival in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein and Soweto
(South Africa), the “Festival des choeurs” in Dakar (Senegal) and the “Don
Giovanni” opera workshop with young musicians in Caracas (Venezuela).
Projects with a contemporary focus that were especially worthy of mention
included: the world première of Thomas Perne's “Zauberflöte06” and “Mozart
re-visited” by the Nouvelle Cuisine Big Band in Bratislava; “Tableau vivant –
Magic Flute”, a multimedia musical installation based on “The Magic Flute”
by Gabriele Amadori and “Mozart – Il suono della bellezza”, a recital
incorporating poetry and visuals in Rome; the multimedia project “Mozart
b/o” in Krakow; the world première of “Amadeus.Rondo” in Rousse;
“Leschetizky meets Mozart” in Lvov (Ukraine), “Mozart Remixed” as a techno
event in Ottawa, “Mozart Electronica” in Montreal (Canada); “Mozart and
Austrian Contemporary Composers Referring to Mozart” by and with Jehi
Bahk and Paul Gulda, and “Mozart and Emigrated Austrian Composers” by
Eugeniy Chevkenov and Maria Prinz in Washington, D.C. (USA); the
electronic interpretation “No more Mozart” by the Waxolutionists DJs
collective in Mexico; “The Marriage of Figaro” as an opera performance with
audience participation in Sào Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (Brazil); “Movin’
Mozart” at the Artscape Theater in Cape Town, the “Mozart in the Oasis”
festival in the United Arab Emirates; the Al Bustan Festival in Lebanon.

Special support was given to the world première of Richard Edlinger's
Holocaust symphony “The Train” performed by the Krakow Philharmonic,
the world premières of works by Georg Friedrich Haas and Bernhard Lang in
Bergen (Norway), a tribute to Alfred Peschek featuring the “new Ensemble
international” in Celje and the Hans Swarovsky concert series conducted by
Manfred Huss in Belgrade (Serbia).
1.2. Literature and Theatre

International conferences on the dramatic oeuvre of Elfriede Jelinek were held in Brussels, Oslo and Paris; her play “In the Alps” was performed by the theatre group Theatervereinigung Riksteatern in 22 Swedish towns and cities; further performances of her works were staged in Bulgaria (“What Happened After Nora Left Her Husband or Pillars of Society” in Sozopol), Italy (“Wolken.Heim.” in Palermo, Rome and other cities in southern Italy) and Canada (“Jackie” from the “Princess Plays” in Toronto). The 80th anniversary of Ingeborg Bachmann’s birth was celebrated with conferences in Naples and Tallinn. “The Good God of Manhattan” was performed in Lvov.

Austria’s independent theatre scene presented itself successfully, among other things with an appearance by “Theater ohne Grenzen” (“Theatre without Boundaries”) at the “Out the Box“ festival in Cape Town and the Schauspielhaus Wien’s performance of the play “Samovar” at the Singapore Arts Festival.

Austrian writers took part in a number of international literature festivals. Bettina Galvagni, for instance, participated in the “1.2.3 ...cultures” festival in Paris, Christl Greller and Friederike Mayröcker in the Jan Smrek Festival in Bratislava, and Ludwig Laher in the Salon du Livre in Montreal. Members of the younger generation of Austrian writers, including, Bettina Báláka, Olga Flor, Franzobel, Arnold Geige, Thomas Glavinic, Norbert Gstrein, Wolf Haas and Daniel Kehlmann, gave successful readings all over the world.

Austrian contemporary dance was showcased internationally at several major events. A particular highlight was the “Vienna – Brussels Festival: Dance Austria @ Brussels 2006”, a co-production by BOZAR DANCE and Vienna’s ImPulsTanz festival as part of the cultural events programme celebrating the Austrian EU Council Presidency, featuring young representatives of the Austrian dance scene such as Milli Bitterli, the Willi Dorner Company, Christine Gaigg, Saskia Hölbling and Barbara Krauss. The dance festival “Beyond the Waltz: Austrodance 2006“ in Washington, D.C. was the first major Austrian dance event in Washington since the guest appearance by the State Opera Ballet Company in 1972. Nine productions featuring Hanna Berger, Bernd Bienert, the Willi Dorner Company, Nejla Yatkin and the Dana Tai Soon Burgess Company were staged at three venues in Washington D.C., including the Kennedy Center. The “Austrian Dance Days” were held in October as part of the celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Israel and Austria. Three Austrian productions by four Austrian choreographers – Willi Dorner, Karl Schreiner and Klaus Obermaier/Chris Haring – were presented at three major concert venues in Tel Aviv.
1.3. Fine and Visual Arts

Alongside numerous solo and group exhibitions and participation by artists in international festivals, the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council and the Freud and Mozart anniversary years formed the focus of the exhibition activities. Austria was the special guest at the ARCO International Contemporary Art Fair in Madrid.

In connection with the EU Presidency a photographic exhibition depicting Austria and its academic, scientific, cultural and socio-political achievements in the European context was put together in cooperation with the Picture Archive of the Austrian National Library and shown in Munich, Ljubljana and Bratislava. In the first half of the year the exhibition “The Wiener Werkstätte and the Palais Stoclet” was on show at the BOZAR Museum of Fine Arts in Brussels.

To mark the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth the Vienna City Archives produced the travelling exhibition “Traces of Mozarts in Vienna“ in various languages, which was put on display at Austrian representations all over the world. The exhibition, which was co-produced with the International Mozarteum Foundation in Salzburg, was shown in numerous cities including Paris, Oslo, Ottawa, Santiago de Chile and Strasbourg, among other places. Several of the venues also exhibited works created from over-painted Mozart sheet music by the artists Ernst and Eleonore Friedrich.

An exhibition in honour of the Freud anniversary year was put together in CD-ROM format to allow local production in the respective countries. In the exhibition “Sigmund Freud – On the Couch” Michael Freund explored the humorous side of Freud’s work, bringing together 80 Freud-inspired cartoons published in the “New Yorker” over several decades. This exhibition was shown at the City Museum in New York, the Sigmund Freud Museum in London, the Freud’s Dream Museum in St. Petersburg and in Prague.

To commemorate the 100th birthday of Kurt Gödel, university professor Karl Sigmund produced an exhibition that was shown in Bangkok, Berlin, Madrid, New York and Prague.

The travelling exhibition “Muslims in Austria“ featuring panoramic photos by Lukas Maximilian Hüller went on display in Jerusalem and various Egyptian cities. The works of Prof. Ernst Degasperi also serve to promote intercultural dialogue by underlining the shared aspects which unite the three monotheistic religions. The official opening of the exhibition at the Museum of Ecclesiastical History in Sofia was attended by leading dignitaries of the religious communities represented in the city.
1.4. Film

The Foreign Ministry enabled Austrian film-makers to participate in international film festivals by co-financing their travel costs. Austrian Film Weeks organised or co-organised by the local diplomatic representations and Cultural Fora were held, *inter alia*, in Budapest, Krakow, Lisbon, Madrid, Milan, Prague and Tokyo. In cooperation with the ADA (Austrian Development Agency), film projects were also carried out in priority countries of the Austrian Development Cooperation programme, including Kampala (Uganda), Managua (Nicaragua), Maputo (Mozambique) and Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso). Austrian film-making was promoted worldwide at a total of 24 “Austrian Film Days” and 62 “European Film Days“.

1.5. Academic and Scientific Events

The predominant focus of the academic and scientific activities was on Sigmund Freud. Conferences, symposia, readings and other events were devoted to all aspects of his work and its importance to today’s world. Around 30 academic events were organised on these topics with the support of the Austrian representations, including major congresses in Jerusalem, Moscow and Stockholm, a conference series in Florence and Rome and conferences in Belgrade, Medellín (Colombia), Mexico City, Riga, Washington D.C. and Tallinn.

A further thematic emphasis was on European policy issues, which were explored at events held in connection with the Austrian EU Council Presidency in Athens, Bonn, Milan and Valletta.

2. International Cultural Policy Initiatives

Several initiatives involving specific cultural projects in Austria's immediate and more distant neighbourhood were prepared for the coming years, particularly in the region of South East Europe, where the countries’ perspective of integration into the EU is also being supported by means of cultural, academic and scientific cooperation. In addition, Austria's cooperation with the other countries of the Danube region is to be strengthened, primarily through the preparation and implementation of an information and communication platform to identify the specific needs and concerns of the local artists and people working in the cultural field.

Austria was involved in the preparation and design of the city of Sibiu's programme as the European Capital of Culture 2007, drawing attention to the cultural and historic links between Austria and Sibiu.
The “Culture Matters” programme is a multi-year priority concept which envisages intensified cultural cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans. Part of this programme is the drama competition “Talking about Borders”, which after successful implementation in Macedonia and Serbia is now to be continued in other states of the region. The winner of the inaugural competition in Macedonia was the young playwright Goce Smilewski with his play “Crossing Borders”. Under the auspices of the programme support was also given to the SKOMRAHI project in Macedonia, a workshop for drama students from the countries of the Western Balkans that has been operating in Skopje since 1988. Besides a theatre workshop and an international conference, a South European and an Austrian drama school work together each year to jointly stage a theatre production or produce a film. The ADA has been the main sponsor of the project since 2002.

A travelling exhibition entitled “Art brut – The Power of the Unconscious” was produced by Prof. Angelica Bäumer. As well as exploring artists’ regard for people with disabilities, the exhibition also addresses the issue of their integration into Austrian life. The two-year programme “The New Austrian Sound of Music” was successfully continued worldwide.

The intercultural dialogue project “Sounding Jerusalem” by Erich Oskar Hütter staged concerts in the Armenian Patriarchate, in the historic Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem and in the Palestinian Territories. An Arabic version of a work on the history of Austrian music was published for the first time in cooperation with the Bethlehem Academy of Music.

A new Austrian Cultural Forum was installed in New Delhi, the first ever externally visible institution for Austrian cultural, scientific and academic affairs in India. The official opening of the new Cultural Forum will take place in 2007.

3. Grants for cultural projects

To support its foreign policy and international cultural policy objectives and establish them in the public eye, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs provides funding in the form of grants for cultural projects. Furthermore, such grants are also employed as a means of establishing additional foci within the programme of international cultural activities. In 2006 budgetary funds totalling 411,010 euros were made available to 73 individual projects in the cultural, artistic and academic fields.

Grants were awarded to the arts project “Brückenschlag - Czernowitz Austria” (“Cernivci Statue of Austria”) by the Institute for Culture-Resistant Goods; the “Roots – Misjudged Neighbours“ exhibition project organised by the town of Fehring; the Ibero-American conference “Migration – Exile –
Identity”; the 29th International Ludwig Wittgenstein Symposium “Cultures. Conflict-Analysis-Dialogue” and the pan-European youth congress “Panalp”.

A team of students from the University of Vienna were granted a subsidy to support their participation in the Harvard World Model United Nations Conference in Beijing, as were a team from the University of Graz for their participation in the National Model United Nations Competition in New York. The Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra, the Klangforum Wien, the Pierrot Lunaire Ensemble Wien, the Wiener Jeunesse Orchestra and the Vienna Art Orchestra were all provided with funding for concert tours abroad that took each of them to several states, while further funds for musical projects went to the Chorvereinigung St. Augustin choral society, the Austrian-Korean Philharmonic Orchestra and the music academy Austria Barock Kulturinstitut. The Jewish Institute for Adult Education received financial support for the Yiddish Theatre Week 2006, b-projekt for the event “Kristallnacht – Zeitzeugen berichten 2006: Ghetto” (“The Kristallnacht Program – Contemporary Witnesses Bear Testimony 2006: The Ghetto”) and the EU XXL cultural association for the organisation of the European Film Festivals in Pecs and Bratislava.

The Slovenian cultural associations “Brücken”, “Abstaller Feld” and “Gottscheer Altsiedler Verein” were provided with grants, as were the Croatian cultural association “Napredak” for German courses, the Circolo di Cultura Italo-Austriaco Triest (“Italo-Austrian Cultural Circle Trieste”), the Italian-Austrian cultural association “Bologna”, the Austrian-German Cultural Society of Vienna for events in the cultural and academic field and the Cultural Association of Austrian Roma for its international activities.

Finally, as in previous years, financial assistance was also made available to St. George’s College Austrian school in Istanbul.

II. Bilateral Agreements in the Fields of Culture and Science


Work programmes on cultural cooperation were negotiated and concluded with Croatia, Montenegro, Poland and Romania.

Negotiations were conducted 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 Cooperation in the
Fields of Culture, Education and Science and create a new basis for cultural cooperation between the two states.

The fourth round of informal Austrian-Swiss cultural talks took place in Berne on 23 and 24 October, focussing on issues relating to cultural policy cooperation in the bilateral sphere and with third states.

A delegation headed by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs reached agreement on new implementation programmes based on the existing agreements on scientific and technical cooperation with China, Hungary and Ukraine.

Negotiations were taken up with India and Macedonia on the conclusion of bilateral agreements on scientific and technical cooperation. Negotiations were also conducted with Russia regarding an exchange of notes on amendment to the Convention between the Republic of Austria and the Russian Federation on Scientific and Technical Cooperation.

### III. Austria Libraries

The network of Austria Libraries abroad currently numbers 51 libraries in 23 countries. Most of these institutions, which also act as information points and small cultural centres, are located in cities where Austria has neither an embassy nor any other official diplomatic representation. Besides providing conventional library services, the Austria Libraries also organised over 500 events which attracted some 70,000 visitors. Over 170,000 people a year use the Austria Libraries, whose stocks have now grown to comprise approximately 300,000 books, 4,400 audio items, 700 CD-ROMs and 3,000 videos.

The range of information services was further improved. The web portal www.oesterreich-bibliotheken.at was expanded to include a “Kaleidoscope of Austrian Culture” featuring essays from and about the arts and cultural scenes in Austria in German, English and Russian. Another addition is the “Wiener Kaffeehaus Feuilleton” (“Viennese Café Features Page”), which provides a round-up of the latest cultural news from Austria and Central, Eastern and South East Europe. The collection of foreign-language translations of Austrian works and articles about Austria that can be accessed via the web portal of the Austria Libraries meanwhile contains some 12,000 titles. Special information sections were also added to mark the anniversaries of Ingeborg Bachmann, Kurt Gödel, Sigmund Freud, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Bertha von Suttner.

The Austria Library in Kosice moved to new premises at the Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, which also set up an Institute for German Studies.
In December a formal event entitled “Culture/Integration/Europe – 15 Years of Austrian Cultural Interferences in Bulgaria and Romania” was co-organised with the two countries’ embassies in Vienna, the Austro-Bulgarian Society, the Austro-Romanian Society and the Austrian Society for Literature and attended by high-ranking representatives of both states.

Book donations were made to the Austria Libraries abroad as well as to German studies and social science institutes at universities all over the world, including Belgium, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Japan, Poland, Romania, South Africa and Turkey.

IV. Science, Education and Language

1. Science and Education

1.1. Austrian Professorships and Centres for Austrian Studies

These facilities established at universities in Europe as well as in Australia, Israel, Canada and the USA serve the purpose of initiating, deepening and coordinating the study of Austria-specific topics in the academic life of the respective host country. Their activities also demonstrate Austria’s own intellectual potential and stimulate academic research in this subject area and publication of the relevant findings. Through networking with appropriate Austrian institutions these establishments also strengthen Austria’s involvement in the international scientific, academic and cultural network.

1.2. Grants and Mobility Programmes for University Studies

The Austrian Exchange Service (Österreichischer Austauschdienst, ÖAD), which acts as the partner of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in this regard, provides services to grant holders and administers the various mobility programmes such as, for instance, Erasmus, bilateral grant programmes, Austrian Development Cooperation programmes and scientific and technical cooperation programmes. The specific individual programmes are implemented by the Bureau for Academic Mobility and Cooperation and the national agency for the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes. The tasks performed in this area by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs include coordination and information activities for both the Austrian representations abroad and foreign representations in Austria.
1.3. International Task Force for Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research

The International Task Force for Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF) was set up in 1998 at the initiative of Sweden. Its purpose is to place political and social leaders’ support behind the need for Holocaust education, remembrance, and research both nationally and internationally. Currently 24 states as well as governmental and non-governmental organisations are members of the ITF.

Austria was admitted to the ITF in 2000. Austrian awareness-raising and Holocaust research projects are highly regarded within the ITF. Within the framework of the ITF the attention of the public and of states who see themselves as special advocates of the victims of National Socialism can be directed towards Austria’s efforts on behalf of victims of the Nazi regime within the context of the institutions set up specifically for this purpose – the National Fund, the General Settlement Fund, the Fund for the Future and the Scholarship Foundation.

2. Language

German is one of the most frequently spoken languages in Europe and the most frequently used foreign language after English. 7.2 million schoolchildren in the EU learn German as a foreign language. Nevertheless, German still lags behind English and French in terms of its visibility as an official and working language.

Österreich Institut GmbH (Austria Institute Ltd.) was founded in 1997 to organise German language courses, support and promote German language teaching abroad and cooperate with the relevant national and international organisations. Headquartered in Vienna, the company promotes learning of the Austrian variety of German. At present there are Austria Institute language schools in Wroclaw, Brno, Budapest, Krakow, Ljubljana, Bratislava, Rome and Warsaw, attended by more than 9,000 course participants. The course programme is being further expanded through granting of licenses to partner institutions (Istanbul).

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 190 examination centres in schools and other institutions worldwide. Agreements ensure that the ÖSD
examinations are accorded equal status to the corresponding examinations of the German Goethe Institute.

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. There are currently lectureships in 128 locations, language assistant posts in ten countries and German as a foreign language teaching placements in 46 countries.

The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs continued to co-manage 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 Graz, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt, Linz, Salzburg and Vienna. Due to the high standard offered these courses are very popular with Israeli students.

V. International Sporting Relations

The host city agreements were concluded between the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) and the Austrian host cities for the 2008 European Football Championships, which will be jointly hosted by Austria and Switzerland. The 2008 European Football Championships were also discussed at the fourth round of informal Austrian-Swiss cultural talks in Berne on 23 and 24 October.

The activities supporting the City of Salzburg’s bid to host the XXII Winter Olympics in 2014 were continued in line with the International Olympic Committee’s guidelines.

VI. Multilateral Scientific and Technical Cooperation

Austria intensified its multilateral scientific and technical cooperation both inside and outside Europe in the interests of positioning the country as a location for high-tech industry and research. Austria’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 to
the achievement of this goal. 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, the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) in Reading and the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI) in Vienna. In this context particular importance is attached to fostering networking of the activities of the international scientific institutions that are headquartered in Austria.

The 34 member countries of COST co-financed an annual research budget of some 2 billion euros. The EU expressed its recognition of COST’s work by raising the Union’s contribution to COST’s administrative expenses by around 80% to 210 million euros under the current Seventh Framework Programme for Research. COST was also opened to research in the cultural field for the first time. Out of the 40 proposed COST Actions one of importance to Austria was approved, namely “Wood Science for Conservation of Cultural Heritage”. 14 COST member countries have already registered their interest in this four-year interdisciplinary Action with a funding volume of 120 million euros. Austria advocates participation in COST Actions by institutions from non-COST countries, with a special emphasis on intensifying cooperation with India. Participation by researchers from the Balkans region was financed from a special COST Fund established specifically for this purpose.

Austria set up its own national space science research programme but continues to participate in ESA, whose Convention enables selective participation in ESA programmes with guaranteed return. This means that over the course of the last two decades Austrian companies have been awarded space technology contracts in proportion to Austria’s financial contribution to ESA programmes. Participation in ESA programmes is the optimum basis for industrial series production geared towards commercial applications. Via the ESA Austria is involved in the construction of the European satellite navigation and positioning system GALILEO, as well as in the preparation of future ESA programmes for the European satellite-based Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) system. During its Presidency of the EU Austria organised a series of large-scale events aimed at developing the market for GMES with an application-oriented focus, for which it earned international recognition. Among these was the successful conference “Markets for GMES in Europe and its regions – the “Graz Dialogue” held in Graz on 19 and 20 April, in which the Vienna-based European Space Policy Institute (ESPI) was also successfully involved.
VII. International Cultural Policy within the Framework of the European Union

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.

As the framework funding and planning instrument for the implementation of Article 151 of the EC Treaty, the "Culture 2000" programme aims to promote cultural dialogue and presentation of the common European cultural heritage. Originally established for the period 2000-2004 with a total budget of 167 million euros, the framework programme was prolonged unchanged until 2006 with additional funding of 69.5 million euros. In 2006 Austria submitted a total of 22 one-year projects, nine of which were granted EU funding; Austrian institutions are also involved as co-organisers or partners in ten further projects. One out of a total of five multi-annual cooperation projects submitted was granted EU funding, with Austrian co-organisers also involved in six further projects. A total of 1.7 million euros were thus made available to Austrian project-executing organisations in 2006.

Under the Austrian EU Presidency political agreement was reached on the follow-up programme "Culture 2007" for the period 2007-2013, and the relevant legislative process was concluded in the autumn. The new programme has a total budget of 400 million euros and will come into force in January 2007.

At the EU Education, Youth and Culture Council held in Brussels on 18 and 19 May political agreement was reached on thematic and budgetary aspects of the "Citizens for Europe" programme (2007-2013); the relevant legislative process was concluded under the Finnish Presidency. A budget of 235 million euros was earmarked for the programme, which aims to promote citizens' participation in European integration and deepen their knowledge about the EU and its values.

With regard to the replacement decision establishing the "European Capitals of Culture (2007-2019)" agreement between the Council and the European Parliament was reached at the first reading under the Austrian Presidency of the Council, creating the basis for the conclusion of the legislative process. The decision ensures a stronger European dimension, greater competition between
cities, increased transparency in the selection process and a more secure basis for planning for the event's organisers. In the autumn, Essen, Istanbul and Pecs were designated as the European Capitals of Culture for 2010.

The EU highlighted the importance of intercultural dialogue by declaring 2008 the "European Year of Intercultural Dialogue". Actions and information campaigns at Community level are to promote intercultural dialogue and raise European citizens' awareness of the importance of developing active European citizenship which is open to the world. The programme was assigned a budget of 10 million euros for the period 2007-2008.

For detailed information on the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions, please see Chapter E.VI.6.

The EU education and training programmes Socrates II (general education) and Leonardo II (vocational training) had a total of 3 billion euros in funding at their disposal for the period 2000-2006. These programmes are also open to the Central and Eastern European (CEEC) 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. The funds are also used to finance the programmes Socrates/Grundtvig in the field of adult education and lifelong learning and Socrates/Erasmus in the field of higher education. Every year numerous Austrian students have the chance to spend a semester abroad in one of the 30 participating states, and some 4,200 young people took up this opportunity in the academic year 2006/07.

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 intercultural understanding. The programme has a budget of 230 million euros and will run from 2004–2008.

VIII. Intercultural and inter-faith dialogue

The internal European and global developments of the past few years have underlined the necessity of a dialogue between the great world religions, as had been initiated by Austria already two decades ago. At the same time it has become evident that the dialogue strategy has to go far beyond promoting
inter-faith dialogue; indeed, it must encompass issues spanning the spectrum from migration to integration and Islam as well as the aspect of global social dialogue together with conflict prevention and resolution. For Austria, questions relating to the development of Islam and the Muslim representative organisations in Europe are of essential importance. A core element in this regard is the integration of our Muslim fellow citizens into the European model of life and the dialogue about this process. In its own approaches to dialogue Austria places great emphasis on the role of women and the strengthening of their position, as well as on involving young people in the dialogue.

1. **Mediation in the “caricature dispute”**

During the Austrian Presidency of the EU the so-called "caricature dispute" reached its climax, with rioting targeted at the embassies of Denmark and other EU Member States. To send out a signal of understanding, Federal Minister Ursula Plassnik invited the Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller, the Danish Bishop of Lolland-Falster and the Grand Muftis of Syria and of Bosnia and Herzegovina to a round-table discussion in Vienna on 16 February. At this high-level meeting possible ways of defusing the tensions and lending new impetus to the dialogue between the religions in Europe and between Europe and the Islamic world were explored. On 27 February, under the Austrian Council Presidency, the External Affairs Council of the European Union adopted conclusions condemning violence and calling for respect for religious and other beliefs and convictions, mutual tolerance and respect for universal values.

2. **Second Conference of European Imams**

From 7-9 April the 2nd Conference of European Imams convened in Vienna, organised by the Islamic religious community in Austria with support from the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. 120 delegates from 40 countries discussed the keynote topics of integration, education, women, youth issues and ecology. The final declaration clearly condemned all forms of fanaticism and extremism and proclaimed a commitment to diversity, democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The conference met with a great response beyond the borders of Europe, especially in the Muslim world, and further strengthened Austria’s reputation as a venue for encounter between Muslim authorities.

3. **The Anna Lindh Foundation**

Statutes and rules of procedure were adopted for the Anna Lindh Foundation, the organisation headquartered in Alexandria (Egypt) and
mandated with the implementation of the social, cultural and interpersonal components of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The programme is implemented via a network of national NGOs.

The **Austrian network** comprises more than 20 organisations which cooperate in implementing the objectives of the Anna Lindh Foundation in its major fields of action: education, arts and culture, science, human rights, sustainable development, empowerment of women and youth issues. The event "Orient – Occident, Encounters and Visions“, which was held at the Vienna Diplomatic Academy on 3 and 4 April, also involved representatives of the embassies of the ten Mediterranean states (+10 partners) to lend visibility to the Euro-Mediterranean Process and the Foundation’s role in the intercultural and interfaith dialogue with the +10 partners.

4. **Second ASEM Interfaith Dialogue**

The follow-up to the first ASEM Interfaith Dialogue meeting was held in July in Larnaca (Cyprus). Bringing together representatives of all world religions, this discussion platform convenes once a year alternating between Asia and Europe and is supported by Austria with financial and personnel resources. Through the resolutions adopted by the conferences the Dialogue aims to demonstrate to a broad public in Europe and Eastern and Southeast Asia how the world’s faiths and religions are working together in their striving for peace.
L. Media and Information

I. Public Relations Activities of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs

1. The Austrian Presidency of the EU Council

The media work associated with the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council consumed the greater part of the Press and Information Department’s capacity in the first half of the year. Major highlights included provision of media support and organisation of the media-related events at the informal meeting of EU Foreign Ministers in Salzburg in March, at a further meeting of EU Foreign Ministers in Klosterneuburg in May and at several EU Troika meetings with third countries at foreign minister level in Vienna. Furthermore, the department was involved in the media work associated with major large-scale events such as the EU-LAC and EU-USA summits in Vienna. Moreover, the EU Presidency made for a significantly higher number and frequency of media enquiries and contacts.

2. Prize for the Promotion of Austro-Polish Relations

Following last year’s amendment to the statutes of the former Austro-Polish Prize for Journalism, which entailed broadening of the pool of potential candidates, the “Prize for the Promotion of Austro-Polish Relations” was awarded for the first time in 2006. At its meeting on 1 December, the jury chaired by the Polish ambassador to Austria decided to award the prize to the Austrian writer, journalist and translator of Polish literature Martin Pollack. The presentation ceremony is due to take place in Warsaw in 2007.

3. Press Officers’ Conference

The annual Press Officers’ Conference held on 1 September served as a forum for both discussion of the lessons learned from the EU Presidency and future challenges. The exchanges focussed on practical issues concerning the cooperation between the local Press Officers and the central Press Department in Vienna - for instance with regard to the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs’ website.

4. Internet

The success of the complete relaunch of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs’ new web portal 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 implementation of websites in a uniform corporate design for the Austrian diplomatic representations abroad was continued, 39 such homepages were online by the end of the year.

5. Publications

The publications of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2006 dealt with the topics “Muslims in Austria” and – marking the Freud anniversary year – “Sigmund Freud: Conquistador of the Unconscious”. In addition, financial support was also provided for other individual publications, including, for instance, the brochure “Österreich Konkret” (“Austria in Brief: Facts & Figures”) and the book “Media and Minorities in South East Europe” by the South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO). In addition, an updated pocket size edition of the booklet “Tipps für Auslandsreisende” (“Tips for Travellers Abroad”) was printed.

6. Focus on Citizens' Service

The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs also acts as a service centre, looking after the interests of Austrian citizens abroad via its Citizens' Service and the worldwide diplomatic representations. The media attention frequently aroused by so-called consular cases requires close cooperation between the Citizens' Service and the Public Relations department.

II. “Communicating Europe”

The internal discussion within the EU on how to enhance the communication on Europe (“Communicating Europe”) was continued in various bodies during the Austrian EU Presidency. Focal points were the debate on the European Commission’s White Paper on a European Communication Policy which was presented in February, the exchange of experience on “Communicating Europe” on the Internet and preliminary plans for the celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome in March 1957.

Communicating Europe to the citizens was also the key concern of the “Europe is Listening” EU information campaign launched by the Federal Government, which ran until September. The major aim of the campaign was to intensify the dialogue with the citizens and strengthen their confidence in the EU, a key element being the interactive website www.zukunft europa.at
which remained online after the campaign had finished and has since been expanded. One section of the website is the The “Europe is Listening” platform, where users are asked to give their opinion on EU related issues. Moreover, www.zukunfteuropa.at also addresses European topics in a playful way: a quiz on Europe and the “Eurodoku”, a Europe-themed version of the popular sudoku puzzle, are further features of the website.

The website and the free-of-charge “Europe hotline” were advertised in television as well as on infoscreens and billboards. Citizens were also invited to take part in debates on Europe in the context of an Austria-wide roadshow. Another key component of the campaign was the creative, eye-catching Austrian EU Presidency logo symbolising Europe’s common bonds and diversity, designed by Rem Koolhaas, which featured in all relevant publicity activities and advertising tools.

“Europe is Listening” did not rely exclusively on classical advertising media, however, but also attempted to give Europe a presence in the public space. Air passengers from Austria and abroad found the arrival hall at Vienna International Airport decorated in the Presidency design, for instance, while an Austrian Federal Railways Taurus-class locomotive bedecked with the bright colours of the logo travelled the European rail network as a rolling ambassador of the Austrian Presidency.

The Federal Government also supported the “Speaker’s Corner” project on Vienna’s Ballhausplatz with the objective of bringing Europe closer to the Austrian population. Over a total of 25 weeks, interested citizens were invited to comment on 25 quotes on Europe by 25 prominent figures – either online on the website of the Austrian daily “Die Presse” or directly via the terminal at Speaker’s Corner. The “Café d’Europe” project, in which politicians, artists and intellectuals engaged in café discussions with members of the public, was organised in all EU Member States on Europe Day, 9 May, and received a remarkable and positive response from the media. The Rem Koolhaas exhibition “The Image of Europe” on Vienna’s Heldenplatz attracted over 40,000 visitors.
M. The Austrian Foreign Service

I. Introduction

The flexibility of the Foreign Service and temporary use of additional staff contributed to the successful management of the EU Council Presidency. Growing demands on the Foreign Service (consular services for Austrian citizens, visa administration, voting rights for Austrians abroad, shifts in the worldwide diplomatic presence and active participation in international organisations) requires well-trained, motivated employees and the best possible infrastructure concerning information technology and diplomatic properties.

II. Foreign Missions – Honorary Consulates

Austria has 81 embassies abroad (two of them as trade representation offices and one coordination office for technical cooperation), six permanent missions to international organisations, two liaison offices of embassies (one of them in the form of a coordination office for technical cooperation) and 15 consulates general (one of them as a trade representation). Compared with similar EU Member States, this is a small network of foreign representations. A total of 30 Cultural Forums in Beijing, Belgrade, Berlin, Bern, Brussels, Budapest, Bucharest, Cairo, Istanbul, Kiev, Krakow, Ljubljana, London, Madrid, Mexico, Milan, Moscow, New Delhi, New York, Ottawa, Paris, Prague, Rome, Tehran, Tel Aviv, Tokyo, Warsaw, Washington D.C. and Zagreb) promote cultural relations. The network of Austrian missions is constantly being adapted to requirements: Austria’s presence in the Western Balkans was increased by the Austrian Embassy in Podgorica (Montenegro), while the Austrian Embassy in Guatemala and the liaison office in Bonn were closed.

277 honorary consulates all around the world offer valuable support and supplement the work of professional Austrian representations. Honorary consuls, often business people with close ties to Austria work on an honorary basis and are also expected to provide the necessary infrastructure for consular services.

III. Real Estate and Property Management

Since 2005, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs has its headquarters at the historic building located on No. 8 Minoritenplatz, the centrepiece of the 337 properties currently used to accommodate the Austrian representations and employees in 80 countries around the world. These properties include both historical buildings, like the Austrian Embassy in Ankara, built to the design
of Clemens Holzmeister in the 1930s, and modern buildings such, as the Austrian Embassy in Berlin, designed by Hans Hollein. These premises are managed by a team of facility-management specialists at the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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 commission, as laid down by 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 and provides information on the requirements and career options in the Foreign Service through lectures and professional guidance programmes.

In all career schemes, new staff undergo a mandatory basic training programme, as specified in the Basic Training Regulation of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Federal Law Gazette II 113/2004.

For training purposes, the "Austrian Embassy in Vienna" was established. It provides employees in all career schemes with consular and administrative experience before their first assignment abroad.

V. Human Resources

As of December 2006, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs had 1,287 employees: 558 in Austria, (including 19 IT specialists), and 729 abroad. Seventy-eight employees were on leave - on maternity/paternal leave, working for international organisations, the Diplomatic Academy or Development Cooperation offices, or were on leave for private reasons such as accompanying their spouses on foreign missions. Additionally, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs employed 27 trainees and, during Austria’s Presidency of the EU Council, young university graduates on a temporary employment basis.

Although the federal staffing scheme for the year 2006 had provided for 1,420 positions (or 1,465, including positions under Section VI of the staffing scheme) for the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Federal Government currently controls the staffing levels through expenditure-effective "full employment equivalents" (converting part-time positions into full-time
equivalents). The full employment equivalents allocated to the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs were capped at 1,294.84.

**Women** accounted for 47.7% of the total staff of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs; 29.7% at the diplomatic level, 41.5% at consular/administrative level, 67.8% in technical service and 65% at the secretarial level.

**Staff of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2006 shown by Career Scheme/Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Scheme</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>296</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2/v2, B/b (consular/administrative level)</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3/v3, C/c (technical service)</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4/A5/v4, D/d, P2/P3/p2/p3, h2/h3 (support/secretarial staff)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>65.0</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>IT specialists</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual contract</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>673</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>1,287</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Retirement age:** The average age at which public officials of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs retired in 2006 was 63.8 years. As can be seen from the following table, except for the year 1998, the average retirement age in the past ten years has always exceeded the 60-year limit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VI. Budget**

In the federal budget for 2006, the total amount earmarked for the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs amounted to 388 million euros. Of this sum, 25 million euros were used to provide services for all ministries during the Austrian EU Council Presidency in the first half of the year (“Zentralbudget”). The **operative budget** of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs’, after deducting the “Zentralbudget”, the budget allocation for ADA (93.6 million euros), Austria’s contributions to international organisations (59.3 million
euros), other legal commitments (3.5 million euros) and the expenditure for international conferences (1.9 million euros), but including personnel expenditure, amounted to 204.7 million euros. The operative share in the total federal budget amounted to 0.3%.

**Budget 1996-2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>year</th>
<th>FMFFA budget (1,000 euros)</th>
<th>contributions to international organisations, international conferences, development cooperation, grant programmes in Eastern Europe (1,000 euros)</th>
<th>operative budget of the FMFFA (1,000 euros)</th>
<th>FMFFA operative budget as a percentage of the federal budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>388,000</td>
<td>183,282</td>
<td>204,718</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared with the previous year, 2006 saw a budgetary increase linked to the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council.

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. From 1999, only the general budget was used, with no account being taken of the compensatory budget. The percentage shares 1996-1998 were thus adjusted accordingly.

**VII. Information Technology**

The Austrian Presidency of the EU Council presented the ICT Department with a number of challenges. More than one hundred additional desktop and
laptop computers had to be acquired, set up and maintained. For the first time, 24/7 user and system support was provided during this period.

Another major focus of the ICT Department’s work was the design and tender of new IT equipment for the embassy network. This will not only include routine replacement of hardware and new software versions for office automation and administration, but also – in line with the headquarters in Vienna, where the records management system (ELAK, Elektronischer Akt) has been used since 1996 – the introduction of a new information management system (ELISA), that gives users in Vienna and abroad real-time access to all files in the system.

All Austrian missions are connected to Vienna by encrypted terrestrial WAN data lines or by satellite (VSAT), providing communication between Austrian authorities access to the Intranet and use of internet-based data-bases and software.

The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs switched to VOIP (Voice over IP) in 2005, with the missions abroad gradually being connected to the system. Tailor-made software applications, developed by the ICT Department, are used worldwide for administrative and consular work, such as issuing visa. The missions have access to the (SIS) Schengen Information System and are connected to the VISION consultation network of the Schengen states.

**VIII. Information Management**

The holdings of books and periodicals in the library of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs (“Außenpolitische Bibliothek”) were further increased, with its holdings now included in the ALEPH (Austrian Library Union Catalogue) system was. The libraries of the Cultural Forums in Budapest and Paris were integrated into the Library Union Catalogue in spring and autumn 2006. Via special access to ALEPH it is possible to run specific on-line internet queries on the library’s files at the Ministry and the Cultural Forums in Budapest, Paris and Prague. At the end of 2006, the book holdings of the Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies were also taken over, with the approximately 35,000 books gradually being integrated into the holdings of the Außenpolitische Bibliothek, thus increasing its holdings to approximately 80,000 volumes. As a result, the number of external library users and book requests by inter-library loans increased.

The IT system is also used to answer the rising number of queries relating to the holdings of the archives of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs.
## IX. The Organisational Structure of the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs

### I. General Affairs

**Johannes Kyrle**

- I.1 Protocol
  - Ferdinand MAULTASCHL
  - I.1a ...  
  - I.1b Lucia KRONSTEINER  
  - I.1c Werner AMMINGER

- Group I.A Office of the Legal Adviser
  - (Directorates I.2, I.4, I.7)
  - Ferdinand TRAUTTMANDORFF

- I.2 Public International Law
  - Helmut TICHY
  - I.2a Martin KLEIN
  - I.2b Thomas BAIER
  - I.2c Thomas LOIDL

- I.3 Press and Information
  - Astrid HARZ
  - I.3a Thomas SCHLESINGER
  - I.3b Franz HUTEGGER

- I.4 European Law
  - Andreas KUMIN
  - I.4a Ulla KRAUSS-NUSBAUMER

- I.5 Organisation of International Conferences and Matters relating to International Organisations in Austria
  - Ernst-Peter BREZOVSKY

- I.7 Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law and Minority Issues
  - Engelbert THEUERMANN
  - I.7a Georg HEINDL
  - I.7b Elisabeth KÖGLER

- I.9 Security Affairs
  - Daniel KRUMHOLZ

### II. Political Affairs

**Thomas Mayr-Harting**

- Deputy:
  - Ralph SCHEIDE

- Special Representative for Africa:
  - Georg LENNKH

- II.1 Security Policy Affairs, CFSP, Basic Issues
  - Thomas HAJNOCCI
  - II.1a Andreas RIECKEN
  - II.1b Karl PRUMMER
  - II.1c Klaus FAMIRA-PARCSETICH

- II.2 South Tyrol and Southern Europe
  - Clemens KOJA

- II.3 Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Central Asia; Central European Initiative (CEI)
  - Hans PORIAS
  - II.3a Josef LITSCHAUER
  - II.3b Thomas SCHNOLL

- II.4 Near and Middle East, Africa, OAU
  - Ralph SCHEIDE
  - II.4a Caroline GUDENUS

- II.5 International Organisations
  - Helmut BOCK
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2006
Austrian Foreign Policy Yearbook